

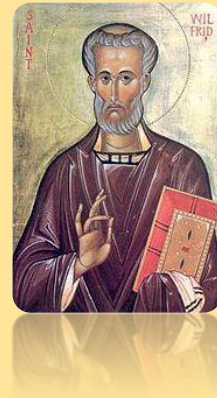
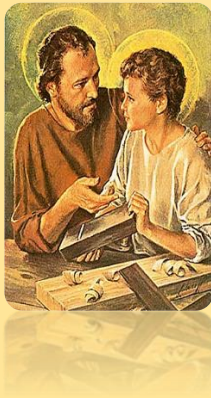
Weekly Newsletter During the Covid-19 Pandemic

20<sup>th</sup> September 2020

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## *Feast of St Padre Pio 23<sup>rd</sup> September*



Padre Pio was born on May 25, 1887 in Pietrelcina, southern Italy. He was tutored privately until his entry to the novitiate of the Capuchin Friars at the age of 15. Of feeble health but strong will, with the help of grace, he completed the required studies and was ordained a priest in 1910. On September 20<sup>th</sup>, 1918, the five wounds of Our Lord appeared on his body, making him the first stigmatized priest in the history of the Catholic Church.

Countless people were attracted to his confessional and many more received his saintly counsel and spiritual guidance through correspondence. His whole life was dedicated to long hours of prayer and continual austerity. Letters to his spiritual directors reveal the ineffable suffering, both physical and spiritual, which accompanied him throughout his life. They also reveal his deep devotion for the Blessed Sacrament and Our Blessed Lady, as well as a deep union with God.

On January 9<sup>th</sup> 1940, padre Pio announced his plans to develop a home for the relief of suffering, (Casa Sollievo della Sofferenza), his plans reached fruition when on May 5<sup>th</sup> 1956, thanks to the prayers and donations of his followers, the casa opened its doors offering 300 beds to those in need. He also developed an international network of prayer groups for the support of the Casa and its ministry that continues to live on and grow today.

Padre Pio considered the Casa Sollievo Della Sofferenza his "work", inspired and blessed by God, to be a haven of relief from suffering for all God's children in pain of body or soul. It is a model community of Catholic Christian health delivery and has grown into a regional referral centre of international renown. Today, with over 1,000 beds and services comparable to most academic research centres of excellence, the Casa is thriving by God's graces in one of the most remote, desolate, and poorest areas of Italy...atop Mount Gargano, four hours from Rome.

Worn out by over half a century of intense suffering and constant apostolic activity in San Giovanni Rotondo, Padre Pio was called to his heavenly reward on September 23, 1968. After a public funeral, which attracted over 100,000 mourners, his body was entombed in the crypt of Our Lady of Grace Church. Increasing numbers flock to his tomb from all parts of the world and many testify to spiritual and temporal graces received.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of February 1973, the Archbishop of Manfredonia, Msgr. Valentino Vailati, consigned the documentation to the Sacred Congregation of the Causes of Saints so as to obtain the "nihil obstat" for the beginning of the process of his Beatification.

On December 18, 1997, by the reading of the decree on the herocity of virtues, the Holy Father John Paul II declared Padre Pio "Venerable.", and on June 16, 2002, over 500,000 Padre Pio devotees gathered in Rome to witness Pope John Paul II proclaim Padre Pio, "Saint Pio of Pietrelcina".

"Stay with me Lord"

### 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.*

*The Week beginning 20<sup>th</sup> - September*

**Sunday 10:** People of the parish

**12:** Brenda Lowes

**Monday:** Honour of St Joseph

**Tuesday:** Intentions of SED

**Wednesday:** Holy Souls

**Thursday:** Thanksgiving

**Friday:** Maria Schneider

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

**Sunday:** 10: Lesley Keeble 12: People of the Parish

*Please remember in your prayers the sick of the parish and all those who have recently died and for those whose anniversaries occur at this time.*

Today is Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

(OF) Readings for today are: -

First Reading	Isaiah 55:6-9
Responsorial Psalm	Psalm 144
Second Reading	Philippians 1:20-24,27
Gospel	Matthew 20:1-16

*" Why are you envious because I am generous?"*

The denarius was a small silver coin, the daily wage of a Roman soldier, and the average wage of a working man in ancient Rome. They have been unearthed at Hadrian's wall.

