

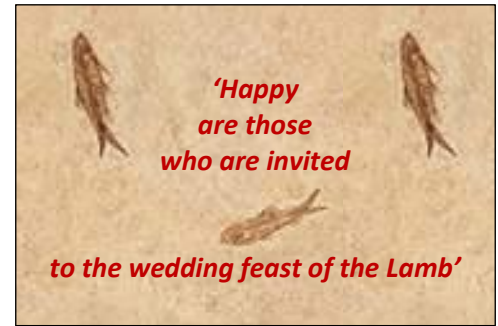
# St John the Evangelist, Poulton

26<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Thursday of the Thirty-fourth Week of the Year  
(Thirty-sixth Thursday of Isolation)

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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.

## Notes from Fr Peter:

Being together to pray allows us the quiet to listen. This is very special and opens up for us a new appreciation of 'being together as Church' – The short period at St John's is not a 'drop in' to pray alone, but a chance for private prayer together with all the support that brings. People were also appreciative of the chance to know others were OK afterwards. Come along.

### From next week:

Tuesday Private Prayer from 9.30am to 10am at St John's

Wednesday Private Prayer from 10.00am to 11.30am At Ss Martin & Hilda's

Thursday Private Prayer from 9.30am to 10am at St John's

Friday Private Prayer from 9.30am to 10am at St John's

Sunday Private prayer from 11am to 12.00 at St Martin's

(There will be no Eucharist over the month)

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

### Revelation 18:1-2,21-23,19:1-3,9

*I, John, saw an angel come down from heaven, with great authority given to him; the earth was lit up with his glory. At the top of his voice he shouted, 'Babylon has fallen, Babylon the Great has fallen, and has become the haunt of devils and a lodging for every foul spirit and dirty, loathsome bird.' Then a powerful angel picked up a boulder like a great millstone, and as he hurled it into the sea, he said, 'That is how the great city of Babylon is going to be hurled down, never to be seen again.*

*Never again in you, Babylon,  
will be heard the song of harpists and minstrels,  
the music of flute and trumpet;  
never again will craftsmen of every skill be found  
or the sound of the mill be heard;  
never again will shine the light of the lamp,  
never again will be heard  
the voices of bridegroom and bride.  
Your traders were the princes of the earth,  
all the nations were under your spell.*

*After this I seemed to hear the great sound of a huge crowd in heaven, singing, 'Alleluia! Victory and glory and power to our God! He judges fairly, he punishes justly, and he has condemned the famous prostitute who corrupted the earth with her fornication; he has avenged his servants that she killed.' They sang again, 'Alleluia! The smoke of her will go up for ever and ever.' The angel said, 'Write this: Happy are those who are invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb', and he added, 'All the things you have written are true messages from God.'*

### Luke 21:20-28

*Jesus said to his disciples, 'When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, you must realise that she will soon be laid desolate. Then those in Judaea must escape to the mountains, those inside the city must leave it, and those in country districts must not take refuge in it. For this is the time of vengeance when all that scripture says must be fulfilled. Alas for those with child, or with babies at the breast, when those days come!*

*'For great misery will descend on the land and wrath on this people. They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive to every pagan country; and Jerusalem will be trampled down by the pagans until the age of the pagans is completely over.*

*'There will be signs in the sun and moon and stars; on earth nations in agony, bewildered by the clamour of the ocean and its waves; men dying of fear as they await what menaces the world, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand erect, hold your heads high, because your liberation is near at hand.'*

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

- We said this book would be difficult – just remember: ***‘God is in charge; Jesus is Lord’***

If you remember the Mass readings in the summer you will know the reality of ‘Babylon’ and the place it would hold in the memory of the Jewish people. It was the King of Babylon who attacked and took back to his country the people of Israel – and killed those who were deemed less useful. The response to the Exile and the destruction of the First Temple became part of the work God has done for his people. The word ‘Babylon’ conjures up the ultimate evil power over God’s people.

It is not surprising, then, that the early Christians seem to be using this term, ‘Babylon’, to refer to the evil powers of Rome against them and others at this point in history.

But St John’s vision is of God’s ultimate victory over the great powers of earth and all they stood for. Again we are reminded of the reality that God’s power is far greater than any other power – despite what those Christians were encountering at that time. (God has been victorious before but this is new and with ultimate power.

The reality is much clearer in the full text of today’s reading – you may have noticed we have been given short parts of the text for various parts of chapter 18. The full passage allows us to reflect that political power does not just come from the leader or emperor and their supporters, but also from those who benefit from their rule. The chapter contains lists of works and products which would be destroyed if the regime was brought down.

