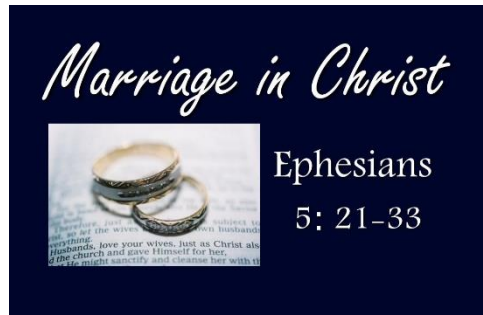


St John the Evangelist, Poulton

27th October 2020

Tuesday of the Thirtieth Week of the Year
(Thirty-second Tuesday of Isolation)

Sign on at: saintjohnpoulton@gmail.com
Parish Website: 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 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)

Ephesians 5:21-33

Give way to one another in obedience to Christ. Wives should regard their husbands as they regard the Lord, since as Christ is head of the Church and saves the whole body, so is a husband the head of his wife; and as the Church submits to Christ, so should wives to their husbands, in everything. Husbands should love their wives just as Christ loved the Church and sacrificed himself for her to make her holy. He made her clean by washing her in water with a form of words, so that when he took her to himself she would be glorious, with no speck or wrinkle or anything like that, but holy and faultless. In the same way, husbands must love their wives as they love their own bodies; for a man to love his wife is for him to love himself. A man never hates his own body, but he feeds it and looks after it; and that is the way Christ treats the Church, because it is his body – and we are its living parts. For this reason, a man must leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one body. This mystery has many implications; but I am saying it applies to Christ and the Church. To sum up; you too, each one of you, must love his wife as he loves himself, and let every wife respect her husband.

Luke 13:18-21

Jesus said, 'What is the kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it with? It is like a mustard seed which a man took and threw into his garden: it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air sheltered in its branches.'

Another thing he said, 'What shall I compare the kingdom of God with? It is like the yeast a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour till it was leavened all through.'

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

Paul began this letter outlining his understanding of what God had done / was doing through his son, Jesus. He moved on to add some messages that 'aired' his understanding through prayers and prayerful reflections. Now he is approaching how our beliefs affect the way we act – the letter is becoming Pastoral.

Ultimately what we believe makes us act in particular ways. At times we hear people who do not seem to see the world about us as we Christians do. Perhaps we underestimate how vital our faith is to us when this happens and it allows us to remember that our faith is not just a private affair – it changes the ways we think and act in the outside world. If people cease to believe in God it is not just a shame – it will affect the way our politics, social culture and everyday life will be in the future!

So Paul comments on family life. Not just how our family life is to us – but what an important evangelising message it gives to the world.

Today he speaks of the love a husband and wife have for each other – and how, for us as disciples of Jesus, that love is a reflection of the love Christ has for us. This is the beginning of what we would call ‘Christian Marriage’ (There are other sorts of ‘honourable marriage’ in the world – but this is what makes it ‘Christian’)

Some people hear the beginning of Paul’s words and, almost automatically, feel he is being ‘sexist’ in some ways. To be fair to Paul he insists in other letters that in Christ there is ‘no male & female, Jew & gentile, slave & free.....’. Paul did live in a different time from us but he could not really have written one sentence about ‘husbands’ and another, exactly the same, about ‘wives’ – it would be boring to read! So I suggest you do what we did this morning at Mass and read the passage again but swap the ‘Husband’ and ‘wife’ words the second time – it works, doesn’t it?

“and that is the way Christ treats the Church, because it is his body – and we are its living parts.

For this reason, a man (woman) must leave his father and mother and be joined to his (her) wife (Husband), and the two will become one body.

*This mystery has many implications;
but I am saying it applies to Christ and the Church”*

As a priest I have the ministry of talking to couples who are preparing for marriage. I usually ask them to talk to each other about how their ‘Christian marriage’ in church will be different from other marriages they witness: ‘Civil Marriage’, ‘Hindu Marriage’, etc. This is a useful exercise to do every so often (especially if you are married). Our Church theology comes from St Paul’s understanding and faith so this passage is a good place to start. We also need to pass this deep understanding on to our younger people who often just refer to ‘getting God’s blessing’ in a church service – the sign value is much more of a gift – and a bit more demanding! But how it speaks to others is amazing!!!

TUESDAY OCTOBER 27, 2020

“It is necessary to affirm God’s primacy in human life and in history, respecting God’s right over all that belongs to him. Hence the mission of the Church and Christians: to speak of God and bear witness to him to the men and women of our time. Every one of us, by Baptism, is called to be a living presence in society, inspiring it with the Gospel and with the lifeblood of the Holy Spirit. It is a question of committing oneself with humility, and at the same time with courage, making one’s own contribution to building the civilization of love, where justice and fraternity reign.”

Pope Francis

ANGELUS OCTOBER 18, 2020

PARISH NOTICES:

- **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.
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- **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.
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- **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.
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- **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.
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- 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.
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- **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 responses from these Virus Times Reflections from our parishioners: Thanks to contributors.)

Wednesday: These (Virus) times have certainly made me value faith over religion. The hamster wheel of religion can blind us to what truly matters. It's an opportunity to deepen our faith. Thank you 🙏

Tuesday: Thanks to you Fr. for keeping us close together with the Virus Times.
Also a big thank you to all the good kind people who have looked after us with their virus protection kit as we enter and leave church.

Sunday: The other day you asked for 'thank yous' - rather than 'pleases'
Clare and Pete Cobb's glorious music - they have sung us through Covid; it's been a joy

Friday: *"It is in Christ that we were claimed as God's own" reminded me to share with you a lovely moment on Friday morning when I was on the school run.*

A lady walking back to her car with a little toddler (not school age) paused outside the church doors as the little girl asked if it was open. She said 'no, would you like to pray here, outside?' Looking up at the doors, the little girl made the sign of the cross and began to pray with her mother. Could there be a more fitting scene for faith in 2020?!?

Perhaps I'm over sensitive at the moment but it brought a tear to my eye!

Tuesday: I suppose, in a way, it's a bit like keeping school rules after you have left school. I remember visiting the school a couple of years after I left. The nun who was seeing me out said, "Are you not going to pay a visit to the chapel"? My automatic response was "But, I've nothing to cover my head" (we were always made to wear our school hats when we were going in to chapel and always had our heads covered in our own church). I never expected it to be a nun who would be the first to tell me, in effect, that the ceiling would not fall down if I went in without a head covering.

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
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)	Maureen died this morning, at home with her three girls. Please remember them in your prayers.
Paul Sharrock (Not Covid-19) (and family: Kathryn, Mary & Rachael)	<i>Paul's various salts, and other measures are levelling and balancing on the whole and he is not needing oxygen at the moment – still difficult.. Please pray for them. Fr Peter</i>

'Thanks You, God' - Do we have any news to thank God for - as well as other people we are praying for?

Clare and Pete Cobb's glorious music	they have sung us through Covid; it's been a joy