

# The Little Flower Messenger



Year A THIRTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME 8<sup>th</sup> November 2020



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

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**Gospel: Matthew 25:1-13**

*'The bridegroom is here! Go out and meet him'*

**1st Reading:** *Wisdom 6:12-16*

**Psalm 62:2-8:** *For you my soul is thirsting, O God my God.*

**2nd Reading:** *1 Thessalonians 4:13-18*

**Gospel Acclamation:** *Alleluia, alleluia! Stay awake and stand ready, because you do not know the hour when the Son of Man is coming. Alleluia!*

**Communion Antiphon:** *The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want. Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose, near restful waters he leads me.*

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## This Week's Good News

Dear Friends,

Today's Gospel text is the first of three eschatological parables of the Kingdom of Heaven, which we will hear on these final three Sundays of this Liturgical Year. They are situated in the context of St. Matthew's discourse on the end times and the second coming of Christ, in Chapter 25. They are each famous for their ways of focusing our attention on how to live life in this world while preparing for life in the next world, in God's kingdom. In fact, they are not about giving up earthly life, but rather, about how to engage this life ever more fully, responsibly, and thoughtfully!

'The parable of the ten virgins' at a wedding which we hear in the Gospel Reading of today is a homely tale climaxing in the crunch line, "Therefore, stay awake, because you do not know either the day or the hour." Jesus tells this parable to impress his followers of the supreme need of vigilance and watchfulness. The parable shows that some of his followers, who have been chosen to play a special role in the nuptials of Christ with his Church, will forfeit their place at the eternal nuptials in heaven through their carelessness and not positive malice. The image Jesus gave of marriage regarding the Kingdom of Heaven was easily understood by his hearers. The reference here is primarily to the Second Coming of Christ as he comes in glory to judge all mankind. On that day his kingdom will be completed, and the eternal triumphal Kingdom of Heaven will begin. In this story Jesus illustrates what will happen on that day to some of those whom he had chosen and to whom he had given every facility to reach their one and only goal. Again, today's parable is found only in the Gospel of Matthew and it is partially an allegory told in the context of the culture and custom of a Jewish wedding of the time, which is different from ours.

In this parable, Matthew is telling the Christian community that the return of the Lord may be delayed beyond their expectation and that they should, therefore, prepare for the long wait by providing enough oil for their lamps. Many details of the parable make good sense when seen against the framework of this principal theme. The bridegroom is Christ, the Lord. The bride is the Church. The ten virgins



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represent the totality of the members of the Church, as they await the Lord's coming. On the basis of what happens later on, five are described as wise or sensible and five as foolish. Their wisdom here consists in their taking prudent steps to do what they need to do in order to come face to face with their Lord. The lamps, which all the virgins had, could represent faith which all Christians have. The oil, which some of them had and others did not, would then represent good works. A lamp without oil is like faith without good works - dead and useless.

Now, as we approach the end of the Liturgical Year, the Church, through the gospel, invites us to contemplate the end – the end of our lives and the end of the world. The conclusion to be drawn from today's gospel parable is this: the time of the arrival of our Lord as judge of the universe, the day on which the eternal wedding feast of Christ with his elect will begin, is as uncertain as the arrival of the bridegroom. A follower of Christ cannot afford to be casual and unprepared for that moment. The situation can be compared to a student who studies his lessons regularly. When a surprise test is given, he is ready and passes it. He is like the wise virgins. On the other hand, the student who studies only when there is an announced test is like the foolish virgins. When a surprise test is given, he is not prepared and thus fails. Finally, when the final examination comes and having no regular study habits, he crams and, more often than not, fails the course. We are asked therefore to be like the wise virgins: to be always vigilant, to be always prepared. "Therefore, stay awake, because you do not know either the day or the hour."

Again, the way to prepare for the end is neither to live in fear and anxiety, or to go after prophets and visionaries that claim to have access to God's secret calendar of how and when the world will end, nor it is a question of taking a gamble on making a last-minute confession on our deathbed. A surprising number of people do not die in their beds. It is a question rather of what I plan to do this very day and every day. There is absolutely no better way to prepare for the final call than, first, to put it completely out of one's head, and, second, to learn to spend each and every day in the company of Jesus.

A story is told of an old and holy monk who was sweeping up the fallen leaves in the monastery grounds. A visitor saw him and asked, "What would you do, brother, if you knew that you were to die in ten minutes?" The old monk said, "I'd carry on sweeping." Because the monk has always been vigilant, he is ready to meet His Judge anytime. We are asked to do the same so that when we stand before Jesus as our judge, He will say to us, "Come, enter into my Kingdom."

Finally, in an emergency there are some things we can borrow from others at short notice. But we can also say in the context of today's parable that the 'oil' of loving service is not strictly speaking transferable to others. Our preparedness to meet the Lord is something that is ultimately only our responsibility. No one can say 'Yes' to Christ on my behalf. So, while the foolish virgins went off to make up for lost and wasted time, those who were ready went into the wedding hall. Then the door was locked. All are invited, but not all get inside. All are called but few are among the chosen ones. This is not due to any partiality on the bridegroom's part but because of the tardiness of some in responding to the invitation. The locked door means that access to Jesus is not automatic or to be altogether taken for granted. And that is precisely the warning in today's parable - "Therefore, stay awake, because you do not know either the day or the hour."

