

HIGH TIDE

*Parish
Magazine*

***Weymouth
St Paul
with Fleet***

AUG 2024



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Irene shares with us her reflections on mind, soul, and emotions - and how it relates to heaven and to life eternal.

Saint of the month: St. Rose of Lima

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Known mostly for her extreme self-mortification, St. Rose is so much more than a woman whose unusual practices make us raise our eyebrows. Her prayer life, her love for God, her ardent charity for those in need are still very much valid expressions of a holy Christian life for us all to imitate!

Know the Bible

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A new series where we will look at every book of the Bible to explore its contents. This month we examine the second book of the Holy Scripture: the Book of Exodus - a book of divine love triangle and jealousy!

The Assumption of Mary (15 August)

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A short and simple article explaining in accessible language what this Feast is about.

Assumption in the kitchen

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Curious traditions and delicious recipes inspired by the Bible and by the Feast of Our Blessed Lady!

Our Lady, Star of the Sea

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A few words from two Saints - Thomas Aquinas and Cardinal Newman - on this title of Mary.

From the Bishop of Oswestry

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Why has St. Paul's - with a group of other Oswestry parishes in our Region - been placed under the protection of Our Lady Star of the Sea.

The Psalms: Psalm 40

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A beautiful prayer of thanksgiving and supplication.

*Many thanks to all who have contributed to the Parish Magazine and to Liz Evans for the proofreading. The next Magazine will be published on **Sunday 1st September**. Please, send all articles, information, news you wish to be publish by Sunday 25th August.*

Front cover: "The Assumption of the Virgin" (detail)
Matteo di Giovanni (1474); National Gallery, London

From the Vicar

Dearly Beloved,

This month's letter must begin with the sad news of Fr. James Baker's departure from St. Paul's and Fleet. Fr. James came to us last year, just before Lent, as part of his journey of rediscovering his priestly call and exploring his monastic vocation. After a pause in his priestly ministry, while working as a psychiatric nurse, he approached the Community of the Resurrection in Mirfield with a desire of joining them.

I could very easily take here a huge detour and write about the lamentable situation of clergy in many dioceses and parishes — how over-worked and under-appreciated they are. Often expectations are unreasonable, the future uncertain, and that generous Christian charity and forgiveness they are called to preach to others is denied to them by their own parish or diocese. The high percentage of priests leaving their parishes is almost a reassuring number in the light of another statistics: the alarmingly high percentage of suicide amongst clergy. However, I am not going down that road... I simply express my gratitude for my own two parishes — for the love, prayerful support, and patience so kindly and so generously given to me.

This parish should be proud (humbly!) of the fact that when Fr. James decided to come back to his priestly ministry, the Community of Mirfield sent him to St. Paul's. He was warmly welcomed and accepted here and soon enough we all began to appreciate his warmth, goodness, and prayerful spirituality. His departure is a huge loss to us all but we rejoice in the fact that God made us part, even if only for a short time, of Fr. James' journey. He leaves with our prayers, affection, and very best wishes.

This sad news, however, shows another fact very clearly: individual priests are not indispensable. Priesthood and priests as such are because without them there is no Eucharist, and without Eucharist there is no Church... but *Father* is never indispensable. Life goes on every time a priest leaves. As they say in Rome: "*morto un papa se ne fa un altro*" (one pope dies, another will be made).

What is much less indispensable is the parish: that local, visible, tangible manifestation of the Church where God is daily worshipped, the Truth confessed, the Gospel proclaimed, the Sacraments administered, and charity lived out. To this we strive in both of our Parishes, to this we call every person of good will - our families, friends, neighbours - to join. This month's Parish Magazine is an attempt to offer a taste of who we are and what we do.

Our worship, with its beauty and truthfulness, comes first because God comes first. And we rejoice seeing the increasing number of visitors who, when visiting or passing through Weymouth, choose to worship with us, knowing they will be part of something sacred and beautiful.

How empty and how superfluous our buildings would be if worship and prayer would not be offered in them. How quickly and spectacularly would all our efforts and work fail if they were not underpinned by prayer. The Church is not a museum or a social club. If our life, communal and individual, does not start with and culminate in worship and prayer, we should close our doors now and just go and do something else. It is for this reason that we do everything we can to keep our churches open daily.

Once we understand this, we will be less tempted to “walk out” whenever we are hurt by others, when our expectations are not met by others, when our efforts are not appreciated enough. After all, sad and hurtful as these things are, firstly and most chiefly we come here for God whose love never changes, whose faithfulness never disappoints.

Part of our worship and prayer is Morning and Evening Prayer. As life can easily become busy, not everyone can come to church every day. At the same time, everyone can and must find time for prayer. By offering the same Morning and Evening Prayer to our whole congregation and to our readers every month, we are deeply united spiritually even when busy days, our daily tasks, or distance keep us apart physically. Those 10 pages printed every month are anything but a waste of money and resources!

Truth is another element of parish life because it is an element of the Church itself. We are not Pilates to cynically exclaim “*What is truth?!*” We believe that the fulness of revelation *is* Jesus Christ and this fulness of Truth is unchangeably set out in the Bible, the Tradition, and the constant teaching of the Church. This Magazine is just one way of proclaiming this Truth by offering sound teaching on Christian faith and morals.

As for the greatest of all gifts and virtues - charity! -, we hope our Parish Magazine gives some idea of our efforts. Our communal life, parish events, and social outreach are all centred around Christian charity. We try to accept each other as we are, to appreciate the gifts - small or great - each one of us brings to the parish, and to share with others what we have — be it the Truth we have discovered through our faith, the warmth of our Parish Hall during the cold months, or the time of our many volunteers in the church, hall, and S.P.O.T. It takes courage, practice, forgiveness, and patience.

Without worship, prayer, truth, and charity we would only be an ageing, sad afternoon club in an overly expensive building. However, with worship, prayer, truth, and charity we are the chosen people of the living God, well worth joining, called to awesome things! We are The Church!

Assuring you of my prayers, I am,
ever yours in Christ,

Fr. Gregory 5

Interesting facts about the month of August

Jeanne James writes:

August was once the sixth month of the year. In the original ten-month Roman calendar, the month went by the name of Sextilis, meaning “the sixth month” in Latin. It wasn’t until around 700BC that August was rudely shoved back in the order of months when January and February were added to the beginning of the year by King Numa Pompilius.

August has also changed its number of days multiple times. In the ten-month Roman calendar, the months all had either 30 or 31 days, totalling 304 days in the year. Not only did Pompilius add January and February to the calendar, but he also reduced the number of days in August down to 29. It wasn’t until Julius Caesar introduced the Julian calendar that it was left with 31 days, and it’s stayed the same ever since!

After so many changes you’d think the month would have had enough, but no – in 8 BC the month was named Augustus, in honour of the Roman emperor Augustus.

August is also a little bit unique, most of the time at least. In a standard year, there is no other month that begins on the same day of the week as August. In a leap year, however, August begins on the same day of the week as February.

Many countries in Europe see August as a holiday period. So much so in fact, that you’ll find major European cities such as Paris almost completely empty of locals. Don’t get your hopes up too much though, these cities are still packed full of tourists at this time of year!

Back in the days of the Anglo-Saxons, the month was called Weod Monath. Its translation of “weed month” is quite literal – in this month weeds and other plants grow the fastest in the northern hemisphere.

On August 1st Lammas day is celebrated as the first day of harvest in the UK. Traditionally it was the day in which harvested wheat would be baked into bread and given to the church. The bread was used as the Communion bread for a special mass to celebrate the beginning of the harvest. This tradition ended when Henry VIII broke away from the Catholic Church.

On August 6th 1762, the first-ever sandwich was created, at least with such a name. It was named after the Earl of Sandwich when he requested a dish involving meat between two pieces of bread. As the story goes, he requested it as he was in the middle of a gambling game and didn’t want to interrupt it.

Those born in August are brought into this world under one of two star signs. If you were born before August 22nd, you're considered to be a Leo. If you're born on the 23rd or later, you're a Virgo. Leos are said to be very proud people who display great leadership. Virgos, on the other hand, are analytical and hardworking people, while still being kind and loyal.

August was a big month for the U.S. Civil Rights Movement. It was on August 28, 1963, that Martin Luther King Jr gave his famous "*I have a dream*" speech to 250,000 people on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. Considered to be one of the most iconic speeches in the history of the US, King's speech called for the end of racial discrimination and for equal rights to all.

August also has two birth flowers – the vibrant multi-coloured gladiolus and the deep crimson poppy. The gladiolus flower is said to represent generosity, strength of character, and deep sincerity. The poppy flower couldn't be more different though, as it is a sign of imagination, eternal sleep, and oblivion!

There are some pretty fascinating holidays spread throughout August which are celebrated in different parts of the world. On August 1st, we have World Scout Scarf Day, as well as the Official Birthday and Coronation of the King of Tonga. August 5th is National Underwear Day (US), August 11th is Mountain Day (Japan), August 16th is National Rum Day (US) and August 20th is World Mosquito Day.

