



# parish newsletter

Third Sunday of Ordinary Time (Year B) | 24 January 2021

## Reflecting on the Gospel



It was a normal day by all accounts, but John just wasn't feeling himself. He was a little lightheaded and out of sorts. Later in the afternoon, he experienced a sharp pain in his

chest and arm. Quick thinking and action brought John to the emergency department with a diagnosis of a significant heart attack. Surviving this ordeal, he found him-

self face to face with his cardiologist, having an honest conversation about things that needed to change. "I came close to death," John found himself thinking. Then came

the remorse. He was a young man with a loving wife and children who were very close to facing life without him. John found himself with intense sorrow for living an

unchecked and self-indulgent life that almost brought him to his demise. He wanted to change.

We all have our wake-up calls. We have experiences and encounters that force us to really think twice about choices we have made and directions we have taken. Often, we find ourselves looking at those we have hurt square in the eye and wallowing in our foolishness. We regretfully realise that we have allowed our needs to lure us into making some cruel mistakes. We impulsively say things and flippantly do things that reveal our unredeemed and unhealed self. It is a self we stumble over and try to tame but can't quite seem to master and control. Help!

We spin our wheels, naively thinking that we will somehow, perhaps through persistence, get ourselves unstuck. But, we don't. We just get out of the car, feeling very helpless, and ignorantly look at the mess we got

ourselves into. Did we ever think to ask someone for help? Or, taken the advice of One who is wiser and avoid this route altogether? "Come after me," are words that Jesus says to all of us. In order to heed his invitation, we must leave our ego-self behind and follow.

When we really see and understand the freedom, peace, justice, and love he offers, we find ourselves with such sorrow in our hearts for how foolish and silly we have been. All the misguided choices and sinful actions come full view and we see how risky our random impassioned behaviours really have been. Repentance is beautiful. When done with a sincere and contrite heart, it directs us to the glory that can be ours, ignites us with the challenge of living a life in service of others and reminds us that all is well.

## Everyday Stewardship

**Tracey Earl Welliver, MTS**

One of the characteristics of Everyday Stewardship is to be committed — to persevere daily in a way of life acknowledging that everything belongs to God.

I know, I know. Easier said than done.

Just ask Zebedee. It's quite an image we get from the Gospel, after all. "So they left their father Zebedee in the boat along with the hired men and followed him."

There was Zebedee, about his business, mending nets with his two sons, who were undoubtedly his best workers — they had to have been more dedicated than the hired men, who worked for wages rather than for family. And in an instant off they go, following this strange man.



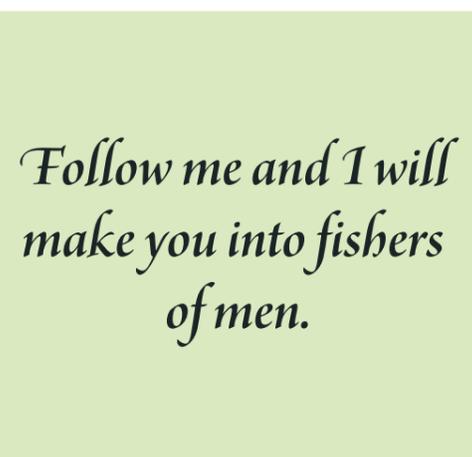
I don't know about you, but if my kids left me on a hot summer day to finish the lawn by myself, I wouldn't

be too happy.

But Zebedee must have been someone quite special. Perhaps he realised that his sons didn't belong to him — not really. They belonged to God, and from the beginning of time, it had been appointed that they would be among the first disciples of Christ. He passed, he called, they followed, and Zebedee obliged. He simply went back to mending his nets, I imagine.

Zebedee already understood what St. Teresa of Calcutta would say millennia later: "Give until it hurts."

"You're wasting my time." "I've done so much for her; she owes me this." How often do we think things, and even people and relationships, belong to us? The truth is none of them do. We must be ready, as Zebedee was, to surrender them to God when He comes walking past.



## Live the Liturgy

**Inspiration for the Week**

"Repent, and believe in the gospel." Some type of honest and sincere repentance is necessary for any type of authentic growth and maturity. We have to come to the realisation, unless we are happy wallowing in immaturity and superficiality, that the way we have been doing things is not the best or the healthiest. There isn't a human being alive who hasn't acted foolishly or erratically at the cost of almost losing a treasured relationship. "Why did I act that way?" is a question we

often ponder after some reflection and enlightenment. Faith works the same way. Stumbling through life and bumping up against meaninglessness, a person can begin to see that something significant is missing. They see that there is merit to a relationship with God and an embrace of faith. Before these can take root, sincere sorrow for past wrong doing, missed opportunities, errors in judgement, and shortsightedness is necessary. Repentance is necessary. Then having realised that we were walking in darkness, we can rejoice that by God's grace we now see the light.