Deacon Des

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

**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

**Lockdown:** Following the Government announcement regarding further restrictions in England, places of worship are required to end all acts of collective worship with effect from Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November. Funeral ceremonies can continue throughout lockdown with restrictions. We shall livestream Masses via our YouTube channel: <https://www.sttheresastansted.org/youtube-livestream/> until further notice.

The Mass and Private Prayer times are as follows:

Day	Livestreamed Mass Time	Private Prayer	Livestreamed Rosary, Exposition of the Sacrament & Benediction
Tuesday	10am	1pm -2pm	
Wednesday	10am	1pm -2pm	7pm (starting 11 <sup>th</sup> November)
Thursday	10am	1pm -2pm	
Friday	10am	1pm -2pm	7pm (starting 13 <sup>th</sup> November)
Saturday	12 Noon	1pm -2pm	
Sunday	10am	11am -12pm	

Please note that the church is **open for Private Prayer only**. Confession will be available during Private Prayer, and on request.

Things may be subject to change so please do continue to check the website, Facebook page and Newsletter for updates and information.

We are reliant on volunteers to open for Private Prayer, if you are able to helping during the day please contact Clair via the [stansted@dioceseofbrentwood.org](mailto:stansted@dioceseofbrentwood.org) email address.

**Keep in touch:** As we start another lockdown your emotional and mental health well-being is just as important as your spiritual well-being. It is normal to feel stressed or lonely so remember to reach out to your usual supports, like family and friends, and talk about how you feel.

As an additional support Fr. Lee and Deacon Des are happy to chat with you to see how you are and to offer guidance. If this is something that is of interest to you then please complete the form on the website, <https://www.sttheresastansted.org/keep-in-touch/> alternatively you can post your details to the Presbytery.

If you are in touch with people of the parish that may not have access to social media, or our website, then please ask them to also post their details to the Presbytery.

**WhatsApp Group & Email Distribution List:** If you would like to be on the parish WhatsApp group and /or email distribution list please email [stansed@dioceseofbrentwood.org](mailto:stansed@dioceseofbrentwood.org).

**Month of Holy Souls:** November is the month of prayer for Holy Souls, when we pray for all the faithful departed, those known and dear to us, and those too, who have no one to pray for them. Should you wish, please write the names of departed loved ones on a piece of paper and once completed post through the Presbytery letter box. The names on the sheets will be kept on the altar for the month of November and will be remembered at the Masses during November. A Mass stipend can also be placed in this envelope.

**Sunday Coffee morning:** 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.



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

## Mass Times and Intentions

Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup> November <i>Saturday Memorial of the BVM</i>	Mass: 12:00 p.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>  Church open for Private Prayer: <b>1:00 p.m. until 2:00 p.m.</b>	Holy Souls
<b>THIRTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - Year A</b>		
Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup> November <i>Remembrance Sunday</i>	Mass: 10:00 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>  Church open for Private Prayer: <b>11:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m.</b>	Those who have Fallen in Battle in Two World Wars and subsequent battles and conflicts
Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> November <i>DEDICATION OF THE ARCHBASILICA OF THE SAVIOUR</i>	Mass: 10:00 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	Holy Souls (J&C Welsh)
Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> November <i>St Andrew Avellino</i>	Latin Mass (EF): 10:00 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>  Church open for Private Prayer: <b>1:00 p.m. until 2:00 p.m.</b>	Holy Souls
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> November <i>St Martin of Tours</i>	Mass: 10:00 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>  Church open for Private Prayer: <b>1:00 p.m. until 2:00 p.m.</b>  Rosary, Exposition of the Sacrament & Benediction: 7:00 p.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	Holy Souls
Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> November <i>St Josaphat</i>	Mass: 10:00 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>  Church open for Private Prayer: <b>1:00 p.m. until 2:00 p.m.</b>	Bill Blythe RIP (H.Bennet)
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> November	Mass: 10:00 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>  Church open for Private Prayer: <b>1:00 p.m. until 2:00 p.m.</b>  Rosary, Exposition of the Sacrament & Benediction: 7:00 p.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	Tommaso Mastrandrea RIP (G.Galati)
Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> November <i>Saturday Memorial of the BVM</i>	Mass: 12:00 p.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>  Church open for Private prayer: <b>1:00p.m. until 2:00 p.m.</b>	James McCreanor RIP (S.Wood)
<b>THIRTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - Year A</b>		
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup> November <i>1st Reading: Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31 Psalm: 127:1-5 2nd Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6 Gospel: Matthew 25:14-30</i>	Mass: 10:00 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>  Church open for Private prayer: <b>11:00a.m. until 12:00 p.m.</b>	William Shevlane RIP (M.Michelson)



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