August was a fateful month for the ancient Roman city of Pompeii. On August 24th 79AD, Mount Vesuvius erupted near the city. The mountain spewed out great clouds of ash, smoke, and pumice, which rained down on Pompeii's citizens. Unfortunately for Pompeii, that wasn't the end of it either – next came molten lava, which buried the remaining residents 7 feet deep!

August has quite a number of varied month-long holidays around the world. To name just a few, August is American Adventures Month, Get Ready for Kindergarten Month, as well as being the Month of Philippine Language!

The US also has some pretty delicious-sounding observances for the month relating to food! In August the US celebrates National Goat Cheese Month, National Panini Month, Peach Month, and Sandwich Month.

August is apparently a relatively common name for boys in Sweden. In 2014 it was reported to be the 55th most common name for new-born baby boys. Ironically, only 22 percent of Swedish boys named August were actually born in August!

Rock music lost a living legend on August 16th, 1977, when Elvis Presley left the world behind. The King of Rock's health had been going downhill for some time, but his death was a shock to the world.

A garden to glorify God

Lesley Cheesman writes:

My garden, front and back, is filled with approximately 65 spectacular hydrangeas in all shapes, sizes and colours, the reward for yearly pruning, treated horse manure to each root and once a week watering, depending on the weather. The beauty of these flowers is a praise of and call to admire the infinite beauty of God, their (and our!) Creator.



Various updates

Noticeboard — most of you must have seen the huge “mysterious parcel” in the cloister. The new parish Noticeboard, approved by the PCC, has been delivered and now awaits the planning permission from the Council.

Lady Chapel lights — we have now received a proposed plan for the complete replacement of the lights in the Lady Chapel. It was drawn by the same company who planned the new lights in the main nave of the church. The next phase is the obtaining of faculty (practically, it is a planning permission for churches issued by the Diocese) and of some grants.

HM The King's portrait — On request, HM Government is providing public buildings with a portrait of the King for free. Though initially churches were not included, after a change to the scheme Church of England parishes can now apply for the free portrait. The one for St. Paul's has arrived and will be placed in the Parish Hall.

Fleet — Mary and Geoff Taylor write: “*Many thanks to all our helpers, it made the coffee morning a great success not just from the view of fund raising but of getting more locals involved with good support from Fleet on this occasion. We also appreciate our friends at St Paul's and those in Chickerell joining us, in total we estimate that there were between forty and fifty people socialising, a good turnout considering the rather poor weather. In total we raised £,255.80 going towards the repairs of the church. Thanks all of you not just for your help but for the cake making and donating raffle prizes, and especially helping to clear up at the end, it was done in record time.*” It is wonderful to see our sister-church growing and flourishing!

S.P.O.T. — The shop has undergone a major reorganising, making it safer and also easier to browse. The panels blocking the shop windows have been removed and the response, both from customers and volunteers, have been very positive. Many thanks for all those who offered help.

Club 200 — It is that time of year when we think about the run up to Club 200 for 2024/25, starting in September. Please consider renewing your subscription which is a huge help to St. Paul's. You will find a form enclosed with the Parish Magazine. If you can, do promote Club 200 with your family and friends. If you would like more forms please take from the pile in church or let us know and we can mail you some.

Eucharistic Festival (see next pages) — St. Paul's will be participating in this Oswestry-initiative by joining the Festival on Saturday. Please try to find time for this in your diary and do join us (lifts are available!).

SEE OF OSWESTRY
THAMES VALLEY AND
THE WEST REGIONAL
EUCCHARISTIC
FESTIVAL

**Encounter,
Formation,
Renewal:**

nurturing a love of the
Eucharist in our heart

26 - 28 September 2024

Join us for this festival
for three days of prayer,
teaching, worship and
Christian witness.

Hosted by

the Parish of Swindon New Town

Further details are available on
the parish website www.psnt.uk

www.seeofoswestry.org.uk

PROGRAMME

THURSDAY

- 19:00 **Solemn Votive Mass of the Most Precious Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ** *S. Luke's*
followed by Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

FRIDAY

- 10:00 **Welcome and Coffee** *S. Mark's*
10:30 **First Session** - Bp Martin Warner
11:30 **Holy Hour**
12:30 **Said Mass on the Feast of S. Vincent de Paul**
13:15 **Lunch**
14:00 **Second Session** - Clare Williams
Afternoon break from 15:00
17:00 **Vespers** *S. Luke's*
17:30 **Third Session** - Br Michael Jacob SSF
18:30 **Community Supper**
19:30 **Drinks reception**

SATURDAY

- 10:00 **Sung Votive Mass of the Holy Eucharist** *S. Luke's*
followed by procession of the Blessed Sacrament through Swindon Town Centre to S. Mark's
12:15 **Fourth Session** - Bp Martyn Jarrett
13:30 **Lunch**
15:00 **Choral Evensong and Benediction**
The Festival concludes at 16:00

News from the “Save the Parish Movement” (STP)

(from their emails, newsletters, and articles)

General Synod — this General Synod was finally presented with a paper which confirms that Bishops are being badly served by their finance departments. Dioceses are making inadequate returns on the assets they manage for parishes which should be generating more funds to pay for more vicars. The Rev'd James Burnell-Nugent writes in a letter to the 5 July Church Times:

“Sir, — I enjoyed the article from Bishop Philip North [observing how] the reduction of stipendary clergy has led to a rise in workload. The National Church, as he observes, ‘sits on billions of pounds’, and, while it is keen to provide funding for projects, it doesn’t invest in its clergy. A new funding model is indeed needed.

The National Church Institutions employed 97 people, at year end 2019. At year end 2022, this has risen to 150 people with benefits of more than £60k per employee. Of these, 76 earned £60k-£80k, 28 earned £80k-£100k, 33 earned £100k-£200k, 11 earned £200k-£400k, and two earned more than £500k. A small factor of this increase may be due to inflation, but this inflationary rise is far from being matched in clergy stipends. Clergy work six days a week on an average of £27,270.”

Restoring trust in the Church of England — Emma Thompson writes: “The church acknowledges it has a culture of distrust. But a document [presented at the Synod] appears to put much of the blame on social media, warning that too much use leaves people “*in danger of becoming stupid*”. Since more than four-fifths of people use social media, implying that they might be stupid hardly seems the way to build bridges.

As a grassroots churchgoer, I sense a fatal lack of self-awareness. During the pandemic there was a breakdown of public trust, a sense of abandonment when churches were closed. In recent years we have seen a collapse in clergy morale and mental health, with low stipends (pay) and, shockingly, a high suicide rate.

Parishes are left vicarless for years. Diocesan (regional) administrators treat churchgoers disrespectfully and do not spend donated money wisely. New schemes for parish reorganisation may camouflage an intention to sell your vicarage and trouser the proceeds. In my parents’ Hampshire village, diocesan employees promised the churchwarden they would not sell the vicarage, then did it anyway.

We need the church to provide love, solace and hope. But I couldn't even trust the church to provide a vicar we knew to take my father's funeral. I went to church after my father's death in search of solace and hope, but got a lecture on gay marriage and the environment. Worthy though these topics may be, they were no use at all in my hour of need.

By definition, Church preoccupations must quickly align with the needs of those seeking a little love, not be diverted to a debate on whether there should be a Bishop for Outer Space. The air gap between the bishops' public concerns and what ordinary people are worrying about implies a lack of empathy with everyday problems.

Church leaders assert 'there is no national plan' to undermine the parish system. However, there is a national "vision and strategy" plan to drive parishes to destruction; and to claim otherwise is a fundamental breach of trust. Stop spending money meant for parish priests on disproven and unsustainable new projects, or appointing what amount to more diocesan rat catchers.

All the Church needs to do for England's people is to provide a good vicar. It has money to provide priests for "everyone, everywhere". How can you trust an organisation which fails to provide the main thing – like a hospital with not enough doctors? How can you trust an organisation with over £15 billion under management which is deliberately accelerating parish mergers and church closures?

Trust starts locally, with family and friends, working outwards and upwards. The church can only rebuild trust gradually, at local level, by providing love, compassion and pastoral care. Give us back our parish vicars and then we can talk about trust."

In the Parishes — Please lend us your help by spreading the word that STP exists to your friends around the country. It is much easier if people know about us and understand how to protect their parishes before their cases become urgent. If your parish priest is about to retire, your PCC needs to be in early contact with your patron for support, in case an amalgamation of parishes is proposed by the diocese once the post is vacant.

Pastoral "reorganisation", involving amalgamation of parishes (which the CofE's own evidence shows drives decline), is a key issue. It is often associated with the sale of the vicarage by the diocese. In some cases, it is happening "by the back door" rather than in a proper legal fashion

Other common postbag concerns are the loss of Eucharistic worship and the imposition on a parish of unsuitable clergy. We have even been consulted in cases where congregations have brutally been told to vacate their

own church. STP cannot solve all of these problems, but we are there to be your advocate and to help parishes make the best case or defence they can.