The Landlord in our parable was making a fair offer for a day's work, nevertheless, the parable offends our sense of fair play. An employer should not ignore the number of hours spent at work. We rightly say "That's not fair"

Parables however are intended to challenge our way of thinking and to question the way we judge life. Through parables Jesus hopes to change our mindset and our behaviour. God's way is not man's way. Perhaps in the area of justice we need a rethink. Are we too legalistic? Do we judge by the letter of the law, rather than by its spirit? Do we judge with mercy.? The parable highlights the interplay between Justice, Law and Mercy.

We cannot interpret this parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard if we only see it as a parable about the wage contract or labour relations. It is first and foremost a parable about the Kingdom of God: about how God rules over his creation and how he governs humankind.

The point about this parable is that **at the 12<sup>th</sup> hour: at end of the day, when life is over, and our work is done, the moment of death, the hour of judgement, as the soul leaves the body, God's final word is Mercy not Justice. His final judgement is a generous one, a generosity beyond our understanding. He is not concerned with keeping accounts. His final judgment is one of mercy and love.**

This is a most comforting and hopeful parable. At our judgement we cannot appear before God and say, "Lord look at all the good things I have done!" We cannot say "Excuse me Lord, but you owe me for this or that. Look how I never missed Mass. Look at the rosaries I've said, and the money I gave to good causes, and the number of times I went to Medjugorje..." God owes us nothing. All we have is gift, even life itself. Our only prayer at the end of the day is "Thank you Lord" and "Oh God be merciful to me a sinner"

**We** find it exceedingly difficult to administer justice with mercy, but with God, Justice and Mercy are one. The psalmist puts it beautifully saying "With God Justice and Mercy have embraced"

The Emperor Napoleon sentenced a soldier to the firing squad for desertion. The soldier's mother pleaded with the Emperor for mercy for her son. The Emperor said "He doesn't deserve mercy. "She replied, "I know he doesn't **deserve** mercy."

What we all deserve is justice. Mercy is a free gift to soften justice. The gift of mercy resides in the fact that no **human** judge knows all the facts, the hidden influences of childhood and of nurture, our inherited genes. But **God** knows them, and hence His judgments are full of generosity, mercy, and compassion. We dare not ask God for justice, but we can all plead for mercy. "Do not deal with us as we deserve but grant us your forgiveness.!"

This parable should give us comfort that God's last word at the end of our life is one of

welcome and mercy: not the keeping of accounts. We must resolve to judge and act with mercy.

The parable challenges us to be kinder in our dealings with others: to be generous: **not** to look sideways at what others have got: this leads to envy and jealousy. This is what the Labourers did in the parable: they looked at what the others got, and so wanted more for longer hours, when their agreed wage was eminently just by the standards of the day.

The parable teaches us to count our blessings. To see the glass as half full rather than half empty.

. Lord Hailsham, Quinton Hogg, a devout Anglican was for a time Chancellor of England. He was interviewed by Sue Lawley for the BBC programme Desert Island Discs. At the end of the programme she asked him, "You have held very high office. You have presided over many trials of murder and severe crime. You are now retired and have time to look back on your distinguished career in the Courts of England. How will you face the Final Tribunal when you stand before God in judgement?"

There was a long pause and Lord Hailsham finally replied "I shall throw myself on the mercy of the court."

"Lord have mercy" is our first prayer at Mass. And Mercy is God's Last Word.

If mercy and forgiveness were our guide, then indeed the Kingdom of God would exist on earth.

*"Lord help me not to judge and criticise or condemn, help me to treat everyone with mercy and generosity. Give me the strength and humility to see my life always as a glass half full, no matter what trials I am experiencing"*



*Today is the Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost*

*EF readings for today are: -*

<i>Introit</i>	<i>Psalm 85: 3, 5</i>
<i>Epistle</i>	<i>Ephesians 3:13-21</i>
<i>Gradual</i>	<i>Psalm 101:16-17</i>
<i>Gospel</i>	<i>Luke 14:1-11</i>

*Humility or Humiliation?*

In Today's Gospel Jesus teaches us an especially important lesson about humility. In verses 1-6 we are shown the hypocrisy of the religious leaders before being shown in verses 7-11, through a parable, that pride brings humiliation and humility brings honour.

Jesus mentions a man who, having been invited to the wedding, chooses to sit in a place of honour, thus wanting to convey to all the other guests his importance. This man who exalted himself, was humiliated when the host asked him to give up his place to someone else, the proud man was humbled and "with shame" went to sit in the lowest place at the wedding table.

Jesus shows us an important truth: "everyone who exalts himself will be humbled", this is not what you or I think but a promise from God Himself, He opposes the proud and therefore will humble those who live lives in pride.

