

St John the Evangelist, Poulton

3rd June 2020

Wednesday of the 9th Week in Ordinary Time

(Eleventh Wednesday of Isolation)

Sign on at: saintjohnpoulton@gmail.com



Thanks to those who replied to my last scripture reflection with your own thoughts – if you want to be taken off the email list, or know anyone who may appreciate the contact, please let me know – or print it for a neighbour. (If you have only just started to receive these daily reflections it is because I have only just found your address, sorry) Thanks. Fr Peter.

Messages from Fr Peter: Please pray for Chris Taylor – she is very poorly

(Daily Scripture is available from www.universalis.com)

2 Tim 1:1-3.6-12

From Paul, appointed by God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus in his design to promise life in Christ Jesus; to Timothy, dear child of mine, wishing you grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Christ Jesus our Lord.

Night and day I thank God, keeping my conscience clear and remembering my duty to him as my ancestors did, and always I remember you in my prayers. That is why I am reminding you now to fan into a flame the gift that God gave you when I laid my hands on you. God's gift was not a spirit of timidity, but the Spirit of power, and love, and self-control. So you are never to be ashamed of witnessing to the Lord, or ashamed of me for being his prisoner; but with me, bear the hardships for the sake of the Good News, relying on the power of God who has saved us and called us to be holy – not because of anything we ourselves have done but for his own purpose and by his own grace. This grace had already been granted to us, in Christ Jesus, before the beginning of time, but it has only been revealed by the Appearing of our saviour Christ Jesus. He abolished death, and he has proclaimed life and immortality through the Good News; and I have been named its herald, its apostle and its teacher.

It is only on account of this that I am experiencing fresh hardships here now; but I have not lost confidence, because I know who it is that I have put my trust in, and I have no doubt at all that he is able to take care of all that I have entrusted to him until that Day.

Mark 12:18-27

Some Sadducees – who deny that there is a resurrection – came to him and they put this question to him, 'Master, we have it from Moses in writing, if a man's brother dies leaving a wife but no child, the man must marry the widow to raise up children for his brother. Now there were seven brothers. The first married a wife and then died leaving no children. The second married the widow, and he too died leaving no children; with the third it was the same, and none of the seven left any children. Last of all the woman herself died. Now at the resurrection, when they rise again, whose wife will she be, since she had been married to all seven?'

Jesus said to them, 'Is not the reason why you go wrong, that you understand neither the scriptures nor the power of God? For when they rise from the dead, men and women do not marry; no, they are like the angels in heaven. Now about the dead rising again, have you never read in the Book of Moses, in the passage about the Bush, how God spoke to him and said: I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob? He is God, not of the dead, but of the living. You are very much mistaken.'

(What is God saying to you as you hear his Word here?)

For the rest of the week we have sections from the second letter of St Paul to Timothy as our first reading. This is quite nice for us as we have only just completed following Paul in the Acts of the Apostles. This letter is thought to be his last writing as an older man and before he is believed to have been executed in the Persecution of Christians by Emperor Nero (Remember he "fiddled while Rome burned"? Well he blamed the Christians for the fire!). Language experts think this letter was actually written by someone else (Luke with a secretary?) as the phraseology is different from Paul usual style – but has his thinking – maybe Paul spoke to them and told them to come back with something?. It is thought to be Paul's sort of 'Last Will and Testament' to Timothy – but also to the all the Churches as they were entering a new period in the life of the Church when the last of the Apostles and original

leaders were dying. It includes encouragement for the future: particularly in being grounded in the scriptures and the teaching of the Apostles, and the importance of leadership.

Today's section has a lovely feel from Paul – notice how the word “mercy” is added in his opening remarks in the middle of his usual “grace and peace” (a Pope Francis message!)

But I would like us to simply concentrate on one phrase he offers to Timothy, the early Christians and to us:

“I am reminding you now to fan into a flame the gift that God gave you when I laid my hands on you.....”

I don't know about you but the recent relaxation of lockdown has allowed me to breathe a bit as I escaped to visit family and friends on Monday! The good weather allowed me to sit in three gardens! But today's message from Paul reminded me of another highlight of Monday: A Barbecue! Like many BBQs it took some lighting! It need a good deal of blowing, wafting with a dustpan and even the use of a clever blowing gadget to get it flaming, and then being hot enough to cook! I'm sure we have all been there (Please don't write in suggesting gas BBQs or impregnated coals or petrol – as you will realise God will not provide the equivalent in this parable!)

So I would just like to leave us with the image and hope we have time to ponder it.

- Do you know what it is like for your faith to feel weak? (describe it)
- Do you know what it feels like to be alive with insight and the “*Spirit of power, and love and self control*”? (Describe the occasions)
- Then how can we “*fan into a flame the gift that God gave*” us? First as just me, but also as a community of disciples as Paul was encouraging at the end of his life?

Could I suggest reading the whole passage again keeping these questions in mind. These questions are always a challenge in any age, but they may be particularly important for us in these days if we are not to be disappointed that the world, and our discipleship, looks different as we return from lockdown.

A note from St Mark: In the Gospel Jesus is, again, warning the religious people (like yesterday) that they can easily be distracted by ‘interesting’ questions which are not central to faith in God. He says to the questioners: “*Is not the reason why you go wrong, that you understand neither the scriptures nor the power of God?*”. Maybe the last weeks have helped us realise what is important and what isn't in living our faith?

