

Parish of the Assumption of Our Lady

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BULLETIN B 31 – 27TH JUNE 2021 THE 13TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

My dear brothers and sisters,

Tuesday this week is the feast of Ss. Peter and Paul, in usual times it is a Holy Day of Obligation when we have a duty to attend mass. During the pandemic the obligation rule has been suspended, Nevertheless, I know that many of you will want to come to mass and so I have put an extra mass on in the morning, we will be joined by children from St. Albans at the 10am mass. Today there will be a second collection as you leave mass, which is our annual opportunity to contribute to the work of the Holy Father. The Peter's Pence Collection supports the Pope's philanthropy by giving the Holy Father the means to provide emergency assistance to those in need because of natural disaster, war, oppression, and disease.

God bless

Fr. John

From Monday 26th - Friday 30th July, the Brentwood Catholic Youth Service will be hosting "**Lourdes at your Local**" for Summer 2021. There will be a Mass celebrated each morning at 11am, with Anointing of the Sick and joyful music, followed by coffee and refreshments. These will then be streamed online each evening, as well as Daily Rosary, a Torchlight Procession and Talent Show (which we encourage you to also get involved in!). The Masses will take place in Leigh-on-Sea, Clacton-on-Sea, Canning Town, Wanstead and Brentwood, and we are welcoming **all ages**, with particular invitation to those who have been housebound or shielding over the last year. Further details and a full itinerary are available on our website www.bcys.net/events or you can email gabriellafusi@dioceseofbrentwood.org for more information.

TIMES OF MASS THIS WEEK

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|-----|----|--|----------------|-----------------------------|
| Sun | 27 | 13 th in Ordinary Time | 1000 Mass | People of the Parish |
| | | | 1800 Mass | Eileen & Alex Welsh (RIP) |
| Tue | 29 | Ss. Peter & Paul | 1000 Mass | the Holy Father |
| | | | 1900 Mass | People of the Parish |
| Wed | 30 | First Martyrs of Rome | 1000 Mass | Vera & Patrick Wright (RIP) |
| | | | 1030 Adoration | |
| Thu | 1 | St. Oliver Plunkett | 1000 Mass | William Ryan (RIP) |
| | | | 1030 Adoration | |
| Fri | 2 | 1 st Friday (of the Sacred Heart) | 1000 Mass | Thomas McGuckin |
| Sun | 4 | 14 th in Ordinary Time | 1000 Mass | Our FHC Children |
| | | | 1800 Mass | People of the Parish |

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Fr. John will be available to hear confessions in church: - Tue 6.30pm and Wed 10.30am or by appointment. We are now allowed to use the confessional room but face masks are to be worn.

GOSPEL REFLECTION

Have you noticed how much people talk nowadays about the work-life balance? There's a sense that many of us struggle with the demands on us, from our employers, from our families, our friends, even from our church. We're pulled this way and that, ending up doing nothing very well. Sometimes the cost is material: there are demands on our money. But often it's time that is the real problem. And sometimes there are occasions when we might shy away from helping someone. Work-life balance can be an excuse, too. We tell ourselves that we really haven't got time to make a phone call to a lonely relative, or bother to go to the food bank to make a donation, or visit someone in hospital. "I need some me-time" is a popular twenty-first-century refrain.

In today's second reading, St Paul is very concerned about striking a balance, urging the Corinthian Christians to get things in order, so that they look after those in need but meet their own needs as well. "Remember how generous the Lord Jesus was," he reminds them. God's generosity is vast, as the reading from Wisdom points out: God created everything, it tells us. And that huge embrace for the world is evident in God's Son too. Mark's Gospel recounts Jesus being pressed on all sides. People want his attention and his healing. He attends to Jairus whose daughter is sick; we can imagine how desperate the father must be. The crowd keeps pressing and in the middle of it, as Jesus is probably struggling to keep his footing when he is jostled while following Jairus to his home, there's someone else in need. A woman who is bleeding touches his garment. And then, hearing that Jairus' daughter is dead, Jesus doesn't hold back. He visits her, regardless.

For people of Jesus' time, this was remarkable behaviour. They had a horror of blood and a woman with a haemorrhage like this would have been seen as ritually unclean. Touching a dead body would also have been seen as unacceptable: Jesus would have contaminated himself. But instead, he responds to these people, just as he would to anyone else, recognising the person in need. Healing the woman with the haemorrhage and bringing Jairus' daughter back to life would have been extraordinary moments. Mark tells us that the people who witnessed the little girl coming back to life were overcome with astonishment. We can imagine how Jesus' actions were so shocking to people for whom death was something that took people so rapidly in an age with little medical knowledge. The reading from the book of Wisdom stresses that death is not God's doing. Now Jesus is overcoming it.

The incarnation of Jesus was, above all else, a physical thing, and this Gospel is full of the physical. There are the crowds of people, pushing and shoving. There is the woman with the haemorrhage. There is the tenderness of Jesus taking the hand of the little girl. And then he overcomes death, the end of the physical body, and restores her to life. God is not some ethereal being here: God is among us, part of our lives. Indeed, Jesus is so practical about the material world that he urges Jairus and the others to give the restored little girl something to eat.

We have here a God who is part of the human world and concerned about it. The Lord can overcome what threatens it – ill health and death – but is also right at the centre of it. As Christians we need to be right at the centre of life too, rather than having time only for the spiritual.

So, there are clear messages here about how we live out our discipleship through service. As St Paul urged the Corinthians, there needs to be balance in life. But just as we should be mindful of our own needs, we must be watchful of others. Christianity is about solidarity, not endless doses of me-time. In Mark's Gospel we see Jesus' solidarity with those deemed literally untouchable by society. We cannot raise others from the dead but we can bring those rejected and unwanted back to a fuller life in society by our acceptance of them. It can be hard sometimes to overcome our own prejudices, but Jesus can awake us from our assumptions about others. Faith will bring us back to life in so many ways.