

The Little Flower Messenger

Year A TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME 13th September 2020

Welcome to our Parish Community of St. Theresa of Lisieux

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

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Gospel: Matthew 18:21-35

'To be forgiven, you must forgive'

1st Reading:	<i>Ecclesiasticus 27:30-28:7</i>
Psalm 102:1-4, 9-12:	<i>The Lord is compassion and love, slow to anger and rich in mercy</i>
2nd Reading:	<i>Romans 14:7-9</i>
Gospel Acclamation:	<i>Alleluia, alleluia! Speak, Lord, your servant is listening; you have the message of eternal life. Alleluia!</i>
Communion Antiphon:	<i>How precious is your mercy, O God! The children of men seek shelter in the shadow of your wings.</i>

This Week's Good News

Dear Friends,

Today's Gospel puts before us what is probably the most demanding of all expressions of love, our duty to forgive. Peter asks Jesus, "**Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive? As many as seven times?**" Jesus' answer is "**seventy times seven.**" In other words, always, ad infinitum.

If we are all honest with ourselves, this is a hard saying. We live in a world where the majority of people believe that evil must be punished. Those crimes against innocents, against ourselves must not go unchecked. Surely Jesus did not mean that murderers, abusers and worse should be forgiven? Well, as uncomfortable as this is going to be for many of us, yes...he meant those people as well.

The disciples would have been raised on the teaching, 'an eye for an eye.' Jesus uses a parable to teach them what Christian living means. There are three main characters in the story, which Jesus begins by saying "The Kingdom of heaven may be likened to..." In other words, those of us who want to be considered by Jesus as members of his kingdom must do the following. A man who owes a great amount is brought before the king, and since he has no manner of paying the debt he owes is condemned to be sold, along with his wife, children and property to pay the debt. Nothing is to remain which can remind people of his legacy. As is customary for normal people before such a fate, the man pleads for mercy, promising something that he probably can never fulfil "Be patient with me, and I will pay you back in full." We are told; "**Moved with compassion the master of that servant let him go and forgave him the loan.**"

The story continues; the man who was forgiven the loan, refuses to forgive a fellow servant who owes him far less than the debt which was forgiven him. When the king hears of this, he commands that the unforgiving servant be excluded from his kingdom. He is handed over to the torturers until he repays the loan in full, something it was impossible for him to fulfil. Jesus concludes the story by saying; "**So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives your brother from your heart.**"



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

In other words, Jesus is telling us that there is no room in the kingdom of heaven for those who cannot find it in their hearts to forgive, not once or three times but always. As always, Jesus calls us to something diametrically opposed to the prevailing wisdom of the world. The Gospel then questions each one of us. Do we put limits on our forgiveness? Do we forgive relatives and perhaps friends, but others we do not, so that we want people to be removed from the face of the earth? Hang them high we say!! Or do we still live with the Old Testament spirituality which says an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth? Today the Gospel reading reminds us that citizens of the Kingdom have a different spirituality, it is the spirituality of Jesus who forgives totally and always, no matter how grievous the offence. Where would any of us be if Jesus' philosophy was three strikes and you're out?

A friend from the parish was talking to me recently about a prayer that she had been given at a service. This prayer simply said, 'We will be judged on how much we have loved, and how much we have forgiven.' That is certainly food for thought.

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

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.

John Whiting R.I.P: Please remember John Whiting, husband of Kath, in your prayers who sadly died earlier this week. Please pray for Kath and the family during this difficult time. Eternal rest grant unto John O Lord. Let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace.

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.

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. Without this support we may have to cut down the number of Masses we provide.

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.

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.

The Giving Machine: You are now able to donate to our church via the Giving Machine. Locate our cause page via the link below and select the 'Donate Now' button, allowing you to donate directly to us. You don't need to be signed up as a giver on The Giving Machine to donate, however, you will be asked to cover the 26p transaction fee. You will be given the choice of adding this to your donation or having it deducted from your donation. Your support is much appreciated.

Visit <https://www.thegivingmachine.co.uk/causes/st-theresas-catholic-church-stansted-mountfitchet/>



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Mass Times and Intentions

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>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	John Whiting RIP
Sunday 13 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>	People of the Parish
Monday 14 th September <i>Exaltation of the Holy Cross</i>	Confessions: 9:00 a.m. Mass: 9:30 a.m. <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	Holy Souls (J&C Welsh)
Tuesday 15 th September <i>Seven Sorrows of the BVM</i>	Confessions: 7:15 p.m. Mass (Latin): 8:00 p.m.	Pat Howard RIP
Wednesday 16 th September <i>St. Cornelius</i>	Confessions: 12:00 p.m. Mass: 12:30 p.m. <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	Sister Naomi Maria Magnificat S.V. Perpetual Profession of Vows & the Sisters of Life (Fr L Bennett)
Thursday 17 th September	Confessions: 9:00 a.m. Mass: 9:30 a.m. <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	Gabby Manalac (C.Manalac)
Friday 18 th September	Confessions: 9:00 a.m. Mass: 9:30 a.m. <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	
TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME - Year A		
Saturday 19 th September	Confessions: 5:15 p.m. – 5:45 p.m. Mass: 6:00 p.m. <i>Live-streamed on our YouTube channel</i>	Ints. for K O'Brien & T McKnight on their Wedding Day (Fr L Bennett)
Sunday 20 th September <i>Home Mission Day</i> <i>1st Reading: Isaiah 55:6-9</i> <i>Psalm: 144:2-3, 8-9, 17-18</i> <i>2nd Reading: Philippians 1:20-24, 27</i> <i>Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16</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>	Hanh Tran RIP (W.Dodd) People of the Parish



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



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