



St James – A shining light in Petts Wood



ST JAMES THE GREAT

Briefly

Weekly Newsletter

27th October 2024

Thirtieth Sunday



Fr David Says....

On Wednesday the 23rd October, we heard of the death of Gustavo Gutierrez, the Peruvian Dominican priest considered the “father” of liberation theology. He died at the age of 96. The theology of liberation is a school of thought that explored dimensions of the liberation from the standpoint of Catholic social teaching. It emphasised a closeness with the poor and the suffering and called for authentic liberation in Christ. In a January 2017 interview with Spanish newsletter El Pais, Pope Francis said: “Liberation theology was a positive thing in Latin America. The Vatican condemned the part that opted for Marxist analysis of reality”. In his time as Jesuit Provincial, Pope Francis was against the extreme Marxist means of liberation. However Liberation theology was much more than that. It helped us to see that the Scriptures were not only about saving souls for the next life but for the Kingdom of God to be present in this reality. Jesus came to save us now in this world especially those who were the poorest, the marginalised – those who are outcasts in our societies. Through the reflection on the scriptures, it gave those on the margins a power to fight (not with guns) but with protests for their rights. Liberation theologians were the voice of the voiceless. In this way we can once again remember Romero and his conversion into becoming a voice for the voiceless in El Salvador. Gutierrez was a thinker and a theologian who tried to empower those who were in the margins. Unlike a number of liberation theologians, Father Gustavo was concerned to remain within the boundaries of orthodox Catholic faith and ecclesial discipline. In June 2018, Pope Francis sent Gutierrez a Letter for his 90th birthday, thanking him “for what you have contributed to the Church and humanity through your theological service and your preferential love for the poor and the discarded of society”.

Our first reading this Sunday is a radical articulation of hope, as the basis for liberation and survival. Hence we find images of restoration and renewal. Exiled, the Israelites were weak and helpless. However redemption and peace came from God. Our second reading on the other hand reminds us of the role of the priest. Every true priest shares in the priesthood of Christ, the High Priest. “every high priest was chosen from among humans.....so he can understand and sympathise with those who are ignorant and rejected”. So as a human being “who lives within the limitations of weakness”, the priest must pray for himself. Most importantly, his community must always pray for him. As Christians, we all need God’s mercy, healing and liberation from the limitations of life.

Today’s gospel has a lot to teach us. We see the blind and poor Bartimaeus yearning for healing and liberation. He will not let this opportunity pass him by. So like a drowning man, he cried out for help: “Jesus, Son of David have pity on me!”. The blind Bartimaeus represents our collective human situation that is consistently yearning for healing and liberation from weakness, sickness, poverty and sin. Our blindness might not necessarily be the physical loss of vision. However it could be whatever limits and prevents us from reaching or maximising our potential in life.

To be free from these limitations, first we must humbly acknowledge that they exist in us and around us. How many times you hear of people who do not see what they are doing wrong. They have no personal insight. They blame and judge others for their mistakes. They like to become a victim and call others as to be blamed for their unhappiness. Whilst what they really need to do is stop projecting their mistakes on others and acknowledge their need to see themselves as they are. Secondly it is interesting to note that, Bartimaeus did not believe because he was cured. Rather he was cured because he believed, and humbly cried out for help. So seeing his faith, Christ said to him: “Your faith has cured you.”

Gutierrez has helped us to see our faith in a different way. Faith and our religion is not only about living as good people in order to go and be with God in the next world. Our Faith and religion is about living in the present age and trying to change it for the better. It is a process of liberating ourselves and others from anything that is keeping us enslaved. And that includes in a very special way – the liberation of those who have no voice in society – those who have no rights and dignity. Bartimaeus is a clear example that Jesus wants to liberate us as whole people – body, mind and soul. Not only our souls. Let us try to wake up from our very small understanding of our faith and embrace the inclusivity which Jesus always showed to those who needed new sight. Let us try to build a much more just world around us and make a difference as Jesus is inviting to do.

The parish this weekend is on retreat at Worth Abbey. Please pray for us and I promise that we are taking you all with us in spirit.

Thank you for taking the time to read my reflection for this week. God bless you all in whatever is happening this week 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.

Thirtieth Sunday Saturday 26th October	6:00pm Christy Bryne RIP (A Mulroy)
Sunday 27th October	09:15am Ivy Dorothy Fry & Arthur Charles Clifton RIP (Foundation Mass) 11:00am Maureen Mulvey RIP (Pastoral Care Team)
Saints Simon and Jude Monday 28th October	10:00am Parishioners who are sick (CWL)
Feria Tuesday 29th October	10:00am Peter Weekly RIP (S Weekly)
Feria Wednesday 30th October	10:00am Mr Italo Ferretti RIP (M Ferretti) 10.45am Eucharistic Adoration
Feria Thursday 31st October	10:00am Frank Mayers RIP (J Mayers)
All Saints Friday 1st November	<u>10am People of the Parish</u> <u>7pm People of the Parish</u>
Thirty-First Sunday Saturday 2nd November	06:00pm Angela Holmes RIP (Flower Family)
Sunday 3rd November	09:15am People of the Parish 11:00am Kay McCoy RIP (L O'Sullivan)

This weeks second collection will be for the Parish Building Fund



The current needs for this week are for:

- Tinned Cold Meat
- Tinned Custard
- Sweets
- Multi-surface wipes/sprays
- Bleach

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