



HIGH TIDE

September 2021

PARISH MAGAZINE
SAINT PAUL'S, WEYMOUTH



This Magazine contains: *Letter from the Vicar - Notices & News - Article from Fr Bruce & Kathy - On the Psalms - and more*

You can detach pages 13-28 and use it for Morning & Evening Prayer

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*Many thanks to all who have contributed to this issue of the Parish Magazine,
and to Liz Evans for the proofreading.*

*The next Magazine will be published on **Sunday 26th September**. Please, send
all articles, information, news you wish to be publish by Sunday 19th September.*

From the Vicar

Dearly Beloved,

I must confess I was very pleased with the reaction of many of you to my opening letter of last month. It is heartwarming to see that people care about the future of their churches and parishes. It is my prayer and hope that this care will lead to a presence which is more faithful on Sundays and more frequent during the week, and also to a greater participation in our ongoing projects and events. It is always “funny” to see the confused and shocked faces of some when I talk about money (how we need it!) and volunteers (how very few we have sometimes!)... sometimes I wonder where people think money comes from (no money-trees in the garden, I’ve already checked twice) and who they think will organise and run things?!

While I am flattered by the attitude of “*Father knows best*” of many Anglo-Catholics... that attitude caused the closure and death of many Parishes. *I*, of course, do know best sometimes when it comes to certain things. When it comes to other things, it is *you* who know best. And when it comes to still another thing, it is *somebody else* who knows best. We all have been given gifts, talents, ideas, and graces - and we must not deny, or hide, or neglect them either in ourselves or in others (Mt 25,18) but we must use them faithfully and generously for the greater good of our Parish. An example could be the Parish Magazine. You will have noticed it is a bit shorter than usual - and that’s because this month I have only had one contribution... You could consider writing or sending in articles, news, or anything else of interest.

Yet, the most important thing to remember are the words of our Lord: “*Without me you can do nothing*” (Jn 15,5). I want to encourage you all to develop a more frequent and fervent prayer life - both private and public - and to come to church more often. As He said, without *Him* we can do nothing...

For this reason, from Advent we will have four times a year (in Ember-tides) a whole day of public prayer, mission, and partial fasting in the Parish, with visible presence for our neighbourhood, pleading the Good Shepherd to keep and increase his little flock here at St. Paul’s.

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

Fr. Gregory 3

Notices

From the Fund Raising Committee: As you enter the church from the Cloisters you will hopefully have noticed a large wooden cross with green mesh hanging on the first pillar. This has been placed there to raise funds for the church's upkeep. Please, please place any loose change you have into it so we can fill it. Wouldn't it be great to be able to see it full by Christmas or at the latest Easter 2022.

Songs of Praise: An outcome of the survey is a request for us to hold more informal, non-Eucharistic worship. A list has been placed on both tables for you to give suggestions of your favourite hymns or sacred songs. We are planning to hold this around Michaelmas.

Please, advertise this among your family, friends, and neighbours, especially if they like singing and are not (regular) church goers.

This informal worship will be followed by tea and cake - and if successful, will be held regularly.

200 Club: Just a quick reminder that there are still numbers available if you would like to buy a ticket. We are leaving applications open until the end of September. If you wish to become a member please speak to Liz Evans or Pam Winspear.

Silent Auction: Our next fundraising event will be a Silent Auction. We are asking for donations of new or 'as new' items to auction (we have some items already including a brand new microwave)!! This is how it works... Please place your donations on the designated table in church throughout the month of September. At the beginning of October the items will be displayed in the hall every Sunday during coffee. Paper and envelopes will be provided for you to write down your 'bid' for the item you would like. You can bid for as many as you like! You then place your bid on the paper and seal it in an envelop and place it in the tray. On the last Sunday in October (Sunday 31st) we will open the envelopes during coffee and see what the highest bid is for each item and announce the winners.

Christmas Bazaar: Please, save the date for your diary: 11th December 2021 between 11am-1pm.

Projects

As we are trying to discern the future of our Parish prayerfully, a few projects have started taking form. Keep them in your prayers and consider to volunteer. We will only grow if we all do our part!

Junior Choir - the PCC has hired a professional music teacher to recruit and train children from our Parish (Beechcroft, Conifers) and to form a permanent choir of children that would sing during our Sunday Masses. Hopefully, we will be able to take these children on day-trips time to time and to the yearly Youth Pilgrimage to Walsingham. If you want to help with the expenses, please talk to the Vicar or the Treasurer.

Buxton House - we have been in touch with the management who have welcomed the idea of regular services in the care home for their residents and staff. Thanks to many-many years of diligent work done by Fr. Tony, Buxton House is most welcoming and keen to collaborate with us. Volunteers are needed to help to organise worship.

Informal Worship - One of the outcomes of the survey is a need for occasional informal worships. This, we pray and hope, will bring in some unchurched people as well from our neighbourhood. Volunteers, prayers, and ideas are needed - also, look out for news and dates and “spread the word”!

Silent retreat - Another outcome of the survey is the openness of many of you to the idea of having yearly silent retreats (few peaceful days in some beautiful monastery). The Vicar has already started to contact venues for availability and prices. Look out for dates and more info - also, registering early your interest with the Vicar or Churchwardens will help us to organise the retreat better.

Parish trips and picnic days - There is a general need (luckily!) to spend some quality time together as a community. One way of doing it is through picnic days (Portland?) and day-trips. Again, look out for more news and dates - but more importantly, please, share your ideas with the Churchwardens!!

Home groups - Yet another outcome of the survey. Please, talk to the Vicar as soon as you can if you are willing to host one of these monthly groups. An evening (afternoon?) of short prayer, discussion, fellowship, drinks and snacks. Strict “no Priests!” policy applies... Something to invite your unchurched friends, neighbours, family to.

Dorset-Murugi (Kenya) Community Projects Group

We all know how proactive Christian charity is an essential part of our faith and that “*he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen*” (1 John 4,20). In the series of articles explaining the Mass, this month we are reminded how salvation is intrinsically linked to acts of charity and that only those who attend - within their own means - to the spiritual and material needs of others will be numbered amongst the *blessed* of the Father (cf. Mt 25,31-46).

This month I want to call a wonderful project to your attention - a project worth considering supporting, especially in the light of the above mentioned Gospel.

The Dorset-Murugi (Kenya) Community Projects Group was started by Martyn Hastings MBE (+2020) and his wife Josie Hastings MBE, both of Weymouth. Martyn first took a team of DES students to climb Mt Kenya in 1999 and they started community development projects in the Chogoria area by digging the foundations of Baragu Health Centre. Through continued fundraising Baragu became a major facility providing accessible healthcare for poor local families. Construction of a new children’s ward has been started in 2012. Many school classrooms have been built or renovated by expedition teams and equipment has been supplied.

He also set up a feeding programme for needy children, built and equipped classrooms including special needs units, provided housing and basic provisions for homeless families, set up a sponsor programme to give orphaned and needy children access to education.

Other projects include individual sponsorship of orphans and needy children, school based programmes for fees, lunch food, clothes, some medical expenses, new homes and a HIV positive group.

