

ST FILLAN'S & ST JOSEPH'S PARISH NEWSLETTER

Dunkeld Diocese, Scottish Charity No: SC001810
Website: stfdac.co.uk

Sunday, 9th July 2023

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

If felt that some form of communication/support network could prove very useful to Parishioners, especially those who are housebound and vulnerable.

Please contact Fr. Les by phone 01877 330 702 or by email: stjosephcallander@dunkelldioocese.org.uk for further information.



FINDING A JUST SAVIOUR

The world looks for strength in power, the ability to control others. It looks for strength in wealth, the ability to own and accumulate possessions. It looks for strength in developing advantages over others, such as superior education and prestigious positions.

Revelation presents a different picture. It introduces us to a Messiah who is "meek, and riding on an ass." It wants us to believe that our strength is in a man whose boast is that "I am gentle and humble of heart." It praises God for contradicting the wisdom of the world: "for what you have hidden from the learned and the clever you have revealed to the merest children."

Maybe we continue to suffer so many miseries because we look for answers in the wrong places. We look "up" at the rich and powerful, expecting to find strength and security, and we are disillusioned with "empty promises of passing joy."

Perhaps we should look "down" at the meek and humble, the little people, the sick and dying, the poor and hungry. For it is among them that we will find our just Saviour, the God whose "right hand is filled with justice."

The power of the Spirit, who raised Christ from the dead, is continuously at work in the world. Through the generous sons and daughters of the Church likewise, the people of God are present in the midst of the poor and of those who suffer oppression and persecution; it lives in its own flesh and its own heart the Passion of Christ and bears witness to his resurrection.

Synod of Bishops, Justice in the World, 1971: 74.

Gerald Darring

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PRAYER

Eternal God, in whom mercy is endless and the treasury of compassion inexhaustible, look kindly upon us and increase Your mercy in us, that in difficult moments we might not despair nor become despondent, but with great confidence submit ourselves to Your holy will, which is Love and Mercy itself.

SUNDAY CONNECTION - This Sunday's Readings

First Reading *Zechariah 9:9-10*
The Lord shall come to reign in Zion.

Responsorial Psalm *Psalm 145:1-2,8-11,13-14*
I will bless your name for ever o God my King.

Second Reading *Romans 8:9,11-13*
Those in whom the Spirit of God dwells must now live according to the Spirit, not the flesh.

Gospel Reading *Matthew 11:25-30*
Jesus prays in thanks to God, who has revealed himself to the lowly.

BACKGROUND ON THE GOSPEL READING

Today's reading from Matthew's Gospel comes after a discourse in which Jesus reproaches people who have witnessed his mighty deeds yet still lack belief. In this context, today's Gospel explains the reason for this unbelief and reveals what is necessary for faith.

Today's Gospel also continues to enhance our understanding of discipleship as last week's Gospel did.

Jesus first prays in thanksgiving to God who has made himself known to Jesus' disciples. He praises God who has made himself known to the "little ones" and not to the wise and

learned. As in other recent readings from Matthew's Gospel, a contrast is made here between the unbelieving Pharisees, who are wise and learned, and the faithful disciples, tax collectors, and sinners with whom Jesus keeps company. The second part of this reading calls to our attention the unity between the Father and the Son. God has made himself known through Jesus, and in knowing Jesus, we come to know the Father. In Jesus' life and in his person, God reveals himself to us.

In the concluding sentences of today's Gospel, Jesus' teaching is again contrasted to the teaching of the Pharisees. This common theme of Matthew's Gospel probably reflects tension that existed between Jesus and the Pharisees and between the Pharisees and the community of Christians for whom Matthew wrote.

Pharisaic Judaism became the predominant form of Judaism after the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem about 70 A.D. Here that tension is expressed as alternative paths of holiness. The careful observance of the Mosaic law taught by the Pharisees could be experienced by some as difficult and burdensome. **In contrast, Jesus' way of holiness is presented as uncomplicated and even restful.**

TO MAKE OUR TRIALS EASIER TO ENDURE, JESUS ASSURES US THAT HIS YOKE IS EASY AND HIS BURDEN LIGHT

In reflecting upon the statement that Jesus assures us that his yoke is easy and his burden light, despite the fact that his own yoke was difficult and his burden heavy, we can find comfort and hope in the message it conveys.

Firstly, it's important to acknowledge that Jesus, as the Son of God, willingly took upon himself the weight of the world's sins and faced unimaginable suffering on the cross. His own

yoke and burden were indeed uniquely heavy. However, when Jesus speaks of his yoke being easy and his burden light, he is referring to the spiritual liberation and redemption he offers to those who believe in him.

The key lies in the fact that Jesus has already conquered the cross and the grave, triumphing over sin and death.

Through his sacrifice, he has opened the way for us to find solace and assistance in times of hardship. He understands our struggles and is ready to bear our burdens alongside us, providing strength, comfort, and guidance. By embracing Jesus and accepting his offer of salvation, we gain access to a divine presence that lightens our load. It doesn't mean that our trials will disappear or that life will become effortless. Rather, it means that we no longer have to face our challenges alone. Jesus walks with us, offering his support and intercession.

This assurance allows us to approach our difficulties with renewed courage and resilience. It reminds us that we have a source of boundless love and compassion who can carry us through even the most challenging times. Our faith in Jesus enables us to tap into his strength, wisdom, and grace, making our trials more bearable.