Pope Francis announced a year to reflect on “Laudato Si” after Covid-19

24th May 2020 – 24th May 2021

“Today is also the fifth anniversary of the Encyclical Laudato si’, with which I sought to draw attention to the cry of the earth and of the poor. Thanks to the initiative of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, the “Laudato si’ Week” we have just celebrated will blossom into a special Year of the anniversary of Laudato si’, a special year to reflect on the Encyclical, from 24 May this year until 24 May next year. I invite all people of good will to join in, to take care of our common home and our most fragile brothers and sisters. The prayer dedicated to this Year will be published on the site. It will be good to pray it.”

“I wish you all a good Sunday. Please do not forget to pray for me. Have a good lunch and arrivederci.”



Prayer for the special year of the anniversary of *Laudato si’*

Loving God, Creator of Heaven, Earth, and all therein contained.

Open our minds and touch our hearts,

so that we can be part of Creation, your gift.

Be present to those in need in these difficult times,
especially the poorest and most vulnerable.

Help us to show creative solidarity
as we confront the consequences of the global pandemic.

Make us courageous in embracing
the changes required to seek the common good.

Now more than ever, may we all feel interconnected and interdependent.

Enable us to succeed in listening and responding
to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor.

May their current sufferings become the birth-pangs
of a more fraternal and sustainable world.

We pray through Christ our Lord,
under the loving gaze of Mary Help of Christians, Amen.

PARISH NOTICES:

- **Know any parishioners housebound or who may need contacting?** - At the start of this lockdown a number of parishioners offered to find a way of being help to those parishioners who are in need or just housebound. Many people are in contact with the parish through this email or the WhatsApp group, but you may think of some who are not getting parish contacts – but they may get family support and food. If you have suggestions please email their names and addresses to the parish address and we can get parishioners to drop a message in to them. Thanks.
- **Local COVID19 Helplines** *(Official message from our Parish Organisers)*
The Wyre Council have a dedicated helpline for COVID19 isolation support. If you are struggling to get essential items, or need help, please ring 01253 891000 and select OPTION 7 when prompted. Alternatively, if you have access to the internet, you can fill in the online request for help here: https://www.wyre.gov.uk/forms/form/257/en/coronavirus_isolation_support_form

There is also another local network being organised by the Methodist Church - called POULTONCAN. The helpline there is 01253 670800 between 8am and 10pm, 7 days a week.

We have a group of parish volunteers who are going to be working with the council to respond to requests. If anyone would like to offer help, please email Jenny at jennifer.hillman.sutcliffe@gmail.com or telephone on 07568502749.

- **Parish WhatsApp Group:** Emily Halliwell (as part of the above group) has set up a closed parish WhatsApp account. I have finally been beaten into joining but am a bit of a WhatsApp virgin as yet! Emily says: “My number is 07969643648 if you want to be added just reply with your mobile number or text me. “
- **Local Bakery Offer:** Jane and Andrew Neal, who are always so generous to us by offering bread and cakes at parish social events, are offering delivered bakery goods to those who are in isolation or ill.

However they also offer a “click-and -collect” service (You can stop outside the shop in Cleveleys) for those who have transport. You can order on line at [neals-familybakery.co.uk](https://www.neals-familybakery.co.uk)

- Lancashire and South Cumbria website for current details on Hospitals & Corana Virus <https://www.healthierlsc.co.uk/coronavirus>

Thoughts contributed by Virus Times’ readers:

(A few of anonymous responses from these Virus Times Reflections from our parishioners: Thanks to contributors.)

Thank you again for all the lovely and inspiring thoughts. It has made me realise after all my years how much the Holy Spirit has influenced my life without acknowledging it I must get on my knees.!!!

What profound words from Our Pope....It made me think a lot...hopefully and prayerfully action will follow. His words on how Jesus used his multifaceted disciples (with all their marked differences) AS THEY WERE :that Jesus did not pre package them as a homogeneous bunch -but held them in unison by The Spirit of our Living God were so, so powerful to this reader. God Bless Him!

This Morning at St Peter’s Hazel Grove the Mass readings were in Arabic and all bidding Prayers of which there were many languages from all over the world. It was quite a moving experience.

People being prayed for by our parish groups:

Various Older People we worry about	Whilst we are enjoying the promise of loosening lockdown we still have concerns for relations and friends who have signs of Covid-19 and who have been taken to Hospital. Please pray for these people – and for those we don’t know as well.
Sarah Maureen	Jen Hillman’s Grandma who has died
Lyn Reynolds	Nana or mother-in-law to Jacinta and Michelle. Lyn is a lot better and hoping to return home later this week. Thanks for amazing prayers.
Chris Taylor	Chris’ son, David has asked for your prayers for her at this time as she is very poorly
John (and family)	Family friend of Emma who has died aged 49
Louie aged 13	The neighbour of a parishioner who has Leukaemia who is having a sudden set back. Prayer, please
From Jayne Clark	Could I please ask that our parishioners pray for all the staff in children’s social care who are still working to safeguard children in our area and around the country. It never ceases to amaze me how hard they work generally, despite the abuse that they often are subjected to, but more so currently given the extra risk that they are putting themselves under to visit the vulnerable.
Maureen O’Connell & Family(Not Covid-19)	Mrs Donnelly’s Mum
Paul Sharrock (Not Covid-19) (and family: Kathryn, Mary & Rachael)	Your prayer of healing for Paul is remarkable –Paul has been moved to a hospital nearer his family – we hope he can see them. <i>Fr Peter</i>
House-locked Parishioners	Who are worried and missing family
Parents home schooling AND home job-ing	Thank God for our parents
Our Teachers	Who are at school or preparing work for our children
Luke (not Covid-19) Died Yesterday	A young man recently married into a family I know in Australia, aged 30. (Fr Peter)
Hugh (Not Covid-19)	The brother of Emma, a friend of mine (Fr Peter), who has been found to have cancer only recently. He has three young children. Prayers Please