One of the simplest yet most effective way you can help is through sponsoring a child. The Group have sponsors for more than two-hundred orphans and needy children, but they have many more children who need a sponsor.

If you choose to sponsor a child you will be living with one child (or more if you like!) And will get regular updates, letters, and photographs. Every penny of the money you give for sponsorship will go to assist your child.

Five groups that need sponsorship have been identified:

Primary schools - in this program sponsored children will receive a simple meal of githeri (maize and beans) or a variation of rice and beans at lunchtime. Morning porridge at school and exam fees are funded as well as some items of school uniform in the most needy cases. In addition to these the program funds medical expenses when necessary. £70 will sponsor one child for a year.

Kianjagi Polytechnic - we recognise that some young people benefit from a course which involves learning a trade. Electrics, plumbing, mechanics, metalwork, agriculture, hair and beauty, dressmaking, and computer studies are offered at the Polytechnic. £120 will sponsor a young person for a year.

Donna Kelly special educational needs unit - the required sponsorship for each child is £150 per academic year (January-December). Sponsorship base for: morning porridge and lunch food, cook's salary, class assistant salary, medication as necessary, some classroom resources.

Wiru Kiriani Mutindwa Kianjagi Kalewa Secondary School - sponsorship provides a school lunch each day. It also covers basic items such as school and exam fees. The students often also need extra items such as scientific calculators and paraffin for lamps for evening study, and holiday tuition. Sponsorship costs vary depending on individual needs, and are from £100 per year.

Special sponsorship - these sponsorships are for children and families who have very specific needs. For example we have rehoused a four year old boy who is HIV positive and living with his grandmother, and helped a mother with two children escape from a violent and drunken relationship. Several children with specific medical needs have had their medical treatment funded, and a blind and disabled boy is now receiving home physiotherapy. The cost of sponsorship for these children and families vary depending on their needs, and can be subsidised by our sales of Kenyan jewellery.

Our PCC will sponsor a Child. If you too want to sponsor one (or more!), please, talk to Chris Keats, the Churchwardens, or the Vicar - or contact Josie Hastings directly:

07796 028479 - 01305 813012 - mrsjosiehastings@gmail.com

Ember Days

Various bits and pieces from newsletters, articles, books.

Catholic Herald: “The Ember Days are four sets of three seasonal days of prayer, fasting and abstinence. They fall equidistant in the cycle of the year and each of them contains a Wednesday, Friday and a Saturday of the same week. On these days, Christians traditionally fast as they would on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, except they are permitted to eat meat as part of the main meal on the Wednesday and Saturday.

The next Ember-tide comes this month. It usually comes after the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (September 14) – so this year, the September Ember Days fall on Wednesday, September 15, Friday, September 17 and Saturday, September 18. After that, the next Ember-tide will be in the third week of Advent, then the first full week of Lent and the week following Pentecost Sunday.

Such Ember Days, also known as the “fasts of the four seasons”, were introduced into England by St. Augustine of Canterbury as a way of thanking God for the gifts of nature and to cultivate the virtues of moderation and prudence in the use of worldly goods. There was a verse to help people remember when they fell: “Fasting days and Emberings be Lent, Whitsun, Holyrood, and [St] Lucie,” and a shorter mnemonic that went: “Lenty, Penty, Crucy, Lucy.”

Traditionally, Ember-tides have been seen also as opportune moments to prepare prayerfully for ordination of diocesan clergy.”

Common Worship (Church of England): “Ember Days should be kept, under the bishop’s directions, in the week before an ordination as days of prayer for those to be made deacon or priest. Ember Days may also be kept even when there is no ordination in the diocese as more general days of prayer for those who serve the Church in its various ministries, both ordained and lay, and for vocations.”

Society of St. Pius X: “The purpose of their introduction, besides the general one intended by all prayer and fasting, was to thank God for the gifts of nature, to teach men to make use of them in moderation, and to assist the needy. The immediate occasion was the practice of the heathens of Rome. The Romans were originally given to

agriculture, and their native gods belonged to the same class. At the beginning of the time for seeding and harvesting religious ceremonies were performed to implore the help of their deities: in June for a bountiful harvest, in September for a rich vintage, and in December for the seeding.

The Church, when converting heathen nations, has always tried to sanctify any practices which could be utilised for a good purpose. At first the Church in Rome had fasts in June, September, and December; the exact days were not fixed but were announced by the priests. The “*Liber Pontificalis*” ascribes to Pope Callistus (217-222) a law ordering the fast, but probably it is older. Leo the Great (440-461) considers it an Apostolic institution.

All faithful should make a special point to assist at Mass on Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday during Ember-tides.

The Collect: *May our frailty, we beseech Thee, O Lord, find support in the help of Thy mercy; so that what is marred by its own nature may be restored by Thy grace. O Lord, we beseech Thee, grant to Thy praying household that, as they fast from bodily food, they may also abstain mentally from sin.*”

National Catholic Register: “St. Thomas Aquinas says fasting is good for three purposes.

First, refraining from food bridles the lusts of the flesh. Saying “no” to food teaches us that despite what the world says, we can tame our appetite both for food and for sex. Therefore, fasting is especially a fitting penance for those who struggle with sins of the flesh.

Second, when we fast our mind is more free to arise to contemplation of heavenly things. Every time a pang of hunger hits, the reason of our penance and Our Lord’s sacrifice come to mind. Our weakness in the face such small discomfort reminds us over and over throughout the day that without Christ, we are nothing.

Third, fasting paves the way to conversion, leading us away from sin. As St. Augustine says, fasting cleanses the soul, raises the mind, subjects one’s flesh to the spirit, renders the heart contrite and humble, scatters the clouds of concupiscence, quenches the fire of lust, kindles the true light of chastity.

St. Basil the Great adds: Fasting gives birth to prophets and strengthens the powerful; fasting makes lawgivers wise. Fasting is a

good safeguard for the soul, a steadfast companion for the body, a weapon for the valiant, and a gymnasium for athletes. Fasting repels temptations, anoints unto piety; it is the comrade of watchfulness and the artificer of chastity. In war it fights bravely, in peace it teaches stillness.

Performing penance, including fasting, is an imitation of Christ. Communal acts of reparation not only declare that Christ's Church is one body, but also acknowledge that the cause of the problem is sin. Fasting and praying show us how sinful and weak our own hearts are, and how without the gift of Christ, no one can break free from the slavery of sin. We fast and pray and do penance so that the sinner - including us - can be moved to conversion and will desire to seek out the sacraments.

The more you fast, the easier it gets. Expect it to be hard at first, but that hardship is part of the sacrifice. Here are some tips: - Drink lots of water. - Say a prayer when it gets hard. - Remember Our Lord's 40-day fast in the desert. - Be joyful. - You're imitating Christ and He's with you every moment."

