

**THE YEAR OF MATTHEW  
ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN**

**TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR A**

**ON HOW NOT TO COMPARE OURSELVES WITH OTHERS**

**SUNDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2020**

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Jesus speaks to the heart of the disciple and to the community of disciples He has chosen. To them He has given an amazing gift - the gift of working with Him to bring to birth a new humanity and a new community. They sit at His feet, and He clearly hopes that they will grow to be like Him. They think they want the same until a Parable pulls the carpet out from under their feet. It only does this because there is a question, like the elephant in the room, that is waiting to be answered. 'What's in it for me?'

In extravagant prose, Jesus assures His disciples that if they choose to do God's work it will bring them to the pinnacle of human fulfilment. Every sacrifice they make will be restored to them a hundred times over and eternal life will flow into them. If they are worried about a poor pay-off, Jesus overwhelms them with a vision of abundance. But first they have to listen to and try to understand the Parable.

Kingdom workers are like people on a zero-hours contract. They are vulnerable. They have no claim on their employer. The only agreement on the table is that when they awaken each day, they do not waste the gift of a new day in idleness. God will give them all that they need for the day. It will be enough for those who want to continue to rely on Gods' goodness.



Enthroned in the Lord's Prayer is the certainty that God will not give more or less than is needed for the day. "Give us this day our daily bread ....". It is assumed that they are friends of the Landowner and have grasped the truth about God that Jesus is trying to teach them. That when we 'seek first the Kingdom' (Matthew 6,33) and pray to follow God's will (Matthew 6,10) there is no need to ask for what we need. Our Father already knows, and gives what is needed, (Matthew 6,8;32-33) to those who work in the vineyard. But the gift of daily bread bears no relation to the amount of work done. It flows out of the generous heart of God, who is now vulnerable to an accusation of being unfair.

This feeling of unfairness is rooted in a social construct everyone takes for granted. More work=More pay. In this version of reality, I am the centre of the universe and my job is to promote myself and my own well-being. If I am denied this possibility I am entitled to have a good old moan. But the Parable puts God at the centre of the Universe and we are invited to stretch high enough to see the sacred point of view. Only here can we begin to relish the work that is being done. We are, to paraphrase Gerard Manley Hopkins, "burnished in use". We no longer live in the envious world of comparisons, but in the overflowing world of Gods Generosity. In this world, God gives us good eyes to better see. These eyes connect us to our soul and to the expansive works of the Spirit. Seduced, the labourers flow like liquid light, releasing Grace everywhere they go.

## TIME FOR CHANGE

We are in the middle of a pandemic – a pandemic which was unleashed on us, through our abuse of Mother Earth. The consequences are horrendous – not just in terms of death and illness; we are impacted violently at every level. Stress, distress, anxiety and uncertainty are everywhere.

As if that wasn't bad enough, the news is filled with a narrative that we are on the brink of an ecological disaster. Our tendency to prefer death, sin and corruption has made the world less safe. Add this to our infantile and astonishing lack of respect for the inherent dignity of our sisters and brothers, and witness a huge increase in violence, hunger, homelessness, displacement, and a refugee crisis on a massive scale.

Is it true that in the developed part of the world, we have shown that we prefer death to life? Have our communities and religious tradition failed us in our quest for life – the Kingdom of God – by being too introspective instead of celebrating the blessings which flow to us from the heart of God with every breath that we take?

What might happen if we were to engage more fully in the struggle for loving communities? This is a pressing demand in the face of the tangle of '*isms*' which are so destructive to community and dignity. There is a pathway, clearly defined by the Sermon on the Mount which challenges us to disengage ourselves from '*isms*', so that we can raise our voices in affirmation, our hands in thanksgiving and blessing, and our hearts to the ecstasy which comes from our contemplative experiences.

We must, no matter our age or state, commit to the Gospel journey. Each of us must allow ourselves to be moved, to feel deeply the suffering of the world. The Beloved Son of God calls us to live, to be aware, and to share life's beauty, not to be numb or dealers in destruction and death.

We need a new wisdom, which isn't new but very old, to taste the beauty and power of creation. Without this ground to stand on, we become bored and this leads to violence.

The creative Word of God must be allowed to speak in us; it must raise us up to a new humility and a revealed humanity which prizes true justice. The creative Word of God must be allowed to speak to us of our eternal dignity and of our absolute responsibility to transform and renew the face of the earth; to situate our search for holiness as unconditional love, and our prayer as gratitude.

We are running out of time, but it is not too late, unless we decide that it is so.

*Fr. Danny*



**PLEASE PRAY** for the repose of the soul of **Hannah Joan Byrne** whose Requiem Mass is being celebrated on Tuesday 22 September here in our parish church of St. Joseph & St. Margaret Clitherow at 11am. Please continue to keep her and her family in your prayers.

