

Weekly Newsletter During the Covid-19 Pandemic 5th July 2020

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

Parish Priest Canon Michael Brown

St Joseph's Presbytery High West Street Gateshead NE8 1LX

Telephone 01914771631

Email:- michaelbrown6@btconnect.com or shaunadevitt@tiscali.co.uk




Today is the 14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

(OF) Readings for today are: -

First Reading	Zechariah 9:9-10
Responsorial Psalm	Psalms 145:1-2, 8-9, 10-11, 13-14
Second Reading	Romans 8:9, 11-13
Alleluia	Matthew 11:25
Gospel	Matthew 11:25-30

"Come to me all you who labour and are overburdened"

To be happy and comfortable with ourselves and others we need to know ourselves, to know oneself is the beginning of wisdom. But do not try to measure yourself as the temptation is to cheat, to make yourself taller or thinner, stronger, or cleverer than you truly are. Instead ask a trusty friend to measure you, be ready to accept criticism, that is what true friends are for. If we do not know our limitations, we will carry too much burden on our shoulders. That is not God's plan, His plan is tailor made for each one of us, God is always gentle towards His children. Many a farmer would probably have come to St Joseph's workshop in Nazareth to order a yoke for his oxen, Joseph and Jesus would make sure the yoke would sit easily and not chaff the shoulders of the beasts whilst pulling the plough.



In the same way God's 'yoke' for us is tailor made to fit and not to chaff, the burdens He gives us are easy to carry, most of life's burdens are not from God, but self-imposed, or from others, and these burdens can often seem too great to bare.

Zephaniah, in the first reading pictures the coming Messiah as a great king, riding in triumph into his city on a donkey, the humble animal of gentleness and peace: not on a horse, for the Jew the horse was a symbol of war and aggression, Roman soldiers policed Jerusalem in their chariots. A king on a donkey is a vivid picture of authority combined with gentleness, solidarity with the poor. Authority is given for service, not for power and control.

St benedict's rule of life for his monks especially for the abbots of his monasteries, was 'encourage the weak, but do not overburden the strong'. If we are in authority at work, be gentle with the staff, we may have charge of a very efficient enterprise, but is everyone happy?

Authority is given to shield others from pressure. Pressure is a form of bullying. A Christian must never be a bully, as disciples of Jesus we are called to unburden people not to add to their burdens ,never tell someone he is useless or that his work is not good enough, always offer to ease his burden, shoulder his difficulties alongside him, guide and lead, recognising when he has reached his limitations.

God's plan is tailor made for me;

'Come all who are overburdened and I will give you rest, shoulder My yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls, Yes, My yoke is easy and my burden light'

Jesus asks each one of us to go to Him with life's burdens and find in Him the secret of happiness, a secret hidden from the learned and the clever, a secret not discovered in power and riches; but found among children, a biblical term meaning not just little children, but the poor , the powerless, those with no-one to speak for them, all the little ones on the margins of society. Jesus reveals Himself to the gentle and humble of heart, we need gentleness and humility to approach Jesus.

So first be gentle with yourself, stop striving for perfection in the unimportant things in life, do not judge yourself too harshly. Be gentle with others also. To be gentle is to show respect. And be humble, humility is strength, the word comes from the Latin 'Humus' meaning the ground, the soil, the earth, having one's feet firmly planted on the ground, humility is truth, knowing our own strengths and weaknesses and because we know our limitations we do not strive after things too great out of our reach. My yoke says Jesus is easy, if life is hard to cope with the burden is not from God, we impose it upon ourselves, or it is imposed unjustly by others. Our saviour's burden is light, if we are overburdened it could be that we have taken on too much, time to downsize perhaps?

Our most important measurement is across the back from shoulder to shoulder, if you go to a dressmaker or a tailor they ensure at the final fitting that the garment 'sits well' across the shoulders, that it is a comfortable fit, not too heavy to wear.

When someone has a burden they are finding difficult to carry we ought not make it heavier , don't say 'you made your bed now lie in it', instead offer to ease the burden in some way, for that is God's way.

In the book of Genesis, God's first revelation about mankind is that man is made for leisure not for work. Time for each other, for family and friends, for music, for conversation, for playing for love. God's creation is good, and the gifts of this world are for the enjoyment of all people, and the greatest gifts are love, joy, and peace.

Lord grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference. Grant us the gift of gentleness and humility of heart.

Fifth Sunday After Pentecost
(E) Readings for today are: -

Introit	Psalm 26: 7-9
Epistle 1	1 Peter 3: 8-15
Gradual	Psalms 83: 10,9
Gospel	Matthew 5: 20-24

"Go first to be reconciled with your brother"

In Matthew's Gospel today we see him continuing to remind the Christian, that to be a true disciple of Christ takes more than just 'paying lip-service' to the role. The true followers are those who make sure their lives are exemplary, they hold no grievances towards others because Christ came to teach us how to love and true love leaves no space for hatred.