Catholic Culture: "Ember Days Here and Now! With all the changes, it could be asked why bother with Ember Days? Even if one follows the Extraordinary Form of the Mass and the 1962 Calendar, there is no binding obligation for fasting and abstinence. Are there other reasons to observe Ember Days? And what ways can we observe personally in our families? I see several reasons why and how we can observe Ember Days:

1) **In Thanksgiving for God's creation.** First of all, the Ember Days can remind us that God speaks to us in His creation. In today's age of predominantly urban living with technology there can be a disconnect with God and creation. Contemporary man is often cut off from nature; he lives in a world that is reduced to a universe of tarmac, concrete, and all kinds of screens.

Our food is shipped from all over the world, arriving in big box stores, wrapped in plastic and paper. We watch the weather forecast for our outdoor sports activities, not with an awareness of the nearby farmer's need for his crops. By observing in small ways the quarterly Ember Days with a focus on the different harvest seasons, we can bring

our thoughts back to God and His creation, and also unite with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

One must point out that the public prayer of the church as contained in the missal, breviary and ritual is not for the exclusive welfare of the farmer, but for all the members of Christ's Body. The man or woman in the city cathedral praying the Mass or using the sacramentals is praying for the good of the farmer; and likewise the farmer in the little rural church at Mass or any public service of the liturgy as well as in the use of the sacramentals and ritual is mindful of his brother's needs before the throne of almighty God and in union with the eternal Priest, the Redeemer, our Lord Himself.

2) **A Mini-Lent: Bringing Our Focus Back to God.** Putting aside some time for God through prayer and penance each quarter of the year can help redirect our focus back to God. We are often pulled in all directions by worldly needs. The Ember Days could be considered a mini-Lent. A little fasting and self-denial can help jump-start our spiritual lives.

The penance aspect is also brought forward by offering our first-fruits in a variety of ways. We must, of the abundance which is given us, offer the first fruits as a gift. No man can receive a gift worthily unless he makes himself like the one from whom he holds the gift. And how can we be like Him who gives us all? By giving, even as He gives.

Thus Ember-tides are moments to reconsider our contribution to the needs of our parish, the poor, and various charities.

3) **A Family Program Brings Us Closer to God.** We can look at Ember Days with a family focus. Formerly Ember Days were dreaded because of the penance involved.

To most of us an ember day means penance and some extra prayers, and codfish balls for dinner. If I were to tell you an ember day is a feast day you would ask where I ever heard such a thing. If I would call it a day of joy when we should sing and play and have fun you would think me slightly "tetched." If finally I would suggest having guests or at least a good family dinner to celebrate the ember season of September you would say I was making rules to suit myself.

Yet codfish and long faces are not at all necessary "*to thank God for the gifts of nature, to teach men to make use of them in moderation and to assist the need.*" These three are the first purpose of ember days. But four

times a year, in a very special way holy Church runs to God, her helper and her strength and says her thanks. Thankfulness is a happy expression of love and service and our ember days are days of thanksgiving for harvest and home. At the same time she is doing penance because she will give up some of her blessings “to draw near to God” and acknowledge His bounty.

4) **For Priests and Vocations.** Dare I add a fourth reason? Our current vocation crisis cannot be denied. And those who are priests and religious need prayers to be strong and faithful in serving the Lord. We need to pray for our priests, we need to pray for vocations.



Observing Ember Days is adding a few more feast days to our Liturgical celebrations, rounding out our prayers of petition, thanksgiving and penance. We do not have to make this complicated. The Mass, Morning and Evening Prayer is the focus of prayer in thanksgiving and petition. The penance aspect can be through voluntary fasting and abstinence, and also through almsgiving.

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

Anniversaries of death

**The Order of Morning and Evening Prayer
at St. Paul's**

Calendar for September 2021

WED	1 st	<i>St. Giles Abbot</i>	10am
THU	2 nd	St. Stephen, Ap. King of Hungary	6pm
FRI	3 rd	St. Pius X Pope	6pm
SAT	4 th	<i>Feria (of Our Lady)</i>	9.30am
SUN	5 th	14TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	10am, 5pm
MON	6 th	<i>Feria</i>	9am
TUE	7 th	Monthly Requiem	6pm
WED	8 th	NATIVITY OF OUR LADY	10am
THU	9 th	<i>St. Gorgonius Martyr</i>	6pm
FRI	10 th	St. Nicholas of Tolentino	6pm
SAT	11 th	<i>Of Our Lady</i>	9.30am
SUN	12 th	15TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	10am, 5pm
MON	13 th	<i>Feria</i>	9am
TUE	14 th	EXALTATION OF THE H. CROSS	6pm
WED	15 th	SEVEN SORROWS OF OUR LADY	10am
THU	16 th	St. Edith of Wilton	6pm
FRI	17 th	The Stigmata of St. Francis (Ember Day)	6pm
SAT	18 th	St. Joseph of Cupertino (Ember Day)	9.30am
SUN	19 th	16TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	10am, 5pm
MON	20 th	Vigil	9am
TUE	21 st	ST. MATTHEW AP. & EVANG.	6pm
WED	22 nd	St. Thomas of Villanova	10am
THU	23 rd	St. Pio of Pietralcina	6pm
FRI	24 th	OUR LADY OF RANSOM	6pm
SAT	25 th	<i>Of Our Lady</i>	9.30am
SUN	26 th	17TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	10am, 5pm
MON	27 th	Sts. Cosmas & Damian, Martyrs	9am
TUE	28 th	St. Wenceslaus Duke, Martyr	6pm
WED	29 th	ST. MICHAEL ARCHANGEL	10am
THU	30 th	St. Jerome	6pm



We pray for...

- 1st Religious vocations - *Maud & Millie Palmer, May Clothier*
- 2nd Priests, vocations
- 3rd Dying
- 4th Shrine of Walsingham - *Dorothy Butler*
- 5th Our Parish - *Tom Buchanan, Mary Salisbury*
- 6th S.P.O.T. - *Peter Mullis*
- 7th Departed - *Mary Vincent, Leslie Ball, David Foote, Peter Dawson, John Wray*
- 8th Beechcroft
- 9th Grandparents
- 10th Depressed - *Margaret Ward*
- 11th Cell of OLW- *Bessie Scriven, Tommy McCarthy, Margaret Boxwell, Liz Taylor*
- 12th Our Parish - *Joan Nickinson, Eileen Parsonage*
- 13th Chapter of St. Aldhelm (Servers)
- 14th Triumph of the Cross - *Austin Woolrych, Jack Hardy, Holly Harding, Joyce Kemp*
- 15th Grieving Mothers
- 16th Ebbsfleet Parishes
- 17th Our Choir
- 18th Elderly - *Kathleen Gunn*
- 19th Our Parish
- 20th Unemployed - *Betty Vincent, Marjorie Green,*
- 21st Fallen in the Battle of Britain
- 22nd Sick
- 23rd Confessors & Penitents - *Sydney Lambert pr., Elizabeth Keat*
- 24th Addicts
- 25th Sick
- 26th Our Parish - *Francis Jobnstone, Madaleine Hicks*
- 27th Afflicted by wars & Terrorism; Afghanistan
- 28th Minorities - *David Davies pr.*
- 29th Persons with eating disorders - *Mary Kemp*
- 30th Increase of charity - *Michael Kerrigan, David Sertin*

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

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. Come and adore Christ the King who was exalted to the Cross for us! 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. Come and adore Christ the King who was exalted to the Cross for us!

