

St Teresa & St John Southworth Churches, Cleveleys

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Sunday : 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

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Gospel:

Matthew: 20:1-16

Jesus said to his disciples: "The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner going out at daybreak to hire workers for his vineyard. He made an agreement with the workers for one denarius a day, and sent them to his vineyard. Going out at about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the market place and said to them, "You go to my vineyard too and I will give you a fair wage." So they went. At about the sixth hour and again at the ninth hour, he went out and did the same. Then at about the eleventh hour he went out and found more men standing round, and he said to them, "Why have you been standing here idle all day?" "Because no one has hired us" they answered. He said to them, "You go into my vineyard too." In the evening the owner of the vineyard said to his bailiff, "Call the workers and pay them their wages, starting with the last arrivals and ending with the first." So those who were hired at about the eleventh hour came forward and received one denarius each. When the first came, they expected to get more, but grumbled at the landowner. 'The men who came last' they said 'have done only one hour, and you have treated them the same as u though we have done a heavy day's work in all the heat.' He answered one of them and said, 'My friend, I am not being unjust to you; did we not agree one denarius? Take your earnings and go. I choose to pay the last-comer as much as I pay you. Have I no right to do what I like with my own? Why be envious because I am generous?' Thus the last will be first, and the first, last.

Reflection : I'll Do It Whose Way?

Don't we know the words the prophet Isaiah quotes in the First Reading this weekend - "My ways are not your ways" - from all those things which God seems to allow to happen to us, but which we would not choose ourselves, like failure, sickness and bereavement.

But to *trust* through all this? We might not know that so well, or at least find it almost impossible to put it into practice.

Can I trust when a loved one is so ill, or taken from me? Can I trust when a loving relationship breaks up? Can I trust when the one I trust lets me down?

There are times when all we can say, all we can find hope in, is that on the Cross Jesus heard those same words "Can I?", and then trusted - that God his Father would *never* let him down in the end.

Notices

Refugees : Many of us were reminded of the terrible plight of many refugees when, on the news, we saw the Moria Centre Refugee Camp burn to the ground on the Greek Island of Lesbos. A Lancaster based Charity, Ripple Effect, is trying to help by appealing for specific items which are now needed, and which will be sent there. These are : - Nappies, Soap, Toothpaste, Shampoo, Shower Gel and Deodorant. A box will be placed in the porches of both our churches for any items you could kindly give.

St. Teresa's Church Car Park : Huge apologies to anyone who comes to the 9.30 am Weekday Mass at St. Teresa's and wants to use the church car park. As always, the gates have to be closed when the children are arriving at school. Because of current regulations their arrival has to be staggered into different times for different groups, which means that the gates have to be locked till 9.20 am (from 8.40.). We are very sorry for the necessary inconvenience, but if you are coming to the 9.30 am Mass by car, please come for 9.20 am +

Are You Looking For A Primary School Place For September 2021? A warm welcome is waiting for you at St. Teresa's, which is the Catholic Primary School for both St. Teresa's Parish and St. John Southworth Parish. After- School Covid Secure tours of our wonderful School are due to take place on 29th and 30th September, and 6th, 7th, and 8th October. These can be booked through the School Office (01253 852457). It is hoped that a 'Virtual Tour' will be available soon.

This Week Bishop Paul Wrote To All The Catholic Schools In The Diocese

I think it appropriate here to quote from that letter the words which go alongside our sincere thanks for, and pride in, our two local Schools, St. Teresa's Primary School and Cardinal Allen High School.

“For nearly two centuries, following the relaxation of laws against Catholics in our nation, our Catholic schools have been the bedrock of our mission to make Jesus Christ known and loved in our communities. They have formed an essential part of our wider contribution to the Common Good of society. The past few months have highlighted particularly just how vital our schools are and how their work and witness reveals the presence of Jesus Christ in our communities. When our churches were unable to be open, our schools remained proactive in feeding the hungry, providing care and concern for the most vulnerable, and assisting key-workers in their important role during the Covid pandemic. I thank all those who work in our schools for their endeavours throughout this period not only in their task of education but also by the way they have supported the wider communities in which they serve.

