



St John Boste Parish, West Durham
Esh, Esh Winning, Langley Park and Ushaw Moor

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Please telephone the Chaplain if you have someone in hospital who would like a visit.



Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A) : 5 July 2020

Re-opening for Public Worship: A couple of weeks ago I mentioned that, each weekend, there is a common thread which flows through the first reading at mass, through its accompanying psalm and then the gospel. If we have a missal at home it's worth looking through these readings before coming to mass so that we might pick out the theme in advance. It is often worth delving into a bit of background too. The background to today's first reading from the prophet Zechariah is interesting. There had been a time back in 587 BC when the army from Babylon, the superpower of the day, had stormed into Jerusalem and caused havoc. The Temple was stripped of anything valuable and it was left in ruins. Most of the leaders and influential people of Jerusalem were marched off in exile to Babylon, 500 miles away. There they experienced a foreign language, unfamiliar food, unexplained customs. Meanwhile, back in Jerusalem, the ruined Temple, was surrounded by weeds. The Jews in far-off Babylon felt that God had abandoned them. After 50 years it was Cyrus, king of Persia, who enabled the Jewish people to travel back to Jerusalem. There was hope, but also despair. They were going home, but what a mess the temple was in. They decided to rebuild the Temple for public worship and, at the same time, to renew their faith. It was a sense of God coming to his people once more, and the people coming to God. But in this re-opening, what sort of 'church community' did they now want? How did they see their future? Theirs was to be a new beginning where they would seek to rediscover the true nature of God, and to live by his ways. Out went the veneration of power, wealth, and selfishness. The new world order was to be built on faith, kindness, humility and a simpler way of life: the ways of God. So, in today's first reading, we have the prophet Zechariah writing in about 520 BC :-

"The Lord says this: 'Rejoice heart and soul, daughter of Zion! Shout with gladness, daughter of Jerusalem! See now, your king comes to you; he is victorious, he is triumphant, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. He will banish chariots from Ephraim and horses from Jerusalem; the bow of war will be banished. He will proclaim peace for the nations. His empire will stretch from sea to sea, from the River to the ends of the earth.'* [* 'from sea to sea, from the River....' this means 'from the Mediterranean Sea to the Dead Sea and from the River Euphrates to the extreme south'.] (Zechariah 9: 9-10)



This theme of humility and simplicity is followed through into today's gospel:-

" Jesus exclaimed: 'I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and for revealing them to mere children. Yes, Father, for that is what it pleased you to do. Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, just as no one knows the Father except the Son, and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. Come to me, all you labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest. Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Yes, my yoke is easy, and my burden light.'

(Matthew 11: 25-30)

- Are there any things which you have discovered during lockdown to be important in your life?
- How might your faith be simpler, but more focused?
- Have you found any new ways to pray, or discovered situations where God feels more real for you?

Recently deceased: Peter Harrison (Waterhouses), husband of Freda Harrison. Peter's funeral will be at Newhouse on Thursday at 11.00am: Fr Michael Hickey (retired, living at North Shields).

Anniversaries: Our Lady Queen of Martyrs: Joseph Quigley, James Shaw, Mary Rippon, Elizabeth Gannon, George Raynor, George Wilson, Julia Morris, Katie Wright, Thomas March, Mary Shoulder, Josie Mallen, Patrick Hughes, Thomas Pickersgill.

St Joseph's: Mary Counter, John Alderton, Joseph Gardiner, Philip Malley, Norman Laidman, Ethel Pattinson, John Lea, Lee Routledge.

St Michael's: Rhoda Oliver, Christopher Crawford, Malcolm Gowland, Patrick Blackburn, Marion Redmond, Valerie Young, Robert Quinn.

14TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Volunteers wanted to support the reopening of churches Mrs Fiona Standfield is the Chief Operating Officer for our diocese. She has sent this message: "We have been asked to start preparations for a gradual re-opening of our churches. Providing a safe and COVID secure space for prayer and worship is our utmost priority at this time, and you could have a part to play in this. To ensure that churches reopen in a safe and timely manner, we will require assistance from you, our parishioners, and therefore we are asking for volunteers from across the parish and partnership. Could you give up some of your time each week to volunteer at one of our churches? This may be at any of our churches across our parish or even our partnership; you can indicate a preference on the form.

The Diocese has produced guidance for the re-opening of churches and full training will be given.

- If you are in the [clinically extremely vulnerable group](#), you must not volunteer at this time.
- If you are in the [clinically vulnerable group](#) you could be at a higher risk of severe illness from Covid-19.
- For more information please [read page 3 of our handbook for the reopening of churches](#) which includes links to HM Government guidance.

We can only open churches with your help. Please do consider volunteering and if you are interested in doing so, a form will be given to you to complete. Thank you." *NB: Protective equipment and cleaning material was delivered to St Joseph's on Wednesday and the church given a thorough cleaning on Saturday. We hope to re-open St Joseph's for individual prayer before long. However, things will be different to what we are used to both for prayer and, eventually, for mass: a one-way system, we don't touch anything such as hymn books or statues and, most, significantly, distancing of 2 meters will severely restrict numbers in church. We estimate a maximum number of about 24. We will need to think carefully about how best to manage numbers at mass though do remember that, for the moment, the Sunday mass obligation remains suspended.*

– David Coxon

News from the diocese: Remember, you can keep up with all sorts of news about support and resources in our diocese by looking at the diocesan website: redhn.org For example, on Friday, 19 June there was a diocesan Day of Scripture with talks and resources all day. These talks are still available to see on the diocesan website. There are also Reflections for Readers and for Holy Communion ministers, and a short safety video on 'Reopening of churches'.

'Northern Cross': A digital version of the 'Northern Cross' should now be available for July. However, this carries no adverts which means that our diocesan newspaper has little income. We can help by taking out a subscription.

1. You can subscribe by cheque for £14.40 payable to Northern Cross and post it to: 11 The Grove, Hartlepool TS26 9NB (our office in Darlington is currently closed due to the present emergency)
2. £14.40 by bank transfer to account number **81602292**, sort code **40-43-11** using your surname & postcode as a reference (e.g. Smith TS26 9NB)

Newsletters!! Just a reminder once more that, with a backlog of unused mass sheets, the printed copies of our weekly newsletter are being distributed on old mass sheets. Don't get confused when, on the front of the newsletter, you see an old date. It is not a mistake!

What does 'individual prayer' mean under the new restrictions? Individuals are expected to be able to "reflect and pray" whilst adhering to physical social distancing rules. Votive candles may still be lit but shared matches, tapers or lighters must not be used. Candles must be lit from existing lit candles. Statues and relics must not be touched or kissed. This instruction will be displayed on posters in church.



Readings for next weekend (15th Sunday, A): Isaiah 55: 10-11; Romans 8: 18-23; Matthew 13: 1-23.



Food bank: "This weekend, the first weekend in July, should be our time for collecting items for the Food bank. However, this is not possible - but the need is still there. How can we continue

to help? We are asking people who normally donate food to donate money instead using our website durham.foodbank.org.uk and clicking on the Donate Now button. Alternatively, you can send a cheque made out to **Durham Foodbank** and sending to our head office at: Mile House, Bridge End, Chester le Street, Durham, DH3 3RA. Thank you."

Facebook page: We have set up a Parish Facebook page. If you are interested in being part of this then the name of the Facebook Group is "St. John Boste Parish Community".

Daily readings and Morning and Evening Prayer: <https://us.magnificat.net/free>
Mass and prayer available online: <https://mass-online.org/daily-holy-mass-live-online/>