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. Come and adore Christ the King who was exalted to the Cross for us!

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. Come and adore Christ the King who was exalted to the Cross for us!

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. Come and adore Christ the King who was exalted to the Cross for us!

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. Come and adore Christ the King who was exalted to the Cross for us!

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. Come and adore Christ the King who was exalted to the Cross for us!

HYMN

Sundays
(or any day)

Now, from the slumbers of the night arising,
Chant we the holy psalmody of David,
Hymns to our Master, with a voice concordant,
Sweetly intoning.

So may our Monarch pitifully hear us,
That we may merit with his saints to enter
Mansions eternal, therewithal possessing
Joy beatific.

This be our portion, God forever blessed,
 Father eternal, Son, and Holy Spirit,
 Whose is the glory, which through all creation
 Ever resoundeth. Amen.

Or: on Our Lady's Feasts:

The Lord whom earth and sea and sky
 Adore and praise and magnify,
 Who o'er their threefold fabric reigns,
 The Virgin's spotless womb contains.

And he whose will is ever done
 By moon and seas, by stars and sun,
 Is borne upon a maiden's breast,
 Whom God's foreseeing grace possessed.

How blest that Mother, in whose shrine
 The very Word of God divine,
 The maker of the earth and sky,
 Was pleased in fleshly form to lie.

Blest in the message Gabriel brought,
 Blest in the work the Spirit wrought,
 Blest evermore, who brought to birth
 The long-Desired of all the earth.

O Jesu, Virgin-born, to thee
 Eternal praise and glory be,
 Whom with the Father we adore
 And Holy Spirit, evermore. Amen.

Or: on a Saint's day:

O Jesu, Saviour of mankind,
 In whom the saints their glory find,
 On this commemoration day
 Hear thou thy people as they pray.

Contending for thy holy Name,
 Thy servants won their saintly fame,
 Which Christian hearts with praise recall,
 And bless the Lord and God of all.

Earth's fleeting pleasures counting nought,
 For higher, truer joys they sought,
 And now, with angles round thy throne,
 Unfading glories are their own.

O grant that we, most gracious God,
 May follow in the steps they trod,
 And freed from every bond of sin,
 As they have won, may also win.

To thee, O Christ, most loving King,
 All glory, praise and thanks we bring,
 Whom with the Father we adore,
 And Holy Spirit, evermore. Amen.

1	Ps 119v 153-end	Proverbs 26,12-end Mark 8,27 - 9,1	5	119 v. 57-72	Jonah 3,10 - 4,11 Revelation 8,1-5
2	143	Proverbs 27,1-22 Mark 9,2-13	6	1, 3	Wisdom 1 Mark 9,38-end
3	142, 144	Proverbs 30,1-9 & 24-31 Mark 9,14-29	7	5, 6	Wisdom 2 Mark 10,1-16
4	147	Proverbs 31,10-end Mark 9,30-37	8	119 v. 1-32	Wisdom 3,1-9 Mark 10,17-31

9	14, 15, 16	Wisdom 4,7-end Mark 10,32-34	20	44	Wisdom 11,21 - 12,2 Mark 12,28-end
10	17, 19	Wisdom 5,1-16 Mark 10,35-45	21	49, 117	1 Kings 19,15-end 2 Timothy 3,14-end
11	20, 21, 23	Wisdom 5,17 - 6,11 Mark 10,46-end	22	119 v. 57-80	Wisdom 13,1-9 Mark 13,1-13
12	119 v. 105-120	Isaiah 44,24 - 45,8 Revelation 12,1-12	23	56, 57	Wisdom 16,15-end Mark 13,14-23
13	27, 30	Wisdom 6,12-23 Mark 11,1-11	24	51, 54	Wisdom 18,6-19 Mark 13,24-31
14	2, 8, 146	Genesis 3,1-15 John 12,27-36a	25	68	Wisdom 19 Mark 13,32-end
15	63	Proverbs 8,12-25 John 19,25-27	26	122	Isaiah 48,12-end Luke 11,37-end
16	37	Wisdom 8,5-18 Mark 12,1-12	27	71	1 Maccabees 1,1-19 Mark 14,1-11
17	31	Wisdom 9 Mark 12,13-17	28	73	1 Maccabees 1,20-40 Mark 14,12-25
18	41, 42, 43	Wisdom 10,15 - 11,10 Mark 12,18-27	29	150	Daniel 12,1-4 Acts 12,1-11
19	119 v. 153-176	Isaiah 45,9-22 Revelation 14,1-5	30	78 v. 1-39	1 Maccabees 1-28 Mark 14,26-52

Each reading ends with these words:

V. This is the word of the Lord. **R.** Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTUS – *One of the following antiphons is used:*

Sundays (or any other day): Blessed are you, O Holy Cross, the only tree worthy to bear the Lord and King of heaven. Alleluia.

On the Feast of Our Lady: Who is she that comes up like the rising dawn, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, terrible as a fenced camp set in battle array?

On a Saint's day: How glorious is the kingdom where all the Saints rejoice with Christ; clothed in white robes, they follow the Lamb!

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.

Sundays (or any other day): Blessed are you, O Holy Cross, the only tree worthy to bear the Lord and King of heaven. Alleluia.

On the Feast of Our Lady: Who is she that comes up like the rising dawn, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, terrible as a fenced camp set in battle array?

On a Saint's day: How glorious is the kingdom where all the Saints rejoice with Christ; clothed in white robes, they follow the Lamb!

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 one of the Collects:

On any day: Almighty and merciful God, of whose only gift it comes that your faithful people offer you true and laudable service: Grant, we beseech you, that we may so faithfully serve you in this life, that we fail not finally to attain your heavenly promises. Through Christ our Lord. **R.** Amen.

On Our Lady's Feast day: O God, at your suffering the prophecy of Simeon was fulfilled, and a sword of sorrow pierced through the gentle soul of Mary, glorious Virgin and Mother; mercifully grant that we who devotedly remember her sorrows, may obtain the saving fruits of your suffering. Who lives and reigns with God the Father, in unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. **R.** Amen.

On a Saint's day: O God, year by year, you gladden us by the feast-day of Saint **N.** Mercifully grant us, who keep *his (her/their)* feast, grace to follow after the pattern of his (*her/their*) godly conversation. Through Christ our Lord. **R.** Amen.

V. Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

All: 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! - *The HYMN follows:*

Sundays & weekdays:

As fades the glowing orb of day,
To thee, great source of light, we pray;
Blest Three in One, to every heart
Thy beams of life and love impart.

At early dawn, at close of day,
To thee our vows we humbly pay;
May we, mid joys that never end,
With thy bright saints in homage bend.

To God the Father, and the Son,
And Holy Spirit, Three in One,
Be endless glory, as before
The world began, so evermore. Amen.