It is all very well to attend daily Mass, weekly confession, to pray twice or thrice a day, but if we do all of this and still harbour annoyance or anger towards someone we are not true disciples of Christ for He tells us we must first and foremost make peace with our fellow human before we approach Him at the Altar.

All our pious acts are meaningless if we do not support them with actions of true love and forgiveness, standing up for the downtrodden, giving help to those less fortunate than ourselves, speaking out for justice wherever we see an injustice. Remaining silent in the face of injustice, turning our backs on the problems faced by others or walking away from a situation which makes us feel uncomfortable is not an option for a true disciple of Christ, we are all brothers and sisters through Him and with His help we can all become worthy of His love by truly following His example.

Throughout His life Jesus was to be found with those who were shunned by others; the tax collectors; the prostitutes; the sinners; the lepers; He never judged them, He listened to their stories, He forgave their actions and He led them to Himself through humility, gentleness and love. We too can lead people to be followers of Christ through merely living our lives as He did, in and through love. We need to become like little children who do not judge others at all, they are quick to forgive those who hurt or misunderstand them, and they show empathy to anyone who is unhappy or in pain. Children are humble and gentle and show complete trust and love, we too need to have complete trust in Our Lord Jesus Christ, to trust that when we do as He asks our lives and the lives of others will be enriched and we will lead all to Heaven through example.

" who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good?"





Please remember in your prayers Fr Hickey who died during the week. Eternal Rest
Grant unto Him Oh Lord.

Opening Our Churches

St Mary's Cathedral is now open for Mass, please refer to their website for further information.

The following Churches in the Diocese are now open for private prayer, please consult the websites/newsletters/face-book pages of these parishes for further information.

(please note no young person under age 16 may attend unaccompanied)

- St Aidan's, Ashington
- St Mary's Cathedral, Newcastle
- St Patrick's, Consett
- St Mary's Sunderland
- St Paul's Alnwick
- St Bede's Bedlington
- St Mary's Bishop Auckland
- SS Joseph, Patrick, and Cuthbert Coxhoe
- St Augustine's Darlington
- Our lady of Mercy and St Godric Durham
- Immaculate Heart of Mary Gateshead
- St Charles Gosforth
- St Aloysius Hebburn
- St Mary's Hexham
- St Teresa of the Infant Jesus Newcastle
- St Bede's Newcastle
- St Mary's Newton Aycliffe
- The Sacred Heart North Gosforth
- St Bede's South Shields
- St Joseph's Ushaw Moor
- Our Lady and St Columba Wallsend
- St John Boste Washington
- St Anne's Winlaton

Opening our churches is no easy task, Parish Priests have been given detailed and complex guidance notes on how safe opening can begin to take place, the Bishop makes the decision about which church will be next to open, once the Parish Priest has been told it is his turn he will contact those who have volunteered to help. These volunteers along with the Parish Priest will attend a meeting, held by the Diocesan Property Department, to undertake a risk assessment and training. The opening of churches for private prayer is a pre-requisite for that church opening for Mass.

VOLUNTEERING

Thank You to all those who have volunteered to help with cleaning and stewardship, you will be contacted about the meeting when Canon Brown is given a date by the Bishop.

Your continued patience, support and understanding are very much appreciated, and we ask that you continue to pray for the absolute best decisions to be made.

An Act of Spiritual Communion

When we are unable to receive Holy Communion, it has long been the catholic tradition to make an Act of Spiritual Communion. St. Thomas Aquinas defined a Spiritual Communion as "an ardent desire to receive Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament and lovingly embrace Him as if we had actually received Him. One composed by St Alphonsus Ligouri in 1870 is: -

"My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen."

Act of Perfect Contrition

When we cannot get to confession the Catholic Church has made provision for our reconciliation with the Father through an Act of Perfect Contrition, Cardinal Vincent Nichols recently spoke these words, "What the Church teaches us, is that God in His mercy, forgives our sins when we are truly sorry for them. And when we turn to Him and express our sorrow in an Act of Contrition, it's called an Act of Perfect Contrition when its focus is on the mercy and the love of God rather than on the burden of our guilt. So to make an act of Perfect Contrition, we simply need to turn to God and be, as it were, overwhelmed by God's mercy, and then express in our own words or in the words of the traditional Act of Contrition, the sorrow we feel for our offences against the goodness of God. When we do that in all sincerity of heart, we may rest assured that God forgives our sins and that we come away from that Act of Perfect Contrition freed from those sins And, as I say, the only thing we have to remember is, when it is possible to make a Confession again, that we mention the grievous sins which were forgiven by this Perfect Act of Contrition.



