



## St John Boste Parish, West Durham

Esh, Esh Winning, Langley Park and Ushaw Moor

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Hospital

R C Chaplain Father Paul Tully Tel. (01388) 818544

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



### Twenty second Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A) : 30 August 2020

**Rewarded by God?** People can sometimes seek a relationship with God which is more like a business deal than a friendship. "I will go to mass every week, say my prayers every night, and give £20 to charity every month and then, from you Lord, I expect good health, respect from my peers and the occasional win on the lottery." A very neat arrangement which is nice and tidy. Except deep relationships don't work like that. Friendships are based on trust. They are about listening, about openness, about a giving of oneself. So, any genuine relationship with God cannot be based on bargaining: 'you do this for me and I will do this for you.' God can be demanding. God can be challenging. The bible is littered with stories of God revealing his plan to humans about, and then expecting, those people to stand up to the plate. And that does not necessarily bring them reward from God, but often pain and anguish. They can end up being resented and ridiculed by others. Not quite the 'business deal' model. In today's readings both Jeremiah and Jesus find out that walking in the ways of God can be challenging and uncomfortable. Here's Jeremiah:

*'You have seduced me, Lord, and have let myself be seduced; you have overpowered me; you were the stronger. I am a daily laughing stock, everybody's butt. Each time I speak the word, I have to howl and proclaim: 'Violence and ruin!' The word of the Lord has meant for me insult, derision, all day long. I used to say, 'I will not think about God; I will not speak in his name any more.' Then there seemed to be a fire burning in my heart, imprisoned in my bones. The effort to restrain it wearied me; I could not bear it.'*

A powerful reading in which Jeremiah bears his soul. 'I will not think about God', he says, 'I will not speak in his name any more.' And yet, for all that, Jeremiah could not resist God's call; it was like a fire in his belly. Let's take a look at the accompanying psalm, a lovely prayer from Psalm 62:

*'O God, you are my God; for you I long. For you my soul is thirsting. My body pines for you like a dry weary land without water. So, I gaze on you in the sanctuary to see your strength and your glory. For your love is better than life; my lips will speak your praise. So, I will bless you all my life; in your name I will lift up my hands. My soul shall be filled with a banquet; my mouth shall praise you with joy. For you have been my help; in the shadow of your wings I rejoice. My soul clings to you; your right hand holds me fast.'*

Then we listen to what Jesus says about discipleship. There's no easy ride promised here either.

*'Jesus began to make it clear to his disciples that he was destined to go to Jerusalem and suffer grievously at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, to be put to death and to be raised up on the third day. Peter started to remonstrate with him: 'Heaven preserve you, Lord. This must not happen to you'. Jesus turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle in my path, because the way you think is not God's way but man's.' Then Jesus said to his disciples 'If anyone wants to be a disciple of mine, let him renounce himself, take up his cross, and follow me.'*

(Matthew 16: 21-27)

- Have you ever bargained with God? What about?
- Have you ever been ridiculed or 'dropped' as a friend because of your faith?
- Have you ever found that, in trusting God against the odds, your faith has deepened?



#### Anniversaries:

**Our Lady Queen of Martyrs:** Maureen Hayton, John Reed, Isabella Linsley, Mary Sullivan, George Daughtery, Joseph McKenna, Norah Turner, Kenneth Robson, Mary Finchen, Billy Peel, Ethel McMahan, Harry Rippon.

**St Joseph's:** Thomas McQuillan, Wilfred Manford.

**St Michael's:** Mary Rowntree, Jack Gray, Fiona Ballantine, Ronald Ives, John Hall, Mildred Sands, Jack Tobin, Joseph McKenna, Lawrence Welsh, Michael Lyons, Bill Salmon, Annie Callan.

