

The Little Flower Messenger

Year A **TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME 6th September 2020**

Welcome to our Parish Community of St. Theresa of Lisieux

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

Tel. 01279 814349 • stansted@dioceseofbrentwood.org • www.sttheresastansted.org

• Twitter: @StStansted • Instagram: sttheresastansted

Priest-in-Charge: Fr. Lee Bennett frlee@dioceseofbrentwood.org ☎ 814349

Parish Deacon: Rev. Des Connors desconnors@dioceseofbrentwood.org

Parish Administrator: Clair Rava stansted@dioceseofbrentwood.org ☎ 816889

(Please note that the Parish Office is closed until Tuesday 8th September, Thank you).

Gospel: Matthew 18:15-20

'If he listens to you, you have won back your brother.'

1st Reading: *Ezekiel 33:7-9*

Psalm 94:1-2, 6-9: *O that today you would listen to his voice! 'Harden not your hearts.'*

2nd Reading: *Romans 13:8-10*

Gospel Acclamation: *Alleluia, alleluia! Your word is truth, O Lord: consecrate us in the truth. Alleluia!*

Communion Antiphon: *Like the deer that yearns for running streams, so my soul is yearning for you, my God; my soul is thirsting for God, the living God.*

This Week's Good News

Dear Friends,

In today's Gospel passage we see Jesus proposing a four-step procedure for dealing with a community member who has done 'something wrong.' The whole thrust of the passage is that we should all work towards reconciliation rather than punishment.

The first step is for the two people concerned to solve the issue among themselves privately. If it works out at that level, that is the ideal situation. And Jesus commends, "You have won back your brother." To win back here is a Jewish technical term for conversion. It indicates in the Christian spirit a change of heart.

We have the second step, in case the offender refuses to listen to his 'brother,' then one or two others are to be brought in as confirming witnesses. Again, care should be taken to keep the issue at as low a profile as possible without any unnecessary publicity. This is a more serious step and again it is hoped that the matter will be resolved by it.

Then there is the third step, if neither of the first two steps works, then the matter is to be reported to the church. The 'church' here is understood as the local community, because during the time of Jesus this term was not in use. The approach to the church is to go beyond all legalism. The personal relationship can be rectified in an atmosphere of Christian prayer, Christian love and Christian fellowship. It is understood that while meeting in the community it is not the judgment but fraternal love that brings the transformation.

If all the above steps fail to produce any result, then the fourth and final step is taken as the last resort. The offender then is to be treated as a gentile or a tax collector. It generally meant that the person was to be shunned totally by the community as a hopeless and incorrigible person. He is no longer a part of the community. But this sounds rather strange coming directly from the mouth of Jesus, who was kind, gentle and forgiving to all. So, treating him too with love and affection as Jesus did, he can still be won over. Here,



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the intention of excommunication is not punishment, but rather to bring the person so cast out to ask for forgiveness.

Immediately after this Jesus speaks about power to bind and loose - "Whatever you bind on earth shall be considered bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." These words indicate that the community has the power, given to it by God, to make a judgment on who is fit to belong to the community of the believers. It is a necessary power to preserve the integrity of the community as a witness to the Gospel.

Jesus further tells the disciples - "If two of you on earth agree to ask anything at all, it will be granted to you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them." Jesus here indicates that when all things fail, they should come together in love and truth to pray to God, who will answer them in His own way with Divine wisdom and foresight. This is both a tremendous gift and also a great responsibility. He also assures them of his presence in their midst.

Today Jesus places on us the painful obligation of fraternal love in the watchful love we show towards others. And very few actually have the courage to do what Jesus tells us in today's gospel - "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone...". Even fewer will go out of their way, like the Prophet Ezekiel about whom we hear in the First Reading, to try to correct someone about a fault that does not affect them directly. To approach this painful duty of fraternal correction, it entails many qualities - courage, compassion, patience, gentleness, humility, sincerity, reverence, a desire to preserve the other's good name, prudence delicacy, tact, mutual dialogue, true listening and mercy. The Readings tell us that we will be held responsible for the silence at our unwillingness to speak.

Again, Jesus' teaching about brotherly correction recalls to our mind his other teaching, that we should not try to remove the splinter in our brother's eye before we remove the log in our own. We need to constantly strive to correct our own mistakes in order to have the moral authority to help others come out of their mistakes. This includes the humility also to graciously receive correction when it is meted out to us.

Let us then today, look into our own conduct in relation to this law of brotherly love. Have we really tried to help our fellow men on the road to heaven? Have we given them the good example of a truly Christian way of living? Have we offered advice and encouragement when it was needed, and correction in private where that was possible? If so, we have gained our brother and it is a mark of heroic love. Let us take some time to reflect on our responsibility towards God and our community. Let us reflect on how we will account to God for the actions of those around us, be it our parents, our brothers or sisters, our children, our relatives, our neighbours, our co-workers, our peers, all of those whose life we touch. You and I - by the way we live - are called to be watchmen, and to build a community of love. And this is the Good News of today.

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.

Parish News



Please familiarise yourselves with the location of the fire exits, extinguishers and assembly points at this church.

Change in Guidelines – Face Coverings: Face coverings will be mandatory in Places of Worship from Saturday 8th 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 adherence to the one way system.

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: 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.



Mass Times and Intentions

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME - Year A		
Saturday 5 th September <i>St. Teresa of Calcutta</i>	Confessions: 5:15 p.m. – 5:45 p.m. Mass: 6:00 p.m. <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	
Sunday 6 th September	Mass: 8:30 a.m. <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i> Confessions: 9:15 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. Mass: 10:00 a.m. <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i> Mass (Latin): 12:00 p.m. <i>XIV Sunday after Pentecost</i>	People of the Parish
Monday 7 th September	Confessions: 9:00 a.m. Mass: 9:30 a.m. <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	
Tuesday 8 th September <i>The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i>	Confessions: 7:15 p.m. Mass (Latin): 8:00 p.m.	
Wednesday 9 th September	Confessions: 12:00 p.m. Mass: 12:30 p.m. <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	Ints. of Frances Roberts
Thursday 10 th September	Confessions: 9:00 a.m. Mass: 9:30 a.m. <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	
Friday 11 th September	Confessions: 9:00 a.m. Mass: 9:30 a.m. <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	
TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME - Year A		
Saturday 12 th September	Confessions: 5:15 p.m. – 5:45 p.m. Mass: 6:00 p.m. <i>Live-streamed on our YouTube channel</i>	
Sunday 13 th August <i>1st Reading: Ecclesiasticus 27:30-28:7</i> <i>Psalm: 102:1-4, 9-12</i> <i>2nd Reading: Romans 14:7-9</i> <i>Gospel: Matthew 18:21-35</i>	Mass: 8:30 a.m. <i>Live-streamed on our YouTube channel</i> Confessions: 9:15 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. Mass: 10:00 a.m. <i>Live-streamed on our YouTube channel</i> Mass (Latin): 12:00 p.m.	

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



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