

BULLETIN 25

22ND SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

At long last the builders have been able to start work on Church House. The Diocesan Property Office and their appointed building surveyor have given us the green light to start the approved necessary refurbishment. The house which has extensive areas of black mould and damp, needs a central heating system, a new kitchen and bathroom, new flooring, and redecoration. We will not be able to afford to do the whole house as it is the cost is coming in at £56,000 plus professional fees. The parish has available funds of £25,000 and the diocese has agreed to lend us the balance. This means that there will be a debt for some years to come. This is regrettable but I hope you will agree that the survival and growth of the Parish is better served when the Priest is resident in the presbytery.

We will have to organise some fund raising events in the future, however this is not possible whilst Covid restrictions are in place. Maybe some of you would like to make a one off donation, we can take anything except credit cards and bit coins. As they say in Tesco's, "every little helps" if so could you place it in an envelope marked "Church House" and either hand it to me or place it in the post box outside the sacristy.

With every Blessing

Fr. John

OUR WORSHIP THIS WEEK

Sun 30 – 22 of the Year	1000 Mass 1800 Mass	People of the Parish Alfred & Emma Corbyn (RIP)
Tue 1 - St. Sebbi	1030 Rosary	
Wed 2 – feria	1000 Mass	Isabella Doig (INT)
Thu 3 – St. Gregory	1000 Mass 1020 Adoration	Helen Osborn (INT)
Fri 4 – of the Sacred Heart	1000 Mass 1020 Stations	Jim Birchall (RIP)
Sun 6 – 23 of the Year	1000 Mass 1800 Mass	Frederick White (RIP) People of the Parish

GOSPEL REFLECTION

“There seemed to be a fire burning in my heart.”

“No wonder you have so few friends, Lord: you treat them all so badly.” It was St Teresa of Avila who made that remark. It’s a remark that’s widely known, because it rings a bell for so many of us. Often those who strive generously to serve God seem to get more than their fair share of suffering and hardship.

Take Jeremiah. He never wanted to be a prophet, but found there was no way of evading the divine call. To use his own bold, even shocking, language: God seduced him, overpowered him, and deceived him. He finds himself addressing people who won’t listen to him, who ridicule him, even punish him in the stocks. No wonder he’s tempted to say: “I’ll just not think about God anymore.” But he can’t do it, because, as he explains, “There seemed to be a fire burning in my heart”; it was the fire of his love for God and it made the prophet carry on his apparently hopeless task.

It isn’t only God’s friends who have to suffer, but even God’s own Son. In the Gospel we see Jesus revealing to the disciples the anguish he feels as he sets out for Jerusalem, knowing that opposition, rejection, an appalling death await him there. Peter is shocked and cries out: “Heaven preserve you, Lord... This must not happen to you.” Jesus’ response may seem harsh: “Get behind me, Satan... the way you think is not God’s way but man’s.” Jesus had given his apostle Simon the new name of Peter, which means “rock”; but now he calls him “Satan”.

The sharpness of the reply reveals how deeply Jesus dreads what lies ahead. “Can’t you see,” he seems to say, “My task is hard enough without you playing the devil’s game too?” Like Jeremiah before him, Jesus shrinks from the suffering his mission will entail. So why does he go through with it? It is because of the fire of love for his Father and for us that burns in his heart; that’s what leads him to march steadfastly on to Jerusalem and to the cross.

The cross slips into our lives, too, in all kinds of ways. Sometimes in small or predictable ones: like bad weather when we expected sunshine; the inevitable aches and pains of getting old; the sacrifice and unselfishness involved in bringing up a family. At other times the cross can come in devastating form – a frightening outcome to an X-ray, the death of a dear one. A young woman of faith who lost her husband in a traffic accident cried out in her grief, “You sometimes wonder if God knows what he’s doing.” Most of us have experienced that feeling. We’d all like a Christianity without the cross, but a Christianity without the cross wouldn’t be Christianity at all. Jesus tells us: “If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him... take up his cross and follow me.” Not only is he indicating that, in one way or another, the shadow of the cross will fall across our lives, he is also reminding us that he has gone before us in the way of suffering.

An early Christian writer compared Jesus to a mother who takes a spoonful of her child’s medicine in order to encourage her little one to do the same; it’s her way of saying, “See, there is nothing to fear from the nasty-tasting concoction, in fact it’s going to do you good.” Jesus wants us to know that just as the cross is the supreme proof of his love, so our gracious acceptance of the cross in our lives can be the finest proof of our love for him. There may be times when, like Jeremiah, we rebel. But, please God, even then, like Jeremiah, we’ll

experience that fire of love in our hearts which will lead us once again to fall in behind Jesus, our friend and leader.

At every Mass, we celebrate the Jesus who not only died but also rose again (resurrection is the other side of the cross), and who we believe will one day, in St Paul's words, "repay each one as [their] works deserve". On that day his friends will discover what, deep down in their hearts, they have always known: that if at times God seems to treat them badly, yet God loves them dearly and holds in store for them a reward infinitely exceeding all that they have suffered in the Lord's name.

Contact Details –

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