Jesus says we must humble ourselves before others and before God, and through our humility we will be honoured, just as, in the parable, the guest who sits in the lowest place may be asked to move to a higher seat and all around will be aware of the honour being bestowed. When a person chooses the lowliest seat, he conveys to everyone that he does not consider himself better than anyone else, in the parable the host honours the humble man, as it says in Proverbs, 11:2 "When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom": 29:23 "One's pride will bring him low, but he who is lowly in spirit will obtain honour"

How do we cultivate humility in our own lives?

As a wonderful, truly humble, and wise Priest of our diocese used to say, true **joy** comes through living it as it is spelt -

**Jesus, Others, Yourself**

Thinking less often of ourselves does not mean we think less OF ourselves; it just means we are shifting the focus away from our wants and desires and levelling our gaze at the needs of others. God does not call us into His kingdom in order to set us up as kings, but as servants.

Once we begin to think less about ourselves, we will automatically begin to think more of others, a truly humble person will focus not on what he does not have, but considers what others do not have, pride says "I want" and humility says "you need".

The key to real humility is to submit yourself to God, true humility comes from confessing your sins and begging His saving graces. True humility begins by turning towards the model of humility, Jesus Christ Himself, He will transform you from a self-absorbed person into a person who thinks of God most often.

God has made it clear that if you choose to exalt yourself you will be humbled, but the blessing of the Gospel is that if we humble ourselves we will be exalted, we need to challenge ourselves:

will I be the person who advances my kingdom with my wants, needs, desires and feelings? Or will I be the person who will "deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow"? (Luke 9:23)

It is only those hearts captured and captivated by Jesus Christ that can truly humble itself before God and others, as followers of Jesus we need to live as He did, knowing we are redeemed, set apart, and children of God, so we can't think badly of ourselves, the Gospel should lead us to living humble and happy lives, lives in

**JOY**

Humility or Humiliation? The choice is yours!!

## Happy Birthday

It is canon Michael's 61<sup>st</sup> Birthday on Thursday of this week, we wish him a happy birthday and 'ad multos annos'

## Special Mass Collections

Peter's Pence - weekend of October 4<sup>th</sup>

World Mission Sunday - weekend of October 18<sup>th</sup>

## Donations

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 40-34-20  
Account Number 01164120

Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle  
St Joseph's  
Sort Code 40-34-20  
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"

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'

Usually at this time of year **Gift Aid Donation Statements** are issued to those who are part of the scheme, however due to the strange circumstances in which we find ourselves the diocesan offices have decided to only issue such statements at the request of each individual should they want one.

If you are a Gift Aider and would like a statement of your donations you can request one by emailing the Gift Aid Office at:

[gift.aid@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:gift.aid@diocesehn.org.uk) or [michelle.dixon@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:michelle.dixon@diocesehn.org.uk) or  
[andrea.emson@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:andrea.emson@diocesehn.org.uk)



## Re-Opening Churches

Please see the Diocesan Website for information regarding churches which are open.

**St Wilfrid's is to be amongst the churches to reopen in phase 6, in order to do this safely we need as many volunteers as possible, if you would like to help please give your name and contact details to Canon Michael or to Veronica Georgeson, Health and Safety representative for St Wilfrid's**

The re-opening of St Joseph's for Mass on Sundays continues to be a great success. There is still no need to pre-book a place.

Thank you to everyone already giving up time to steward and clean St Joseph's church so that it remains open for Sunday Mass. Currently we have just enough to cover Sundays so it is unlikely that the church will open for weekday Mass until more volunteers come forward.

Apart from the Covid cleaning that must be done on Sundays, the church still needs its floors, glass and carpets cleaned regularly. We have a small rota of people to undertake this every 3<sup>rd</sup> week. Please think of giving time on Sundays or adding your name to the normal Church cleaning rota.

If interested please give your name to Canon Michael, Shauna Devitt, or Pat Macgregor.

### Toilet Facilities

These are now re-opened thanks to the willingness of volunteers who are willing to clean and disinfect them before and after each Mass. You can do your part to help by only using the toilets if absolutely necessary, sanitising your hands before and after use and remembering to shut the toilet lid prior to flushing. Also, we ask that you please use the disinfectant wipes provided to wipe down any place you have touched - flush handle, door handles, taps, sink etc.

### St Joseph's Hall

The hall has been given the go-ahead to open once again to groups who use its rooms.

We desperately need volunteers to help clean the hall on a Wednesday in order to maintain a COVID free environment and enable the hall to remain open. Please give your name and contact details to Canon Brown, Shauna Devitt, or Alan Telford if you can help.

Thank you for your continued co-operation and patience

# It Is Up to You!!

