

THE YEAR OF MATTHEW
ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN
TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR A
THE GIFT OF MERCY
SUNDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 2020

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It might look as if Peter is asking a question about Forgiving. But he is really asking when it is okay to strike back. Rather generously, when most people would stop at two, Peter offers seven chances. Jesus evokes the horror story from Genesis 4,23-24 where Lamech boasts, 'I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for striking me. If Cain is avenged sevenfold, Lamech seventy-seven fold'. Without forgiveness there is an escalation of violence. Violence will only stop where forgiveness is present. Jesus wants us to be unremittingly committed to forgiveness.



Today's Parable is stunning. It is the story of a king (God) and a servant (sinner) who is mercifully forgiven. The servant has made a "huge" mistake which, when found out cannot be repaid. This mistake will cost him, and all those he loves, everything. When you're about to lose everything, you will promise anything. He is on his knees and his back is against the wall. He pleads for justice and for time, when suddenly Compassion appears. Mercy comes as a shock and, when it arrives from the future, it changes everything. The servant is suddenly in the first day of the rest of his life. The classic forgiven sinner.

Of course, Jesus wants all of us to see ourselves as this servant. We have sold ourselves into slavery and cannot get out. We say that all we need is more time when the truth is that no time will be enough. We think we can sort ourselves out but our cleverness betrays us. We need the new start and it can only happen by opening our heart to the Heart of God from where mercy flows. He can't believe his luck and he should be filled with joy .....

But then a terrible thing happens. Oh no! The servant still sees himself as a creditor. He pleads for himself but continues to be violent to others. He cannot see, hear or feel himself in his brother, even when he uses the same words! So he throttles him, consigns him to bondage, destroys his family and puts him in a place where he can never make the situation better.

Then a startling thing happens! The Kings mercy vanishes. It recedes back into him, leaving the man with all the consequences of his huge mistake. Divine Mercy may be freely given but if it is not passed on it ceases to be effective in the lives of those who have received it. It seems that for Jesus, Divine Forgiveness and human forgiveness are movements in the same dance.

So, when Peter asks Jesus when it is okay to strike back, the answer is clear. We can only live if we have the mercy and forgiveness of God. Never, Never, Never, Ever forget that! The more we show mercy, the more we will receive it. The more we fail to show mercy the more it will recede. Dear Peter, if you understand this, you will never ask again, "How many times?" We are all bound by our past failures until a future is gifted to us. But all is lost the moment we put our hands around the throat of someone who is in debt to us. All is lost, and we are back in a world of revenge, reprisal and retaliation.

If you don't believe this, just watch the news!

## **SONNET#13**

**This red elixir of a waterfall  
Over rock of bone. Let's agree to call  
it Blood. Yes, Blood. One syllable will do  
for that river that runs in the veins of all  
and washes over tradition and taboo**

**They say the first drop spilled was all it took  
to begin the first rose that can pierce thornwise  
and seize the heart by passion's hook and crook  
Blood that crowns the sorrow of paradise  
and scatters its petals of forgiveness**

**See how it leaves its print on history's purest page  
This moon-blessed companion of life and death  
This wine that clings to a common vine of flesh  
See how it stains your cloth of joy as well as rage**

*From a Collection of Contemporary Black Poetry (Kwame Dawes; Ed)  
by John Agard*



**PLEASE PRAY** for the repose of the soul of **Hannah Joan Byrne** and keep 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.*



## SEASON OF CREATION

The Season of Creation is an annual celebration uniting Christians in prayer and action for the protection of our common home. The season runs from September 1 to October 4, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi. During this time we are

encouraged to pray and engage in events in order to deepen our relationship with our God, our neighbour and the earth we share, being ever more attentive to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.

This year's Season of Creation takes place in the context of the special 'Laudato Si' Anniversary Year,' which Pope Francis opened on Sunday 24 May to coincide with the 5th anniversary of his encyclical. Pope Francis addresses Laudato Si to every person on the planet, for we all share a common home – the earth. He calls us to examine our hearts, transform our social values and take action for global solidarity.

Last week, we started an online discussion group (via Zoom) to reflect upon some of the themes of Laudato Si and explore ways of taking action. Don't worry if you missed the first session! Join us for the next instalment on 17<sup>th</sup> September starting at 7:30pm, and after that on 24<sup>th</sup> September and 1<sup>st</sup> October. If you'd like to be part of the discussion, 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/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-FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – YEAR A**

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Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> 10.30am **LIVE STREAMED MASS ONLY** *Parish Intentions*

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> **NO PRIVATE PRAYER, EXPOSITION OR MASS – CHURCH CLOSED**

**OUR LADY OF SORROWS**

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> 10.00am - 10.30am Mass *Nora Denise Bourne RIP*  
11.00am – 12.00 noon Private Prayer & Exposition

**Ss. CORNELIUS & CYPRIAN**

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> 10.00am - 10.30am Mass *Edward Sheppard RIP*  
**NO PRIVATE PRAYER & EXPOSITION**

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> 10.00am - 10.30am Mass *Margaret Carey*  
11.00am - 12.00 noon Private Prayer & Exposition

Friday 18<sup>th</sup> 10.00am - 12.00 noon Private Prayer and Exposition  
**NO EVENING MASS**

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> **NO MORNING MASS**  
10.00am – 12.00 noon Private Prayer and Exposition

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

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Mass *Parish Intentions*

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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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Pastoral Care: 07394 440938 Email: pastoralcare@bracknellcatholicchurch.org**

Website: www.bracknellcatholicchurch.org Follow us on Facebook

[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**