Our schools are integral and vital parts of the Diocese of Lancaster’s mission, now and going forwards. In a Catholic school, every child is welcomed, valued, and respected, and the person and teachings of Jesus Christ form the foundation of the school’s life and activity. The Gospel values of love, truth, justice, forgiveness, which embraces special care for the vulnerable and those in need will be evident. In a Catholic school, our aim is that every child, whether Catholic or not, will be respected, affirmed, supported and encouraged to reach their full potential, which for us in life in Christ. Education is a potent weapon in combating poverty. Our Catholic Schools are places where young people learn how to be of service to the world. Not only as workers but as citizens.”

Daily Reflections for this week

Monday (A New Catechism)

Humanity has never existed except as the race of people into which Jesus was to come or has come. Even in the most barbarous society past or present, man has always been a fellow-man of Jesus, the Son of God. A newly born child has been ushered into a world where redemption is at work. From the very beginning the baby is called into the friendship of Christ. And as for adults, no matter how morally bankrupt a life may be, no matter how much evil there is, no one is excluded from the call of the good God.

Scripture (Matthew 20: 11-16)

When those who had worked all day were paid what they had been promised they took the money but grumbled at the landowner saying "The men who came last have only done one hour, but you have treated them the same as us, though we have done a heavy day's work in all the heat.". The landowner said "My friend, I am not being unjust to you; did we not agree on one denarius? I choose to pay the latecomer as much as I pay you. Why should you be envious because I am generous?"

Tuesday (Julian of Norwich)

The love of God most high for our soul is so wonderful that it passes all knowledge. No created being can know the greatness, the sweetness, the tenderness of the love that our Master has for us. By his help and grace, therefore, let us in spirit stand and gaze, eternally marvelling at the supreme, single-minded, surpassing, incalculable love that God, who is goodness, has for us.

Scripture (Isaiah 55:6-9)

Let the wicked abandon their ways, and the evil ones their thoughts. Let them turn back to Yahweh who will take pity on them, to our God who is rich in forgiveness; for my thoughts are not your thoughts, and your ways are not my ways, declares Yahweh. For the heavens are as high above earth as my ways are above your ways, my thoughts above your thoughts.

Wednesday (Fr. Richard Rohr.)

The greatest act of faith is to believe that God loves you, even in your nakedness, poverty and sinfulness. But human beings think that we have to earn God's love. We work for it and, by doing good things for God, think we are going to get God's blessing in return. This is Jesus-and-me religion. It is not New Testament. It ends up being a self-centred morality of self-perfection and discipline.

Scripture (Luke 15:28-32)

When the elder son found that his father was celebrating the return of the younger son, he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to urge him to come in; but he retorted to his father "all these years I have slaved for you and never once disobeyed your orders, yet you never offered me so much as a kid to celebrate with my friends. But this son of yours, when he comes back after squandering all your money, you kill the calf we have been fattening." The father said "My son, you are with me always and all I have is yours. But it was only right we should celebrate because your brother here was lost and is found."

Thursday (Thomas Merton)

Some people are virtuous enough to forget that they are sinners without being wretched enough to remember how much they need the mercy of God. It is possible that some who have led bad lives on earth may be higher in heaven than those who appear to be good in this life. What is the value of a virtuous life, if it be without love and without mercy? Love is the gift of God's mercy to human sorrow, not the reward of human self-sufficiency.

Scripture (Romans 3:21-24)

God's saving justice was witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, but now it has been revealed altogether apart from the Law: God's saving justice given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. No distinction is made: all have sinned and lack God's glory, and all are justified by the free gift of his grace through being set free in Christ Jesus.

Friday (A Carthusian)

We must recognise the loving Will of God in all that happens. We have only to say *Thy will be done* and everything we offer to God becomes clothed with his own goodness and majesty. It is the very essence of God himself, who is Love. We do not know how to reach the end of God's love - it has no end! Always see in him a need to give himself, for that is his very essence - Love, the gift of self. This, then, is what God wants of us, and we acknowledge this when we say *thy will be done*. That is also why such a prayer covers the whole range of our failings and miseries.

Scripture (Psalm 145:6-9,17-19)

They will speak of your awesome power, and I shall recount your greatness. They will remember your great generosity and joyfully acclaim your saving justice. The Lord is tenderness and pity, slow to anger, full of faithful love. The Lord is generous to all, his tenderness embraces all his creatures. Upright in all that he does, the Lord acts only on faithful love. He is close to all who call upon him, all who call on him from the heart. He fulfils the desires of all who fear him, he hears their cry and saves them.

Martin Bennett