



ST JAMES THE GREAT

Briefly

Weekly Newsletter

7th July 2024

Fourteenth Sunday



Fr David Says....

For those of you who were not born in this country or to those of you who had to uproot yourselves from other counties in the country, you might understand more the nuances of the gospel of this weekend. When I go back home, I always feel a certain sense of going back to my roots. The culture, the history, the language, the food, my family and relatives are there in the most part. So I feel that I have arrived home. However being away from the island for 31 years now, I have not been part of the changes politically, socially and religiously that country had gone through. I have kept in touch through the News and also through my visits, but I was not part of all that entails in everyday life. For this reason I do not feel completely Maltese. On the other hand being away from the island for 31 years, my relatives and friends do not know completely what has happened to me during this time. They were not part of my living abroad. In this sense if I go home and try to perceive the country of birth, my siblings, their families as I used to know them before it would be the biggest mistake for me. Life have moved on even in tiny Malta. The same would be if they do not understand – that living away has also given me a different perspective of life and of my own country. To encounter each other we need to be sensitive to each other and not try to meet each other with already made assumptions. Those who do not see the reality of this dynamic happening will always put me into a box of when I left Malta in 1993. Who were my parents, what education I had been given, what things I had been up to in my youth etc.

The gospel of today narrates to us how people of his home town reacted to Jesus as he revisited them. We need to remember here, that Jesus started his ministry when he was 30 years old. He had lived with them for a long time. They thought that they had known him. Now he is coming back as a celebrity. Their reaction was of not accepting the different Jesus. They had heard and saw in Jesus – the wisdom and wonders that he was doing. We too could go through similar experience of God in Jesus. We too see and hear many signs but our faith might still be weak to perceive the real Jesus. We too read the gospels through our image of Jesus (religiosity) without perceiving the real message of the gospel. Thinking we are following Jesus but at the same time following an ideology which we believe in and so do not accept the radicality of Jesus's message towards us as individuals but also as humanity. Their story is our story.

In the gospel of Matthew, after the baptism and temptations, Jesus begins his public ministry with the calling of his apostles and the proclamation of his new manifesto from the mountain top. Whereas in Luke, Jesus begins his public

ministry in Nazareth where he makes his mission statements using the words of the prophet Isaiah. It is interesting to note that in Mark who does not speak about the birth and childhood of Jesus, and who actually narrates the events in a hurry – Jesus appears in his home town only in chapter 6. In other words Jesus is already popular in other areas of the country. Against this background, Jesus appearance in his home town and the subsequent rejection by his own people would have been really heart-breaking for him. An interesting detail is that the people of his home town do not reject him down right. They consider the facts. Jesus now is not the man they had previously known in the past thirty years. He is different now. Something has happened to him. The sense of wonder does not translate into a deeper experience of him as he is right now. They are too much bogged down by his history. They want to examine the facts further.

They start mentioning the historicity of Jesus; his profession, his genealogy, and his kin. It could be just a way of saying – After all we know him. We know where he is coming from. Mark uses the term "Son of Mary". In the cultural context of Jesus, that was a vulgar ridicule and offence. In that culture, as it is in many cultures even today, someone is referred to as the son or daughter of the father. But the people of his town call Jesus, the son of his mother. They are basically calling him a bastard. It was so awful that when Luke came to write the gospel, he reports, "They said, "This is Joseph's son surely?" This statement alludes to the reality that there was a mystery behind the origins of Jesus. His origins is not normal. Maybe alluding too to the mystery of the Incarnation.

Sadly they would not accept him. What is Jesus reaction to this? He is resigned to it. The Prophet is not accepted in his own country. Jesus goes about his mission of forming a new family. Even his own family in Chapter 3, Jesus has had some bad experience with his relatives. They had failed to understand him. In fact, they had wanted to take control of Jesus because they said he was out of his mind. So after his rejection in his home town, Jesus continues to tour around the villages teaching.

A lot of times, when one is in a community, they start to take you for granted and one feels more appreciated by others beyond the community as it happened to Jesus. I think it is always the way in life. We never appreciate fully what we have. We always want someone or something else. Rejection can be hard however one needs to pick oneself up and move on.

I wish to thank you for taking the time to read my reflection for this week. I hope you will have a great and blessed week. God bless 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.

Fourteenth Sunday Saturday 6th July Sunday 7th July	6:00pm Mr Bosco Fernandes RIP (M&N Miranda) 09:15am People Of The Parish 11:00am Paul Keller RIP (B Keller) Philip Nery Rebello RIP (E&G Rebello)
Feria Monday 8th July	10:00am Blake Family (J Blake)
Feria Tuesday 9th July	10:00am Maureen Mulvey RIP
Feria Wednesday 10th July	10:00am Barry Head RIP - 2nd Anniversary (G Head) 10.45am Eucharistic Adoration
Saint Benedict Thursday 11th July	Please note change of Mass time: 11:00am Requiem Mass Helle Hobbis-Mutton RIP
Feria Friday 12th July	No Mass from St James' Please note that St Edmund of Canterbury, Beckenham will be live streaming their Mass at 10:00am. <u>Click here for direct link to St Edmund's: https://www.churchservices.tv/beckenham</u>
Fifteenth Sunday Saturday 13th July Sunday 14th July	06:00pm People Of The Parish 09:15am Therese Braniff RIP (M Hutchinson) 11:00am Paul Keller RIP (B Keller)

This Weekends Second Collection Is For The JPIC Project
 Next Weeks Second Collection Is For Stella Maris (Apostleship Of The Sea)



The current needs for this week are for:

- Tinned cold / hot meats
- Long Life Desserts
- Tinned potatoes
- Tinned vegetables
- Tinned soup

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