

ParishNews



Blessed Sacrament Parish Heavitree Exeter
12 July 2020 Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time. Year A

The sower and the seed



The Gospel today is the beginning of a new section in Matthew, called 'The Parabolic Discourse' - a section of parables Jesus tells the crowd, which we will read over the next three weeks. A parable is a story with a hidden meaning: we can easily remember the story, and gradually the true meaning becomes clearer and clearer. Today is a famous example: the Parable of the Sower. In itself, it is a story that would easily be understood by Jesus's audience - people who lived in an agricultural economy. Jesus uses their understanding to make an important teaching about the message he has brought: it is like a seed that is thrown out and received in different ways - the ideal is when the seed finds good soil, and produces a crop that can be seen and harvested: so the ideal listener to the word is one who allows it to lodge in the heart, but also produces a visible result.

What is the harvest we should yield, when we have heard the word?

Welcome Home!

When I proclaimed at the beginning of Mass on Tuesday evening: 'The Lord be with you' and heard the response 'And with your spirit' it was an emotional moment. Celebrating Mass on my own in the church for so many weeks has been a powerful experience, but it has always been impoverished by your absence. And I know that coming back to church this week has been emotional for you too.

As a Church we have never been, and never will be, a 'Temple Cult' a people which relies totally on it's ability to worship in a certain place. Jesus said to the Samaritan woman at the well, 'The day will come when you will worship neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem, but you will worship in spirit and in truth.' Worshipping in spirit has been the reality for most of us these past months and much richness and grace has resulted. It is possible that the way we worship has changed for ever. But rather than weakening our faith, this is proving to be a moment of reflection and renewal. More people have been accessing worship online during the pandemic than actually went to church before the outbreak of the virus. I know many of you travel on a Sunday to watch Mass from parishes and shrines around the world and you have come to know the priests celebrating and cherish the opportunity and experience. There is no reason why that should stop.

But it is also true that to gather together for the celebration of the eucharist is the fullest expression of what it means to be Church. And Jesus assures us that where we are gathered, he will be with us. Our personal relationship with Jesus is experienced and nurtured in the intimacy of our hearts and souls, but it is expressed and shared when we celebrate together. Unfortunately, at the moment, our gathering does look and feel different; social distancing limiting the numbers in church at any one time; giving our contact details as we arrive; receiving Holy Communion as we leave; no singing; all these things are alien to us and take some getting used to, but they are for our safety and security.

I'm immensely grateful to those who have volunteered to steward at Masses in the coming weeks. When you have all gone home they clean the church thoroughly and make sure it is ready for the next celebration. We couldn't gather without them.

The numbers coming to Mass have been manageable. So far we have not had to turn anyone away, but we are coming to the weekend. I want to remind you that there is NO OBLIGATION to attend Mass on Sunday. Yes, I will celebrate three Masses this Sunday, but if you all come expecting things to be normal you will be disappointed. It feels utterly unnatural for me to ask you not to come, but I would encourage you to think about making your weekly observance by coming to Mass on another day if at all possible. If we can spread ourselves across the weekly Masses it will help enormously. I know you understand. And it might be that the times and frequency of the celebration of Mass changes, so you will need to keep your eye on the newsletter, the parish Facebook page and the website.

This week I celebrated the twentieth anniversary of my ordination to the priesthood. All those years ago at Holy Ghost in Exmouth I really had no idea of what the years would bring. What I can now say is that I truly believe God wants me in this place at this time. I thank you for the blessings you have brought to my life and the opportunities to grow that this parish has afforded me. You are in my prayers every day. I thank God for you all.

Fr Jonathan

A thank you to our volunteer stewards

To enable us to open the church for the celebration of Mass we needed volunteers to help as stewards and cleaners. A big thank you to those who have offered to help. Thirty of you have come forward to help and the more that help the less they have to be called upon. If you think that you can spare a couple of hours to volunteer in what is a vital role please email the parish office exeter-heavitree@prcdtr.org.uk or call Lesley on 07712216724.

GIFT is for all families!

If you are a family with school age children, then GIFT (Growing In Faith Together) is for you! GIFT resources support families in their faith journeys.

Bedtime Chats

A new GIFT Resource. Set 10 minutes aside once a week to snuggle up, watch a bible animation, quietly reflect on the Good News of Jesus and say a prayer. Cuddly toys are essential! Visit the new GIFT page on the Blessed Sacrament parish website where you will find all our resources.

