

St Teresa & St John Southworth Churches, Cleveleys

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Sunday : 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

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Gospel:

Matthew: 16:21-27

Jesus began to make it clear to his disciples that he was destined to go to Jerusalem and suffer grievously at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, to be put to death and to be raised up on the third day. Then, taking him aside, Peter started to remonstrate with him.

“Heaven preserve you Lord,” he said. “This must not happen to you.” But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle in my path, because the way you think is not God’s way, but man’s”

Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let me renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me. For anyone who wants to save his life with lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake will find it. What, then, will a man gain if he wins the whole world and ruins his life? Or what has a man to offer in exchange for his life?”

“For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and, when he does, he will reward each one according to his behaviour.”

Gospel Reflection : Happen It Won't Happen - Happen It Might

Where before have we heard Peter's comment to Jesus in today's Gospel? Isn't it true that we do sometimes think or say : 'It must not happen' or 'It should never have happened'. So :-

The person I love must not reject me. This body of mine must not let me down. I must not fail - my exam, my family, my own expectations. This must not happen to me.

Or - This love should not have failed. He or she should never have died. This employment should not have ended. This must not happen to me.

But, are there not new ways of seeing life? Despite all our anger and sorrow, failure is not the end, and may lead to some new strength. Love which dies, may later be renewed elsewhere.

All of life's events - the ones we choose, the ones which just happen - challenge us to trust in a Life that is bigger than any of us. or do we think we have our lives, **and** God's, all sown up! This must not happen to us!

Notices

We Remember In Our Prayers Joe Molden and Andrew Baker whose Funerals were last week, and Monica Cole whose Funeral Mass is at St. Teresa's on Friday. 4th September at 10.00 a.m. We remember them and their families, and all those whose anniversaries are at this time. May they be in God's peace.

Sunday Special Collections :

During any given year each Catholic church has many Sundays when there is an extra Collection, besides the weekly Parish collection, for some needy cause. In all the time that we could not have Mass in church this year, we missed several of these Special Collections, though some with boxes of offertory envelopes kindly handed them in with their weekly collection to the presbytery. Our Bishops in this country are now asking that some Special Collections which were missed during lockdown are rescheduled to Sundays in the rest of the year when we don't already have an arranged date, as shown on the white Offertory envelopes, for other Special Collections. This will happen between October and the rest of the year.

Our Bishop's Conference has made it clear that the beneficiaries of the Special Collections should understand that parishes are still recovering from the Covid-19 situation themselves at this time. However, the Conference also points out that the annual collection is the main way that the work of many of these organisations is funded. Some, such as the Apostleship of the Sea, which has looked after many seafarers stranded away from home in recent months, have been particularly busy.

Parishioners should understand that if they have already handed in the relevant envelopes before or since returning to church, they do not need to give a second time. We appreciate that the prospect of a second collection nearly every week for several months may seem a little daunting, or even insensitive. However, we are being asked to help as much as we can.

This Weekend there is an already arranged **Special Collection for the Catholic Trust for England and Wales**, which organises and funds all the work of the different official departments of the Church in this country, which ultimately exist to support us.

At the moment if you bring your collection money to church at the weekend you are asked to place it in the basket in the porch, or at the back of church. As yet, regulations do not allow us to pass round the collection basket/bag during the Offertory of the Mass. From this week there will be two different baskets, clearly identified for the weekly collection and the special collection. Thank you for your understanding, and patience!

Daily Reflections for this week

Monday (Tolstoy, from *Resurrection*)

Nekhlyudov remembered how he had once meditated on his life and tried to solve the questions, what he ought to do and how he ought to do it; and he remembered how he had been unable to decide them, so many were the considerations in each. He now put to himself the same questions, and was astonished how simple it all was because he now took no thought of what would happen to himself. He thought "the whole meaning of the work which is carried out by our life is dark to me and cannot be made intelligible. To understand the whole work of the Master is not in my power; but to do his will, written in my conscience, that is in my power."