**Fr Laurence Thompson:** next Sunday will see the anniversary of Fr Thompson's death. He died 6 September 1989.

## 22<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

**Gathering for mass:** Thank you to all who came to share in our mass last Sunday. Thanks too to those who assisted as stewards and in cleaning the church again mid-week. We are planning to have mass at St Joseph's again next Sunday, 6 September at 10.00am. **If you would like to come to our mass next Sunday please phone Bill Donnelly on either 07896- 782529 or 373 4284 between 2.00 – 6.00pm this coming Wednesday.** If you have already been to one of our masses recently then perhaps you could phone Bill closer to 6.00pm so as to allow first chance to those who haven't yet been to mass. Let Bill know if you are coming as an individual, as a couple, or as a household group. When you arrive at church you will be met by someone who will check your name against the booking list and ensure we have your phone number in case of a further virus outbreak locally. You will need to sanitise your hands on coming into the church and then be led to a specific seat by a steward (not necessarily your *favourite* seat, I'm afraid). Since some people have specifically asked, you may wish to leave your collection envelope/cash donation in a basket *before* sanitising your hands. It is great that we can meet again at church but do, please, try not to congregate in the narthex or immediately outside the exit door. Remember too that since 8 August it is now obligatory to wear a face covering in all enclosed public spaces, including churches. In the early days we had a number of people volunteer to be stewards and cleaners. Over recent weeks we have had fewer extra volunteers but, remember, you don't need to be from Ushaw Moor to volunteer for things. As we move towards more masses, whether at St Joseph's or our other churches, then we will need more stewards who can welcome people and explain the procedure which is simple enough in themselves, but a little different to what we have been used to. Quite understandably, the different 'system', and our need to wear face coverings, may well put some people off coming to church but please remember that, at present, the obligation to come to mass remains relaxed. You only need to come to church *if you feel comfortable in coming*. As I have mentioned a few times recently, each building needs a thorough deep clean before its *first* opening but then needs a simpler cleaning of benches and surfaces before every further opening for prayer, masses, baptisms, weddings and funerals. Once the initial deep clean has been done we follow a strict cleaning protocol which is straightforward, and the cleaning can now be done in less than 30 minutes. However, the re-opening of our churches does hinge upon our having plenty of people to assist with stewarding and cleaning. We are hoping to have the initial deep clean at Our Lady Queen of Martyrs at 11.00am on Saturday, 12 September and then the same at St Michael's at 11.00am on Saturday, 19 September. If **you** would like to volunteer to help, please contact the Parish Office: you can phone 0191-373 0219 or you can email: [stjosephs.ushawmoor@btopenworld.com](mailto:stjosephs.ushawmoor@btopenworld.com)

**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: [rcdhn.org](http://rcdhn.org)

**Hospital visits:** The work of Fr Paul Tully, our hospital chaplain, is back to normal and so he continues to visit the hospitals regularly. If you know of a patient who wants a visit from the Catholic Hospital Chaplain, please inform Fr Paul Tully on 01388 818544 or [frpaultully@outlook.com](mailto:frpaultully@outlook.com)

**Church cleaning this week:** Colleen Brown, Melanie Lee, Christine Brennan, Kevin Quigley.

**Feast days:** Monday: St Aidan and the saints of Lindisfarne. Friday: the transfer of St Cuthbert's body from Lindisfarne to Durham cathedral.

**Readings next week: 23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday, Year A:** Ezekiel 33: 7-9; Psalm 94; Romans 13: 8-10; Matthew 18: 15-20

**Contributions:** Because we don't have the same opportunity to put money into the collection baskets at mass just now then a number of people have recently been seeking information about direct debits, standing orders and on-line contributions. This is certainly an easier system to use in our present situation. If you are interested in doing this then let us know at the Parish Office and someone will be in touch with how best to do it. We also received a message from the diocese about Gift Aid. We are told: *'As you know, we would usually produce Gift Aid Donation Statements around this time to confirm for parish Gift Aiders the amount they donated during the last tax year and the amount of tax reclaimed for the parish in their name as a result. The letters can be used by parishioners when completing their tax returns if necessary, and also form an important part of our audit process. However, due to churches not yet being fully re-opened as a result of Covid-19, we have decided that this year we will only provide this information where specifically requested by an individual. This is because it would be unfair to expect our Gift Aid Organisers to distribute the letters when most parishioners are not able to attend Mass as normal. We did consider posting the letters direct to donors but this would be very costly across the Diocese and was not considered a good use of funds in the current circumstances. Taking both of these points into consideration, we have therefore decided it will not be possible to produce letters for everyone this year. If anyone does specifically request confirmation of their donation details however, please contact either the Gift Aid office ([gift.aid@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:gift.aid@diocesehn.org.uk)) or Andrea Emson ([andrea.emson@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:andrea.emson@diocesehn.org.uk)) and we will provide confirmation for them on an individual basis.'*

