

# St John the Evangelist, Poulton

11<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Friday of the Twenty-third Week of the Year

(Twenty-fifth Friday of Isolation)

Sign on at: [saintjohnpoulton@gmail.com](mailto:saintjohnpoulton@gmail.com)

Parish Website: [www.stjohnspoulton.org.uk](http://www.stjohnspoulton.org.uk)



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.

## Note from Fr Peter:

**Please notice the Parish Quiz advert under ‘Parish Notices’**

If you wish to make a CAFOD donation please contact: <http://cafod.org.uk/celebration>

And ask for ‘St John’ before making your online donations.

Please encourage those who are afraid of coming to large gatherings that our present Masses have small numbers of attenders and this is a good place to begin a return to Mass:

**Tuesday, Thursday, Friday** at 9.30am at St John’s

**Wednesday** at 9.30am at Ss Martin & Hilda’s Chapel

**Saturday** at 6.00pm at St John’s

We still celebrate the Resurrection on Sundays – **Which day is your ‘Sunday Eucharist’?**

(Daily Scripture is available from [www.universalis.com](http://www.universalis.com))

### 1 Corinthians 9:16-19,22-27

*I do not boast of preaching the gospel, since it is a duty which has been laid on me; I should be punished if I did not preach it! If I had chosen this work myself, I might have been paid for it, but as I have not, it is a responsibility which has been put into my hands. Do you know what my reward is? It is this: in my preaching, to be able to offer the Good News free, and not insist on the rights which the gospel gives me.*

*So though I am not a slave of any man I have made myself the slave of everyone so as to win as many as I could. I made myself all things to all men in order to save some at any cost; and I still do this, for the sake of the gospel, to have a share in its blessings.*

*All the runners at the stadium are trying to win, but only one of them gets the prize. You must run in the same way, meaning to win. All the fighters at the games go into strict training; they do this just to win a wreath that will wither away, but we do it for a wreath that will never wither. That is how I run, intent on winning; that is how I fight, not beating the air. I treat my body hard and make it obey me, for, having been an announcer myself, I should not want to be disqualified.*

### Luke 6:39-42

*Jesus told a parable to the disciples: ‘Can one blind man guide another? Surely both will fall into a pit? The disciple is not superior to his teacher; the fully trained disciple will always be like his teacher. Why do you observe the splinter in your brother’s eye and never notice the plank in your own? How can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me take out the splinter that is in your eye,’ when you cannot see the plank in your own? Hypocrite! Take the plank out of your own eye first, and then you will see clearly enough to take out the splinter that is in your brother’s eye.’*

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

Yesterday Paul was answering what the asker was expecting to be a simple question: “Is it OK to eat meat sacrificed to idols?”. He was probably expecting a one-word answer! But Paul is continuing to open up the mind of the questioner to make him (I expect it was a ‘him’!) understand what we are about as followers of Jesus.

Today he follows up the practical issues of yesterday to introduce a more thoughtful approach. He is speaking of the gift of 'Freedom' which Paul experiences from being a disciple of Jesus. But this is not a freedom to do what you want! – it is much more powerful than that! It is not a freedom to provide room to make your life your own. When the early morning Sunday Masses were being dropped and Vigil Sunday Masses introduced I remember people telephoning presbyteries to ask where there was 'an early Mass these days'. The caller would explain themselves by adding (Quite openly even though they know they were speaking to a priest) "We prefer an early Mass so that you can get it out of the way" – presumably to 'do what you wanted'.

It is not that Paul regards himself as a slave to God – or anything else in his faith. But he continues to declare that he chooses to be a slave to the Gospel. He explains that what he is boasting about is "preaching the Gospel" – he even becomes suitably pompous in telling us he has never been paid for doing this (OK, but don't be so pompous about it!). The point is clearly made, though.

It is worth pondering to what extent we feel a slave to our faith, or will only deal with our practice of faith if it fits what is 'my freedom'. At present we may not be able to celebrate the Mass we chose to do, in a way we became used to, before lockdown – so what is our response to this threat to our freedom?

The other interesting issue brought up by Paul is how we speak of our response to faith to those who may ask us. Paul speaks of his following Jesus as "Preaching the Gospel", Jesus spoke of "Bringing about the Kingdom of my Father", etc. I wonder how we would explain what we are about a disciples if we were stopped in the street? (None of these is the only right answer, but they all lead the listener to wonder and ask questions)

Finally, here is Paul using athletic visions to speak of his ministry – in a way which I don't find attractive (Smells a bit like school changing rooms!). But there is a message here for us, also. Paul was speaking to a people not far from a regular athletic games meeting. The image may not have been his way of life, but he is choosing an image which may have a meaning in the minds and lives of his listeners. In our modern day the Church is always keen for us to keep in mind the experience of our listeners when we are sharing our faith with them. Jesus was good at this with his parables, but it may need us to think how we are seen by: younger people, people of other faiths, people who left the Church in the past because they didn't like what they saw, etc. How do we preach the gospel to our modern day?

