

The Little Flower Messenger

Year A TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME 4th October 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 21:33-43

'He will lease the vineyard to other tenants'

1st Reading:

Isaiah 5:1-7

Psalm 79:9,12-16,19-20:

The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel.

2nd Reading:

Philippians 4:6-9

Gospel Acclamation:

*Alleluia, alleluia! I call you friends, says the Lord,
because I have made known to you everything I have learnt from my
Father. Alleluia!*

Communion Antiphon:

The Lord is good to those who hope in him, to the soul that seeks him.

This Week's Good News

Dear Friends,

The common theme of today's readings is the necessity of bearing fruit in the Christian life and the consequent punishment for spiritual sterility, ingratitude and wickedness. In today's first reading, called Isaiah's Song of the Vineyard, the prophet describes God's care of, and expectations for, His Chosen People. God's Chosen People have failed to bear fruit despite the blessings lavished upon them by a loving and forgiving God. Further, they have been poor tenants in the Lord's vineyard. Hence, God laments: "I expected my vineyard to yield good grapes. Why did it yield sour ones instead?" In the Responsorial Psalm (Ps 80), the Psalmist pleads with God to look down from Heaven and to "take care of this vine," knowing that if any good is to come of the vine, it will be God's doing and not the people. In the second reading, Paul tells the Philippians about the high expectations he has for them, reminding them that they need to become fruit-producing Christians by praying and giving thanks and by practising justice, purity and graciousness in their lives. Giving a theological explanation of Israel's history of gross ingratitude through a parable, Jesus, in today's Gospel, reminds us Christians that, since we are the "new" Israel, enriched with additional blessings and provisions in the Church, we are expected to show our gratitude to God by bearing fruits of the kingdom, fruits of the Holy Spirit, in our lives, and to give God the Glory for these accomplishments.

The parable of the wicked tenants is an allegory told by Jesus during Passover week in the Temple precincts of Jerusalem. A parable normally presents one lesson and the details are not relevant. In an allegory, on the other hand, each detail has a symbolic meaning. This story is one of the three "parables of judgement" which Jesus told in response to the question put forward by the Scribes and the Pharisees about his authority to teach in the Temple. It was intended to be a strong warning to the Jews in general — and to the Scribes and the Pharisees in particular, as they were planning to kill Jesus, the Messiah for whom Israel had waited for centuries. Thus, this parable of the wicked tenants is a theological summary



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of the entire history of the ingratitude, infidelity, and hard-heartedness of the Chosen People. Its importance is shown by its appearance in all the three Synoptic Gospels.

The Lord's Vineyard at present is the Church, and we Christians are the tenants from whom God expects fruits of righteousness. The parable warns us that if we refuse to reform our lives, to become productive, we, too, could be replaced as the old Israel was replaced by the "new" Israel. We cease being either God's Vineyard or the tenants of God's Vineyard when we stop relating to others as loving servants to their Master. In the parable, the rent the tenants refuse to pay stands for the relationship with God and with all the people of Israel which the religious leaders refuse to cultivate. This means that before anything else, God checks on how well we are fulfilling our responsibilities to each other as children of God. The parable teaches that instead of glorying in our privileges and Christian heritage, we are called to deeds of love, including bearing personal and corporate witness that invites others into God's kingdom.

The parable also challenges us to ask the question, how do we treat the prophets of our time? Over the centuries, how many prophets in our Christian communities have been rejected, abused and even killed? How did we treat Joan of Arc, Thomas More, Oliver Plunkett and, in our own times, Bishop Oscar Romero, Martin Luther King, the countless victims of violence in Africa, (Rwanda, among other places), Central and South America — not to mention Northern Ireland? The sad fact is that they were killed not by pagans but by fellow-Christians, tenants in the Lord's vineyard.

Let us pray that we can always fulfil our responsibilities as missionary disciples and bear fruit that is good and lasting.

