

Parish of the Assumption of Our Lady
Old Harlow, Essex CM17 0HA
Tel: 01279 434203

<http://www.catholicchurchoftheassumption.co.uk>

BULLETIN B 47 – 17TH OCTOBER 2021
29TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

My dear brothers and sisters,

Our First Holy Communion children have reached the end of their sessions and are now ready to make their Holy Communion for the first time this Sunday at the 10am Mass. Please continue to pray for them; they are: Aleksander & Maximilian Baldwin, Rosie & Finley Sweeting, Evie Odu, and Archie O'Keeffe. I also take this opportunity to thank Clem Williams their catechist, for her dedication and kindness in teaching them.

I am happy to say that our Childrens Liturgy will restart from the first Sunday of November, we have four volunteer teachers and I am so grateful to them for their generosity in coming forward to help our young people grow in the faith.

Don't forget to get your tickets for next Sunday's Sonare Choir concert. If you buy them online they are £10, but £12 on the day. I went online and got mine, really easy to do, I'm hopeless at such things, the link is www.sonarechoir.com, if I can do it anyone can!

Congratulations to Jamie and Lauren Millbery who were married in our church yesterday.

God bless
Fr. John

TIMES OF THIS WEEK'S SERVICES

Sun	17	29 th in OT	1000 Mass	Judith Hopkinson (RIP)
			1800 Mass	People of the Parish
Tue	19	feria	1900 Mass	
Wed	20	feria	1000 Mass	
			1020 Rosary and Adoration	
Thu	21	feria	1000 Mass	
			1020 Rosary and Adoration	
Fri	22	St. John Paul ii	1000 Mass	
Sun	24	30 th in OT	1000 Mass	Margaret Ayrton (RIP)
			1800 Mass	People of the Parish

GOSPEL REFLECTION

Have you ever realised that somebody has completely misunderstood you and what matters to you? Perhaps a friend whom you've known for years takes you by surprise. The friend might say to you: "I know how ambitious you are, so you must be livid your colleague has been promoted," when you're not ambitious at all, and never wanted the top job and all its responsibilities. You're just delighted your colleague has had their talents recognised and will be shouldering that burden, and not you.

Jesus must have felt like that when his apostles James and John approached him and said that they wanted to share in his glory. After all this time together, Jesus might have thought, they don't get it: this isn't what I'm about at all. But when we realise someone has misunderstood us, we have options. We can keep silent and let the confusion continue, or we can try to explain ourselves. Out of a miscomprehension can come a deeper understanding. This is what Jesus chooses to do with James and John – explain further. In doing so, he enables us to know more fully what his mission and our own calling are.

Jesus starts his teaching here by telling James and John that there are matters that are not his to decide on. He takes this further when he speaks about his own role: this is not a glorious, all-powerful figure, despite being the Son of God, but a suffering servant, as prophesied by Isaiah, who will serve God's purpose by making the ultimate sacrifice – that of his life. He "offers his life in atonement", as Isaiah puts it or, as Mark's Gospel says, "as a ransom for many". It is in fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah that Jesus is hinting at what is to come as well. For rather than having James and John on his right and left in glory, he will die on a cross with a thief on either side.

There is no fear in Jesus here, even though he has, in the verses that precede today's Gospel passage, foretold his own death. Mark says Jesus had been striding ahead of the disciples on the road to Jerusalem, suggesting a confidence and enthusiasm for the task ahead, while the disciples were both amazed and afraid. And it is then, as Jesus speaks of his own death and his rising again, that James and John tell him that they want to be with him in glory. They are getting ahead of themselves. For the Christian, the journey of life means not glory but serving others. That is Jesus' mission for himself and his followers, and it could not be more demanding. After all, Jesus tells James and John: "The cup that I must drink you shall drink" – something that hints at what is to come. For later, during his passion in the garden of Gethsemane, as Jesus grows aware of what torment is to come, he asks his Father: "If it is possible, let this cup pass me by." For those, including the apostles, called to follow Jesus unto death, they too will have to drink from that cup. Jesus will rise to glory, but first his mission must be accomplished and his disciples must also undertake that mission. Jesus' comment that it is not his choice who will be at his side suggests that someone else – God the Father – will allot those places.

The Gospel offers an enormous challenge to Jesus' followers. Here we see God's own Son prepared to be not the one served but the one who serves and he urges the apostles to live their lives in the same way. The pagans, Jesus says, had rulers who lorded it over them. But Christianity is about a rethinking of leadership and the way everyone lives. It may seem hard, for putting others first may go against our survival instinct, but the Gospel offers hope too. The apostles went on to be inspired by the Holy Spirit and to spread the Good News, taking Jesus' message to heart. So they show us that ambition and pride can give way to self-giving and humility. We can all follow in the footsteps of the one who paid the ransom. We are set free by his perfect sacrifice to discover and develop all that is best of our humanity, for the greater glory of God. It is then that we can approach the throne of grace, as today's reading from Hebrews puts it.