

Weekly Newsletter During the Covid-19 Pandemic

18<sup>th</sup> October 2020

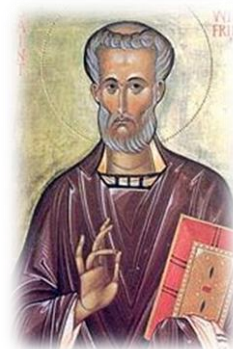
Joint Parishes of St Joseph's and St Wilfrid's Gateshead

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## St. Hilarion

Saint of the Day for October 21<sup>st</sup>



Despite his best efforts to live in prayer and solitude, today's saint found it difficult to achieve his deepest desire. People were naturally drawn to Hilarion as a source of spiritual wisdom and peace. He had reached such fame by the time of his death that his body had to be secretly removed so that a shrine would not be built in his honour. Instead, he was buried in his home village.

Saint Hilarion the Great, as he is sometimes called, was born in Palestine. After his conversion to Christianity, he spent some time with Saint Anthony of Egypt, another holy man drawn to solitude. Hilarion lived a life of hardship and simplicity in the desert, where he also experienced spiritual dryness that included temptations to despair. At the same time, miracles were attributed to him.

As his fame grew, a small group of disciples wanted to follow Hilarion. He began a series of journeys to find a place where he could live away from the world. He finally settled on Cyprus, where he died in 371 at about age 80.

Hilarion is celebrated as the founder of monasticism in Palestine. Much of his fame flows from the biography of him written by Saint Jerome.

### Reflection

In today's virus filled world of restrictions and enforced solitude perhaps St Hilarion's example can help us to turn our solitude away from the negative feeling of loneliness and into a positive condition in which we are alone with God.

Today is Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

(OF) Readings for today are: -

First Reading	Isaiah 45:1,4-6
Responsorial Psalm	Psalm 95
Second Reading	1 Thessalonians 1:1-5
Gospel	Matthew 22: 15-21

"Give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God"

The Gospel today is set in the days after Palm Sunday when Christ has been hailed as the Messiah by the people. It is Passover time, so there are many pilgrims in Jerusalem collecting their Passover lamb from the Temple. The city would be packed and nationalistic feelings running high. Due to the mass of pilgrims, the Roman procurator of Judaea, Pontius Pilate, had also temporarily taken up residence in Jerusalem, along with a multitude of troops poised to suppress any religious violence.

Against this background Jesus' enemies try to trick Him into taking sides. Either it is ok to pay taxes to Caesar, thus acknowledging the legitimacy of the Roman occupation and leading to him losing popular support or if it was wrong to pay Roman taxes, then He was making himself a rebel against the Romans and likely to be arrested and executed. Jesus, therefore, follows a traditional rabbinic method of approaching a question by asking his interrogators a counter-question: "whose image is on the coin?", now there is no problem," give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God".

The first-century audience would have immediately apprehended what it meant to render unto God the things that are God's. They would have known that the things of God and Caesar were mutually exclusive. No Jewish listener would have mistaken Jesus' response as an endorsement of paying Caesar's taxes. To the contrary, His audience would have understood that Jesus thought the tribute was illicit. Indeed, opposition to the tribute was one of the charges the authorities levied at His trial, according to St Luke. "They brought charges against him, saying, 'We found this man misleading our people; he opposes the payment of taxes to Caesar and maintains that he is the Messiah, a king.'" To the Roman audience, however, the pronouncement of rendering unto Caesar what is Caesar's sounds benign, almost supportive.

So where does this leave us today? The Catechism of the Catholic church discusses this when it looks at the fourth commandment "Honour your father and mother" and then talks about the Christian and civil authorities.

"God's fourth commandment also enjoins us to honour all who, for our good have received authority in society from God. It clarifies the duties of those who exercise authority as well as those who benefit from it.

Duties of civil authorities

2235 Those who exercise authority should do so as a service. It is the duty of citizens to contribute along with the civil authorities to the good of society in a spirit of truth, justice, solidarity, and freedom. the love and service of one's country follow from the duty of gratitude and belong to the order of charity."