Or: on the Feast of Our Lady:

Hail, O Star that pointest
Towards the port of heaven,
Thou to whom as maiden
God for Son was given.

Jesu's tender Mother,
Make thy supplication
Unto him who chose thee
At his Incarnation;

That, O matchless Maiden,
Passing meek and lowly,
Thy dear Son may make us
Blameless, chaste and holy.

So, as now we journey,
Aid our weak endeavour.
Till we gaze on Jesus,
And rejoice for ever.

Father, Son and Spirit,
Three in One confessing,
Give we equal glory,
Equal praise and blessing. Amen.

Or: on a Saint's day:

Ye thousand thousand angel hosts!
Assist us in our need;
Ye patriarchs! with the prophet choir!
For our forgiveness plead.

Forerunner blest! and thou who still
Dost heaven's dread keys retain!
Ye glorious Apostles all!
Unloose our guilty chain.

Army of martyrs! holy priests
In beautiful array!
Ye happy troops of virgins chaste!
Wash all our stains away.

All ye who high above the stars
In heavenly glory reign!
May we through your prevailing prayers
Unto your joys attain.

Praise, honour, to the Father be,
Praise to his only Son;
Praise, Holy Paraclete, to thee,
While endless ages run. Amen.

The appointed Psalm and Reading(s) follow:

1	Psalm 136	2 Samuel 19,8-23 Acts 11,19-end	16	39, 40	1 Kings 11,1-13 Acts 17,16-end
2	140, 141	2 Samuel 19,24-end Acts 12,1-17	17	35	1 Kings 11,26-end Acts 18,1-21
3	145	2 Samuel 23, 1-7 Acts 12,18-end	18	45	1 Kings 12,1-24 Acts 18,22 - 19,7
4	149	2 Samuel 24 Acts 13,1-12	19	119 v. 137-152	Exodus 19,10-end Matthew 8,23-end
5	119 v. 41-56	Exodus 14,5-end Matthew 6,1-18	20	34	Isaiah 33,13-17 Matthew 6,19-end
6	4, 7	1 Kings 1,1-31 Acts 13,13-43	21	119 v. 33-40	Ecclesiastes 5,4-12 Matthew 19,16-end
7	9, 10	1 Kings 1,32 - 2,12 Acts 13,44 - 14,7	22	59, 60, 67	1 Kings 17 Acts 20,1-16
8	11, 12, 13	1 Kings 3 Acts 14,8-end	23	61, 62, 64	1 Kings 18,1-20 Acts 20,17-end
9	18	1 Kings 4,29 - 5,12 Acts 15,1-21	24	38	1 Kings 18,21-end Acts 21,1-16
10	22	1 Kings 6,11-28 Acts 15,22-35	25	65	1 Kings 19 Acts 21,17-36
11	24, 25	1 Kings 8,1-30 Acts 15,36 - 16,5	26	120, 12	Exodus 24 Matthew 9,1-8
12	119 v. 73-88	Exodus 18,13-26 Matthew 7,1-14	27	72, 75	1 Kings 21 Acts 21,27 - 22,21
13	66	Isaiah 52,13-end Ephesians 2,11-end	28	91	2 Kings 6,8-17 Matthew 18,1-10
14	110	Isaiah 63,1-16 1 Corinthians 1,18-25	29	138, 148	Daniel 10,4-end Revelation 5
15	46	Judith 13,22-25 Luke 2,34-35	30	78 v. 40-end	2 Kings 1,1-17 Acts 24,1-23

Each reading ends with these words:

V. This is the word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

MAGNIFICAT

Sundays (or any other day): O Holy Cross, surpassing all the stars in splendour, exceeding dear to all Christian people, holiest of earth's treasures: only you were worthy to bear the Price of our Redemption, alleluia.

On the Feast of Our Lady: Blessed Mother and inviolate Maiden! Glorious Queen of the world! Plead for us with the Lord!

On a Saint's day: All your Saints and Elect with one voice acknowledge you: O Blessed Trinity, One God!

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.

Sundays (or any other day): O Holy Cross, surpassing all the stars in splendour, exceeding dear to all Christian people, holiest of earth's treasures: only you were worthy to bear the Price of our Redemption, alleluia.

On the Feast of Our Lady: Blessed Mother and inviolate Maiden! Glorious Queen of the world! Plead for us with the Lord!

On a Saint's day: All your Saints and Elect with one voice acknowledge you: O Blessed Trinity, One God!

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 one of the following Collects is said:*

On any day: Almighty and merciful God, of whose only gift it comes that your faithful people offer you true and laudable service: Grant, we beseech you, that we may so faithfully serve you in this life, that we fail not finally to attain your heavenly promises. Through Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

On Our Lady's Feast day: O God, at your suffering the prophecy of Simeon was fulfilled, and a sword of sorrow pierced through the gentle soul of Mary, glorious Virgin and Mother; mercifully grant that we who devotedly remember her sorrows, may obtain the saving fruits of your suffering. Who lives and reigns with God the Father, in unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. R. Amen.

On a Saint's day: O God, year by year, you gladden us by the feast-day of Saint N. Mercifully grant us, who keep *his (her/their)* feast, grace to follow after the pattern of his (*her/their*) godly conversation. Through Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

V. Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

All: 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 Virginité 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.

Prayer of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus for Priests:

O Jesus, I pray for your faithful and fervent priests; for your unfaithful and tepid priests; for your priests labouring at home or abroad in distant mission fields; for your tempted priests; for your lonely and desolate priests; for your young priests; for your dying priests; for the souls of your priests in purgatory.

But above all, I recommend to you the priests dearest to me: the priest who baptised me; the priests who absolved me from my sins; the priests at whose Masses I assisted and who gave me your Body and Blood in Holy Communion; the priests who taught and instructed me; all the priests to whom I am indebted in any other way (especially ...).

O Jesus, keep them all close to your heart, and bless them abundantly in time and in eternity. Amen.

From the Book of Common Prayer

15th Sunday after Trinity: *Keep, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy Church with thy perpetual mercy; and, because the frailty of man without thee cannot but fall, keep us ever by thy help from all things hurtful, and lead us to all things profitable to our salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Let us notice here in the first petition a strange but most relevant fact. God the Father is implored to keep his Church (for which his Son shed his precious blood) not with his Fatherly Care, not with his Watchful Providence and not with the guardianship of his holy Archangels and angels, but with his Perpetual Mercy. If we are to be saved and secured from major spiritual and moral injuries with which Satan, the world and the flesh threaten him, it can only be by the continual & perpetual exercise of the Father's mercy in the name and for the sake of his Beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Our conviction is that from that heavenly mercy proceed abundant blessings of many and varied kinds, descending upon those who seek the Lord and find him.

Let us also recognize, as does the Collect, that considered as moral and spiritual beings who stand before God, the all-holy, the all-seeing and the all-knowing One, we are not only mortal but also frail. We possess the ancient disease of inbred, original sin and because of it we cannot truly, in and of ourselves, truly help ourselves into the way and enjoyment of God's salvation.