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

Mass Numbers: The good news is that last weekend both the 18:00 Vigil Mass and the 10:00 a.m. Mass reached full capacity. It is truly wonderful to see you all coming to celebrate the Eucharist of the Lord. However, the not so good news is that this sadly meant some people were unable to attend those Masses. As you know, we are limited on the number of parishioners that can attend Mass. We would prefer not to turn people away should these numbers continue as they are and so we may need to revert to the booking system. Perhaps you may be able to help by considering the 8:30 a.m. Sunday Mass where there is still capacity. We would remind you that the obligation to attend Mass on a Sunday is still suspended. Our weekday Masses have more capacity if you are able to attend those. We are trying to ensure that everyone who would like, can have the opportunity to attend Mass. Thank you.



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Face Coverings: Face coverings are mandatory in Places of Worship and are required unless you are exempt from doing so or under the age of 11.

Holy Communion: 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 hand sanitising and 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? A huge thank you to those that volunteered to Steward and to clean the church. Just as a reminder we are forbidden to open for Mass without people stewarding and cleaning after Mass. **We are in desperate need of volunteers for the month of October, without volunteers at Masses some will have to be cancelled.** If you would like to volunteer your services to steward, 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.

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/>

Sunday Coffee morning: We are now able to attend Mass in person, however, we are not yet able to hold our coffee mornings in person. If you would like to socialise virtually then why not join us for a chat and a short fun quiz from the comfort of your own home? Held every Sunday at 11.10 a.m. via the following Zoom details: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83024819984> Meeting ID: 830 2481 9984 Password: CM24Thrsx - All are welcome.

CAFOD Harvest Fast Day 8-11th October: Although we are unable to have any events in our parish at this time, it is still possible for you to take part in some events online. These include a Fast Day live talk, a Global Family Food event, a Harvest Quiz and a Children's Liturgy. You can also listen to inspiring talks about the great work that you have been supporting. There are even some places up for grabs in the London Virtual Marathon. All details can be found online at Cafod.org.uk

Mass Intentions: You will notice from this week's Newsletter that there are a number of Masses without an Intention. We have had to remove the envelopes for Mass Intentions due to COVID restrictions. Should you wish to have a Mass offered for any of your intentions please contact Clair in the office and she will arrange this for you. Thank you.



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Mass Times and Intentions

TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - Year A		
Saturday 3 rd October	Confessions: 5:15 p.m. – 5:45 p.m. Mass: 6:00 p.m. <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	John Whiting RIP (M&T Rhead)
Sunday 4 th October <i>XVIII Sunday after Pentecost</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 (EF) (Latin): 12:00 p.m.	Sgt Matt Ratana RIP McGrath Family (B.Whitehead) People of the Parish
Monday 5 th October	Confessions: 9:00 a.m. Mass: 9:30 a.m. <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	
Tuesday 6 th October <i>St. Bruno</i>	Confessions: 7:15 p.m. Mass (EF) (Latin): 8:00 p.m.	
Wednesday 7 th October <i>Our Lady of the Rosary</i>	Confessions: 12:00 p.m. Mass: 12:30 p.m. <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	John Whiting RIP (B.Whitehead)
Thursday 8 th October <i>St Osyth</i>	Confessions: 9:00 a.m. Mass: 9:30 a.m. <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	
Friday 9 th October <i>St John Henry Newman</i>	Confessions: 9:00 a.m. Mass: 9:30 a.m. <i>Livestreamed on our YouTube channel</i>	
TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - Year A		
Saturday 10 th October	Confessions: 5:15 p.m. – 5:45 p.m. Mass: 6:00 p.m. <i>Live-streamed on our YouTube channel</i>	
Sunday 11 th October <i>1st Reading: Isaiah 25:6-10</i> <i>Psalm: 22</i> <i>2nd Reading: Philippians 4:12-14,19-20</i> <i>Gospel: Matthew 22:1-14</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>	

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



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