

BULLETIN B 2 – 6TH DECEMBER 2020 SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

My dear Brothers and Sisters,

Welcome Home. Today we are allowed once again to come to Mass. It all seems a bit wacky this situation, they keep saying that Churches and other places of worship are some of the most Covid secure, but that doesn't stop them closing us down, perhaps the government are treating us as "non-essential venues".

Anyway, we are now open again for mass, and I hope to see you all this Sunday. The 6.00pm Mass will also be starting again this week. We must remain vigilant, sanitize our hands, wear a mask, and keep our distance. Can I also remind you all that congregational singing is very dangerous, so please don't, Simon and Lucy will sing during the mass but we must not join in!

Deacon Michael and I have again signed some Christmas Cards, please take one for your household, and if you know of any who are housebound or sick please take one for them.

Stay Safe and God Bless.

Fr. John

Here is a thought for you!

In the US a pastor attended a men's breakfast in the middle of a rural farming area.

The group had asked an older farmer, decked out in bib overalls, to say grace for the morning breakfast:

"Lord, I hate buttermilk," the farmer began. The visiting pastor opened one eye to glance at the farmer and wonder where this was going. The farmer loudly proclaimed, "Lord, I hate lard." Now the pastor was growing concerned. Without missing a beat, the farmer continued, "And Lord, you know I don't much care for raw white flour." The pastor once again opened an eye to glance around the room and saw that he wasn't the only one to feel uncomfortable.

Then the farmer added, **"But Lord, when you mix them all together and bake them, I do love warm fresh biscuits. So Lord, when things come up that we don't like, when life gets hard, when we don't understand what you're saying to us, help us to just relax and wait until you are done mixing. It will probably be even better than biscuits. Amen."**

Within that prayer there is great wisdom for all when it comes to complicated situations like we are experiencing in the world today.

Stay strong brothers and sisters, because our life is being mixed with lots of things that we don't care for.....relax and wait until the mixing is done.

MASS AND ADORATION SCHEDULE THIS WEEK

Sun	6	2 nd of Advent	1000 Mass 1040 Adoration	Thanksgiving for re-opening
			1800 Mass	People of the parish
Tue	8	Immaculate Conception	1900 Mass	Birchall family & friends (RIP)
Wed	9	feria	1000 Mass 1020 Adoration	Isabella Doig (Ints)
Thu	10	feria	1000 Mass 1020 Adoration	Clodagh Cefolani (RIP)
Fri	11	feria	1000 Mass	John Hogan (RIP)
Sun	13	3 rd of Advent	1000 Mass 1800 Mass	People of the parish Theresa Field (RIP)

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

"This Tuesday we will be celebrating the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. On this day, let us remember all unborn children, especially those recently conceived. That safety, protection and love would be granted to them, and that we the church, with the intercession of Our Lady, would take on the call to support these precious children of God. Lord hear us".

GOSPEL REFLECTION

The tale is told of a young man who discovered a beautiful song that touched his heart and inspired him to sing, first silently and then aloud. Others heard his voice and its words, which almost danced through the air and into their hearts. Before long, they too were singing. Person by person, the music spread throughout the land, promising ever more freedom and joy as the number of singers increased. Some people disliked the song and objected to its message of hope, which seemed to threaten their very existence: something had to be done to silence it. The leaders dispatched a detachment of soldiers to arrest and imprison the young man who had begun the cascade of song. Yet he continued singing, his voice soaring to the skies beyond the bars of his cell. Other prisoners heard him and joined in the chorus.

Enough was enough! The only way to silence the song would be to kill the singer. An armed guard marched him into the courtyard in the centre of the prison and fastened him, still singing, to a pole in the ground. The senior officer gave the order, the guns barked and, at last, there was silence – but only for a second: from every cell in the prison, one inmate after another started singing the same song that had cost the young man his life. This time, in spite of the death of the young singer, his song spread throughout the world. It could not be stopped. The song was greater than the authorities who had tried to destroy it.

John the Baptist described himself as a voice crying in the wilderness as he called upon the people of his time to prepare the way of the Lord. The Jewish people had a long history of hearing prophets challenge them to repentance and saw the Baptist in the light of their sacred traditions. John's words and unusual lifestyle fitted into a recognisable and deeply cherished pattern. That is why they headed towards the River Jordan for a good dose of spiritual cleansing. John gave practical, common-sense suggestions for leading a better life and thereby inspired many people to try to follow his ideas. It's something we can recognise and appreciate. Most of us appreciate the feel-good factor after a session of renouncing past shortcomings. How many of us have emerged light-hearted from the sacrament of reconciliation?

Yet John was far from putting himself on a pedestal: he was merely the pointer in the right direction. However high he might rise in people's estimation, he recognised his unworthiness even to unfasten the Messiah's sandal strap. How did John feel when the Messiah turned out to be his cousin? Most of us would hold back from equating a cousin and God. That, however, says something about John's humility: in a way that he couldn't understand, the Baptist knew that he was merely the vehicle for a song that was greater than himself.

The story of the young singer echoes the work, imprisonment and execution in Mexico of Blessed Miguel Pro, a young Jesuit, who died by firing squad on 23 November 1927. He was executed without trial, wrongfully accused of trying to assassinate the president. His crime? He had faithfully served the oppressed and suppressed Mexican Church during the Calles dictatorship. His song? Jesus and the Gospel. Like John the Baptist, Pro was a singer who willingly gave his life for the song that had touched his heart and inspired his music. Both were voices in a wilderness, preparing the way for the Lord who was to come.

Before he died, Pro blessed the firing squad. He knelt in prayer, raised his arms in the shape of the cross, holding a crucifix in one hand and his rosary in the other. He prayed aloud: "May God have mercy on you! May God bless you! Lord, you know that I am innocent! With all my heart I forgive my enemies!" He shouted, "Viva Cristo Re!" ("Long live Christ the King!") – and the guns fired. Forty thousand people attended Pro's funeral: his song had been heard.

If I were charged with being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to indict me? Do I sing the same song as John the Baptist and Miguel Pro? Do I have their courage?