

BULLETIN 20 – 17TH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

My dear Brothers and Sisters,

As you know we have a group of members of the Ordinariate attached to our parish, indeed I am a priest member and was ordained into the Catholic Priesthood in this very church on 2nd June 2012.

The Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham in England and Wales is immediately subject to the Holy See within the territory of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, of which its ordinary Msgr Keith Newton is a member. It was established on 15 January 2011 for groups of former Anglicans in England and Wales in accordance with the apostolic constitution *Anglicanorum coetibus* of Pope Benedict XVI.

The personal Ordinariate is set up in such a way that "corporate reunion" of former Anglicans with the Catholic Church is possible while also preserving elements of a "distinctive Anglican patrimony". The Ordinariate was placed under the title of Our Lady of Walsingham and under the patronage of John Henry Newman, a former Anglican himself.

In order to further the mission of the Ordinariate in its work of "realised ecumenism" in this parish, from next Sunday onwards the 10am Mass on the first Sunday of the month will be said using the Ordinariate Rite. This Rite was given to the Ordinariates in 2015 by the Holy Father its Missal is called "Divine Worship – The Missal". This rite uses traditional English language and is based on the Old Sarum Rite of pre-reformation England. We are already using this Missal at the Wednesday Masses.

This will be a normal Sunday Mass for you all, a copy of the Order of Mass will be available for you (please take home) and is on our parish website under the Ordinariate Tab. This will be an ideal opportunity for those of you who have non-Catholic partners to join you in worship. The 6pm mass on Sundays will be as usual.

With every good wish
Fr. John

WORSHIP THIS WEEK

Sun26 – 17 of the Year	10.00 Mass	Jo Gallagher (RIP)
	18.00 Mass	People of the Parish
Tue 28 – feria	10.30 Rosary	
Wed 29 – St. Martha	10.00 Mass (ORD)	Celine McGuiligan
Thu 30 – feria	10.00 Mass	Fred Brittan (RIP)
	10.30 Adoration	
Fri 31 – St Ignatius	10.30 Stations	
Sun 2 – 18 of the Year	10.00 Mass (ORD)	People of the Parish
	18.00 Mass	John Hogan (RIP)

GOSPEL REFLECTION

“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field.”

The people of San Francisco were taken by surprise when in March 1848 a newspaper vendor started shouting, “Gold! Gold!” The discovery of gold in California became a Gold Rush, though not immediately. These were the days before air travel. It took four or five months to get from the east coast to the “Wild West”, whether you went by ship around the tip of South America; by mule through the jungle of Panama; or by wagon across the prairies. By the following year, however, gold-diggers were arriving in huge numbers: these were the so-called “forty-niners”.

Hundreds of thousands left their jobs, homes and families in Europe, China and other parts of America in the hope of getting rich. Many died on the journey; others in mining accidents or violent disputes. With no law enforcement, anyone could stake a claim to land, only to have it grabbed from them as soon as they struck lucky. Unbridled greed and savage competition reduced human life to its most primitive. Were fortunes made? Many early gold-diggers made thousands of dollars, but lucky strikes became less common as time went on. “Forty-niners” had to endure all the hardships of the trail: life in a shack; grinding toil; and the company of gamblers, crooks and gunslingers, with no certainty of finding gold. Yet they were prepared to give up everything they held dear in the dream of getting rich.

Gold Rush towns were full of lawless, reckless people – not the kind you might expect to find in God’s kingdom, you might think. However, in today’s Gospel we hear a parable about some shady dealings following the discovery of gold, and Jesus is not talking about California, but the kingdom of heaven. Imagine, he says, a man finding buried treasure in a field. Furtively, he puts it back. Then what does he do? Sells everything to buy the field. That treasure must have been worth having, if the man was willing to give up everything he owned, though it does sound rather unethical to keep quiet about the true value of a piece of land in order to secure its purchase. Can Jesus *really* be saying that God would welcome such an unscrupulous person into the kingdom? He is exaggerating to make a point, perhaps, but the message is clear. It is not respectability that will get us into heaven, but how much we desire to be there.

Jesus’ description of the kingdom overturned expectations. Religious leaders like the Pharisees thought that only pious people deserved the reward of God’s friendship. They hadn’t reckoned on God’s mercy; nor on the deep longing of sinful people for the chance to turn their lives around. Such are the people God desires: those, that is, who truly desire God, especially those for whom God’s friendship matters more than anything else.

We heard the psalmist say today that God’s law “means more to me than silver and gold”. How true is that for us? When Solomon was granted a wish, he did not choose wealth or health or popularity. Some people, however, are preoccupied with those things. Their heart is set on making money, improving their looks and prolonging their years.

Faith may be what many of us hold most dear; knowing that heaven is waiting for us when we die. Faith, however, is more than investing in a comfortable afterlife. When

Jesus was describing the kingdom of heaven, he was also talking about the enrichment of our lives in the here and now. Every morning and evening it is the Jewish tradition to recite the commandment: "You shall love the Lord our God with all your heart and soul." That is what Jesus meant by "selling everything". God's kingdom is about wholehearted commitment: making the daily choices that please God; doing what God asks of us. Jesus is urging us to let God reign over us if we wish to find true happiness.

Treasure is not found lying on the surface. Superficial things like finery or celebrity are never worth as much as people think. Many "forty-niners" gave up everything to search for gold, only to find disappointment. So it is today: some people spend their whole lives chasing dreams. The most valuable treasures are buried deep. If our life with God does not seem as important right now as money or appearance or popularity, then Jesus challenges us to rethink our priorities: "Set your hearts on [God's] kingdom first" – and every other good thing will be added to you.