First Reading	Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel Acclamation	Gospel
When God saw by their actions how they turned from their evil way, he repented of the evil that he had threatened to do to them; he did not carry it out. (Jon 3:10)	Lord, make me know your ways. (Ps 24)	For the world in its present form is passing away. (1 Cor 7:31)	Alleluia, alleluia! The kingdom of God is close at hand: repent and believe the Good News. Alleluia!	The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel. (Mk 1:15)

# Masses this Week

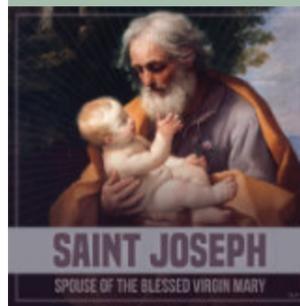
24	<b>SECOND SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME</b>	Jon 3:1-5, 10/Ps 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9 [4a]/1 Cor 7:29-31/Mk 1:14-20
	10.30	<b>Mass</b> St Mary's Les and John Lane (RIP)
	17.00	<b>Mass</b> St Mary's Lorraine Elizabeth Purdy (RIP)
25	<b>The Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle</b>	Acts 22:3-16 or Acts 9:1-22/Ps 117:1bc, 2 [Mk 16:15]/Mk 16:15-18
	12.05	<b>Mass</b> St Mary's Veronica Whiting(RIP)
26	<b>Tuesday</b> Ss Timothy and Titus	2 Tm 1:1-8 or Ti 1:1-5/Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 7-8a, 10 [3]/Mk 3:31-35
	12.05	<b>Mass</b> St Mary's Intentions of Rosemary Corbett
27	<b>Wednesday</b> St Angela Merici	Heb 10:11-18/Ps 110:1, 2, 3, 4 [4b]/Mk 4:1-20
	12.05	<b>Mass</b> St Mary's Sr M. Bede (RIP)
28	<b>Thursday</b> St Thomas Aquinas	Heb 10:19-25/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6 [cf. 6]/Mk 4:21-25
	12.05	<b>Mass</b> St Mary's José Pérez Guirao (RIP)
29	<b>Friday</b>	Heb 10:32-39/Ps 37:3-4, 5-6, 23-24, 39-40 [39a]/Mk 4:26-34
	12.05	<b>Mass</b> St Mary's Deceased members of of Sayer Family
30	<b>Saturday</b>	Heb 11:1-2, 8-19/Lk 1:69-70, 71-72, 73-75 [cf. 68]/Mk 4:35-41
	11.00	<b>Mass</b> St Mary's Ron Cook (RIP)
	18:00	<b>Vigil Mass</b> St Cecilia's Sheila Ward (RIP)
31	<b>FOURTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME</b>	Dt 18:15-20/Ps 95:1-2, 6-7, 7-9 [8]/1 Cor 7:32-35/Mk 1:21-28
	10.30	<b>Mass</b> St Mary's People of the Parish
	17.00	<b>Mass</b> St Mary's Sister Mary Bede (RIP)

## Parish Prayer for the Year of Saint Joseph

Almighty God, you have chosen Saint Joseph to be the mainstay of Jesus and Mary, the wise and faithful servant in whom they could trust.

We pray that he may be the guardian of our Parish and our families; that he may inspire with confidence those who seek his protection; that he may give security to those who work in the vineyard of your Son; and finally, that he may be a source of strength to us, who wish like him, to dedicate ourselves ever more fully to Christ's service, now and in times to come.

Amen.



## Questions for the Week

**First Reading:** Although initially reluctant to be one of God's prophets, Jonah was ultimately successful in getting the Ninevites to repent of their sins. When do you find yourself resisting God's will?

**Second Reading:** In trying to awaken a sense of spiritual urgency, Paul taught the Corinthians that Christ's return was imminent and that, "time is running out." How can a sense of urgency aid one's spiritual life?

**Gospel:** In Mark's account of the call of the first disciples, Simon (Peter), Andrew, James, and John immediately answer Jesus' call to follow him. How would you describe your response to Jesus' call in your life?



## Why do we do that?

### Catholic life Explained



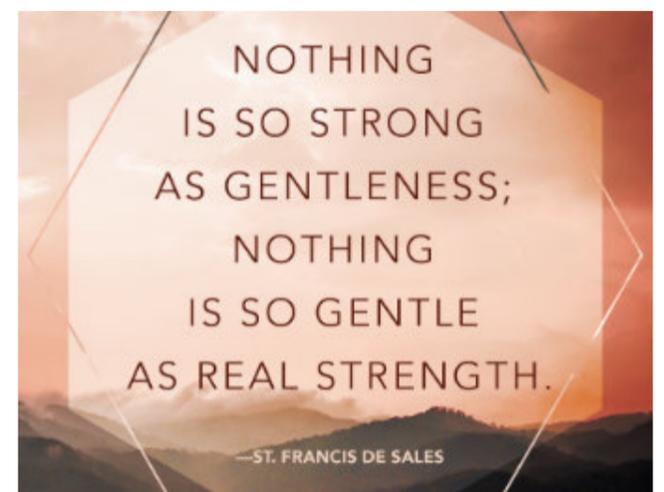
**Question:** Do Catholics always need to receive communion in wafer form, or can it be different kinds of bread?