We do happily have some success stories. All credit to the Acting Bishop of Exeter and the Archdeacon who reversed an unjust amalgamation. Please remember that your main source of strength is to refuse any suggestions to merge your PCC, to connect with your parish's patron for early support and for your PCC to decline unanimously to merge your parish into a larger group.

The cash flow diagram in the finance pages of our website shows how much money there is for parish ministry. If your Archdeacon claims that the Church Commissioners' money is "not there to support parish ministry", this is wrong. The Commissioners' endowment was created in Queen Anne's reign precisely to fund the day-to-day activities of parishes in poorer areas by providing them with clergy, creating a model of universal provision for "everyone everywhere".

Moreover, if your diocesan representatives try to link your payment of parish share to their provision of a priest to you, they are cutting across this longstanding universal model and substituting a system of "priests for the rich" which is surely not what Christ intended. Studies show that poor areas are more likely to see church closures and are harder hit by the closures.

Club 200

Club 200 is a fun and easy way to support our Parish so it can continue its mission and outreach in Westham. We aim to recruit 200 members, each paying £1 per month (payable in advance for the whole year) for a personal lucky number which is entered into a monthly draw.

On the 1st Sunday of each month three lucky numbers are drawn with prizes of £50, £30 and £15, except December when the prize money is doubled! You can pay for as many lucky numbers as you wish thereby increasing your chances of winning.

You can also give membership as a gift to family and friends, making a subscription on their behalf.

The year runs from September to the following August. Early subscription is always helpful. Every pound, after giving out prize money, is used for the benefit of St. Paul's.

To join or to renew your subscription, please contact the Parish Office (see back cover of the magazine) or visit our website (under the menu Fundraising - Club 200).

Thank you for helping our church and parish!

Glastonbury Centenary Pilgrimage

Pam Winspear writes:



Saturday 13 July once again we set off in three cars and Fr. Gregory in his Mini. The weather was lovely and the service superb. Our own Fr. Tony was among the clergy participating. The service was followed by a picnic in the sunshine and a walk around the town.

This time the Procession through the town and back to the Abbey was led by our own servers, Fr. Gregory, and Fr. Tony, all wearing their robes and with incense. I was so proud to see our church members leading the Procession and assisting at the Altar for the Benediction Prayers. After a beautiful day we made our way home. Well done St. Paul's!



Pasta and ... more pasta *with aubergine*

I love pasta recipes as they are quick and simple, yet varied and delicious. Aubergine is a great favourite in the south so here are two variants of a Sicilian dish. Start with making your tomato sauce. If you want to skip the first step - chopping up 1.5 kilos of tomatoes, cooking them with 3 cloves of garlic and a handful of basil (*strictly no oil!*) for a good half an hour, and then passing through a food mill (*remember: a blender will change the sauce's colour*) - just open a bottle (1 litre) of good quality tomato *passata*. Cook (again) this *passata* for 40 minutes with a handful of basil and 3 cloves of garlic.

In the meantime, slice the aubergine (*cubes, half-rounds, stripes... your choice*), salt it with coarse sea salt (*fine salt would make the aubergine extremely salty*), leave it in a sieve for 15 mins or so to get rid of the bitter liquid. Tap-dry the aubergine and fry it. Now... for an authentic dish, the aubergine must be deep fried. However, since it is not the '90s, you can fry them in a pan or you can even air-fry it (with some oil)—just don't invite a Sicilian over for dinner!

Put on the hob enough water for the pasta (*strictly penne, mezz~~e~~e maniche or tortiglioni*), cook it *al dente*. When the tomato sauce is ready, take it off the hob, eliminate the garlic and the basil, add 1 or 2 tablespoons of olive oil (*you can use the oil you used to fry the aubergine as long as it didn't burn*) to the sauce. All there is left is to stir together the pasta and the tomato sauce — and just before serving your dish, add to it a generous amount of fried aubergine (*just on the top, don't mix it!*) and grate a nice amount of seasoned (=“dry” as opposed to creamy) “Ricotta di Pecorino” — or, if you have decided not to invite your Sicilian neighbours anyway, you can use some (seasoned) Pecorino cheese.

The simpler and quicker version of the above pasta goes like this: fry some finely chopped spring onions in olive oil (*this step is optional - or you can substitute spring onions with garlic*), add the cubed (*or sliced or rounded, see above*) aubergine (350 grams) to the pan and stir-fry everything until the aubergine has a nice colour. In the meantime cook your pasta *al dente*. Add in the frying pan 250 grams of halved cherry tomatoes (*or any type of sweet, tasty, juicy small tomatoes*) and stir-fry for 4-5 minutes on high heat. Season with salt and pepper. Try to time all this in a way that the pasta finishes cooking just when the sauce does. Unite the pasta to the sauce in the frying pan, add a little bit of cooking water, cook it all on high heat for half a minute or so until it all comes together nicely. Add some chopped basil and serve. It's nice both with or without cheese (*parmesan or pecorino*). If you make plenty of either of these dishes, the day after you can put the left overs into an oven-safe dish, add a dash of milk, cover the top with cheese (*parmesan, pecorino, mozzarella, gouda, or even cheddar*) and bake it on high temperature until crispy on the top.

**Calendar, Service times,
and Prayer Intentions**

Anniversaries of death

Order of Morning and Evening Prayer

Calendar for August 2024

THU	1 st	St. Peter's Chains	6pm
FRI	2 nd	St. Alphonsus Liguori Bishop	12pm
SAT	3 rd	<i>Of Our Lady</i>	9.30am
SUN	4 th	10TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	10.30am, 5pm
MON	5 th	Dedication of S. Maria Maggiore	9am
TUE	6 th	Transfiguration	9am
WED	7 th	St. Cajetan	10am
THU	8 th	St. John Mary Vianney	6pm
FRI	9 th	St. Oswald King & Martyr	12pm
SAT	10 th	St. Lawrence Deacon	9.30am
SUN	11 th	11TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	10.30am, 5pm
MON	12 th	St. Clare of Assisi	9am
TUE	13 th	<i>Sts. Hippolytus & Cassian, Martyrs</i>	9am
WED	14 th	<i>Vigil</i>	10am
THU	15 th	ASSUMPTION OF THE BL. V. MARY	6pm
FRI	16 th	St. Joachim, Father of Our Lady	12pm
SAT	17 th	St. Hyacinth	9.30am
SUN	18 th	12TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	10.30am, 5pm
MON	19 th	St. John Eudes	9am
TUE	20 th	St. Bernard Abbot	9am
WED	21 st	St. Jane Frances Fremiot de Chantal	10am
THU	22 nd	The Immaculate Heart of Mary	6pm
FRI	23 rd	St. Philip Benizi (<i>Anointing</i>)	12pm
SAT	24 th	St. Bartholomew Apostle	9.30am
SUN	25 th	13TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	10.30am, 5pm
MON	26 th	Monthly Requiem	9am
TUE	27 th	St. Joseph Calasanctius	9am
WED	28 th	St. Augustine Bishop	10am
THU	29 th	Beheading of St. John the Baptist	6pm
FRI	30 th	St. Rose of Lima, Virgin	12pm
SAT	31 st	St. Aidan Bishop	9.30am

Daily Intentions



Anniversaries of death

We pray for...

- 1st Priests and vocations - *Handel Kardas, Dennis Farmer*
- 2nd Dying - *Marlene Clothier*
- 3rd Walsingham - *Claire Humphries, Sylvia Mackintosh, Terry McCarthy pr.*

- 4th Our Parish - *Phyllis Richardson*
- 5th S.P.O.T. & all our volunteers
- 6th Our Benefactors, living and departed
- 7th Churchwardens - *Charles Bristow*
- 8th Neighbours - *Pennie Fowler, Neville Watben*
- 9th Their Majesties The King and Queen Camilla
- 10th Our Cell of Walsingham - *Christine Tolman*

- 11th Our Parish - *Betty Scriven*
- 12th All the Oswestry Parishes
- 13th Bishop Paul of Oswestry
- 14th Families - *Mike Anderson, Winifred Queben, Michael Kemp pr., George Ayling*
- 15th Forward in Faith *14th: Mervyn Bown*
- 16th Fathers - *Daisy Tabone*
- 17th Missions

- 18th Our Parish - *Marrion Hain*
- 19th Those who doubt God's love - *Marge Medway, Kathleen Lucking*
- 20th Care homes & hospitals - *Paul Gibbons, Leonard Norris*
- 21st Widows and widowers - *Dorothy Scriven, Jessie Buckingham, Renee Skilleter*
- 22nd Purity of heart - *Frederick Bishop, Agnes Searle*
- 23rd Sick - *John Lucking*
- 24th Our Diocese - *Roy Tarrier, Kathy Bray*

- 25th Our Parish - *May Riggs*
- 26th Departed
- 27th Beechcroft
- 28th Our priests
- 29th Persecuted - *Andy Van Dorsten*
- 30th All afflicted by wildfires, heat, drought, floods - *Iris Croxford, John White*
- 31st Emergency services

If there are names missing from the list or you want to add names, please, talk to the Vicar.