Some of these people might well be happy for Christians to be persecuted if it was good for their business. Remember Demetrius the Silversmith in Acts (19:24-41) who caused a ‘rather serious disturbance’ when his production of pagan images of the god Diana was effected by Paul’s teaching? We are also aware of those who can collaborate with occupying forces in war-time situation. The evil is not just in the hands of emperors and dictators but also passes to those who gain from the regime. We are, also, aware that ‘to do nothing’ can be actually supporting evil.

In this vision, as God conquers evil and becomes victorious, he unveils false Emperors, their statues and signs of power, and other images contrary to the power of God. We could ask ourselves ‘Is worship of wrong objects a problem for us, today?’

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 26, 2020

*“Service is our work too; it makes our talents bear fruit and it gives meaning to our lives. Those who do not live to serve, serve for little in this life. We must repeat this, and repeat it often: those who do not live to serve, serve for little in this life. We should reflect on this: those who do not live to serve, serve for little in this life.”*

Pope Francis  
2020

HOMILY NOVEMBER 15,

## **PARISH NOTICES:**

### **COVID 19 Security - When you come to Church during the present Lockdown:**

- ✓ 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. (if you have visited church for private prayer you will recognise these requests. Thanks)
  - ✓ 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.
  - ✓ 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 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.
  - ✓ There is a basket at the back of church for your offertory donations – thank you.
  - ✓ There are weekly bulletins at the back of church with other information. However please regard any paper you touch as your own to take away with you. Please do not leave it behind in case of contamination.
  - ✓ Thanks to our small, but keen, band of stewards, without whom we could not open our church. Please speak to them if you would like to help with this.
  - ✓ If you want to bring your own prayerbook or bible that is fine – but please do not leave it in church for others to touch.
  - ✓ *Please pray for all people throughout the world who are prevented for celebrating the Eucharist regularly for all sorts of reasons. What do they do?*
- **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: [www.wyre.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.wyre.gov.uk/coronavirus). 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 responses from these Virus Times Reflections from our parishioners: Thanks to contributors.)

**Tuesday:** *What a Wonderful Arrangement of today's Psalm.  
It's great that they share their God given talent with others.*

**Friday;** *"Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the SIN of the world." (I have always been puzzled when we say at Mass "who takes away the sins of the world")*

*I began to reflect more deeply on what the sin of the world actually is, and perhaps have come to the conclusion that the only sin, out of which all other sins derive, is selfish pride: putting myself in front of every other consideration and every other person. If, in our world view, we put humanity at the top of creation and exclude God the Creator from the equation, then the key issue for our life can easily become how to get to the top of the pile (no matter how little or large the pile is that we personally inhabit). If, however, we take away selfish pride then we live in service of others.*

*How did Jesus take this away? Paul challenges us, as we have read previously, to put on the mind of Christ who ... "emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave." (Philippians Ch 2) and John in his account of the Last Supper puts these words into Jesus mouth: "wash each other's feet ... I have given you an example" (John 13, 2-16)*

*The result: "And therefore ... God raised him high .. every knee should bend at the name of Jesus" (Phil Ch 2) and in the vision of heaven we see what this means: "The Lamb that was sacrificed is worthy to be given power, riches, wisdom, strength, honour, glory and power ... and the four animals said 'Amen'; and the elders prostrated themselves to worship".*

*The vision John gives us of heaven is one of the right order of things as you have in your reflections drawn attention to all the time: God is God and Jesus is Lord. We bow down in wonder and worship at the feet of the Lamb. Amen*

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

Kath Wainman has died	Please pray for her and her family
Please pray for Kathleen Keohane who has died	You may have known her. Requiem Mass: Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> December at 3.00pm in St John's – invitations from the family.
Myra Murphy is sick – and asks for your prayers	Many of you will know Myra from St Martin's – Myra asked me to thank you all for your prayers and your thoughts of her – as you can imagine, if you know her, she really means that and feels your prayers.
Peter Brownwood	Who is worried about his health – but progressing well.
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.
Paul Sharrock (Not Covid-19) (and family: Kathryn, Mary & Rachael)	<i>Paul has managed to balance most of his issues after his operation – Paul has returned to his special unit – which has visiting for immediate family but with strict Lockdown II restrictions – Thank you, God. Thanks for your prayers so far - Please continue to pray for them. Fr Peter</i>

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

<b>Clare and Pete Cobb's glorious music</b>	<i>they have sung us through Covid; it's been a joy</i>
<b>For all our Faith-filled Parishioners with whom we share our weekday Masses.</b>	<i>It's so supportive to be in the presence of others.</i>
<b>To scientists working on a COVID help</b>	