

St Teresa & St John Southworth Churches, Cleveleys

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Sunday : The Twelfth Sunday of the Year

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Gospel:

Matthew: 10:26-33

Jesus instructed the Twelve as follows:

“Do not be afraid. For everything that is now covered will be uncovered and everything now hidden will be made clear. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the daylight, what you hear in whispers, proclaim from the housetops.

“Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; fear him rather who can destroy both body and soul in hell. Can you not buy two sparrows for a penny? And yet not one falls to the ground without your Father knowing. Why, every hair on your head has been counted. So there is no need to be afraid; you are worth more than hundred of sparrows.

“So if anyone declares himself for me in the presence of men, I will declare myself for him in the presence of my Father in heaven. But the one who disowns me in the presence of men, I will disown in the presence of my Father in heaven.”

Reflection:

Love is like a bridge between heaven and earth. When we try to love, to care for another, to look out for another in trouble, or raise a family or care for a community in love, then we are in the presence of God.

Many a parent has spent years of effort in love, and not always felt they have been as successful as they wanted to be. Many a teacher has cared for generations of children, and wondered what has been the fruit.

Partners, parents, grandparents - lives lived in the effort to love. Friendship, community, caring professions - efforts to love, to care, to heal, to grow. Many of us feel we are not always successful. Yes, selfishness, putting ourselves first, can enter the field of love. But remember, we all need to be loved ourselves to keep the effort going.

The thing is, as Jesus came to show - God always sees the effort, and loves every bit of us. He has counted every hair on our head. And even if worry and work have produced less hairs to count, on the bridge between heaven and earth, the bridge of love, no effort is lost, no kindness unnoticed, no love wasted.

Notices

From Saturday, 20 June, St Teresa's Church will be open on Wednesdays and Saturdays, 10 am – 12 noon for private prayer.

At those times there will be two 'stewards' in church to help you keep safe, by supervising hand - cleaning on entrance, physical distancing while you are there, and by them cleaning where you have been when you leave. Please enter by the usual door at the back of church and go out by the side door on the right, at St. Joseph's Chapel.

We are very grateful indeed for those who have accepted the role of helping you while you are in church.

Unfortunately we are not able to open St. John Southworth church at the moment, but the church there is not normally open for private prayer during the week.

Daily Reflections for this week

Monday (Oscar Romero)

Do you want to know if your Christianity is genuine? Here is the touchstone: Who do you get along with? Who are those who criticise you? Who are those who do not accept you? Who are those who flatter you? Know from that what Christ said once: "I have not come to bring peace, but division." There will be division because some want to live more comfortably by the world's principles. But others have embraced the call of Christ and must reject all that cannot be just in the world.

Scripture (Psalm 69:7-9,13,32-33)

It is for you that I suffer insults, that shame covers my face, that I have become a stranger to my brothers. I burn with zeal for your house and insults against you fall on me. This is my prayer to you, my prayer for your favour. In your great love, answer me, O God, with your help that never fails: Lord, answer, for your love is kind; in your compassion, turn towards me. The poor when they see it will be glad and God-seeking hearts will revive; for the Lord listens to the needy and does not spurn his servants in their chains.

Tuesday (Martin Luther King, spoken the night before he died)

The question before you tonight is not, "If I stop to help someone in need, what will happen to me?" The question is, "If I do not stop to help what will happen to them?" That's the question. I got into Memphis and some began talk about the threats that were out. What would happen to me from some of our sick white brothers? Well, I don't know what will happen now. We've got some difficult days ahead. But it really doesn't matter with me now, because I've been to the mountaintop. And I don't mind. Like anybody, I would like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the promised land! And so I'm happy, tonight. I'm not worried about anything. I'm not fearing any man! Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord!!

Scripture (Matthew 10:27-29,31-33)

What I say to you in the dark, tell in the daylight; what you hear in whispers, proclaim from the housetops. Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul: fear him rather who can destroy both body and soul in hell. Can you not buy two sparrows for a penny? And yet not one falls to the ground without your Father knowing. So there is no need to be afraid: you are worth more than many sparrows. So if anyone declares themselves for me in the presence of humans, I will declare myself for them in the presence of my Father in heaven. But the one who disowns me in the presence of humans, I will disown in the presence of my Father in heaven.

Wednesday (A Carthusian)

Happy are those who know how to put their whole soul into all that they do. Because they are giving themselves, they will be able to bear much suffering, but their happiness will exceed their suffering, since the gift of self is the source and condition of life, and therefore of spiritual growth and joy. Go on, then, giving yourself: go on suffering.... seek your joy in that precious suffering that the gift of self entails. God who became man knew no more excellent way than this when he was on earth.

Scripture (Psalm 42:8-11; 43:3-4)

In the daytime God sends his faithful love, and even at night; the song it inspires in me is a prayer to my living God. I shall say to God, my rock, 'Why have you forgotten me? Why must I go around mourning, harassed by the enemy?' My enemies taunt me, all day long they ask me, 'Where is your

God?' Why so downcast? Why all these sighs? Hope in God! I will praise him still, my Saviour, my God. Send out your light and your truth; they shall be my guide, to lead me to your holy mountain to the place where you dwell. Then I shall go to the altar of God, to the God of my joy.

Thursday (Traditional prayer: "Soul of Christ)

Jesus, may all that is you flow into me.
May your body and blood be my food and drink.
May your passion and death be my strength and life.
Jesus, with you by my side, enough has been given.
May the shelter I seek be the shadow of your cross.
Let me not run from the love which you offer,
but hold me safe from the forces of evil.
On each of my dyings shed your light and your love.
Keep calling me until that day comes when, with your saints,
I may praise you forever. Amen.

Scripture (Hebrews 10:32-36)

Remember the great challenge of sufferings that you had to meet after you received the light, sometimes by being publicly exposed to humiliations and violence, and sometimes as associates of those who suffered humiliation and violence. You accepted with joy being stripped of your belongings, knowing that you owned something better and lasting. Do not lose your fearlessness now, then, since the reward is so great. You will need perseverance if you are to do God's will and gain what he has promised.

Friday (Henri Nouwen)

When Jesus says "Can you drink the cup I am to drink?" without offering the reward we expect, it is the great challenge of the spiritual life. It breaks through all human calculations and expectations. It defies all our wishes to be sure in advance. It turns our hope for a predictable future upside down and pulls down our safety devices. It asks for the most radical trust in God, the same trust that made Jesus drink the cup to the bottom. The intimacy between Jesus and his Father is an intimacy of complete trust in which there are no advanced guarantees. That same intimacy Jesus wants to give us so we can drink our cup.

Scripture (Romans 8:35-39)

Can anything cut us off from the love of Christ – can hardships or distress, or persecution, or lack of food and clothing, or threats of violence? No; we come through all these things triumphantly victorious by the power of him who loves us. For I am certain of this: neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor any power nor any created thing whatever will be able to come between us and the love of God.

Martin Bennett