**PLEASE PRAY** for the repose of the soul of **Peter Stanton** and keep his family in your prayers.

*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.*



Join us if you can for our next online discussion group meeting (via Zoom) to reflect upon some of the themes of Laudato Si and explore ways of taking action. Everyone is welcome: Thursday 24 September at 7:30pm. To receive the link to the meeting, please email Mary McNab at [bracknellpa@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:bracknellpa@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

**NEWSLETTER VOLUNTEERS** – Thank you to our parish volunteers who kindly deliver newsletters each week. We need additional volunteers, particularly in the Wildridings, Priestwood, Great Hollands, Warfield areas of the town. If you can help, please contact [pastoralcare@bracknellcatholicchurch.org](mailto:pastoralcare@bracknellcatholicchurch.org) or ring or /text Pastoral Care: 07394 440 938. If you know someone who is unable to receive a newsletter by email and who would like to receive one, please let us know and we will arrange for a newsletter to be delivered. If you wish to receive a newsletter by email, contact the parish office.

**WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN OUR PARISH COMMUNITY WHO ARE SICK,  
HOUSEBOUND OR IN HOSPITAL AND FOR THOSE WHO CARE FOR THEM**

Brenda Theobald, Olga Maguire, Peter Dossett, Ena Stanton, Inge Walker, Eddie Moore, Peggy Pendergast, Ann Newton, Joyce Newland, Bridie Maughan, Angelina Ediale, Josephine Timms, Freda Edgington, Anne Hardy, Patricia Holmwood, Evie & Ruby Shallom, Blanche Shap, Mike Garnham, Ethna Sweeney, Mary King, Mary Phelan, Mary Sol Faulkner, Tony Andrews, Derek Alexander, Margaret Clark, Shaun Howard, Sally Torode, Dorcas Innes-Grant, Veronika Jastrzebski, Jerry Tobin, Rico Morales, Reynalita Leysan, Jenny Bashford, Donal Hanley, Jim and Frances McEvoy, Mary Murray, Thelma Briggs, Margaret Pearce, Audrey Lam, Pam Savage, Marie Swash, Terri Landmann, Jennie Tucker, Vilma Taborda, Zac Hoy, Terry and Mary Brennan, Brenda Lynch, Amanda Killestein, Doreen Pryor, Sharon Bryan, Sarah Bryan, Fr John Chadwick.

***If you would like to add a name to this list with consent, or if you want a name removed, please contact the Parish Office.***

**PARISH OF ST JOSEPH and ST MARGARET CLITHEROW, BRACKNELL**

**TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – YEAR A**

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Sunday	20 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	<b>LIVE STREAMED MASS ONLY</b>	<i>Parish Intentions</i>
Monday	21 <sup>st</sup>	<b>No Private Prayer or Mass – CHURCH CLOSED</b>		
Tuesday	22 <sup>nd</sup>	11:00am	<b>Requiem Mass</b>	<i>Hannah Joan Byrne RIP</i>

**ST PIO OF PIETRELCINA**

Wednesday	23 <sup>rd</sup>	10.00am - 10.30am	Mass	<i>Sarah Davis RIP</i>
		11.00am - 12.00 noon	Private Prayer & Exposition	

**OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM**

Thursday	24 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am - 10.30am	Mass	<i>Noel Harnett RIP</i>
		11.00am - 12.00 noon	Private Prayer & Exposition	
Friday	25 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am - 12.00 noon	Private Prayer and Exposition	
		7.30pm - 8.00pm	Mass	<i>Gerard McCourt RIP</i>
Saturday	26 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am - 10.30am	Mass	<i>John Collins RIP</i>
		11.00am – 12.00 noon	Private Prayer and Exposition	

**TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – YEAR A**

Sunday	27 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Mass	<i>Parish Intentions</i>
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**THE CHURCH WILL BE CLOSED FOR 30 MINUTES ON TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY AND SATURDAY MORNINGS AFTER MASS TO SANITISE THE CHURCH BEFORE RE-OPENING FOR PRIVATE PRAYER AND EXPOSITION AT 11.00am. THE CHURCH WILL BE OPEN 30 MINUTES BEFORE EACH MASS, THE DOORS WILL BE CLOSED AT THE START OF MASS.**

**Parish Office: 39 Braccan Walk, Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 1HA**

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**Email: [pastoralcare@bracknellcatholicchurch.org](mailto:pastoralcare@bracknellcatholicchurch.org)**

**Website: [www.bracknellcatholicchurch.org](http://www.bracknellcatholicchurch.org)**

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**[DIRECT DEBIT, STANDING ORDER AND GIFT AID FORMS CAN BE DOWNLOADED FROM THE PARISH WEBSITE \(drop down menu "Planned Giving"\)](#)**

**BANK DETAILS: Account Name: PRCDTR Bracknell St Joseph**

**Sort Code: 30-93-04; Account Number: 00875520**

**Bank: Lloyds Bank Plc, Palmerstone Road, Southsea**

**PLEASE MAKE CHEQUES PAYABLE TO (FULL NAME):**

**PRCDTR BRACKNELL ST JOSEPH**

**Parish Priest: Fr. Daniel McAvoy Deacon: Rev. Aidan Lynch**

**Parish Secretary: Elizabeth Fisher Pastoral Assistant: Mary McNab**

**Safeguarding Representatives: Sarah Birch, Marion McGuire, Paula Read**

**Safeguarding phone and email: 07712 048695 [safeguarding@bracknellcatholicchurch.org](mailto:safeguarding@bracknellcatholicchurch.org)**