Optional private prayer: Open, O Lord, my mouth to bless thy holy Name; cleanse also my heart from all vain, evil, and wandering thoughts; enlighten my understanding and kindle my affections; that I may worthily, attentively, and devoutly recite this Morning Prayer, and so be meet to be heard before the presence of thy divine Majesty. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

MORNING PRAYER

V. The Angel of the Lord brought tidings to Mary.

R. And she conceived by the Holy Ghost.

V. Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

R. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it unto me according to thy word.

V. Hail Mary... R. Holy Mary...

V. And the Word was made flesh.

R. And dwelt amongst us.

V. Hail Mary... R. Holy Mary...

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

V. Let us pray. We beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts, that as we have known the Incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so by his Cross and Passion we may be brought unto the glory of his Resurrection; through the same Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

V. O Lord, open my lips. R. And my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

V. O God, make speed to save me. R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

R. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Alleluia!

V. Let us rejoice in the Lord; let us joyfully sing to God our Saviour! Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us joyfully sing psalms to him!

R. The Most High King of glory, even Christ: Him let us worship.

V. For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hands are the depths of the earth; and the heights of the mountains are his.

R. O come, let us worship him.

V. The sea is his, for who but he made it; and his hands fashioned the dry land. O come, let us worship and fall down, and weep before the Lord who made us! For he is the Lord our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

R. The Most High King of glory, even Christ: Him let us worship.

V. Today if you shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts: As in the provocation, on the day of temptation in the wilderness, where your fathers tempted me, and put me to the test, and they saw my works.

R. O come, let us worship him.

V. For forty years I loathed that generation, and I said: They always err in heart, they have not known my ways, so I swore in my wrath: they shall not enter my rest.

R. The Most High King of glory, even Christ: Him let us worship.

V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

R. The Most High King of glory, even Christ: Him let us worship.

HYMN

Light of the anxious heart,
Jesus, thou dost appear,
To bid the gloom of guilt depart,
And shed thy sweetness here.

Joyous is he, with whom,
God's Word, thou dost abide;
Sweet light of our eternal home,
To fleshly sense denied.

Brightness of God above!
Unfathomable grace!
thy presence be a fount of love
Within thy chosen place.

To thee, whom children see,
The Father ever blest,
The Holy Spirit, One and Three,
Be endless praise address. Amen.

The appointed Psalm(s) and Reading(s) follow (please see next page).

1	Psalms 1	1 Samuel 21 Acts 2,22-36	5	5	1 Samuel 24 Acts 3,11-end
2	2	1 Samuel 22 Acts 2,37-end	6	6	Ecclesiasticus 48,1-10 1 John 3,1-3
3	3	1 Samuel 23 Acts 3,1-10	7	8	1 Samuel 28 Acts 4,13-end
4	86	1 Maccabees 3,1-12 2 Peter 1,1-15	8	14	1 Samuel 31 Acts 5,1-11

9	15	2 Samuel 1 Acts 5,12-26	21	30	2 Samuel 5,1-12 Acts 9,20-31
10	16	2 Samuel 2,1-11 Acts 5,27-end	22	31	2 Samuel 15,13-end Acts 9,32-end
11	90	1 Maccabees 14,4-15 2 Peter 3,8-13	23	32	2 Samuel 16,1-14 Acts 10,1-16
12	17	2 Samuel 3,12-end Acts 6	24	34	Genesis 28,10-17 John 1,43-end
13	19	2 Samuel 5,1-12 Acts 7,1-16	25	115	Ecclesiasticus 3,17-29 Revelation 1
14	20	2 Samuel 6,1-19 Acts 7,17-43	26	36	2 Samuel 18,1-18 Acts 10,34-end
15	98, 138	Isaiah 7,10-15 Luke 11,27-28	27	41	2 Samuel 18,19-end Acts 11,1-18
16	21	2 Samuel 7,18-end Acts 7,54-end	28	42	2 Samuel 19,1-23 Acts 11,19-end
17	23	2 Samuel 9 Acts 8,1-25	29	43	2 Samuel 19,24-end Acts 12,1-17
18	106 v. 1-10	Ecclesiasticus 3,1-15 2 Peter 3,14-end	30	44	2 Samuel 23,1-7 Acts 12,18-end
19	27	2 Samuel 11 Acts 8,26-end	31	48	2 Samuel 24 Acts 13,1-12
20	28	2 Samuel 12,1-25 Acts 9,1-19			

Each reading ends with these words:

V. This is the word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTUS

Ant: This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, alleluia.

Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel, *
who has come to his people and set them free.

He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour, *
born of the house of his servant David.

Through his holy prophets God promised of old *
to save us from our enemies, from the hands of all that hate us,
To show mercy to our ancestors, *
and to remember his holy covenant.
This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham: *
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
Free to worship him without fear, *
holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life.
And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, *
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,
To give his people knowledge of salvation *
by the forgiveness of all their sins.
In the tender compassion of our God *
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, *
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, *
and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, *
world without end. Amen.

Ant: This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, alleluia.

V. Let us pray. – *Intercessions* are offered for the Church, for the Sovereign (the world), for those in need, and for the dead. Then follows the Collect:

O God, you declare your almighty power most chiefly in shewing mercy and pity: Mercifully grant unto us such a measure of your grace, that we, running the way of your commandments, may obtain your gracious promises, and be made partakers of your heavenly treasure. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **R.** Amen.

V. Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

V. The Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil, and keep us in eternal life. **R.** Amen. *V.* Let us bless the Lord. **R.** Thanks be to God. *V.* And may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **R.** Amen.

Morning Prayer ends with the final Antiphon of Our Lady:

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy; our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve: to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us, and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary!

V. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

V. Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, who by the cooperation of the Holy Spirit, didst prepare the body and soul of Mary, glorious Virgin and Mother, to become a worthy dwelling for Thy Son; grant that we who rejoice in her commemoration may, by her gracious intercession, be delivered from present evils and from everlasting death. Through the same Christ our Lord.

R. Amen

EVENING PRAYER

V. The Angel of the Lord brought tidings to Mary.

R. And she conceived by the Holy Ghost.

V. Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

R. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it unto me according to thy word.

V. Hail Mary... **R.** Holy Mary...

V. And the Word was made flesh.

R. And dwelt amongst us.

V. Hail Mary... **R.** Holy Mary...

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

V. Let us pray. We beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts, that as we have known the Incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of

an angel, so by his Cross and Passion we may be brought unto the glory of his Resurrection; through the same Christ our Lord. **R.** Amen.

V. O God, make speed to save me. **R.** O Lord, make haste to help me.

V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

R. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Alleluia!

HYMN

All ye who would the Christ descry,
Lift up your eyes to him on high:
There mortal gaze hath strength to see
The token of his majesty.

A wondrous sign we there behold,
That knows not death nor groweth old,
Sublime, most high, that cannot fade,
That was ere earth and heaven were made.

Here is the King the gentiles fear,
The Jews' most mighty King is here
Promised to Abraham of yore,
And to his seed forevermore.

'Tis he the prophet' words foretold,
And by their signs shown forth of old;
The Father's witness hath ordained
That we should hear with faith unfeigned.

Jesu, to thee our praise we pay,
To little ones revealed today,
With Father and blest Spirit One
Until the ages' course is done. Amen.

The appointed Psalm(s) and Reading(s) follow:

1	Psalms 4	Ezekiel 43,1-12 Mark 1,29-end	7	12	Proverbs 2 Mark 3,20-end
2	7	Ezekiel 44,4-16 Mark 2,1-12	8	13	Proverbs 3,1-26 Mark 4,1-20
3	9	Ezekiel 47,1-12 Mark 2,13-end	9	18	Proverbs 4,1-19 Mark 4,21-34
4	88 v. 1-10	1 Samuel 17,31-54 Luke 24,13-35	10	22	Proverbs 6,1-19 Mark 4,35-end
5	10	Proverbs 1,1-19 Mark 3,1-19	11	91 v. 1-12	1 Samuel 22 Acts 2,37-end
6	11	Exodus 34,29-end 2 Corinthians 3	12	24	Proverbs 8,1-21 Mark 5,1-20

13	25	Proverbs 8,22-end Mark 5,21-34	23	40	Proverbs 22,1-16 Mark 7,31-end
14	26	Proverbs 8,22-23 John 19,23-27	24	45	Deuteronomy 18,15-19 Matthew 10,1-7
15	132	Song of Solomon 2,1-7 Acts 1,6-14	25	116 v. 10-end	2 Samuel 7,18-end Acts 7,54-end
16	29	Proverbs 11,1-12 Mark 6,14-29	26	46	Proverbs 25,1-14 Mark 8,11-21
17	33	Proverbs 12,10-end Mark 6,30-44	27	47	Proverbs 25,15-end Mark 8,22-26
18	92 or 100	2 Samuel 1 Acts 5,12-26	28	49	Proverbs 26,12-end Mark 8,27-end
19	35	Proverbs 15,1-17 Mark 6,45-end	29	52	Proverbs 27,1-22 Mark 9,1-13
20	37	Proverbs 15,18-end Mark 7,1-13	30	53	Proverbs 30,1-9 Mark 9,14-29
21	38	Proverbs 18,10-end Mark 7,14-23	31	58	Proverbs 31,10-end Mark 9,30-37
22	39	Proverbs 20,1-22 Mark 7,24-30			

Each reading ends with these words:

V. This is the word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

MAGNIFICAT

Ant: Jesus said to his disciples: Arise, and be not afraid, alleluia.