Bedtime Chat link for 'Jesus heals a man'

<http://www.blessedsacrament.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Jesus-heals-a-man.pdf>

Bedtime chat link for 'Two sons and a father':

<http://www.blessedsacrament.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Two-Sons-and-a-Father.pdf>

Click on these links or the one below and scroll down the GIFT page to access the 'Bedtime Chats.' <http://www.blessedsacrament.org.uk/parish-life/gift/> Each Friday Maria, our Pastoral Assistant, sends out a new chat. If you'd like to receive regular GIFT emails, please email Maria (Exeter-pastoral-assistant@prcdtr.org.uk).

CAFOD Coronavirus Emergency Appeal

Exeter Catholic Churches CAFOD International Coronavirus Emergency Appeal

In these challenging times when we can't worship together we have set up a CAFOD JustGiving page for our parishioners from Exeter and Topsham parish churches, Sacred Heart, Blessed Sacrament and Holy Cross to raise funds for our brothers and sisters in developing countries. This is the biggest challenge the world has faced in a 100 years and we can all make a difference in supporting this vital international fightback against the pandemic and help to save lives and livelihoods of the world's poorest people. CAFOD are already helping the poorest and most vulnerable people regardless of backgrounds or religion to overcome and survive COVID-19 but due to the unprecedented scale of this crisis they urgently need our help. Whilst the pandemic in the developing world has not had as much media coverage their circumstances are desperate and distressing as their health services are not able to cope.

Please visit our JustGiving page (which is also on our parish website) and support by donating and/or taking part in a sponsored activity and/or join us in our virtual pilgrimage to Lourdes.

To donate and for more information please visit the link below:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/CAFODInternationalCoronavirusAppealExeter>

Exeter Foodbank News

You can access the Exeter Food Bank newsletters *online via our website*. If you would like to receive our newsletters directly via email, or to receive printed versions in the post, please contact us at laura@exeterfoodbank.org.uk / 07818 226524.

Our Priority items for July are –Rice – 500g/1kg, Sugar, Tinned/long life custard, Tinned fruit, Sponge puddings. As we cannot collect donations at the church please look out for the donating points in supermarkets. You can also make a financial donation at:

<https://www.trusselltrust.org/make-a-donation/>

Summer Youth Catechetical/Faith Camps online this year!

Every summer the Diocese of Plymouth runs residential week-long faith camps to inspire and encourage young people in their faith journeys. Many of our children have attended these camps and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Due to the pandemic, this year's camps will be run online. During the week, there will be a programme of prayer and activity involving morning and evening prayer, quizzes, games and the celebration of Mass. Theme: The God Who Speaks.

Junior camp, aimed at Key Stage 2 children, will run from Sunday 1 to Friday 6 August; there are also **Senior camps** (Years 7 – 10 & Years 11 – 13) from Sunday 26 until Friday 31 July.

There are three separate email addresses for registering interest:

Junior Camp (current years 3-6) junior1pdcamp@mail.com

Senior Camp (current years 7-10) seniorpdcamp@mail.com

St Petroc's Camp (current years 11-13) chrislee4sc@gmail.com

To register, parents/guardians should email the appropriate email above with the full name of the young person, current school year, and name of school and/or parish. You do not need to be a member of a parish to attend the camps; all are welcome! All camps will be run in accordance with the Diocese of Plymouth Safeguarding Office. If you would like to speak with a family who has accessed these camps in previous years or if you have any questions, please do let me know. Maria Quinn School and Parish Chaplain exeter-pastoral-assistant@prcdtr.org.uk

DEADLINE to book a place is 17 JULY

The Community Sponsorship Scheme

It is two years since Pope Francis called on 'every Parish, every religious community, every monastery, every sanctuary of Europe, to take in one family'.

In response to Pope Francis' call, the Diocese of Plymouth agreed that Caritas Plymouth would be the Lead Sponsor for Catholic-led groups interested in community sponsorship across the Diocese. Through its work with refugees and migrants, Caritas Plymouth aims to explore how the Gospel Imperative to 'Welcome the Stranger' can be translated into practical action.

The Community Sponsorship Scheme offers a way for local groups - including Parish groups - to assist refugees fleeing war and violence to integrate safely into our local communities. It is a way to put local communities at the heart of a family's journey to a new life in the UK.

The Exeter Catholic Community response is now actively focusing on how to make this a reality. We will most likely emerge at differing rates that best suits us as we discover the new normal, in the coming weeks and months. Work has still been progressing, actively encouraged by Deborah Fisher the Caritas Manager for the Plymouth Diocese.

