

BULLETIN 31 – 11th October 2020

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

November is the month of “The Holy Souls”, when the Church traditionally remembers all those who have died. We shall again be inviting all who wish for their loved ones to be held before the Altar. There are special printed envelopes for this use in the porch, please take one and enclose the names of your departed relatives and friends, together with your offering and place it in the basket before the Altar. The basket will be there from Sunday 1st November.

Thank you to all who donated food or money to our Harvest Thanksgiving, the produce was taken to the Harlow Food Bank on Tuesday and the money, £134, will be sent to Cafod next week.

With every blessing

Fr. John

TIMES OF MASS AND OTHER SERVICES THIS WEEK

Sun	11	28 th of the year	10:00 Mass	Jeff Campbell
			18:00 Mass	people of the parish
Wed	14	St. Callistus	10:00 Mass	Jamie Auza (INT)
Thu	15	St. Teresa of Avila	10:00 Mass	John Hogan (RIP)
			10:20 Adoration	
Fri	16	St. Margaret Mary	10:00 Mass	Norah Green (RIP)
Sun	18	29 th of the year	10:00 Mass	people of the parish
			18:00 Mass	Tess Hogan (RIP)

GOSPEL REFLECTION

“Tell those who have been invited that I have my banquet all prepared...Come to the wedding.”

The German composer Carl Maria von Weber wrote his *Invitation to the Dance* originally for the piano. It begins majestically, reflecting the formality of the request being made between the partners. Once acceptance is assured the music changes completely, sweeping the couple away in a crescendo of melody and movement. There can be successful invitations, a delight to all concerned. However, invitations may also be fraught with complications. Think of weddings: who is to be invited, who excluded? Modern weddings in the Western world can be expensive and very demanding of all involved. There are lists of desired presents sent out on behalf of the bride and groom.

For parents, there are children’s parties to think about, where again the problem of whom to invite comes to the fore. Again there’s the question of what present should be brought, and the parents of the child whose party it is have to sort out fun bags of gifts for those attending. Now there are even professional party organisers, who are intended to take away the burden of these decisions, organise the fun in a venue of choice and allow the parents to sit quietly chatting and nursing a drink.

Against such a background it is reassuring to know that Jesus himself had problems with invitations. Not that he disliked or refused them; rather the opposite. In the Gospels he accepts invitations whenever offered, is accused by his detractors of dining with public sinners, and even, as is the case with Zacchaeus, engineers an invitation before it has been offered. Nor is he always the easiest of

guests. When dining with Pharisees he never misses an opportunity to upbraid them for their behaviour, which might seem rather churlish in our polite world of dinner parties.

It is in his parables that Jesus faces up to the big problem in certain invitations. Normally we would be only too eager to accept an invitation to an important event, but he gives examples of kings or lords holding prestigious weddings, and those invited refusing to come. Not only do they refuse to come but can go so far as to maltreat and kill the messengers sent to tell them of the event. Today's story runs two parables together, one with the conclusion that all are to be invited now that the original guests have refused, the second to do with how we are expected to respond to an invitation with good faith. What Jesus is really exposing is how God constantly invites us to come and celebrate, and how we resolutely refuse.

God's invitation to us is to celebrate with God in the Eucharist. It is in this celebration that we make present once again the mysterious act of salvation brought about by Christ's suffering, death and resurrection. The format in which we celebrate is a mixture of the synagogue service, welcoming God's word among us, and the Last Supper at which Jesus anticipated, through the blessing and gift of the bread and wine, the sacrifice he was about to undergo.

Why are so many reluctant to accept the invitation? The reasons given may be similar to the parables. We have other more pressing, more important things to do. There is also a failure in us to appreciate the full nature of the celebration, and we sometimes blame the celebrant or the form the liturgy takes for our drifting away. The liturgy is too traditional, too modern, too boring, too dull – and in our modern need for entertainment it can be all of these things. Any human attempt to express what is happening will fall short, though that does not take away the responsibility to try to catch something of the essence of God being among us as we gather in God's name. The problem is that if we do cut ourselves off in this way we run the risk of becoming isolated and losing the sense of meaning in our lives. God does not abandon us, but when we abandon God we certainly do not make God's attempt to love us any easier.

Help stop DIY abortions

During the Coronavirus pandemic unborn babies and their mothers have been at even greater risk of abortion. The Government's "pills through the post", brought in as Covid measure, means that over 23,000 women in England and Wales aborted their baby at home during lockdown. Please help us to spread the truth about DIY abortion and save women and babies from the tragedy of abortion.

Will you deliver pro-life information leaflets about DIY abortions door-to-door in your area? Every leaflet could make the difference to a vulnerable woman and save a baby's life. Go to our [website](#) to learn more and order some leaflets. Or you can order leaflets by calling SPUC 020 7091 7091.

Sign the petition to save the right to save lives

Pro-abortion MPs in Parliament want to stop pregnant women getting help outside abortion clinics by calling for buffer zones. SPUC is campaigning to save the right for peaceful pro-life vigils to take place. Hundreds of children are alive today in this country because their mother met a loving pro-life person just before they walked into the abortion clinic. We must protect this vital work.

Please sign our petition to save the right to save lives. It only takes a minute of your time, but it could mean a lifetime for an unborn baby. You can sign the petition here: <https://spuc.org.uk/SaveTheRightToSaveLives>

Contact Details –

For those who would like to speak with me on any matter please telephone 01279 429388 or email me on john.corbyn@btinternet.com