Scripture (Mk. 14:32-37)

When they came to Gethsemane, Jesus took Peter, James and John with him, and he began to feel terror and anguish. And he said to them "My soul is sorrowful to the point of death. Wait here and stay awake." Going a little further, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that if it were possible, this hour might pass him by. "Abba, Father, "he said "For you everything is possible. Take this cup away from me. But let it be as you, not I would have it.

Tuesday (St. John of the Cross)

To practice virtue you should be constant in your religious observance and in obedience without any concern for the world, but only for God. In order to achieve this and to avoid being deceived, you should never set your eyes on the satisfaction or the dissatisfaction of the work at hand as a motive for doing it or failing to do it, but on doing it for God. Thus you must undertake all things, agreeable or disagreeable, for the sole purpose of pleasing God through them.

Scripture (1John 2:15-17)

Do not love the world or what is in the world. If anyone does love the world the love of the Father finds no place in him, because the disordered desires of the world and pride in possession are not from the Father but are from this world. And the world with all its disordered desires is passing away. But whoever does the will of God remains for ever.

Wednesday (Fr. Richard Rohr.)

When one attempts to live the reign of God in this world, one comes to know the cross through misunderstanding, difficulty, privation, persecution. The affluent and unpersecuted churches of the North have abandoned the life of the cross and pursued happiness and survival in this world. The cross is our salvation. It makes us holy. It frees us and liberates us for God and the great picture. It "opens the gates of heaven" by closing off our loyalties to hell. Through the cross, Jesus paid the price, not so we would not have to but so that we would in fact know that there is a price for truth and love: everything.

Scripture (Mt. 16:21-24)

Jesus began to make it clear that he was destined to go to Jerusalem and suffer grievously, to be put to death and to be raised up on the third day. Peter started to rebuke him, saying "Heaven preserve you, Lord, this must not happen to you." But Jesus turned and said to Peter "Get behind me Satan! You are an obstacle in my path, because you are thinking not as God thinks but as human beings do." The he said to his disciples "If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let them renounce themselves and take up their cross and follow me."

Thursday (Pope Francis, *Gaudete et Exsultate*)

In the Beatitudes, we find a portrait of the Master, which we are called to reflect in our daily lives. The word "blessed" expresses the fact that those faithful to God and his word, by their self-giving, gain true happiness. Although Jesus' words may strike us as poetic, they clearly run counter to the way things are usually done in our world. Even if we find Jesus' message attractive, the world pushes us towards another way of living. The Beatitudes are in no way trite or undemanding, quite the opposite. We can only practise them if the Holy Spirit fills us with his power and frees us from our weakness, our selfishness, our complacency and our pride. Let us listen once more to Jesus, with all the love and respect that the Master deserves. Let us allow his words to unsettle us, to challenge us and to demand a real change in the way we live. Otherwise, holiness will remain no more than an empty word.

Scripture (Jeremiah 20:7-9)

You have seduced me, Lord, and I have let myself be seduced; you have overpowered me: you were the stronger. I am a daily laughing-stock, everybody's butt. Each time I speak the word, I have to howl and proclaim: 'violence and ruin!' The word of the Lord has meant for me insult, derision, all day long. I used to say, 'I will not think about him, I will not speak his name any more.' Then there seemed to be a fire burning in my heart, imprisoned in my bones. The effort to restrain it wearied me, I could not bear it.

Friday (General Synod of the Anglican Church in Canada)

Making plans does not produce vision. Seeking a fresh vision is a spiritual quest that involves living in ambiguity, waiting on God, dying to old ways, letting the Spirit blow where it will and being resurrected to face a new day in a new way. Grasping a vision requires “letting go” and being open to transformation. Making plans without waiting for the prophetic voice will result in restructuring of what is and not transformation.

Scripture (Romans 12:1-2)

Think of God's mercy, brothers and sisters, and worship him, I beg you, in a way that is worthy of thinking beings, by offering your living bodies as a holy sacrifice, truly pleasing to God. Do not model your behaviour on the world around you, but let your behaviour change, modelled by your new mind. This is the only way to discover the will of God and know what is good, what it is that God wants, what is the perfect thing to do.

Martin Bennett