There is a need to have a core team with a 'can-do' attitude that would be drawn from across the Exeter Parishes, typically 10-12 people to help kick-start the application process. A key message from our last meeting with Caritas was that people, who have been involved already around the UK, spoke of it as life changing in a positive way for them and their communities. This will be more rewarding than challenging and is an invitation to have fun making it happen. The reach of this will involve all of us learning more and contributing what we can, as we scale up after the application is approved in principle.

This next-step lends itself to a mix of people, some of whom may well still be home-based, or in lockdown. We will find ways of communicating and working with anyone who wants to participate. There is a need to have internet access to online content for this stage.

Once we have the core group of members, we will actively move ahead together. We have access to lots of established best practices, worked examples, guidance, and mentoring as required. Exeter is a City of Sanctuary and we will be in good company with many others who have already accomplished this. In nearby Sidmouth, the Catholic Parish are expecting the arrival of a family very soon.

Contact Chris Lee, to learn more or express your interest. 07702 435890 cml_lee@hotmail.com

The Collection

During the celebrations of Mass in the coming weeks we are not able to pass the bags to collect your weekly offering. Instead please place your cash offering or planned giving envelopes in one of the two baskets which will be available at the church doors. These will be collected at the end of each Mass. And don't forget that the most efficient way for you to give is by standing order. Forms are available by emailing the parish office. Arrangements are made directly with your bank. And please remember to GiftAid your contribution if you are a UK taxpayer. Many thanks.

Pope's July Intention

Our families: We pray that today's families may be accompanied with love, respect and guidance. See also <https://thepopevideo.org>

The Pope tweets...

Faith makes us walk with Jesus on the roads of this world, in the certainty that the power of His Spirit will bend the forces of evil, subjecting them to the power of God's love.

Pope Francis on Mercy...

What does Jesus ask of us? He desires hearts that are truly consecrated, hearts that draw life from his forgiveness in order to pour it out with compassion on our brothers and sisters.

Prayers of Hope

Every Sunday during the Coronavirus crisis thousands of Christians across Britain are praying together at 7.00pm every Sunday evening.

Thanksgiving Masses for Care Workers

Thursdays at 7.00pm streamed Live Catholic Masses for the Sick and their Families, NHS Front-Line workers and those working in Social Care: <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/our-work/health-social-care/coronavirus-guidelines/masses-for-the-sick-and-their-families-nhs-front-line-workers-and-those-working-in-social-care/>

Sunday Mass Blessed Sacrament YouTube channel

Even though we are able to gather for Mass Fr Jonathan will continue to record a Sunday Mass and post it online at www.youtube.com/c/BlessedSacramentExeter

Livestreaming

We have had a favourable quote to install equipment to enable us to livestream from the church. We are hoping the work will commence in the next few weeks. This will be a permanent way to offer the celebration of Mass for those who are unable to come to church.

Wednesday Word online

Why not join our weekly Wednesday Word on line at 2.00pm every Wednesday? Contact Maria at exeter-pastoral-assistant@prcdtr.org.uk. She will add you to a group and/or support you with learning how to participate using Zoom video conferencing. We have had many parishioners successfully join who were new to 'Zoom' so be brave and get in touch!

Making an Act of Spiritual Communion

We are once again able to receive Jesus in Holy Communion when we come to Mass, but for many reasons it may not be possible for everyone. Committing this prayer to memory and saying it every day could help us express our heartfelt desire to be close to Jesus always.

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

For all the Saints...

15 July St Bonaventure (1218–1274)

Bonaventure was born at Bagnoregio in Etruria in about 1218. He became a Franciscan in 1243 and studied philosophy and theology at the University of Paris. He became a famous teacher and philosopher, part of the extraordinary intellectual flowering of the 13th century. He was a friend and colleague of St Thomas Aquinas. At this time the friars were still a new and revolutionary force in the Church, and their radical embracing of poverty and rejection of institutional structures raised suspicion and opposition. Bonaventure defended the Franciscan Order and, after he was elected general of the order in 1255, he ruled it with wisdom and prudence. He is regarded as the second founder of the Order. He declined the archbishopric of York in 1265 but was made cardinal bishop of Albano in 1273, dying a year later in 1274 at the Council of Lyons, at which the Greek and Latin churches were (briefly) reconciled. Bonaventure wrote extensively on philosophy and theology, making a permanent mark on intellectual history; but he always insisted that the simple and uneducated could have a clearer knowledge of God than the wise. He was declared a Doctor of the Church in 1588 by Pope Sixtus V.