Thus we pray again for help, the presence of the Holy Ghost indwelling our souls so that he elevates our affections, inspires our thinking and energises our wills in order to guide us away from that which will harm us and towards that which will protect and bless us. Many things exist to harm us, even things which, in and of themselves, are good but for you or for me. In practice, they are the cause of temptation and sin. Happily there are many things in God's creation, and especially in the provisions of the new creation of grace and mercy, that are for the cleansing, renewing, inspiring and saving of our souls and bodies. As the Household of God and the Body of Christ we are in the fishing boat, the Ark of the Lord, as it were on the high seas, and the Lord is with us to make sure that the boat does not sink, that the sea is calmed and that we arrive at our heavenly destination rejoicing in the Lord.

The Revd Dr Peter Toon (+2009)

Acceptance

Fr Bruce and Kathy Dixon write:

Frank Gardner is known to us as the BBC Security correspondent who appears regularly on our TV screens. He has always been interested in the Middle East and has worked there most of his life. He was in the Army and then worked as a banker before taking up journalism full time.

In 2004 while on assignment in Saudi Arabia he was shot six times by an Al-Qaeda gunman and his camera man was shot dead. He spent months in hospital and had several operations. The damage to his spine has left him paralysed below his waist and he now appears on the news in his wheelchair or supported by a frame.

In the film he made a couple of years back called “Being Frank” he speaks openly of his experience and how he has got on with the things that are important to him. He has met several others who have had life changing disabilities and accidents. The theme that comes through very strongly is that he just had to get on with it. He chose to be both realistic and positive. It is no help to feel sorry for oneself or hard done by. It happened, and it is something that cannot be changed or undone.

We saw in his film how he manages to get around, in and out of his car. We also saw something of the daily routine of how he deals with his bodily functions. It is clear he has just got on with life in spite of the enormous challenges and whenever he appears it is inspiring on the normality he valiantly achieves.

At times, disaster and trouble come to all of us. Hopefully for the vast majority it is nothing like Frank Gardner’s experience. His response and the manner of his response are a wonderful example for us all to aspire to. It is not a case of saying that other troubles are nothing compared to his. It is saying that the need is to recognise first that it has happened and it cannot be changed. The second thing is to remember that life goes on. Maybe in a slightly different way or direction. There remain those around us who love and care and support us. And it just maybe we will be called to do something new. There is a thought we often put on our Christmas card which is below: God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, The courage to change the things that I can, And the wisdom to know the difference.

Feast of the month: The Nativity of Our Blessed Lady

8th September

Dom Prosper writes: “Let us celebrate the Nativity of the Virgin Mary; let us adore her Son, Christ our Lord.” Such is the invitation addressed to us today by the Church. Let us hearken to her call; let us enter into her overflowing joy. The Bridegroom is at hand, for his throne is now set up on earth; yet a little while, and he will appear in the diadem of our human nature.

Truly a better Paradise than the first is given us at this hour. Eden, fear no more that man will endeavour to enter thee; thy Cherubim may leave the gates and return to heaven. What are thy beautiful fruits to us, since we cannot touch them without dying? Hail, new world, far surpassing in magnificence the first creation! Hail blessed haven, where we find a calm after so many storms!

Today the Mother of fair love and of holy hope has appeared. Today the Angels, standing like armed warriors around her cradle, recognize their Queen.

Mary, thou art truly the Tower of David; citadel withstanding the first shock of Satan’s attack, and breaking all his power; true Sion, founded on the holy mountains, the highest summits of virtue; temple and palace, feebly foreshadowed by those of Solomon; house built by Eternal Wisdom for herself: the faultless lines of thy fair architecture were planned from all eternity. Together with Emmanuel, who predestined thee for his home of delights, thou art thyself, O blessed child, the crowning point of creation, the divine ideal fully realised on earth.

He who, being Son of God by essence, willed to be also Son of man, had decreed that he would have a Mother. We too, then, must recognize thee as Mother, even from thy very cradle, and must celebrate thy birthday by adoring thy Son our Lord. Mother of God, Queen of heaven, Sovereign of the world, all generations shall call thee blessed, for thou hast brought forth life and glory for all. In thee the Angels ever find their joy, the just find grace, sinners pardon; in thee, and by thee, and from thee, the merciful hand of the Almighty has reformed the first creation.

Andrew of Crete calls this day a solemnity of entrance, a feast of beginning, whose end is the union of the Word with our flesh; a virginal feast, full of joy and confidence for all. "All ye nations, come hither," cries St. John Damascene; "come every race and every tongue, every age and every dignity, let us joyfully celebrate the birthday of the world's gladness." "It is the beginning of salvation, the origin of every feast," says St. Peter Damian, "for behold! the Mother of the Bridegroom is born. With good reason does the whole world rejoice today; and the Church, beside herself, bids her choirs sing wedding songs."

The whole Church sings, from the rising of the sun to its setting: "Thy birth, O Virgin Mother of God, brought joy to the whole world: for out of thee arose the Sun of Justice, Christ our God: who, taking off the curse, hath bestowed blessing; and, defeating death, hath given us life everlasting."

In the eternal City a mysterious fountain of oil has sprung up from the spot where the first sanctuary of the Mother of God is one day to be built; signs and portents are multiplied; the whole world is in expectation; the poet has sung: "*Behold the last age, foretold by the Sybil, is at hand; behold the great series of new worlds is beginning; behold the Virgin!*"

In Judaea, the sceptre has been taken away from Juda; but the usurper of his power, Herod, is hastening to complete the splendid restoration of the Temple so that it may worthily receive within its walls Mary, the Ark of the New Covenant.

September is the sabbatical month, the first of the Jewish civil year, the seventh of the sacred cycle; the month of Tisri which begins the repose of each seventh year, and in which is announced the holy year of Jubilee; the most joyous of months, with its solemn Neomenia celebrated with trumpets and singing, its feast of Tabernacles, and the commemoration of the completion of Solomon's Temple.

In the heavens, the sun in his passage through the Zodiac, has just left the sign of the Lion to enter that of the Virgin. On earth, two obscure descendants of David, Joachim and Anne, are thanking God for having blessed their long-barren union. So Church intones her beautiful song: "*Hail, holy parent, who didst bring forth the King: who rules heaven and earth for ever and ever.*"

O Lady, who dost deign to call us also thy children, it is well for us that thy goodness is equal to thy greatness! Happy is the human race for having waited and watched for thee during so many long ages, and for having found thee at length; for with thee is salvation and life.

At length, O Mary, our earth possesses thee! Thy birth reveals to it the secret of its destiny, the secret of that love which called it from nothingness, that it might become the palace of the God who dwelt above the heavens. But what a mystery, that poor, weak humanity, inferior to the angels by nature, should be chosen to give to the angels their King and their Queen! Their King they will soon adore, a newborn Babe in thine arms; their Queen they reverence today, admiring thee in thy cradle as only angels can admire.

