



ST JAMES THE GREAT

Briefly

Weekly Newsletter

21st July 2024

Sixteenth Sunday



Fr David Says....

In every life, there is a need for a balanced rhythm of work and re-creation. With so much pain and suffering in our world – both in our personal lives and in our world, the demands of the mission can overwhelm us and cause us to act as though everything depends on us. While we can never really escape the responsibility of being there for those in need, today's gospel reminds us that there is a time for being out on mission whatever that may be, and a time for being with the one who calls and sends us. We need to care for ourselves. We need to learn how to say no. And if we cannot say no, then we need to explore the reason why. Are we people that puts a lot of our identity in being there for others? Are we people who are frightened to upset or let down people and then fear rejection? Are we people whose image of being "Nice" so important for us that although we keep on helping, we find ourselves grumbling other people's demands on us and maybe we find lack of appreciation for our sacrifices?. There are lots of needs in us that leaves us vulnerable to feel abused. If we constantly feel the need for affirmation, then we might feel anger and resentment towards those who do not give it to us constantly. Unfortunately these kinds of people can sap us of our energies. As healthy human beings we need to come to a point to acknowledge our limitations and be able to say no with sensitivity. I have always found people who have common sense to understand me when I give them the reasons for not being able to do what they were asking of me. And if they do not understand, than I think they need to do some kind of soul searching themselves.

The apostles have been busy, preaching, healing and driving out the demons as instructed. They now report back to Jesus with an account of their activities and are invited to take time to rest and recuperate. "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while" is the invitation that Jesus extends to them. Their rest is short lived, for the crowds pursue them. Jesus's response to the suffering of the people is a physical one: He was moved with compassion. Greek verb suggests a "gut" reaction in Jesus: he is physically affected in the depths of his being by the plight of the people who are like sheep without a shepherd and is ready to do something about it. As the narrative unfolds, we find Jesus inviting his disciples to accept the responsibility for relieving the hunger of God's people in the desert life. "You give them something to eat" is his instruction to those who would turn the people away.

Like the Israelites of old, afflicted humanity in any age needs good leaders or shepherds who would practice justice and righteousness in the land. Are we like sheep without a shepherd? What does that mean? Am I unable to make my own decisions? As we listen to Christ in the gospel today, we may ask ourselves what it means to follow him. The first reading of the Prophet Jeremiah, seems to be a commentary on the Gospel. Religious leaders often mislead us? It has happened for centuries and even

millennia. All we have to think of today is about the enormous scandal of the sexual abuse in our Catholic Church. What righteous indignation there was about bishops and priests who were hiding these scandals and thus making them even more possible.

Those of us who are priests or deacons or bishops and those of us who are involved in any way in the leadership of the Church must work very hard to regain the credibility within the Church. We must always be on the side of those victimized by persons in authority in the Church. We must keep helping them to have the counselling they need to bring healing in their lives. We must also have compassion to those who have abused others – as difficult as it sounds.

Jeremiah our first reading for today, calls for repentance on the part of those shepherds who mislead their flock. Jeremiah promises that God will send good shepherds to lead God's people. Perhaps before, we always took it for granted that those in positions of leadership were good shepherds, especially in these last 100 years of history. If we look back at the middle ages of Christian history we find popes, bishops, nuns, monks and priests and other involved in some pretty bad situations. Many of us today would be totally scandalised. Yet the Church survived. Probably you and I would not want to be part of the Church at various moments in history, yet the saints managed to become holy even in the midst of scandals and truly evil moral conduct on the part of the leadership of the church and on the part of the general membership.

If we turn to a more positive of today's readings, then we must summon one another follow Christ more faithfully. We must learn first and foremost that our leaders are human. They do make mistakes – they do sin. This is not to justify what they do, however we need not to put them on a pedestal. We are human like most of you are. However because of our role within the community we have the responsibility to grow in holiness whatever that may look like.

For our own spirituality today, we must all strive to live good and holy lives and lives that are deeply faithful to Christ's teachings. Only when we live in Christ, we are able to see the brokenness of our world and not condemn others. We must be loving in demanding true Christian leadership in our communities.

As the days for holidays is approaching for all of us, I hope that you will have a good and safe time of recreation and quality family lives.

Thank you for taking the time to read my reflection for the week. God bless you all especially the Year 6 at our school who have their leavers Mass and do on Wednesday. Remember Year 6s, St James's will always be here for you – our doors will always be opened for you.



All the Masses being said at St James' will be live streamed
<https://www.churchservices.tv/pettswood>
For the protection of all attend St James we request that you do not video live Masses using your phone during services.
 You can also take part in Adoration and Benediction by live stream.
 All events for live streaming are listed on the streaming site.

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Confessions will be heard in the church on Saturdays, 5.00-5.45pm,
 or by appointment.

Sixteenth Sunday Saturday 20th July Sunday 21st July	6:00pm People Of The Parish 09:15am Rudd Family 11:00am Paul Keller RIP (B Keller) Ken Evans - 80th Birthday (Evans Family) Harry McAleer RIP (S&D McAleer)
Saint Mary Magdalene Monday 22nd July	10:00am Moira Lyons RIP (G Whitley)
Saint Bridget Tuesday 23rd July	10:00am Elizabeth Margaret Mary Weekly RIP (Foundation)
Feria Wednesday 24th July	10:00am Whole School Mass Year 6 Leavers Mass
Saint James Thursday 25th July	10:00am Andrew O'Hanrahan RIP (E Delaney)
Saints Joachim and Anne Friday 26th July	<u>No Mass from St James'</u> <u>Please note that St Edmund of Canterbury, Beckenham will be live streaming their Mass at 10:00am.</u> <u>Click here for direct link to St Edmund's:</u> <u>https://www.churchservices.tv/beckenham</u>
Seventeenth Sunday Saturday 27th July Sunday 28th July	06:00pm Francesca & Luisa, two exceptional daughters (L Levoir) 09:15am People Of The Parish 11:00am Paul Keller RIP (B Keller)

The next Second Collection will be on the 28th July for the Parish Building Fund.



The current needs for this week are for:

- Long Life Desserts
- Cooking Sauces
- Sweets
- Shaving Gel / Foam
- Multi Surface Sprays & Wipes

For more information go to: <https://bromleyborough.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/>