In conclusion, Jesus' statement about his yoke being easy and his burden light is not a denial of the hardships we may face in life. Instead, it is an invitation to lean on him, to trust in his ability to carry our burdens, and to find peace in the midst of adversity. With Jesus as our companion, we can face any difficulty, knowing that we are not alone and that his power is at work within us.

FAMILY CONNECTION

In today's Gospel, Jesus teaches an important lesson for families: from the youngest and simplest among us we can learn the most profound insights about God.

Parents who are attentive to this reality can learn much from their children even as their children are learning from them.

Families who create time and space for encounters with God will enrich the faith of all who share in family life.

Gather as a family and read together today's Gospel, Matthew 11:25-30. Allow time for each person to reflect on what Jesus reveals to us about God. Invite each person to show these things in a creative way, perhaps through a picture, poem, or some other means. Share these with one another. Conclude in prayer together, thanking Jesus for making God known to us. Pray together the Lord's Prayer.

DAILY PRAYER THIS WEEK

As Jesus heals, he gives courage. As he carries out his ministry of healing and announcing the good news of the closeness of the Kingdom of God, he is filled with compassion for all those who suffer and who need this encouraging news. So, Jesus calls us to join him. This isn't the call to priesthood or religious life. This is the universal call addressed to all of us to see with the same compassionate eyes of Jesus and to reach out and heal others.

As Jesus sends us, he knows that we will encounter resistance and opposition - sometimes from within our own heart first, but certainly from others.

- He always tells us not to be afraid. Even when things happen that take away our peace, our peace will be given back to us.
- He knows he is sending us like sheep among the wolves of this world, and so he asks us to be both wise and simple - two great gifts for our mission.
- He assures us that even when we don't know how to speak tender or reconciling words, the Spirit will speak through us.

The only thing we need to fear is the stuff we get into that can actually destroy our soul. What a great week to ask for the grace to be responsive to his call! All week, with attentive eyes, we can see with Jesus' own compassion, where

he is directing our heart to love and to heal. **We begin the week with such a great orientation.** Jesus invites us to come to him with our burdens and the stuff that weighs us down and then he sends us.

- He doesn't say we are not supposed to expect burdens.
- He just invites us to take up his burden, the ministry he gives to each of us.

Each day, following our pattern of focusing throughout the day in brief moments of conversation and connection with the Lord, we can consciously recognize the "calls" the Lord has given us and is offering us. And we can acknowledge them, accept them, embrace them. Of course, our primary relationships are all the ways we live our discipleship call.

So often though, these relationships are where we need the greatest courage to be tender, compassionate and courageous in loving, in letting the Spirit speak through us.

Let's ask ourselves all week: how can I bring healing and peace to each important relationship in my life? And, where I'm afraid, or resistant, or even where I've given up, that can be the place of the deepest and most important prayer of the week. It certainly can be the place we come to Jesus to be refreshed.

All week, we can try to be conscious of how our day-to-day work is part of our call from the Lord: to be an agent in the world for good, to make products, to offer goods and services to people, to coordinate human activities, to protect and defend others' rights, to heal others. Some of us are still available to be called to a specific work or ministry. This is a great week to ask for openness. Every one of us can find great meaning and deeper peace in placing what we do in the pattern of our response to God's call to us, through Jesus. When we do our work, we can thank the Lord for this work; ask to do it faithfully, lovingly, compassionately and justly. Some of us are struggling to find work that offers us dignity and a living wage. We can ask the Lord to send us to be his servants, with our gifts, and trust in his fidelity.

As we move through the week, growing in our relationship with the Lord all week, as we make these more conscious background moments of insight, recognition, and connection, we can give thanks and trust that if we scatter his seed, with trust and with abandon, we don't have to worry. The harvest has his guarantee of abundance.

AN INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC SPEAKER

Fr. Martin Pletts is having an **International Catholic Speaker: Marino Restrepo** to give a talk in **St. James', Kinross on Wednesday, 25th July 2023.** Holy Mass will be celebrated at **5.00 pm**, there will be tea and coffee in the church hall after Mass, and then **Marino will share his story with us, back in the church, from 6.15 pm onwards.** All are welcome to join us for what promises to be an inspiring and faith-filled evening.

PRAYER FOR LIFE: The Lord tells us that He has revealed the mysteries of the Kingdom to little children. Let us, therefore, ask for the grace to protect all children - born and unborn - from every form of harm. *Lord hear us.*

THANK YOU FOR YOUR LAST TWO WEEKS DONATIONS

24-25 June 2023 – Callander: £262.61.

including Saturday Vigil Mass: £58.30.

Sunday £123.20; Tea: £55.11; Raffle: £26.00.

– Doune: £75.60.

1-2 July 2023 – Callander: £581.54.

including Saturday Vigil Mass: 1st collection: £73.10.

2nd collection: £17.00.

Sunday 1st collection: £68.69.

2nd collection: £17.00; Car Boot: £400.00.

– Doune: £177.80.

including 1st collection: £90.80; 2nd collection: £87.00.

In June we have sent to Stirling Food Bank acc. £303.38.

On July 16, 2023 – the 2nd collection will be for:
Apostolate of the Sea (*Stella Maris*).