22 July St Mary Magdalene

Mary of Magdala was healed of “seven devils” by Jesus. She ministered to him in Galilee and was present at his crucifixion. She was in the group of women who were the first to discover the empty tomb, and it was to her that the risen Jesus first appeared. The Western tradition is that Mary Magdalene is also “the woman who was a sinner” and the sister of Martha and Lazarus of Bethany. There is no evidence either way, and the tradition is tenuous enough for even such authorities as St Ambrose to hold, with the East, that they are three different people. Therefore, although the Western tradition is to be respected and is a real inspiration, it may not necessarily be historical. This kind of ambiguity is inevitable in a religion such as Christianity, which is founded on definite historical events rather than myths which can be adjusted into logicity. We need not worry about it too much: if it had been harmful to us to celebrate the tradition of heroic penitence, the Holy Spirit would not have allowed it. Even without the extra tradition, Mary Magdalene is a unique and important character in the story of the Resurrection, chosen by Christ as one of the first witnesses of the event that changed the world.

25 July St James the Apostle

He was the brother of St John and, like him, a fisherman. He was one of the witnesses of the Transfiguration and one of those who slept through most of the Agony in the Garden. He was the first of the apostles to be martyred, beheaded by King Herod Agrippa I to please the Jewish opponents of Christianity. He was buried in Jerusalem, and nothing more is known about him until the ninth century. At this time we learn of a tradition that the relics of St James were brought to Spain some time after his martyrdom, (perhaps early, perhaps as late as 830), and his shrine at Compostela in Galicia grew in importance until it became the greatest pilgrimage centre in western Europe. In every country there are churches of St James and well-trodden pilgrim routes. In Paris, the Tour St Jacques marks the start of the route and the Rue St Jacques points straight towards Compostela. In England, pilgrim routes lead from all parts of the country to the major ports that were used on the pilgrimage. This network of routes is a vital witness to the fact that the Middle Ages were not the static stay-at-home time that we often think them to be: everyone must have known someone, or known someone who knew someone, who had made the pilgrimage. The scallop shell, the emblem of St James, has become the emblem of pilgrims generally. In 1987 the pilgrimage routes to Compostela were designated by the Council of Europe as historical cultural routes of international importance.

Mass Times

Sunday 12 July

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

SEA SUNDAY

8.45am

10.45am *People of the Parish*

6.00pm

Tuesday 14 July

6.30pm

Wednesday 15 July

St Bonaventure

9.30am

Thursday 16 July

9.30am

Friday 17 July

6.30pm

Saturday 18 July

9.30am

Sunday 19 July

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

8.45am *People of the Parish*

10.45am

6.00pm

Tuesday 21 July

6.30pm *Barbara Henwood RIP*

Wednesday 22 July

St Mary Magdalene

9.30am *Lesley Hooper*

Thursday 23 July

St Bridget of Sweden, Patron of Europe

9.30am

Friday 24 July

6.30pm

Saturday 25 July

St James, Apostle

9.30am

Sunday 26 July

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

8.45am *Dick Henwood RIP*

10.45am *People of the Parish*

6.00pm *Kathleen Jenkinson RIP*

The Word

Sunday 12 July

FIRST READING Isaiah 55:10-11

The rain makes the earth give growth.

PSALM *Some seed fell into rich soil and produced its crop.*

SECOND READING Romans 8:18-23

The whole creation is eagerly waiting for God to reveal his sons.

GOSPEL Matthew 13:1-23

A sower went out to sow.

Sunday 19 July

FIRST READING Wisdom 12:13.16-19

After sin you will grant repentance.

PSALM *O Lord, you are good and forgiving*

SECOND READING Romans 8:26-27

The Spirit expresses our plea in a way that could never be put into words.

GOSPEL Matthew 13:24-43

Let them both grow till the harvest.

Attachments

Regular information

Sunday Message

Look for young children

Ichthus for older children

Sunday Homily

SEA SUNDAY

Please pray for all seafarers and the work of the Apostleship of the Sea on this Sea Sunday.

O Trinity of love and power,
our brethren shield in danger's hour.
From rock and tempest, fire and foe,
protect them wheresoe'er they go,
and ever let there rise to thee
glad hymns of praise from land and sea.