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,+
my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour;*

he has looked with favour on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed;+
the Almighty has done great things for me*

and holy is his name.

He has mercy on those who fear him,*
from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm*
and has scattered the proud in their conceit,

Casting down the mighty from their thrones*
and lifting up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things*
and sent the rich away empty.
He has come to the aid of his servant Israel,*
to remember his promise of mercy,
The promise made to our ancestors,*
to Abraham and his children for ever.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, *
and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

Ant: Jesus said to his disciples: Arise, and be not afraid, alleluia.

V. Let us pray. – *Intercessions* are offered for the Church, for the Sovereign (world), for those in need, our Benefactors, and for the dead. Then the Collect is said:

O God, you declare your almighty power most chiefly in shewing mercy and pity: Mercifully grant unto us such a measure of your grace, that we, running the way of your commandments, may obtain your gracious promises, and be made partakers of your heavenly treasure. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **R.** Amen.

V. Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

All: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen.

V. Let us bless the Lord. **R.** Thanks be to God. *V.* And may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **R.** Amen.

Optional private prayer to be said after Evening Prayer: To the Most Holy and undivided Trinity, to our Lord Jesus Christ Crucified, to the fruitful Virginitie of the most blessed and most glorious Mary, always a Virgin, and to the holiness of all the Saints be ascribed everlasting praise, honour, and glory, by all creatures, and to us be granted the forgiveness of all our sins, world without end. Amen.

From the Book of Common Prayer

3rd Sunday after Trinity: * O LORD, we beseech thee mercifully to hear us; and grant that we, to whom thou hast given an hearty desire to pray, may by thy mighty aid be defended and comforted in all dangers and adversities; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

This Collect is the humble deprecation (a prayer against evils that are lurking near to us or hanging over our heads) by which we seek to follow St Peter's advice who warns us that our adversary the devil walks about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

When we are faced by problems and tribulations, there should arise in our hearts a desire to bring them to God (who has thereby given to us in the moment of impending danger a hearty desire to pray). There is intensity in the verb *grant* and this force is present in this petition that we make to God because his Spirit is touching our souls and inspiring us to cry out for divine help.

We ask that we be both defended (protected & preserved) from all dangers, enemies and adversities and also comforted in and through them. God's aid is our defence and the consciousness of its real presence becomes and is our comfort. By the providential gracious aid of the Lord we can sing:

Ye fainting saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

And with St. Paul we can testify: "*Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the holy Ghost which is given unto us*" (Rom 5,3).

The Gospels, especially the parables of the Lord Jesus, make clear how precious the individual person is to God and how that when he responds in repentance to God's grace there is joy in heaven amongst the angelic hosts. Such knowledge in the believer's heart obviously encourages him to call upon God in humble confidence when things appear to be going either well or not so well for him.

The Rev'd Dr Peter Toon (+2009)

(* *These articles tend to explain Collects used during the month when the magazine is published. However, as during the last three years we have covered most Collects, for the remaining of this series those Collects will be looked at which have been missed so far, in no particular order. Once the last of these articles is published, all Collects in the BCP will have been explained.*)

Thinking

Irene Leader writes:

We move into eternity as we are. I do not want to go into eternity with how I think now, which is not always gracious.

We are body – physical. Spirit – connection to God in my heart. What is the soul? It is the mind, will, emotions. Therefore, where does thinking come in? Is thinking the same as mind? Do I think with my mind? Are they in the same part of the brain or are they separate?

However, my thinking is automatic, and in that thinking do my thoughts follow my mind, or does my mind follow my thoughts, or is it one and the same thing?

I spent a long time pondering this in the middle of the night. I was about to give up on this until another time, when I got inspiration, and it became clear.

If I harmonise my will to God's will by continually dying to self (my reality, opinions, perspective, objectives) and take on Christ, then my will becomes like God's will. I see daily more and more from God's perspective. In Romans 13,14, St. Paul tells us to "*put on, [to] clothe [our]selves with the Lord Jesus Christ.*" This will lead to an emotion of joy, whatever the circumstances. So, I *can* control my will and my emotions.

As I take on Christ, my thoughts should be working towards becoming His thoughts. I should be looking to see things from the Lord's perspective and that way I will have my eyes open to the needs in the situations I encounter, and the needs of people: to be able to see them how God sees them. This will change my thought pattern, which leads to me entering eternity with good, kind, and compassionate thoughts. Yay!

The conclusion is: my mind is separate from my thoughts. My mind should always be focussed on Christ. Like Brother Lawrence, to do everything for Christ; for His glory – to serve Him.

Prayer before Meditation, Study, or Spiritual Reading - My God, I firmly believe that Thou art here present and I humbly adore Thee in union with the angels and saints. I am sorry for having sinned, because Thou art infinitely good and sin displeases Thee. I love Thee above all things and with my whole heart. I offer Thee all that I am and all that I have, my soul with all its faculties, my body with all its senses. Enlighten my understanding and inflame my will, that I may know and do what is pleasing to Thee. I beseech Thee to direct all the powers of my soul, all my thoughts and affections to Thy service and Thy glory as well as to my own sanctification and salvation.

Saint of the month: St. Rose of Lima, Virgin

30 August

Saint Rose was beatified in 1667 by Pope Clement IX, and declared saint in 1671 by Pope Clement X. She was the first person born in the Americas to be declared a saint by the Church.

She must be rather busy in heaven as she is the patron saint of embroiderers, gardeners, florists, people who are harassed for their piety, and those suffering family problems. She is also the patroness of the Americas, the indigenous people of the Americas, and of Peru, India, and the Philippines.

Rosa was born to parents of Spanish descent in Lima, Peru, at a time when South America was only in its first century of evangelization. Christian faith was not yet deeply rooted in most people's hearts and souls. When her parents fell into financial trouble, she worked in the garden all day and sewed at night.

One characteristic St. Rosa shares with every other saints is the suffering of opposition. Ten years of struggle against her parents began when they tried to make Rose marry. Her mother refused to allow her daughter to pursue her greatest desire and call: religious life. Out of obedience, she stayed at home but she lived as she would have in a convent. Her father provided her with a room to herself, where she spent hours in prayer and was said to sleep only two hours a night so as to have more time for prayer. Rosa's life became characterised by solitude, prayer, and penance. She chose St. Catherine of Siena as a model — indeed, just as St. Catherine, Rosa, too, joined the Third Order of Saint Dominic — for which she was ruthlessly ridiculed by her family and friends.

Rosa's beauty was very often noted and she had quite a few suitors, all of them encouraged by her mother. To deter them, Rosa cut off her hair and rubbed her face with hot pepper to produce disfiguring blotches.

The other characteristic St. Rosa shared with the saints was mortification — to an extent which we would find extreme today. We have already mentioned how she disfigured her skin and face with hot peppers. Later, she wore a chain of spikes around her waist and a thick circlet of silver on her head, studded on the inside, like a crown of thorns. She also performed other secret and often painful penances, slept on a hard floor, fasted multiple times weekly, and permanently abstained from eating meat.

The centre of her spiritual life was the Eucharist. St. Rose attended Mass daily just as she spent time adoring the Blessed Sacrament every day.

The saints have so great a love of God that what seems bizarre to us, and is indeed sometimes imprudent or excessive, for them is simply a logical carrying out of a conviction that anything that might endanger a loving relationship with God must be rooted out. For St. Rose it was her beauty, so often admired by others.

We might be puzzled by such excessive mortification but we must remember the greatest thing about St. Rose: a love of God so ardent that it withstood ridicule from without, violent temptation from within, and lengthy periods of sickness, like asthma and arthritis. Even when she had to pass lengthy periods of spiritual dryness, she persevered most faithfully in prayer.