On the question of taxes, the Catechism reads: 2240 "Submission to authority and co-responsibility for the common good make it morally obligatory to pay taxes, to exercise the right to vote, and to defend one's country:

Pay to all of them their dues, taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honour to whom honour is due."

"The citizen is obliged in conscience not to follow the directives of civil authorities when they are contrary to the demands of the moral order, to the fundamental rights of persons or the teachings of the Gospel. Refusing obedience to civil authorities, when their demands are contrary to those of an upright conscience, finds its justification in the distinction between serving God and serving the political community. "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."48 "We must obey God rather than men" When citizens are under the oppression of a public authority which oversteps its competence, they should still not refuse to give or to do what is objectively demanded of them by the common good; but it is legitimate for them to defend their own rights and those of their fellow citizens against the abuse of this authority within the limits of the natural law and the Law of the Gospel."

As English Catholics this is deep within our DNA. Twenty years ago, Pope John Paul II declared St Thomas More the patron saint of politicians. Next weekend the 25<sup>th</sup> October marks the fiftieth anniversary of the canonisation of the Martyrs of England and Wales. As English Catholics we know only too well that laws can be unjust and obedience to God`s laws rather than Caesar`s can come at a high price as the life and death of St Thomas More shows us. As Catholics we should be involved in discussing the issues of the day, to bring the light of Christ to shine on the problems we face with the Good News that we serve a God of love who is close to the poor and needy. We may not have the Lord`s quick wit to deal with the hostile questions but we do have the duty to be informed about our faith and to seek to serve Christ our King who gives meaning to our lives as we struggle towards His kingdom.

*Today is Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost*

*EF readings for today are: -*

<i>Introit</i>	<i>Dan 3, 31,29. 35</i>
<i>Epistle</i>	<i>Ephesians 5:15-21</i>
<i>Gradual</i>	<i>Psalms 144:15-16</i>
<i>Gospel</i>	<i>John 4: 46-53</i>

*"The man believed the word that Jesus spoke"*

The Gospel presents us with a miracle story from the Gospel of John. What is there in it that makes it different from the other miracles of the Lord which we regularly hear about in the Gospels at Mass? Well there are some interesting details. The man who approaches the Lord is a man in authority. It is generally assumed he is an official of king Herod. So, the rich and well-connected are also seeking the Lord`s help. The man`s son is seriously ill at home in Capharnaum, 21 miles away from Cana where Christ is. He clearly has great trust that Christ can do something to help, to have gone this far to seek him out. He wants to take Christ back with him, back to Capharnaum, to heal his son. However, this proves unnecessary as at a word from the Lord his son is healed. The official shows faith in obeying the command to go back home alone and his faith is rewarded as his son lives.

What does this say to us today? It is his son`s sickness that convinces the official to seek out Christ. So too for us: often it is sickness which intensifies our prayer as we pray for ourselves

or for others. How much time have we given to praying about our current situation? In the past, in times of plague, there have been public days of prayer with processions to pray for an end to the suffering. Maybe we aren't praying enough about it.

Sickness can be a way back to God. The history of the church is full of examples. The young Francis Bernadone answered the call of his city, Assisi, to fight in war against Perugia in 1202. Francis and the men of Assisi came under heavy attack, and in the face of superior numbers, they took flight. Unskilled and with no combat experience, Francis was quickly captured by enemy soldiers. During this time, he became seriously ill and it caused him to reflect upon his life and what was important. When ransomed in 1203 he was a different man, with different priorities. His encounter with the leper, whom he embraced, marked the start of his new adventure as a knight of Christ. So too St Ignatius of Loyola. Described as "a fancy dresser, an expert dancer, a womanizer, sensitive to insult, and a rough punkish swordsman who used his privileged status to escape prosecution for violent crimes committed with his priest brother at carnival time", a soldier from the age of 17, he was almost fatally wounded at the siege of Pamplona in 1521. During his recuperation he experienced a conversion through reading a life of Christ. His life as a pleasure-seeking soldier ended, and he determined to serve a new king and use his energies at the service of God and His church.