Queen of angels, thou art our Queen also; accept us as thy liegemen. On this day, when the first movement of thy holy soul was towards God, and the first smile of thy lovely eye was for thy happy parents, may holy Anne allow us to kneel and kiss thy little hand, already filled with the divine bounties of which thou art the predestined dispenser. And now, grow up, sweet little one! Let thy feet be strengthened to crush the serpent, and thy arms to carry the treasure of the world! Angels and men, the whole of nature, God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, all are awaiting the solemn moment, when Gabriel may fly down from heaven to hail thee full of grace, and bring thee the message of eternal love.



The Psalms

Psalm 12: *The words of men and the word of God*

(Commentaries from various sources edited together.)

Psalm 12 is a lament psalm. The author – St. David – is wrestling with an issue in his mind and he works through it for all of us to see and learn from his example. The issue he is struggling with is in the last line of the last verse of Psalm 12. “*When the Vilest Men are Exalted.*”

The exact circumstances under which David wrote this psalm are unknown, and it could have been during many different periods in his life. David knew what it was like to feel that the faithful disappear from among the sons of men. David was a warrior and a fierce soldier, but we see here that he also had to deal with the battles of gossip and the backbiting of idle and deceptive talkers. David knew what it was like to feel all alone in this kind of battle, where it seemed that no one would speak up and defend him.

Application to us - Whether in culture, or politics, or economy we see everyday *vile men* being exalted. Lies have no consequences, mishandling of public funds is wide spread, morally wrong decisions are praised, sin is promoted... and so on and so forth. *Vile things* have not only no consequences, they are not even “just” tolerated - no, they are exalted in our society. Then, of course, we are surprised about the levels of corruption, crime, violence - even amongst the youngest generations.

But before we despair, let’s recall that this is nothing new to our time. David experienced it too. And he dealt with it in his mind. And his dealings with this issue are recorded in Psalm 12. So, let’s find out how he wrestled with the vilest men being exalted.

Verse 1: Invocation and Lament - David starts Psalm 12 by crying out to God: “Help, Lord”. He uses the word *yashang* which means to save, to deliver, to come to one’s aid. The only correct reaction. We, of course, must act against vileness in society, politics, sport, everyday life... we all have our part to play, our responsibility to

show. Yet, it will be not our actions that will bring the solution. God will. He needs to save and deliver and come to our aid.

This invocation also reminds us, Christians, of how we cannot stay silent or hide or pretend everything is ok. We who know God must say: “HELP LORD!” We must pray.

The reason why we must act *and* pray is that there are real consequences to this kind of thing going unchecked in our society.

“*For the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men*” (verse 1). David gives a valid and pressing reason why we need God’s deliverance and help. The godly man ceases. As the vilest men and values are exalted, the *godly*, the righteous tend to be less and less present. They’re marginalised. And that makes sense. A culture will get what it displays to everyone as its highest ideals. If righteousness is exalted in the eyes of a nation, it’ll typically encourage more righteousness from its citizens. And the same is true for a society that exalts vileness. It will encourage more of that type of behaviour.

How “godly” or “ungodly” our society, politics, economics, values, youth, etc. are it also depends on *our* prayers.

Verses 2 - 4 - Now, David moves in verses 2 through 4 to expose the behaviour of the vile. In verse two we have a particular word mentioned twice. “*They SPEAK...*”. We all know the power of what is being said and repeated publicly. It imprints itself on our minds, it forms values and opinions, it has a true impact on individuals and society alike. “*They speak vanity.*” When we hear the word “vanity” we probably think of something worthless. But this word can also refer to *deception*. And I think that emphasis is warranted in this verse because of the parallel in the next line that says these men speak with a double heart – that is, dishonestly. Deception and dishonesty.

There are many such talkers today, even within the church – those who know the *right* answer for every occasion but speak with no honesty or transparency of heart. They constantly speak what people hope to hear or what is assumed to be proper instead of their true thoughts, feelings, and deeds.

And they do this with their neighbours. Their comrades, fellows, companions, or friends. They lie – not to their enemies in this kind of society that exalts vileness – no, they lie to even their friends. And they

do all of this with flattering lips. That word for “flattering” is literally smooth. Slippery. It’s intended to trip you up. So that you fall and injure yourself. And that’s the intention of these men.

They have a double heart. When you’re talking to them, they portray their heart – their desires, their intentions, their thoughts, and feelings – one way. But really, it’s as if there’s this whole other “heart” in them that they keep hidden. And it’s full of violence and evil intentions. No one wants to look as bad as they truly are. These men are evil – not stupid. They know how to hide their true self and put forward an exterior that will allow for them to deceive.

Now, verse 3 is interesting. Seems so violent. “*May the Lord cut off all flattering lips.*” This prayer or request simply expresses where David stands. We don’t need to wonder about his values. He says it clearly what he thinks... Do we? Or do we find excuses? Do we close an eye out of fear or “political correctness” or indifference? Can we still see clearly the difference between sin and virtue, true and false, good and bad?

Finally, verse 4 explains the root of their behaviour, why they exalt the vile - men and values -: they are proud. Pride lords over their hearts instead of God. May this Psalm inspire us to pray earnestly to God that he would save us from the sin of pride which is the cause of so many disaccord, hate, sin.

Verse 5: God speaks - This is the first lament Psalm where God personally speaks. “*For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.*”

So, God begins by giving the reason for his being provoked: the godly, poor and needy are “oppressed”. This is a word describing destruction or devastation or violence. And they’re sighing and groaning as a result of this treatment. And it’s the kind of thing that rouses God to act. God will arise. And when he does, he’s going to set the poor and needy in a position of safety.

That word “safety” is from the same word that we see in verse 1. Where the psalmist says, “Help, Lord.” So, David asked for help. And now God is pictured as promising to do that very thing for David and for his group of poor and needy men. Prayer is being answered.

As a Commentator writes: “Think of God arising in his might. When he arises, he shakes terribly the earth; nothing stands before him when he once arises. Poor, sick, needy, sorrowing, sighing child of God, it is you who can bring him into this marvellous state of activity.”

Verse 6: Praising God's word - Now, we've been hearing a lot about words and speech in this psalm so far. The sons of Adam who are exalting vileness have been speaking. And now, we've just heard from God. And there could hardly be more difference between the two sets of words. The sons of Adam speak boastfully and sinfully and rebelliously. God – on the other hand — speaks truthfully and authoritatively. That's what leads David to marvel at and praise God's words in verse 6: *“The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.”*

What a contrast to the evil, boastful, false words of the sons of Adam. God's words are pure. All of them are – of course. But in the context of this psalm – God's statement in verse 5 that he will arise and put the needy in a place of safety – these are the words that the psalmist declares to be particularly pure in this verse. God's words are like metal that's put through exceedingly hot fire and it comes out without a defect. “As silver enriches its owner, so does the Word of God enrich its lovers. Nothing so strengthens the intellect, clears the judgment, enlarges the views, purifies the taste, quickens the imagination, and educates the whole man.”

Verses 7-8: God protects his own - David clearly expresses his confidence that God will keep or watch or guard or observe his poor, needy, oppressed people even in the midst of a society that marginalises them and exalts vileness.