Also, it is so very easy to dismiss excessive penances of the saints as the expression of a certain culture or temperament. But a woman wearing a crown of thorns may at least prod our consciences. We enjoy the most comfort-oriented life in human history. We eat too much, drink too much, use a million gadgets, fill our eyes and ears with everything imaginable. Commerce thrives on creating useless needs on which to spend our money. In pursuing some false idea of freedom, we have become slaves of so many things and ideologies, and of our own passions and desires. Are we still willing to discipline ourselves to root out temptation and sin? Are we heaven-orientated? Do we have our priorities right? Is God at the centre of our lives and hearts and are we ready/willing to fight to keep him there?

Finally, another characteristic Rose shared with God's saints was charity. In her room she cared for homeless children, the elderly, and the sick. She was taught to make herbal medicines and took great delight in distributing these remedies to long lines of the sick poor of Lima. This was the beginning of social services in Peru.

Perhaps the most spectacular of Rose's miracles occurred when Dutch pirates invaded Lima's harbour. They intended not only to loot the city but also to desecrate the churches. In the church of Santo Domingo, Rose stirred all those who were there, seeking refuge, to prayer. As pirates burst into the church, they were confronted with the terrifying spectacle of a young girl ablaze with light, holding a monstrance with the Blessed Sacrament. They turned away and fled to their ships, which sailed away.

St. Rose died of a terrible fever and paralysis in 1617, at the age of 31. It is said that at the moment of her death, the city of Lima smelled of roses and later, at her funeral, rose petals fell from the sky.

Her funeral was a major event, the whole city turning out and the most prominent citizens taking turns carrying her coffin.

Know the Bible! - The Book of Exodus

The second book of the Bible, the Book of Exodus, is one of the most important books to understand the rest of the Bible. The book itself gets its name from the greatest event in the life of Israel: their escape from Egypt.

While Exodus is a long book, containing 40 chapters, its structure is straightforward. The first half (chapters 1-19) contains the story of God rescuing Israel from Egyptian slavery; the second half (ch. 20-40) describes how God meets Israel in the desert to form a new relationship with them.

The main theological themes of Exodus explore questions such as “who is God?”. We learn about God’s faithfulness: how, that is, he always keeps his promises. We also learn about the origins of Israel. In the Book of Genesis we were given the ancestral origins of the Jewish people while in the Book of Exodus we are offered their theological origins. While Genesis is trying to answer the question: “where does Israel come from”, Exodus is trying to understand why, how, and by whom was Israel made into a nation.

Another recurring theme in Exodus is God’s name and reputation and how he has to defend them — sometimes from his own people, on other occasions from the nations and their false gods. Just as in the Book of Genesis, in Exodus, too, the theological concept of God/gods is not fully developed. Israel sees God as the mightiest, the only true God, as *his* God — but this does not exclude, in their eyes, the existence of other gods. Their monotheism exists on the level of practice rather than of theory.

This allows for the development of a divine “love triangle”, if you will, between God, Israel, and the gods of other nations. Indeed, the core tension in Exodus — and in the whole Old Testament — is between God and Israel *because* of Israel’s unfaithfulness. We will see often how Israel is tempted to imitate other nations, to worship their gods; we will also hear the prophets comparing the relationship of God and Israel to a marriage where the faithful one is betrayed by the other one. But it all starts here, in the Book of Exodus.

Still another important theme of Exodus is the Law and its origins: why and when did God give it to Israel. We learn from these 40 chapters of the Bible that Israel is called by God to be loyal and obedient, and to reflect God’s goodness to other nations. However, as mentioned above, Israel often fails to live up to its call and becomes unfaithful.

A slightly more nuanced structure could be presented as follows. Chapters 1-2 are the Prologue. We see a new Pharaoh who never met the by now dead Joseph. And Israel, who originally was a welcomed and honoured

guest in Egypt, and who moved there during a famine in Genesis, is now enslaved by the new Pharaoh. He even orders their baby boys to be killed. Only one newborn male escapes: his mother puts him in a basket and entrusts him to the river Nile. Ironically, Pharaoh's daughter finds the baby. She names him Moses, and brings him up as her own. Moses, as a young adult, sees the misery of the Jews and tries to save them on his own. This does not work out very well for him; on the contrary, he kills an Egyptian and so he must fled Egypt and he ends up in the desert.

Chapters 3-19 see first Moses, and then Israel being saved. God calls Moses by his name in the famous scene of the Burning Bush, and tells him the equally famous words Moses is supposed to tell Pharaoh: *"let my people go."*

Very dramatic chapters follow. Moses, with the help of his brother, Aaron, takes God's message to Pharaoh who refuses to obey God. The 10 plagues are unleashed on Egypt: a true judgement on Pharaoh and the Egyptian gods. Israel is God's firstborn, they are his family, and so God fights for them — and he wins. The Pharaoh, considered god by his people, is defeated and Israel is freed from slavery. The first forms of worship and ritual are being given by God: all the ceremonies surrounding the Paschal Lamb and the marking of doors with its blood.

Chaotic waters threaten Isreal, as they did with life at the beginning of Genesis, until God opens the waters and Israel crosses the red sea. In the very same waters Pharaoh and his army are destroyed. God finally meets his own people in the wilderness: God on the top of a mountain, Israel in the valley.

While the centre of the first half of Exodus were the 10 plagues, at the centre of the second half are the 10 Commandments. The plagues meant death and destruction, the Commandments mean life and new beginning.

A covenant is offered to Israel - "I will be your God and you will be my people" - and very clear expectations are laid down. Israel knows well the consequences of an eventual disobedience from the very beginning. Israel says yes to God and the deal is done. God instructs them to build a tent, the Tabernacle, so he can come down from the mountaintop and dwell with his people. However, this holy place where divine and physical realms meet is not yet built because Isreal quickly breaks the still fresh covenant while Moses is on the mountain. God gives the Hebrews a second chance and finally the Tabernacle is built and God does "move into" it, taking possession of it in the form of fire and cloud. But a new, big problem arises: God is too powerful, too holy, and no one can directly approach him. No one can enter the Tabernacle — not even Moses or Aaron.

So what to do when Someone too Holy dwells amongst us? The answer to this most important question is given by the next Book in the Bible.

The Assumption of Mary

Origins, meaning, and significance of the Feast

Assumption Day is celebrated on (or around) 15 August in many countries, particularly in parts of Europe and South America. This feast commemorates the fact that when Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ, died, her body (and soul) was taken into heaven, instead of going through the natural process of physical decay upon death.

Names and history — Assumption Day is a public holiday in many, mostly Catholic, countries and is often celebrated with colourful processions, performances, pageants, and fireworks, but each region puts its own spin on celebrations. Although this feast goes by many different names — Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God, and the Feast of the Assumption to name a few — it has been celebrated since the fourth century. The earliest written sources that mention Mary's assumption are from the third century.

In 1950, Pope Pius XII declared the Assumption of Mary official dogma of the Roman Catholic Church. The Catholic Church teaches that the Virgin Mary “*having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory.*”

Mary's tomb and relics — Archaeology has revealed two tombs of Mary, one in Jerusalem and one in Ephesus. The fact that Mary lived in both places explains the two tombs. But what is inexplicable apart from the Assumption is the fact that there is no body in either tomb. And there are no relics. Anyone who peruses early Church history knows that Christian belief in the communion of saints and the sanctity of the body led early Christians to seek out with the greatest fervour relics from the bodies of great saints. Cities, and, later, religious orders, would fight over the bones of great saints.

This is one reason why we have relics of the apostles and so many of the greatest saints and martyrs in history. Yet never was there a single relic of Mary's body... As revered as Mary was, this would be very strange, except for the fact of the assumption of her body.

Beautiful images from the Old Testament — While the Old Testament cannot mention Mary's Assumption for obvious reasons, the Church (popes, theologians, church fathers, mystics) has pointed to several passages that have been legitimately used in a “rather free” manner to explain belief in the Assumption (meaning: these passages resonate with it in various ways, but they don't provide explicit proof). This is done because God is the

author of both Testaments, and the New is already hidden in the Old, while the Old reaches its full meaning in the New.

Thus, to mention only a few of the texts rather frequently cited in this fashion, many theologians have employed the words of the psalmist: “*Arise, O Lord, into your resting place: you and the ark, which you have sanctified*” (Ps 131,8); and have looked upon the Ark of the Covenant, built of incorruptible wood and placed in the Lord’s temple, as a type of the most pure body of the Virgin Mary, preserved and exempt from all the corruption of the tomb and raised up to such glory in heaven.

Treating of this subject, they also describe her as the Queen entering triumphantly into the royal halls of heaven and sitting at the right hand of the divine Redeemer (Ps. 44,10-14).

Likewise they mention the Spouse of the Canticles “*that goes up by the desert, as a pillar of smoke of aromatic spices, of myrrh and frankincense*” to be crowned (Song 3,6; 4,8; 6,9). These verses are proposed as depicting that heavenly Queen and heavenly Spouse who has been lifted up to the courts of heaven with the divine Bridegroom.