God can use the most unlikely people and unlikely circumstances to achieve his purposes. Our sorrows and afflictions can be the means for us to deepen our relationship with Him in a way we could never foresee. Christ is the Good Shepherd who never abandons his sheep. Misfortunes in life bring some people closer to God while others lose faith through the same circumstances as they feel let down or abandoned. While it is understandable, (and I meet a lot of people who want to know why God hasn't answered their prayers), ultimately God is our only hope of peace and meaning in this life. We may run from Him, but He will not let us go. In difficult times such as our own, we look to the example of Mary, the Mother of God, privileged by Him more than any other human being, yet she had to endure many sorrows and find strength to stand at the foot of her Son's cross and watch Him die, and yet she had real faith and trust that God is good and that things would work out well in the end. We pray for the strength to carry our own cross, whatever that may be, so that we too can share one day in the glory of His resurrection.

### Mass Intentions

*Mass is offered Daily at approximately 10.00am in private, if you have any intentions please put these in an envelope and pop through the letter box, or place them on the collection plate at the end of Sunday's Mass.*

**Saturday 5pm** Dot Adams (sick)

**Sunday 10am:** People of Parish      **Midday:** Les Taylder

**Monday:** Holy Souls in Purgatory

**Tuesday:** No Mass

**Wednesday:** No Mass

**Thursday:** Veronica, Catherine, and John wall

**Friday:** Veronica, Catherine, and John Wall

**Saturday:** Veronica, Catherine, and John wall      **5pm:** Moira Rath

**Sunday 10am:** People of Parish      **Midday:** Holy Souls in Purgatory

Please keep in your prayers Canon Michael who undergoes surgery this week, the sick of the parish, all those who have recently died and for those whose anniversaries occur at this time.

## Rosary Whirlwind British Isles

October 2020 for Faith, Life and Peace

Join daily online Rosary at 8pm

31<sup>st</sup> October National Rosary Relay Rally(9am-9pm)

1<sup>st</sup> November -online Rosary led by Bishop John Keenan at 8pm

More information at [www.walsingham.org.uk](http://www.walsingham.org.uk)

### Confirmations

The decision has been taken to postpone these until we can safely resume meetings. We appreciate your understanding and apologise for any inconvenience or disappointment. If you have any questions, please contact Canon Michael.

### Special Mass Collections

Today World Mission Sunday

### Donations

Apologies for the incorrect sorting code on previous newsletters, the correct information is below

Thank you to all those who have continued throughout the pandemic to give so generously to the church.

If you would like to continue giving through direct debit, standing order or bank transfer, the details are below.

Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle  
St Wilfrid's  
Sort Code 40-34-18  
Account Number 01164120

Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle  
St Joseph's  
Sort Code 40-34-18  
Account Number 31164066

To donate via cheque please make out to  
'DHN St Wilfrid's Gateshead' or 'DHN St Joseph's Gateshead'  
These can be posted to the parish address

Please use the reference "Weekly Contribution" for collection money  
"Loft Fund" for donations to improving choir loft  
"Lourdes Garden" for contributions to the garden  
"Parish Poor" for donations to help feed our homeless and hungry

"Doors Wide Open" We have to keep doors fully open during Mass, in order to maintain proper ventilation to ward off any transmission of COVID. This will remain the case throughout the Autumn and Winter months. Please bear with us and remain patient and understanding, it is all for everybody's safety. We advise that you wear extra layers of clothing as the weather begins to cool down. Thank you



## Thinking Ahead to Christmas



If you intend to attend one of the Christmas Masses this year at either St Wilfrid's or St Joseph's please let Canon Michael or Shauna Devitt Know, (via email, phone, letter, or word of mouth). We are having to think ahead due to the limit on numbers in our churches. Extra Masses may be needed.

