

BULLETIN 19 – 16TH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

My dear Brothers and Sisters,

Finance -This week saw the reestablishment of our Finance Committee in the Parish, and its inaugural meeting. Our Finances are in a perilous state at present, one more casualty of Covid 19! Whilst the church was closed to public worship there were of course no cash collections, neither was there any hall income, which in itself is a major setback.

I realise that we are all in a very difficult financial period, but we would be very grateful for any donations you could make to the Assumption of Our Lady. Some of our parishioners already have standing orders with us, for which we are extremely grateful, if you have not reviewed your giving for some time, now would be a very helpful time to do so, if you are a parishioner and you do not have a standing order with us but would like to have one, we can help you with that. The Standing order forms and other details are in the porch, and if you need any advice Deacon Michael will be able to help.

Those who are unable to make a Standing Order can still contribute to our work for The Lord in this Parish by using the Donation Basket at the entrance to church, or by placing your gift in an envelope in the "Posting Box" outside the Sacristy when the church is closed.

Face Masks – As the wearing of Face Coverings becomes compulsory in Shops and other confined indoor spaces, it is felt that this should apply to those attending Weekday as well as Sunday Masses. The exception to this is myself: a) I'm at a distance from everyone else b) It would be difficult to say the mass without being muffled. C) As a copd sufferer I am exempt anyway.

With every blessing

Fr. John

WORSHIP THIS WEEK

Sun 19 – 16 of the Year	10.00 Mass	People of the Parish
	18.00 Mass	Monica Hogan (INT)
Tue 21 – feria	10.30 Rosary	
Wed 22 –St. Mary Magdalene	10.00 Mass (ORD)	Mary Skuse (RIP)
Thu 23 – St. Bridget	10.00 Mass	Deacon Michael (INT)
	10.30 Adoration	
Fri 24 - feria	10.00 Mass	Vic Potter (RIP)
	10.30 Stations	
Sun26 – 17 of the Year	10.00 Mass	Jo Gallagher (RIP)
	18.00 Mass	People of the Parish

GOSPEL REFLECTION

“The virtuous will shine like the sun.”

A London parish with a large number of refugee individuals and families decided to hold a “Story-telling and Supper” evening. The aim was to celebrate diversity in the parish and learn something about parishioners who came from various conflict-ridden countries in the Middle East and global south. It was a great success. On a beautiful summer evening, participants enjoyed food from such countries as Syria, Iraq, Pakistan, Cameroon and Guatemala. They sat around tables and listened to the stories and poems performed on stage: Syrian refugee Muhammet talked about fleeing his country at the beginning of the civil war in 2011, and his traumatic journey, which eventually brought him to Britain. He recalled the wonderful food his mother used to serve up and her generous hospitality. Consolata and her two children fled her village in Cameroon when it was attacked by militia one evening. She never saw her husband again and her children cried for weeks, even after receiving shelter in a camp for displaced people. She was grateful that in Britain her children “can play and sleep well whenever they want”.

At the end participants were invited to share their thoughts on postcards and some were read out. One person remarked: “It just reinforces that people are the same the world over – wanting the same things” and “Thank you for enlightening us – we must try to imagine being in the shoes of others”. The parish garden was filled with a sense of the inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers in the parish community.

One interpretation of the parable of the wheat and the darnel is that it is about inclusivity. Darnel is a weed that closely resembles wheat and the difference is evident only when the plants mature and the ears appear. When the owner’s servants discover weeds in the wheat field, the question is not only where they could have come from, but also what should be done about them. To their surprise the owner tells them not to weed the field but to let the wheat and the darnel grow together. When both are mature at harvest time the sorting will be done. The wheat will be gathered up and stored; the darnel will be burned.

Jesus explains that the parable is about good and evil thriving alongside each other in the world. It is not always easy to tell the weeds from the wheat and their roots are intertwined below ground. Judgement is left to God’s angels. We see the inclusive nature of Jesus’ vision. He explains that the power of the kingdom of God is like the growth potential of a tiny mustard seed, or the transforming qualities of yeast. The tiny seeds and yeast spores have a dynamic potential for change that is out of all proportion to their size. With the metaphors of the mustard seed and the yeast, Jesus asks us to trust our inner energies and the power of the Holy Spirit. We can all be agents of change in our world.

So we are invited to use our potential to build God’s kingdom. And a part of that is avoiding the most prevalent of all our sins, the sin of judging other people. Jesus recognised this tendency in his followers, and there is a warning to us in the Church today. We can set ourselves up as gatekeepers, and make some people welcome in our communities, while discouraging others. However, let us get on with the mission

Jesus has given us: proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. This will help us guard against becoming weeds ourselves.

Jesus teaches us to be patient with the ambiguities of life and situations and people, particularly those who are different from ourselves. We can apply this parable to our own Christian lives. We are called to follow Jesus' patience and tolerance towards our neighbours, particularly vulnerable people such as refugees and asylum seekers. And nurturing wonder and humility towards the whole community of our planet – God's creation – is appropriate today as Jesus reminds us of the power of seeds and yeast. From fields of wheat swaying in the wind to birds perching on a mustard tree to the smell of baked bread, there is infinite healing and generosity in nature. Jesus uses another wonderful image from our environment to conclude the Gospel. "The virtuous will shine like the sun" in God's kingdom.