The Bible knows about assumptions — Although there are no explicit proof texts in Scripture for Mary’s assumption, some biblical themes may at least shed light on this doctrine. For example, the notion of being taken up into heaven has some precedent in Scripture. Enoch was taken into heaven without seeing death (see Hebrews 11,5), and Elijah was whisked into heaven by the chariots of fire at the end of his life (see 2 Kings 2,11).

If God could assume these righteous men of the Old Testament, it is certainly possible that Jesus, who is God incarnate, could assume his own Mother as well.

Mary’s Assumption and our daily lives — By contemplating Mary in heavenly glory, we understand that the earth is not the definitive homeland for us either, and that if we live with our gaze fixed on eternal goods we will one day share in this same glory and the earth will become more beautiful.

Consequently, we must not lose our serenity and peace even amid the thousands of daily difficulties. The luminous sign of Our Lady taken up into Heaven shines out even more brightly when sad shadows of suffering and violence seem to loom on the horizon.

We may be sure of it: from on high, Mary follows our footsteps with gentle concern, dispels the gloom in moments of darkness and distress, reassures us with her motherly hand.

“Mary, give me your Heart: so beautiful, so pure, so full of love and humility that I may be able to receive Jesus in the Bread of Life and love Him as you love Him.”

“A sweet smell like cinnamon” — Assumption in the kitchen

(Various traditions and recipes from around the world for the Feast of Assumption)

Ecclesiasticus 24,20-21, in the beautiful translation of the Knox Bible, describes the Blessed Virgin Mary in the following words: “*Cinnamon and odorous balm have no scent like mine; the choicest myrrh has no such fragrance. Perfumed is all my dwelling-place with storax, and galbanum, and onycha, and stacte, and frankincense uncrushed; the smell of me is like pure balm.*”

Many countries have special recipes for the Feast of Our Lady — here are a few of them. The first one is inspired by the above mentioned spices.



Moravian Spice Biscuits — For centuries, the home bakers of Austria and Germany have taken a spice dough of this sort, rolled it to medium thickness, and cut it into heart shapes — sometimes seven or eight inches wide. Then they ice the hearts with great care and delicacy. Religious and liturgical symbols, pictures and quotations appear among the scrolls on the gingerbread. This recipe is for 100 regular biscuits.

Ingredients: 1/4 cup melted butter; 1/2 cup warm molasses; 1/4 cup brown sugar; 1-7/8 cups flour; 1/3 teaspoon soda; 1/3 teaspoon salt; 1/3 teaspoon ginger; 1/3 teaspoon cloves; 1/3 teaspoon cinnamon; 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg; 1/8 teaspoon allspice.

Instructions: mix butter, molasses and sugar. Add sifted dry ingredients. Chill until hard (preferably overnight). Roll very thin. Bake at 190 C for six minutes. They can be iced if preferred.

Another widespread tradition is to bless herbs on the Feast of Assumption. There are various blessings intended to be used on 15 August. The link between herbs and the Blessed Virgin Mary is yet again biblical because of the images applied to her in the Holy Scripture — images such as vine, lavender, cypress and lily. Also, Christian devotion has always seen Our Lady in terms of a sweet smelling flower because of her virtues, and most of all because of Isaiah 11,1 and his reference to the “*shoot springing from the side of Jesse*”, which would bear the blessed fruit of Jesus. The next two recipes are in line with this herb/plants tradition.

Assumpta Salad — *Ingredients:* 8 medium-size ripe tomatoes, sliced; 1 red onion, finely chopped; 1 cup pitted black olives, drained; 1/3 cup chopped fresh basil; 1/4 cup chopped fresh oregano; 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley; 1 cup cubed feta cheese. *Vinaigrette:* 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil; 5 tbsp wine vinegar; 1 garlic clove, minced; salt and freshly ground pepper.



Instructions: Whisk the vinaigrette ingredients together until thickened. Let stand for about 1 hour before using to steep the garlic. Whisk vinaigrette again just before serving and drizzle evenly over the salad. Serve immediately.

The next recipe focuses on lavender also called “Mary’s Drying Plant” because of the non-biblical but very sweet tradition according to which Our Lady would always lay Jesus’ cloths on the plant to dry so it has a beautiful scent. Now, one doesn’t normally think of eating lavender, but the flower is edible.

Lavender sticks — *Ingredients:* 12 stalks fresh lavender flowers; 1 egg white, beat until frothy; 1/2 cup granulated sugar.

Instructions: Cut just the flowers from the stalks. Dip the sprigs in beaten egg white. In a separate bowl then roll or dust on granulated sugar. Air-dry on waxed paper. Makes 1 dozen edible flowers. They can be eaten as they are or used to decorate cakes.

You can also add lavender to any shortbread or biscuit recipe.



Yet another rather universal tradition is to associate the colour blue with Our Blessed Lady. Indeed, here at St. Paul’s, clergy wear blue vestments — donated in memory of John Cheesman (+2019) — on her feast days. But before a “blue” recipe, let’s see why the colour blue has become the colour of Mary!

In art, the blue of Mary’s cloak has been interpreted in various ways: it represent her virginity and purity; it symbolises the skies; and it labels her as Empress, for blue was associated with Byzantine royalty.

More importantly, the colour blue is specifically mentioned in the Bible as the colour of the people of Israel. In Numbers 15,38-39 we read: “*Speak to the people of Israel, and bid them to make tassels on the corners of their garments [with] a cord of blue [... to] remember all the commandments of the Lord, to do them, not to follow after your own heart.*” In other words, for the people of Israel blue brings to mind the following of God’s Commandments, as opposed to a person’s selfish will. There is no greater example of following the will and commandments of God than Our Blessed Mother. Through God’s grace she perfectly lived out her own words: “*Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word*” (Luke 1,38). This is how she, the faithful and obedient “*Daughter of Zion*”, was given the blue as her own colour.



Additionally, Numbers also instructed the Levites “*spread over [the Ark of the Covenant] a cloth all of blue*” (4,6) as well as “*over the table of the bread of the Presence*” (4,7). Mary, the God-Bearer, *is* the new Ark of the Covenant

and the new vessel of the Bread of Presence, containing in her womb not symbols and promises anymore but Christ our God himself! It is only right then that in art she is covered in blue cloths. Let’s see then a “blue” recipe!



Blueberry-Strawberry Cobbler in Honour of Our Lady — *Ingredients:* 1/3 cup Butter; 1 1/2 cups Flour; 1 1/2 cups Granulated Sugar; 1 1/2 cups Milk; 2 teaspoons Baking Powder; 1/2 teaspoon Cinnamon; 1/2 teaspoon Salt; 4 cups of Blueberries; 2 cups of Strawberries, sliced; 1/2 cup Pecans, coarsely chopped; 1/3 cup Brown Sugar.

Instructions: Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Place butter in a 9×13” baking pan and melt in preheating oven, but remember to keep an eye on it. Remove from oven when butter is melted. In the meantime, combine flour, granulated sugar, milk, baking powder, cinnamon and salt in a large mixing bowl. Whisk together until a thin batter forms and all the lumps are gone. Pour the batter into the pan, over the melted butter. Do not stir. (The butter will ooze up around the batter and

may pool on the top, which is ok.) Sprinkle berries evenly over batter. Sprinkle with pecans and brown sugar. Bake for 45-60 minutes or until it tests done. The top will be a beautiful golden colour. Serve warm with vanilla ice cream or whipped cream (a big “cloud” for the Assumption) and enjoy!

Finally, something to drink... that is suitable for all: **infused water**. Infusing your water with fruits, herbs, or veggies not only adds flavour to the water, but also adds essential vitamins and nutrients that help your body. It is a great way to quench your thirst and keep you hydrated on a hot, late summer day. They can be helpful for getting children and the elderly to increase their daily water intake. And they are pretty, too. Making your own is more cost friendly and healthier than purchased waters.

Making infused water is very simple. Just add desired fruit, veggie, or herb or combination to a pitcher of water with ice. Muddle mixture a bit if you want to increase flavour and let steep for at least several hours, up to 24, depending on how strong you want the flavours.

For some mixtures you can pour directly from pitcher, for others you may want to strain ingredients first to remove small floaters. As long as you keep the water refrigerated, the fruit should stay fresh. And you can keep refilling the pitcher as you drink the water but, it will dilute the flavour each time you refill. It should last several days before you need to remake with fresh fruit.

Blueberry-Lemon infused water for Assumption — Since blue, as mentioned above, is a colour associated with Mary, the blueberry is a great fruit to use on Marian feasts. The lemon is a symbol of fidelity in love, and, as such, is often associated with the Virgin Mary in art. A lemon blueberry infused water would be a refreshing addition to this Marian solemnity. The amount of various ingredients depends completely on your personal taste.



