

# Parish of St. Theresa of Lisieux Stansted

## *The Little Flower Messenger*

SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (Year A) - 19<sup>th</sup> February 2023

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

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**Gospel: Matthew 5:38-48:** *'Love your enemies.'*

**Mass book (P. 139)**

**1st Reading:** *Leviticus 19:1-2, 17-18*

**Psalm: 102** *The Lord is compassion and love.*

**2nd Reading:** *1 Corininthians 3:16-23*

**Gospel Acclamation:** *Alleluia, alleluia If anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him. Alleluia!*

### **A thought from Fr Liam...becoming as the Prince of Peace**

Dear Friends

Amidst the ongoing horror and trauma of the earthquakes in Syria and Turkey, we have also witnessed in these past weeks signs of hope in the historic and unprecedented ecumenical pilgrimage of Peace to South Sudan by Pope Francis, Archbishop Justin Welby and Moderator Iain Greenshields. It is not insignificant that the message of solidarity and peace, dialogue and humility that they promoted and preached was modelled through their actions of shared discipleship, fraternal love and respect for each other and their respective churches, for as Francis underlined, 'prior to any historical divisions there remains one unchanging fact, namely that we are Christians - we belong to Christ.'

This unprecedented pilgrimage is in response to the scandal of war, violence and division that has disfigured South Sudan for too long and witnessed 400,000 people killed and up to 4 million people displaced. This joint pilgrimage has allowed our three Christian leaders to meet with the women, children and men who have been forced to flee their homes to escape violence, to pray for peace and an end to division, and to support and encourage political leaders to actively continue the journey towards peace and justice for all, for 'we journey towards unity when love is concrete, when we join in coming to the aid of the outcast, the wounded and the disenfranchised.'

In 2019 leaders from South Sudan, including President Salva Kiir and his rival, the former rebel leader Riek Machar, travelled to the Vatican to meet with Pope Francis. He urged them both to seek out what unites them and overcome what divides them, ensuring them that peace was possible. At the end of the meeting Pope Francis knelt down and kissed their feet saying 'I am asking you as a brother to stay in peace. I am asking you with my heart, let us go forward.'



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It is often said that peace begins in the heart of one person, reaching out in love to the other beyond their own needs. As we pray for renewed peace and healing across South Sudan, may the Lord grace us with the vision and wisdom to become in our own lives what we are praying for - peace.

I wish you and yours a blessed and peaceful week.

Liam

### **Prayer of the Week from CAFOD**

Loving God

Give us your peace and lead us to be united  
with all people throughout the world.

Hear our prayer for the people of South Sudan.

Fill them with hope and strength

To build peace, trust and understanding.

And unite us all in wanting peace

So that everyone may live free from conflict.

Amen.

### **This Week's Good News**

Dear Friends,

In today's Gospel we continue our examination of the Sermon on the Mount. The Gospel readings for both today and last week are perhaps the hardest actions for us to practice as Christians. Perhaps we interpret the words to suit our own world view and to help us feel better about ourselves when we invariably fall short of the exacting and demanding standards Jesus sets for us in this Sermon. However, to do so is to ignore the true meaning of Christ's message contained in these passages. Jesus turns the old understanding of Mosaic law regarding retaliation on its head. For Jesus retaliation has no place in the Christian life. Jesus instructs us to accept with grace offenses that we suffer. To do so requires great strength and discipline. When we encounter evil, we are expected to counter it with kindness.

Jesus tells us that we are to turn the other cheek, to forgive the offense. He uses the examples of surrendering not just the coat when sued for it but to offer the shirt we own as well. We defuse conflict by giving more than is required. When a Roman soldier forced a person to carry a burden for a mile, which was part of Roman law, Jesus gives the instruction to go the extra mile, to accept unjust treatment in a spirit of service.

Let us ask ourselves how we truly feel about these commands? Do we think that Jesus did not really mean what he said in these passages? People who have taken these words literally have practised pacifism down through the ages. As Christians we are challenged to contemplate these words and act upon them. We are to love our neighbours and forgive our enemies. We are called to be set apart from others by our ability to treat others with kindness and respect, even when they show no remorse and continue to try to harm us. These are tough words. Tough instructions to follow. To just love our friends and families is easy and does not set us apart at



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all. We are to forgive again and again. We are to pardon wrong after wrong, to pray for our enemies, even when they do not deserve it.

This is what we will be judged upon when we stand in front of God. We are kidding ourselves if we think we can feel contempt and harbour ill will to those we dislike whilst standing in the presence of the blessed sacrament, whilst praising God through public displays of prayer and song, and feeling we are righteous. We can fool everybody and even ourselves, but we can never fool God.

