

# The Little Flower Messenger

Year A TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2020

*Welcome to our Parish Community of St. Theresa of Lisieux*

The Presbytery, High Lane, Stansted Mountfitchet, CM24 8LQ

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(Please note that the Parish Office is closed until Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September.  
Thank you).

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## Gospel: Matthew 16:13-20

*'You are Peter and I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven.'*

**1st Reading:** *Isaiah 22:19-23*

**Psalm 137(138):1-3, 6,8:** *Your love, O Lord, is eternal: discard not the work of your hands.*

**2nd Reading:** *Romans 11:33-36*

**Gospel Acclamation:** *Alleluia, alleluia! You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church. And the gates of the underworld can never hold out against it. Alleluia!*

**Communion Antiphon:** *Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, says the Lord, and I will raise him up on the last day.*

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## This Week's Good News

Dear Friends,

The first reading, taken from Isaiah, gives a detailed description of the investiture of a royal court official. The robe, the sash, and the keys are insignia of this office. The Lord God, through Isaiah, tells Shebna that the keys of authority will be taken away from him, the unfaithful, proud “master of the royal palace.” In the Responsorial Psalm (Ps 138), David thanks God for having raised him from lowly origins and given him authority as King over the people of Israel. In the second reading, St. Paul points out that God is the Source of all authority on earth and in Heaven. Today's Gospel passage, giving the Petrine promise of Mt. 16:16-20, defines Catholicism. Here, Jesus reveals his plan to build his Church on the strong bedrock foundation of Peter, to whom he will then give the Keys of teaching and governing authority in the Church. Thus, Simon Bar-Jona receives a new mission symbolised by a change of name, Cephas (Peter), the rock (petros), on which Jesus will build his Church which the power of evil cannot overcome. Peter will be given the Keys of the Kingdom and the power to bind and to loose (make laws; exercise authority) on earth, decisions which Heaven will ratify. Thus, Jesus commissions Peter, giving him authority and leadership in the Church.

This incident took place at Caesarea Philippi, twenty-five miles northeast of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus asked a question in two parts. The first question: “What is the public opinion?” The apostles' answer was, “Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” John the Baptist was so great a figure that it might well be that he had come back from the dead. Elijah, the greatest of the prophets was believed to be the forerunner of the Messiah. The phrase “one of the prophets” suggested that Jesus had a ministry like that of the former prophets. When the people identified Jesus with Elijah and with Jeremiah, they were paying him a great compliment and setting him in a high place, for Jeremiah and Elijah



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were the expected forerunners of the Anointed One of God. When they arrived, the Kingdom would be very near indeed. The second question: “Who do you say that I am?” For the first time in their relationship Peter, speaking for the other disciples, declared publicly: “You are the Christ (Messiah), the Son of the living God.” Peter was the first apostle to recognise Jesus publicly as the Anointed One (also translated Messiah or Christ. Christ is the Greek word for the Hebrew word Messiah). Peter was saying that Jesus is the Christ, the anointed one of God, Immanuel, the Salvation of God — God who became Man to save sinners! It is evident that Jesus was well pleased with Peter’s answer. Jesus first pronounced a blessing upon Peter, the only disciple in the Gospels to receive a personal blessing. “Blessed are you, Simon son of John!”

Then Jesus makes a promise to him “You are Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church.” Jesus’ promise to Peter is the Catholic basis for the position of the Pope and of the Church. The Church teaches that Peter was given the keys which admit a man to Heaven or exclude him from it, and that to Peter was given the power to absolve or not to absolve a man from his sins. In other words, Jesus gave to Peter the authority to determine what courses of action would be permitted or forbidden in the Church. It is further argued by the Catholic Church that this power given to Peter has descended to all the Bishops of Rome throughout all ages, and that it exists today in Pope Francis, who, as the direct successor of Peter, is the head of the Church and the Bishop of Rome. So here, in the New Testament, we see Jesus handing over these “keys” to the Kingdom of Heaven, to one of the apostle’s, Peter. We notice the similarities and differences between this passage and the one from Isaiah in today’s first reading. Where Eliakim has the key placed on his shoulder, Jesus hands the keys to Peter; Where “he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open,” Peter is told “whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven.”

The Catholic Church teaches that by giving Peter the “keys” along with the promise that all his decisions would be ratified in Heaven, Christ gave Peter the power of freedom from error when he was officially teaching the universal Church. In other words, Peter received primacy in the Church and the gift of infallibility in his official teaching on matters of Faith and morals. The first Vatican Council defined this Dogma, and the second Vatican Council reconfirmed it. This is known as the Petrine privilege and it was rightly understood from the beginning that those privileges given to Peter which were necessary for the successful mission of the Church, were given to his lawful successors – the Popes. Sadly, today, we see many examples of members of the Church, Laity and Clergy, denying this promise that Jesus gave to Peter. Jesus promised that the gates of Hell would not prevail against his Church. In life, we cannot always agree with one another, even with the Pope. However, it is one thing to disagree and quite another to deny the validity of the successor of Peter as some do today. Let us pray, and trust in the Holy Spirit, for an end to division within the Church and to always put service to others as our daily task.

Deacon Des

### **Making an Act of Spiritual Communion**

When we cannot fulfil our obligation to attend Mass on a Sunday or Holy Day of Obligation, whether because of illness or bad weather, or some other reason outside of our control, we can, and indeed should make an Act of Spiritual Communion. It is also good to make an Act of Spiritual Communion when we can attend Mass, but when something prevents us from receiving sacramental Communion that day—say, a mortal sin that we know we have not had the opportunity to confess yet.