He will set us in the safety that we so desperately want. His words are completely trustworthy. When he says that he's going to do this for his oppressed people, that's exactly what he will do. He will guard his people throughout our lifetime and forever.

Do you see vileness exalted in your society today? Deal with it in your heart like David did. Call out to God about it. Express your dismay at the exalting of vileness in our society. Make your requests that it end. Express and reflect upon your confidence that God will put an end to it. It is also God's desire.

On the Holy Mass

The Roman Canon (7)

We therefore beg you to graciously accept, O Lord, this oblation of our service and that of your family. Order our days in our peace; and command that we be delivered from eternal damnation and numbered into the fold of your elect. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

As we get closer to the consecration, that is to the moment when bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ, the language of the Eucharist Prayer becomes even more solemn and more requestful, recognising God's graciousness in accepting our offering. This is the proper tone for any prayer.

This does not simply ask God to accept our offering but to accept the oblation of *our service*. We are not simply making offerings to God, we are making offerings that are expected. Our praise is due to God. We have a debt of gratitude to render unto God. It is true we could never thank God enough for what he has done. That is why we join our prayers to Christ who alone can give the Father the thanks and praise he deserves. Our offering is not just some wonderful gesture on our part but is, rather, the partial rendering of a debt that is owed that only Christ can complete.

This, of course, should also remind us of those painful absences when we stayed away from God, worship, church, or prayer. In our times, there is certainly a tendency - even amongst fervent Christians - to see prayer, worship (God?) from *our* point of view. We go to church when *we* feel like going. We participate in worship when *we* are in the mood. We pray when it is good for *us*. While God *is* our loving Father graciously accepting our imperfect and often staggering devotion and affection, and is pleased with that little we have to offer - he is also our sovereign Lord, Creator, God, and Judge to whom we owe all we are and all we have, to whom we owe unreserved service, unconditional surrender, complete obedience.

Then we pray for peace but not in a particular way. "*Order our days in your peace.*" To be under God's good order, under his law, under his dispensation is to experience greater peace. Sin is chaos and disorder, grace is good order and brings peace. Peace and good order

are hand and glove. This prayer, then, is also a promise: we will live according to God's laws, aided by his grace, following his inspirations so that the peace announced at the Saviour's birth and obtained by his Sacrifice on the Cross - renewed and made present on the Altar - may be ours in this life and in the one to come.

A beautiful allusion to Scripture follows where we ask the Lord to number us among the sheep (flock) he has chosen. This is a clear reference to Matthew 25,31 wherein the Lord says he will judge the nations and place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. The sheep will inherit everlasting life, but the the goats (those on his left) will depart unto eternal damnation.

This last bit of the prayer reminds us once more that everything is in the gift of God's grace, even salvation and life eternal. It is not our doing, not our merits (real as they may be), not our efforts that can obtain us salvation. It comes only from God and it is he who - in his unsearchable mercy - had chosen those who will be saved and had made them his own even before the creation of the world. There were yet no stars, no cosmos, no universe; not even the Angels and Cherubs were created when he already saw, knew, loved, and had chosen all those who would be saved and made part of his eternal life and glory. And we earnestly pray that we may be among those - and the fact that we are Christians, we acknowledge and serve the true God, receive his Sacraments, are called his children... all this gives us true and real hope of being among the chosen and elect of his flock.

We also have a very precise description of the Church in this short prayer: family and flock. For the Church throughout the whole world, with its bishops, with our friends and our fellow worshippers, with Christ's Mother and his Apostles, with the Saints and with the Martyrs, is, when all this said, a family whose members, however different, share the same home and heritage. But the Church is also the flock of the good Shepherd, whose voice it knows and who has given his life for it that he may lead it in safety through the valley of the shadow of death. We have already mentioned the Gospel of Matthew where the Lord separates the sheep from the goats. The image of the flock also recalls to our minds the Prophet Isaiah (the Messiah "*shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arms and carry them in his bosom and shall gently lead those that are with young*"); the Prophet Ezekiel

("Thus saith the Lord God: Behold I, even I, will both search my sheep and seek them out"). All these prophecies are fulfilled at the Altar, during the Mass.

This short prayer is also about the dedication of the victim. The priest, as he says it, stretches out his hands over the oblations of bread and wine in the same manner as the Jewish priest laid his hands on the sacrificial offering of the lamb to indicate that it was a substitute for himself and for those who had provided it. During this prayer in the Mass a small bell is rung to let all the congregation know that they, represented by the oblation they have provided, are being offered. It is here, at this precise point, that (in the words of the Book of Common Prayer) "*we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy and lively sacrifice.*" We are about to be presented with him, so that we may truly say: "*Look, Father, look on his anointed face / And only look on us as found in him.*"

In this short prayer the whole theology of the Atonement is expressed. Sinful man lays himself on the altar, ready to be immolated in expiation of his sins; but the only offering which can achieve atonement is the God-Man. The offering represents on the one hand the faithful, on the other Christ. The priest, acting for himself and for the people, lays his hands on the chalice and the host, as though upon the head of Jesus Christ, who invites us to load him with our faults and to recognise that he alone can merit for us pardon for our sins.

"*Order our days in your peace.*" These few words were added by Pope Gregory the Great. As the year 590 opened, Rome seemed on the brink of destruction. Not only were the Barbarians at the gate but nature itself seemed to have turned enemy. Unprecedented floods had carried away whole farmsteads. The overflowed Tiber destroyed granaries with their vital supply of corn. To the famine which ensued was added plague in its most terrible form: a Black Death. Men went mad in the streets. Rome became a desert with piled up corpses on the streets. In this almost apocalyptic situation, after much prayer, fasting, and penitence, the Pope inserted these words into the Mass and they have been prayed - in times of war and peace, in times of famine and prosperity, in good times and in bad - by the whole Church. Whatever we must endure, Christ's words come to us: "*Peace I leave to you, my peace I give to you.*"

Vicar

Fr Gregory Lipovsky - gregorio.hu@gmail.com - 07796 963703
The Vicarage, 58 Abbotsbury Road, Weymouth, DT4 0BJ

The Vicar's day-off is Monday. In case of pastoral emergency, please, try to contact the Assistant Priests, or the Parish Office first.

With enquires about Baptisms, Weddings, Banns, or Funerals, please, contact the Vicar.

Assistant Priests

Fr Tony Ball - tonyball2008@hotmail.co.uk - 07899 027710
Fr Bruce Dixon - bandk2d@hotmail.com - 07535 014239

Churchwardens

Anne Mullis - annemullis566@btinternet.com - 07821 199823
Jeanne James - jeannejames@uwclub.net - 07854 275895

Parish Office

You can contact the Parish Office by email (stpweymouth@gmail.com) or on 771217 (leave a message with your name and number). Since nobody works in the Parish Office currently, messages are not checked daily. If your enquiry is urgent, please contact the Vicar or the Churchwardens directly.

Treasurer

Katherine Harrison - 01305 771217

S.P.O.T.

Pat Perry - 01305 771217

*With enquires about **hiring the Parish Hall, joining the Munch Club or the Choir**, please, contact the Parish Office.*

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!