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 11, 2020

*"In his wisdom, God set aside the Sabbath so that the land and its inhabitants could rest and be renewed. These days, however, our way of life is pushing the planet beyond its limits. Our constant demand for growth and an endless cycle of production and consumption are exhausting the natural world. Forests are leached, topsoil erodes, fields fail, deserts advance, seas acidify and storms intensify. Creation is groaning!"*

*Pope Francis*

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE CARE OF CREATION SEPTEMBER 1, 2020

## **PARISH NOTICES:**

**Parish Quiz for CAFOD** – *Please pass this on to other parishioners and encourage them*

Hi - Because we can't all gather together in person at the moment, we have decided it would be a great idea to have a Parish online quiz. This will take place on Sunday 13th September at 12 noon. We will be raising funds for Cafod - if you would like to play, please visit

<http://cafod.org.uk/celebration>

and search "online quiz". You will then see our fundraising page where it would be fantastic if you could make a donation to take part.

If you would like to take part, please also email me on [deborahhelenwood@gmail.com](mailto:deborahhelenwood@gmail.com). We will be hosting the quiz on Zoom. I will send you the Zoom link and details explaining how you access everything. For the best quiz experience, it would be great if you are able to access Zoom on one device and have another online device, e.g. mobile phone, to play along with on Kahoot. If not, please don't worry. If you can access Zoom, bring a pen and paper along and you can play along this way too.

If you have any questions at all, please just give me a call on 07883599511 or drop me an email.

Best wishes

Debbie Sumner

- **When you come to Mass:**

*Despite getting used to physical distancing over the past three months returning to a familiar situation, like church, can make us forget we are still threatened by a virus that could kill vulnerable people. We have been asked to ensure Government and Church rules which might seem intrusive but they are designed to remind us to be careful and, above all, to keep distances. Please help us with this.*

- Government guidelines demand that all the congregation (except those with exemption certificates) wear mouth and nose masks in church
  - Please maintain a 2m distance as you approach and enter church and be guided by the stewards.
  - Please note there is a 'one way' system – entering church by the left hand door.
  - Please sanitise your hands as you enter church
  - You will be invited to leave your name and contact detail for 'Track & Tracing' in case of need.
  - If you wish to wear a face mask you may do this – but please bring your own.
  - To minimise movement in church Stewards will direct you to fill the benches from the front. You will probably not be able to go in your 'usual' bench but that will give you a new perspective!
  - Please remove your mask just before approaching for Holy Communion and then replace afterwards.
  - You will receive instructions for coming forward for Holy Communion. But please respect distancing (don't bunch), move for Communion using the one-way system, please stretch out your arms fully as you request Holy Communion, you will not be invited to speak "Amen" before receiving Holy Communion. These will need to be kept in mind at first and we do need to remember they, though not the best liturgy, are about distancing and staying well.
  - Holy Communion must be received only on the hand. (No gloves, please)
  - Please sanitise your hands as you leave church by the other door than the one you entered.
  - As you leave church please move away from the door and remember to distance yourselves if you speak to other people.
- **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.
  - **Fleetwood Food Bank:** If you know of anyone you think has need of a parcel of food from the Food Bank please telephone 01253 774313 – they will need an address to have it delivered to.

- **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](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](mailto: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. "

### **Thoughts contributed by Virus Times' readers:**

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

**Thursday:** *I have never before heard the word gentle in association with St Paul - must give that some thought.*

*A mother, years ago was heard to grumble that her child had been at school for (?) weeks and had still not been taught the Hail Mary!!!!*

**Thursday:** *Love the recipe reference and very true, that's why I like your thoughts Father, I can reread and digest - bit like carrot cake! (Isn't it great when a recipe become so well known that it has become part of you? It even become known as 'mum's scone recipe' Fr Peter)*

### **People being prayed for by our parish groups:**

Alan	Could we pray for Judith Reeves' dad She says: <i>I wanted to drop you a short email to let you know that my Dad has been diagnosed with liver cancer. I wanted to thank everyone for their prayers and ask for their continued prayers as we move forwards. Dad was taken into hospital on Monday and is quite weak. The hope is that if he gets stronger we will be able to bring him home. He is yet to start the appropriate treatment and we will know more in the coming days.</i>
Jacinta's Nana Lyn	Poorly and asks for your prayers
A Lady in Intensive Care	The Parish WhatsApp Group ask for your prayers
The People of Beirut	
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.
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)	<i>Is showing continued, but slow, progress. He is eating a proper diet and having a lot of physiotherapy – which he's not enjoying! Fr Peter</i>

Our Teachers	
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