The Sermon on the Mount is a timely reminder and should be a constant meditation for all of us as to how we should truly be living our lives.

Deacon Des

## Our Parish

### Message from Deacon Des

Dear All,

After 17 years in this parish, a parish where my daughter made her first holy communion and then confirmation and where I was ordained to the Diaconate, it is time to move on. My wife has been appointed as the Deputy Chief Constable of Police Scotland and so we will be relocating to Scotland.

I will be here in the parish until my last Sunday which will be Easter Sunday. After that mass, there will be tea and cake in the parish centre so that I can get a chance to say goodbye to you all and thank you all for your love and support over the years. This parish will always be 'home' as far as I and my family are concerned and I hope to see you all again in the future, God willing.

Des

**Yvan Van Driessche RIP:** Yvan's coffin will be received into the church on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March at 4.30pm. His Funeral service will take place on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> March at 11.00am, followed by a burial at Henham Cemetery at 12.00pm.

**Parish Centre Heating:** Unfortunately, we have no heating in the Parish Centre until further notice. Should events take place we would suggest that you wrap up and wear a few extra layers. We will update you once we have any further details regarding its repair. Thank you.

**Churches Together:** The Churches together Group are organising the collection of mens' jackets for migrants in the local area. If you can help, please place your donation into the box located in the church entrance hall.

**St Theresa's Parish Fairtrade Weekend:** We shall be holding a number of events over the weekend of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> March after each of our Masses, in the Parish Centre. These will include Fairtrade tea and coffee, wine sampling, Traybake Cake Sale (made with Fairtrade ingredients), Raffle of Fairtrade products, a Quiz and Children's corner.

Please support this event however you can by coming along or volunteering to help. Speak with Frances or Anel for further information.



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**Encounter:** The next meeting takes place on Friday 24th February in the Parish Centre from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. The talk and discussion topic is Reconciliation: the sacrament, forgiveness & making peace; led by Fr David Clemens (Saffron Walden parish). Followed by a shared Lunch at 12.30p.m. All welcome for all or part of the event.

**Offertory 12<sup>th</sup> February 2023:** Thank you very much for your generous financial support for our parish.

Gift Aided	Loose Cash	Standing Orders	Total
£98.00	£ 239.64	£ 397.50	£735.14

If you pay tax and would like any donations you make to our Parish to be Gift Aided, please email Angelo at [stansted-giftaid@dioceseofbrentwood.org](mailto:stansted-giftaid@dioceseofbrentwood.org) for details.

## Our Wider Community

**CAFOD Turkey-Syria Earthquake Appeal:** CAFOD is responding with support of provision of food, water, shelter, medical assistance and winter kits for survivors. Your donations in recent months have made that quick response possible. Let us join CAFOD in praying for our sisters and brothers affected by the earthquakes and the winter weather. Your support for CAFOD throughout the year allows our Catholic agency to act quickly when disasters strike. For more details visit CAFOD's Turkey Syria Earthquake Appeal online at <https://cafod.org.uk/give>.

**CAFOD's Family Fast Day on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2023:** The family Fast Day provides an opportunity for us to eat simply, to pray and to give what we can. In the last few years, CAFOD has shared news of extreme hunger caused by the impact of war and droughts, as well as emergencies caused by climate change around the world. Seeing crisis after crisis can feel overwhelming, but Lent reminds us that change is possible, for each of us personally and for our world. Your support will give many families the tools and training they need to fight the climate crisis. You can use the CAFOD envelope located in the church entrance to Gift Aid your donation, which boosts your donation by 25 per cent. The QR code on the envelope is also an easy way to jump to the CAFOD website to donate online. Thank you for all your support, for your generosity and your prayers.

## Mass Times and Intentions

SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - YEAR A		
Saturday 18 <sup>th</sup> February	Reconciliation: 5:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. Mass: 6:00 p.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	People of the Parish
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> February <i>Day for the unemployed</i>	Mass: 10:00 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	Jane Bertaut R.I.P (B&E Quinn)
Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> February <i>Ash Wednesday</i>	Mass: 7:30 p.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	Henry John Aldridge R.I.P (T. Aldridge)
FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT - YEAR A		
Saturday 25 <sup>th</sup> February	Confessions: 5:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. Mass: 6:00 p.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	People of the Parish
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> February	Mass: 10:00 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	Eileen Johnson R.I.P (B&E Quinn)



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