



St James – A shining light in Petts Wood



ST JAMES THE GREAT

Briefly

Weekly Newsletter

13th October 2024

Twenty-Eighth Sunday



Fr David Says....

The great African American activist and writer tells about her Aunt Tee who worked as a house-keeper for a couple in Bel Air, California. She lived with the couple in their spacious fourteen-room ranch house. They were a very quiet couple. As they had gotten older, they had stopped entertaining their friends and even spoke less to one another. "Finally", Maya says "they sat in a dry silence". Aunt Tee, on the other hand, enjoyed entertaining her friends on Saturday evenings. She would cook a pot of pigs' feet, a pot of greens, fry chicken, make potato salad, and make banana pudding for her friends to feast upon. And they would have a marvellous time together. There was always plenty of laughter coming from Aunt Tee's room. One Saturday, as they were playing cards, the old couple called her. "Theresa, we don't mean to disturb you..." the man whispered, "but you all seem to be having such a good time..." the woman added, "we hear you and your friends, laughing every Saturday night and we would just like to watch you. We don't want to bother you. We will be quiet and just watch". At that moment they both won Aunt Tee's sympathy forever. She agreed to allow them to watch her and her friends. It was a sad situation, since the couple owned the spacious house complete with a swimming pool and three cars, but they had no joy in their lives. Maya reflects "Money and power can liberate only if they are used to do so. They can imprison and inhibit more, finally than barred windows and iron chains".

In today's gospel, an unnamed man approaches Jesus and enquires about what he must do to inherit eternal life. Jesus replies that one must follow the commandments of the Law of Moses. The man acknowledges that he has observed all of these since his childhood. Jesus then says that only one thing is lacking: he must give all his possessions to the poor and follow Jesus. The man leaves in sadness, and Mark tells us that this is because he had many possessions.

The belief in resurrection and eternal life was a relatively recent development in Jewish thought at Jesus's time. And it wasn't shared by everyone. The Pharisees taught that there would be a resurrection from the dead. The Sadducees did not share this belief. Jesus taught that there would be a final judgement for everyone and eternal life (The Kingdom of God) for believers.

Jesus makes two requirements of the wealthy man who approaches him. First, he must give up his possessions. Throughout history, some Christians have taken this literally. Their example witnesses to us a radical commitment to the Gospel of Jesus. The first that comes to my mind is St Francis of Assisi, who was the son of a very rich merchant in Assisi.

His father used his wealth to control his Francesco. Until Francesco read the story of the rich young man and the biography of St Francis tells us that he went in the middle of Assisi and undressed naked in front of everyone to show to everyone including his father of his detachment from material things. This experience helped him to identify himself to Christ and his mission on earth. Some others have read this story of the rich young man, as a particular requirement directed to this specific individual. Still others have sought to explain the meaning intended by the word possessions as those things that prevent one from following Jesus. Christians have generally understood that at the least, following Jesus requires that believers hold material possessions loosely and remain vigilant against seeking security in accumulating possessions.

I remember myself when I decided to leave the Community I was part of for 21 years, and having a salary with the NHS as a Chaplain, I found myself buying stuff that I did not really need just for the sake of accumulating. I did not have lots of money before. I have never been a millionaire thank God however I realised how easy it is for people to have the money and to feel secure by things that we do not really need. How we as human beings, find our security in stuff and then we can become enslaved by the stuff themselves. There is such freedom when we live according to our means and instead of feeling completely self-sufficient, we can live simply. This demands a true metanoia. A change of prioritizing things. We are living in a society which encourages us to accumulate wealth and stuff in order to fill the void within us. The void that we feel within us is not filled with material things. The void is existential – the void is spiritual. The void is feeling loved and surrounding ourselves by loving people.

The second requirement Jesus makes of this man is the invitation that Jesus extends to all disciples. "Follow me". Jesus very much wants this man to be his disciple. We believe that Christian faith is one in which each believer is in a personal relationship with Jesus. Just as this gospel tells us that Jesus loves the man and is sad when he departs, so too Jesus loves us and is saddened when we are unable to let go of our possessions and dreams to follow him.

Peter replies to Jesus by boasting that the disciples have already given up everything. Jesus acknowledges that those who have given up everything for the sake of the Gospel will be rewarded. This reward begins now, in the new community that one will gain in this life, and will continue in the eternal age to come. Our personal relationship with Jesus is also an invitation to the community of faith – the Church.

Thank you once more for taking the time to read my reflection for this week. God bless you and your week.



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.

<p>Twenty-Eighth Sunday Saturday 12th October</p> <p>Sunday 13th October</p>	<p>6:00pm Harrington/Crowley Anniversary Mass (Harrington Family)</p> <p>09:15am Gilda Spaducci RIP (L Wiedenhaupt)</p> <p>11:00am Nora Forshaw RIP (M Morley) Margaret Dudley RIP (David Family)</p>
<p>Feria Monday 14th October</p>	<p>10:00am Thanksgiving for Granddaughter Libbi Spencer (T Willard)</p>
<p>Saint Teresa of Jesus Tuesday 15th October</p>	<p>10:00am Welfare of Anthony & Ed Blake (J Blake)</p>
<p>Feria Wednesday 16th October</p>	<p>10:00am For Healing of my son Vitalii (Tatiana) 10.45am Eucharistic Adoration</p>
<p>Saint Ignatius of Antioch Thursday 17th October</p>	<p>10:00am Linda Kingdom on her retirement (M Jackson)</p>
<p>Saint Luke Friday 18th October</p>	<p>No Mass from St James' Please note that St Edmund of Canterbury, Beckenham will be live streaming their Mass at 10:00am. Click here for direct link to St Edmund's: https://www.churchservices.tv/beckenham</p>
<p>Twenty-Ninth Sunday Saturday 19th October</p> <p>Sunday 20th October</p>	<p>06:00pm Geraldine Colleary RIP (C Cavaday)</p> <p>09:15am People Of The Parish</p> <p>11:00am Michael Cooper RIP (C Cooper)</p>

Next weeks second collection will be for World Mission.
 The Second Collection on 27th November will be for the Building Fund



The current needs for this week are for:

- Multi-surface wipes/sprays
- Ladies Deodorant
- Bleach
- Shaving Gel / Foam
- Nappies size 5/5+

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