I am sure Our Lady will not be jealous at all if we add a final infused recipe in honour of two female Saints of this months: St. Rose of Lima (*see page 30*) and St. Clair of Assisi. Both Saint are associated with rose... so:

Raspberry-Rose-Vanilla infused water — Just as above, the amount and proportion of rose petals, vanilla sticks/bean, raspberries and water are completely up to your taste. And in case you were wondering: the vanilla or the raspberries of this recipe don't necessarily represent anything about these two Saints but make the infused water combination really delicious. :)

Our Lady, Star of the Sea

“*As sailors are guided by a star to the port, so Christians are guided to heaven by Mary*” — St. Thomas Aquinas.

St. Thomas’ explanation of the title “Star of the Sea” for Our Lady (quoted above) should resonate with all of us. Mary is, after all, the “true north,” our guiding star, forever and unfailingly leading us to her Son during our sojourn here on earth. Through whatever life may bring, we need only turn to her, trusting that she will never cast us adrift.

Here is a short, simple prayer we may memorise and repeat often throughout the day, and even teach it to our children and grandchildren: “*Mother of Christ, Star of the Sea, pray for the wanderer, pray for me.*”

Cardinal Newman wrote in 1874: “Truly art thou a star, O Mary! Our Lord indeed Himself, Jesus Christ, He is the truest and chiefest Star, the bright and morning Star, as St. John calls Him; that Star which was foretold from the beginning as destined to rise out of Israel, and which was displayed in figure by the star which appeared to the wise men in the East.

But if the wise and learned and they who teach men in justice shall shine as stars for ever and ever; if the angels of the Churches are called stars in the Hand of Christ; if He honoured the apostles even in the days of their flesh by a title, calling them lights of the world; if even those angels who fell from heaven are called by the beloved disciple stars; if lastly all the saints in bliss are called stars, in that they are like stars differing from stars in glory; therefore most assuredly, without any derogation from the honour of our Lord, is Mary His mother called the Star of the Sea, and the more so because even on her head she wears a crown of twelve stars.

Jesus is the Light of the world, illuminating every man who cometh into it, opening our eyes with the gift of faith, making souls luminous by His Almighty grace; and Mary is the Star, shining with the light of Jesus, fair as the moon, and special as the sun, the star of the heavens, which it is good to look upon, the star of the sea, which is welcome to the tempest-tossed, at whose smile the evil spirit flies, the passions are hushed, and peace is poured upon the soul. Hail then, Star of the Sea, we joy in the recollection of thee. Pray for us ever at the throne of Grace; plead our cause, pray with us, present our prayers to thy Son and Lord—now and in the hour of death, Mary be thou our help.”

This beautiful meditation of Cardinal Newman in itself is well worth to be published so more people can read it. However, there is another reason why our Parish Magazine has an article about Our Lady, Star of the Sea. Just read the next page...

A Pastoral Letter to the Clergy of the See of Oswestry on the consecration of the Pastoral Regions of the See to Our Lady

The Memorial of Our Lady of Mount Carmel 2024

Beloved Deacons, Beloved Fathers,
Praised be Jesus Christ, true God and true man!

You will recall that on the Feast of Candlemas this year, I shared with you the news that the See of Oswestry - for the purposes of better pastoral care, organisational effectiveness, and for the deepening of our collegial unity and identity - was to be organised into five Pastoral Regions. I indicated then that it was my wish to consecrate each of the five Pastoral Regions to Our Lady under one of her devotional titles. Since then, a good deal of thought and discussion has taken place with the Regional Deans and Assistant Regional Deans about this matter. I am most grateful to them. Happily, today, on the Memorial of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, I am able to announce those titles to you. [...]

The South West Pastoral Region is consecrated to Our Lady under her title *Our Lady Star of the Sea*.

Each of these devotional titles both reflects and elaborates the boldly evangelistic aspirations we all share for the whole See and the renewal of our common life in Christ in a confidence proper to our confession. Our vigorous commitment is to a programme of Total Evangelization at every level of ecclesial life. To whom else, therefore, should we turn other than Our Lady, the very first and the very best disciple of Our Lord. Mary is the first Evangelizer, *'Do whatever he tells you.'* (John 2,5). She shows us the way. She leads us to him.

Further to this, I have commissioned from an artist images which depict Our Lady in the aspect of each of these titles. The images will be revealed as soon as they are ready, I hope by Christmas.

It is my sincere wish that in all these things an even deeper devotion will be fostered to Our Lady among the people and parishes of the See, a devotion that the Faithful will understand as directly relating to the way they themselves live out their vocation as Catholic Christians in the Church of England for the sake of the whole Church.

To you all I send my fullest greetings in Christ, committing our whole life to him who is our life.

In Domino,
+ Paul Oswestriensis

The Psalms

Psalm 40: Thanksgiving and Supplication

Thanksgiving and supplication are certainly not surprising or even unusual themes in a Psalm. After all, it is a collection of prayers. What might seem surprising is their order. In Psalm 40 thanksgiving for deliverance comes first and then it is followed by supplication - for deliverance. When examining Psalm 40, it is good to remember that it bears some resemblance with Psalms 70 and 35.

However, this seemingly unusual order of prayer is only surprising if one has no experience of his or her prayers being listened to. The faithful, be it an individual or the whole people of God, can rely on his/her past experience of God's deliverance. Even in the greatest of calamity, the faithful can pray with the certainty of faith: God who is faithful will save those who trust in him. Of course, there remains much uncertainty about the speed and timing of help, so to say, but not about the fact that God listens to the prayer of the righteous.

At the same time we must admit that there is an immense tension between the certainty of deliverance and the uncertainty of its timing. Some Bible commentators tried to see Psalm 40 as two different, independent prayers glued together but by doing so, they eliminate this tension which actually is essential to faith. A faith marked by such tension is a living, true, real faith of a person who goes through the heights and depths of ordinary human life - and while doing so, hope develops in him. Hope founded on experience of God's love and providence.

Psalm 40 can be divided into three main themes: the experience of divine help (vv. 1-3a); the community of faith (vv. 3b-5); the true way of giving thanks (vv. 6-10). These three main themes are then followed by two prayers in verses 11-17.

Verses 1-3a — David recalls the times when he sought refuge in God with the same anxiety and yearning. He confesses how God listened to his prayer back then, every time, and rescued him. The images of rock and step give the idea of a strong, unshakable, and faithful Deliverer.

This experience of deliverance becomes a “new song”, a cultic hymn, God himself put into David's mouth for David did not experience God's help only for his own sake, as something personal and intimate to treasure in the secrecy of his heart, but rather for the good of the whole worshipping community. David's personal life of faith becomes of significance for everybody else. Indeed, he calls God “our God.” To some extent, we are

reminded of the experience of the great canticles (Benedictus, Magnificat, Nunc Dimittis) of the New Testament. Faith and community are deeply linked.

Verses 3b-5 — What is done to the individual member, is done to the community. In this sense, there is not much novelty in the words of St. Paul (1 Cor 12,26): *“If one member suffers, all suffer together; and if one member is honoured, all rejoice together.”* These verses depict the humble yet proud happiness of a trust in God which is enjoyed in the fellowship of the faithful. What a striking contrast is the arrogance of the self-assuring wicked who deceive themselves and others.

Only the faithful can see the wondrous deeds of God by which his gracious saving will has been made manifest. The majesty of God is revealed in the divine saving will (=grace) to the righteous; the wicked, in their arrogance, remain blind to it.

The faithful recognise the immense gap between God’s majesty and the praise they can offer to him. They know that even the most fervent thanksgiving and the most eloquent praise are not able to do justice to God. Some millennia later St. Thomas Aquinas will write in his Eucharistic hymn: *“All thou canst, do thou endeavour: / Yet thy praise can equal never / Such as merits thy great King.”*

Verses 6-10 — It is in this sense that sacrifice is said to be not wanted by God. All man can do is to humbly accept everything from God and simply offer it back to him, well knowing that, as the Roman Canon puts it in every Mass, it is from God’s own bounty and gifts man can offer anything back to God. The only right attitude for the faithful is a humble and obedient listening to God. When he comes to the Temple, he does not come to stand in God’s presence, face to face. Who would dare to do so? No! He comes (*“Lo! I have come.”*) to place himself at God’s disposal.

Once the faithful know himself to be at one with the will of God, this will ceases to be a yoke and becomes the only source of true joy.

These verses end what by now is a deeply rooted tradition of the Old Testament and an essential element of true, authentic faith: offering witness in the midst of the congregation. Experiencing God’s grace comes with an obligation towards one’s neighbour: to proclaim it boldly. Faith, grace, deliverance are not given to be enjoyed selfishly but to be shared through proclamation so they can express the true nature of God as the One who is a living reality and is at work.

The final verses of the Psalm take the form of a prayer which we are invited to meditate upon, making it ours, in the light of what we said above.

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A priest is always available for Confession, spiritual direction, or for a simple chat half an hour before every Service, or at any other time by appointment! For service times and other information about our churches and services (including weddings and funerals), please visit our website:

www.stpaulsweymouth.org