**Answer:** In the Roman Rite of the Catholic Church, the most common form

for the eucharistic bread is the small white communion "wafer" that is a ubiquitous part of the Catholic Mass. The instructions of the Church have been very specific regarding the make-up of the bread used in the Mass: "The bread used in the celebration of the Most Holy Eucharistic Sacrifice must be unleavened, purely of wheat, and recently made ... it follows therefore that bread made from another substance, even if it is grain, or if it is mixed with another substance different from wheat to such an extent that it would not commonly be considered wheat bread, does not constitute valid matter for confecting the Sacrifice and the Eucharistic Sacrament" (see *Redemptionis Sacramentum* by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, no. 48).

The Church's tradition of using a wheat-based bread is based on the bread that Jesus would have used at the Last Supper and is considered to be an essential part of the "matter" of the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

As we consider the question of whether a "wafer" — which is properly called a "host" — should be used, we also must keep in mind that in the Eastern Rites of the Catholic Church, leavened (i.e. "raised") bread is more often used. And so, while the thin, white "wafer" is most commonly used in the Roman Rite of the Church, the full expression of the Catholic tradition does allow for a more substantial form of bread to be used, but the tradition of using a simple wheat bread with no other additions or additives is considered essential.



## News & Announcements

### Public Worship is Still Allowed

We are grateful that we are still able to open our churches for Mass. However, please observe the government guidelines especially if you are vulnerable and shielding. There is no obligation to attend Mass at the moment and you can follow the 10.30 Sunday Mass as normal on the parish Facebook Page.



### Student Chaplaincy

The University Chaplaincy events are all online for now, just email Mary (lay chaplain) for more information: [sunderland.chaplaincy@rcdhn.org.uk](mailto:sunderland.chaplaincy@rcdhn.org.uk) or to join the student WhatsApp group. The chaplaincy is here to support you during your time in Sunderland, so just get in touch

if you need a chat.

Every week:

Monday Morning Prayer 9am

Tuesday Games Night 7pm

Thursday Cathsoc Prayer/Social 6pm - This Thursday, we have "Ask a priest" with Fr Emmanuel ready to answer your questions on the faith!

### Northern Cross Newspaper

There are some forms at the back of Church for anyone interested in taking out a subscription to the Diocesan newspaper the *Nothrrern Cross*. You can have it delivered either by email or by post and support the diocesan newspaper during these difficult times.

### New System for Leaving Church

To prevent the build up of people at the back of the Church after Mass and to help maintain safe social distancing, please remain in your pew after Mass until the stewards invite you to leave.

### Email Newsletter

Sign up on our Facebook page to get the newsletter emailed to you every week. Alternatively, you can download it and read back issues on the parish website at [sunderlandcatholic.com](http://sunderlandcatholic.com).

### Baptism

Congratulations and welcome to Amelia Fos on the occasion of her Baptism.

## Flock Notes

I'm not going to get political, and certainly not with another country's politics; however, I was touched by one of the themes in Joe Biden's inauguration speech last Wednesday: truth.

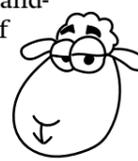
For a long time I have been concerned with the general 'dumbing-down' of political conversation but in recent years truth and facts have been used and abused in such a way as to remove any semblance of objectivity from both.

It seems we have gotten into the habit of confusing truth with opinion. No matter how sincerely my opinions are held, when I elevate them to the status of truth I do a disservice to truth and make it impossible to dialogue with people of differing opinions. At the heart of this, of course, is a lack of humility: making idols out of our opinions.

Fortunately, for us Christians, we know that truth is not some abstract, philosophical concept. Truth is a person: Jesus Christ. The closer our relationship with Jesus is the

closer to the Truth we will be. A relationship with Jesus is the antidote to the lack of humility that makes idols of our opinions. A relationship with Jesus also makes it possible to have healthy relationships with others, even if their opinions differ wildly from my own.

Pilate asked 'What is truth?' He couldn't recognise it standing right in front of him. Let's pray we and our leaders don't make the same mistake.



### Our Lady of Mercy Parish

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Fr Emmanuel Nuh Mbeh MHM, Assistant Priest • [emmanuel.mbeh@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:emmanuel.mbeh@diocesehn.org.uk)

Rev Eddy Barker, Parish Deacon

Canon Alexander Barras, Priest in Residence

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