Our Lady of Lourdes

Canon Brown has asked some professional gardeners to tidy up and renovate the gardens around St Joseph's, including the '**Lourdes Garden**' to the side of the church. The statues of Our Lady and St Bernadette have endured a great deal of weather beatings and sadly some vandalism, they need replacing or repairing (if this is possible). We are seeking quotes for the repairs and have sourced suppliers for new statues, the cost of replacing the statues will be about £2,000. I will let you know about repairs once the quotes are in.

We need to raise funds to update this peaceful, prayerful area of our church grounds and are therefore appealing for donations large and small. If you could mark your donation 'Lourdes Garden' it would be helpful, and I will be able to keep you up to date with the amount raised. As well as the statues, and the garden area, the fence needs to be repainted and the wording along the top re-done, also the mosaic on the wall below the fence is falling to pieces and looks quite an eye-sore now. All this work is going to cost money and take time, we have set a target of

£5,000 and 10 months for the work to be completed, hopefully in time for Our Lady's Month of May.

Donations may be made in the same way as weekly/monthly offerings as set out below.

Thank You

To all those who have continued to make donations to Our Churches throughout the pandemic, your generosity is invaluable.

To donate via bank transfer:

Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle

Gateshead St Wilfrid's

Sort Code 40-34-18

Account Number 01164120

Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle

Gateshead St Joseph's

Sort Code 40-34-18

Account Number 31164066

Please use reference: - Weekly Income

OR

Donate using a cheque made out to either parish

'DHN St Joseph's Gateshead' or 'DHN St Wilfrid's Gateshead'

St Wilfrid's

Ford House

Sunderland Road

Gateshead NE8 3QR

St Joseph's

Presbytery

High West Street

Gateshead NE8 1LX

KEEP YOURSELF UPDATED AND INFORMED


- Parish Website and Facebook pages are updated regularly
- Parish Newsletter is available on our website each week
- Diocesan website www.rcdhn.org.uk
- Bishops' Conference website www.cbcew.org.uk

Keeping us updated with your contact information

During this time of social distancing and self-isolation, Canon Michael Brown has tried to keep in touch with as many parishioners as he can to offer support and comfort. He has been able to do this only with those parishioners for whom he holds up to date contact details.

Please ensure your contact details are correct. Use parish email addresses or telephone to update your information.

Access to the Newsletter



If you know of anyone from either Parish who cannot access this newsletter via the website and would like to receive it by email, please ask them to give their email address to Canon Michael Brown email michaelbrown6@btconnect.com or Shauna Devitt at shaunadevitt@tiscali.co.uk

Diocesan News

Live Streaming of Masses

The following parishes have set up a live stream of Mass. Please visit the links for more details:

St. Mary's Cathedral, Newcastle

[Cathedral's YouTube Channel](#). Each day at 12.00 noon (Sunday at 11.30am) Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and devotions live streamed at 5.00pm each day.

Our Lady of Mercy Parish, Sunderland

[YouTube channel](#). You can also find details and information on their [Facebook page](#).

Billingham, St. Thomas of Canterbury

[Facebook page](#), Mass daily at 12.00 noon, Exposition at 1.00pm and Benediction at 2.00pm.

Chester le Street, St. Cuthbert and Sacriston, St. Bede

A recording of daily Mass via their [Facebook Page](#).

Darlington, St. Augustine's

Sunday Mass at 9.15am via their [Facebook page](#).

St. Mary's, Hexham

Via their [website](#) or [YouTube channel](#). Sunday Mass 10.00am, weekday Mass 6.00pm and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament Sunday 4.00pm.

St. Paul's, Cramlington

[Facebook Page](#).

Stockton Family Parish

[Facebook Page](#).

Parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea

[Facebook Page](#), Mass daily at 9.30am.

Pope Video

A monthly video with notes that highlights the Holy Father's monthly intentions for prayer.

thepopevideo.org

Community Support

Gateshead Council have a dedicated page on their website offering a network of support for those who need help: -

<https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/15181/coronavirus-COVID-19-Community-support>

Or phone 01914333000

Alcoholics Anonymous Call free on 08009177650 or email help@aamail.org

Pastoral Care

As part of the pastoral care of parishioners and others during this time several qualified counsellors and listeners have generously made themselves available to anyone who may be troubled by the negative effect



of the situation. These councillors and listeners can be contacted through St Mary's Cathedral Listening Service on 01912326953

IMPORTANT: EU Citizens All EU, EEA and Swiss citizens living in the UK MUST apply through its Settlement Scheme to continue living, working, and accessing services here. The deadline is **30 June 2021**. Details and links to the application process can be found at: [gov.uk/eusetledstatus](https://www.gov.uk/eusetledstatus) Assistance is available at: [gov.uk/help-eu-settlementscheme](https://www.gov.uk/help-eu-settlementscheme)