We can make an act multiple times a day—even on days when we have been able to receive the Eucharist; because each Act of Spiritual Communion that we make increases our desire to receive sacramental Communion, and also helps us to avoid the sins that would make us unable to receive Communion worthily.

**My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there, and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.**



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## Parish News

**Change in Guidelines – Face Coverings:** Face coverings will be mandatory in Places of Worship from Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> August 2020. All those who are attending churches must wear a face covering unless they are exempt from doing so or under the age of 11. This is for the good of all who gather in the Church for Mass as it is an enclosed public space where there are people from differing households who they do not normally meet. Therefore, people who are not exempt must wear a face covering when attending Mass at St. Theresa's Church.

**Holy Communion:** Please note that following the guidelines issued by the Bishops of England and Wales, **communion on the tongue is presently not permitted and can only be received in the hand.** Parishioners are asked to wait in their pews until instructed to move forward for Holy Communion by the Stewards, always being aware of the regulations on social distancing in the orderly queue. When you approach Fr. Lee/Deacon Des, please do so with arms at "full stretch" to maintain good distance. one on top of the other forming a 'throne'. **Once received, cover the host with the free hand to ensure it is not dropped, and then move to the right, away from the Fr. Lee/Deacon Des. Pause and unloop your face mask, consume the blessed sacrament and then re-apply your mask and leave the church. Under no circumstances should the host be consumed after leaving the church.**

**Maintaining Social Distancing before and after Mass:** Please make note of the guidance issued by the Bishops of England and Wales. Worshippers should limit their interactions with anyone they are not attending church with, i.e. if they are attending corporate worship with one other household, wherever possible they should maintain social distancing with anyone outside of this group.

Please do not congregate outside the church, this also includes the grounds and the car park. Thank you.

**Church Volunteer – Can you help?:** Firstly a big thank you to those members of the Parish that have assisted over the last few months and to those that continue to support us, without you we could not and cannot continue to open. As things slowly start to return to normal and people are returning to work, we need more volunteers. Can you help? The role involves ensuring social distancing takes place, limiting the number of people in Church at any one time (if required), directing parishioners towards the hand sanitisers and ensuring the one way system is adhered to.

Sadly, the current advice is that those who are either in an 'at-risk' category or who are above the age of 70 cannot be part of this volunteer workforce. That means that even those of you who feel very fit and well, or are a septuagenarian or older, cannot volunteer. We are sorry about that.

We do need to have a good list of volunteers to allow us to continue meeting the requirements issued by the Bishops of England and Wales and enabling us to continue worship at St Theresa's.

If you would like to volunteer your services to steward, can you please contact Clair via the parish email: stansted@dioceseofbrentwood.org with your name, contact details, and the times/days you could be available each week. Should you have any questions as to duties please feel free to contact Fr. Lee or Deacon Des.

**Donations:** Your continued support for our Parish is appreciated notwithstanding that during these difficult times, we recognise that the financial impact on some parishioners can be significant. While we are currently unable to circulate the basket for donations at Mass, should you wish to make a donation, baskets are located at the exit doors as you leave the church.

Many of you have been able to use up old Gift Aid envelopes to make your donations. Gift Aid envelopes for the current financial year are available; should you wish to have them, please contact Clair in the office and she will arrange for them to be delivered to you.

We know that many of you are not comfortable with handling cash, nor do you use electronic banking. Should you prefer to use a cheque, this is acceptable.



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## Mass Times and Intentions

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME - Year A		
Saturday 22 <sup>nd</sup> August <i>Our Lady, Mother and Queen</i>	Confessions: <b>5:15 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.</b> Mass: <b>6:00 p.m.</b> <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	
Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup> August	Mass: <b>8:30 a.m.</b> <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>  Confessions: <b>9:15 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.</b> Mass: <b>10:00 a.m.</b> <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	<b>People of the Parish</b>
Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> August <i>St. Bartholomew</i>	Confessions: <b>9:00 a.m.</b> Mass: <b>9:30 a.m.</b> <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	
Tuesday 25 <sup>th</sup> August <i>St. Louis</i>	Confessions: <b>7:15 p.m.</b> Mass (Latin): <b>8:00 p.m.</b>	
Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup> August <i>Blessed Dominic of the Mother of God</i>	Confessions: <b>12:00 p.m.</b> Mass: <b>12:30 p.m.</b> <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	
Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> August <i>St. Monica</i>	Confessions: <b>9:00 a.m.</b> Mass: <b>9:30 a.m.</b> <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	
Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> August <i>St. Augustine, Bishop, Doctor</i>	Confessions: <b>9:00 a.m.</b> Mass: <b>9:30 a.m.</b> <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	
TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME - Year A		
Saturday 29 <sup>th</sup> August <i>Martyrdom of St. John the Baptist</i>	Confessions: <b>5:15 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.</b> Mass: <b>6:00 p.m.</b> <i>Live-streamed on our YouTube channel</i>	
Sunday 30 <sup>th</sup> August <i>1st Reading: Jeremiah 20:7-9</i> <i>Psalm: 62:2-6, 8-69</i> <i>2nd Reading: Romans 12:1-2</i> <i>Gospel: Matthew 16:21-27</i>	Mass: <b>8:30 a.m.</b> <i>Live-streamed on our YouTube channel</i>  Confessions: <b>9:15 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.</b> Mass: <b>10:00 a.m.</b> <i>Live-streamed on our YouTube channel</i>	



**PLEASE TAKE THIS NEWSLETTER HOME WITH YOU  
AND DISPOSE OF IT RESPONSIBLY. THANK YOU.**



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