At present Mass will be celebrated on Christmas Eve at 5pm at both St Wilfrid's and St Joseph's. The 10am Christmas Day Mass in English at St Joseph's has been poorly attended in the past and this year may be said in Latin.

We need to know how everyone feels so that if extra Masses are needed or a booking system is required, we have plenty of time to set things in motion.

Next week there will be a paper vote for all those who are attending weekly Mass at present., so give it some thought before then.

The options will be: -

### St Wilfrid's

- Do you intend to come to 5pm Mass on Christmas Eve?
- If an extra Mass is required due to number limitations what time/day would be your preference?

### St Joseph's

- Do you intend to come to a Christmas Mass at St Joseph's?
- Would you prefer Latin or English or are you happy to attend either?
- Which of the following is your preference?
  - a) 5pm Christmas Eve English      b) 8pm Christmas Eve English
  - c) 8pm Christmas Eve Latin        d) 11pm Christmas Eve Latin
  - e) Midnight Latin                      f) Midnight English
  - g) 10 am Christmas Day English    h) 10 am Christmas Day Latin

So far the poll on the new Blog

<https://stjosephstwilfridsgatesheadnewsblog.wordpress.com/>

Latin Mass on Christmas morning at 10am 27.59%

English Mass on Christmas Eve at 5pm 20.69%

Latin Mass on Christmas Eve at 11pm 17.24%

Latin Mass at Midnight 17.24%

English Mass at 10am 10.34%

The poll on the Blog will remain open for a further week. We are also asking that people submit their preferences in other ways too - Facebook, email, phone, letter, website, word of mouth

### Keeping Up to Date

Keeping us updated with your contact information If you are reading this and realise that you have not updated a recent change of address, telephone number or email address, please send an email to the parish with your updated information. If you have recently moved into the parish and have not yet given us your details, please let us know your details by email.

Follow us On Facebook and online at

<http://www.stjosephscatholicchurchgateshead.org.uk>

and take a peek at the new Blog at

<https://stjosephstwilfridsgatesheadnewsblog.wordpress.com/>

### St Wilfrid's

- There are 40 spaces which will be allocated on a first come first served basis
- Please sanitize your hands when entering church
- Follow the directions of the stewards
- The church will have signs for you to follow and read
- You are asked to give your contact details in compliance with Trace and Track

### Bonus Ball and Tombola

Restricted numbers makes these financially unviable so they will be suspended until further notice

### Christmas Raffle

will not take place this year, if you wish to donate money in lieu of raffle tickets please put your donation in an envelope marked "Raffle Ticket Donation" and put it on the collection plate.

### Piety Stall

we are unable to open, but items can still be bought. Please see Rachel if you would like anything.

### November Candles

in memory of deceased family and friends are available at a cost of £1 each. Please put the name of your loved one, along with the correct money, into an envelope and hand it to Sandra.

## St Joseph's

### November Candles

in memory of deceased family and friends are available at a cost of £1 each, please put the names of your loved ones, along with the correct money, into an envelope and place in the box at the back of church.

### Lourdes Garden

We are continuing to raise money for the improvement of the 'Lourdes Garden' at St Joseph's, if you would like to help please use the reference 'Lourdes Garden'

### Help for Our Local Homeless and Hungry

If you would like to help please put money in an envelope marked 'for the poor' or place Greggs food vouchers on the collection plate, or make a bank transfer, reference 'poor of the parish'.

Choir Loft/Gallery

We have an open fund for the improvements of the choir loft, if you would like to donate towards this please mark your donation 'choir Loft'.

Trace and Track App the NHS QR code is available to scan as you come into church.

At University? Interested in Serving at the Traditional Mass?

If you are male and new to the parish of St Joseph's you may be interested in serving at the traditional Latin Mass at midday each Sunday, please speak to canon Michael.

Please forward this newsletter to anybody you think may enjoy reading it.

If you know of someone who is not on the mailing list but would like to be please ask them to contact us via one of the above emails.

If you, or someone you know, would like to receive a slim downed, edited paper version of the newsletter please let me know.