

St John the Evangelist, Poulton

18th June 2021

Friday of the Eleventh Week in Ordinary Time

Sixty-fourth Friday of Isolation

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But store up treasures for yourselves in heaven, where neither moth nor woodworms destroy them and thieves cannot break in and steal

Mass during the week:

Saturday – 11 th Sunday of Year	6.00pm	St John's
Tuesday -	9.30am	– Mass at St John's
Wednesday -	9.30am	– Mass at St Martin's
Thursday -	9.30am	– Mass at St John's
Friday –	9.30am	– Mass at St John's
Saturday – 12 th Sunday of Year	6.00pm	St John's

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

2 Corinthians 11:18,21-30

So many others have been boasting of their worldly achievements, that I will boast myself. But if anyone wants some brazen speaking – I am still talking as a fool – then I can be as brazen as any of them, and about the same things. Hebrews, are they? So am I. Israelites? So am I. Descendants of Abraham? So am I. The servants of Christ? I must be mad to say this, but so am I, and more than they: more, because I have worked harder, I have been sent to prison more often, and whipped many times more, often almost to death. Five times I had the thirty-nine lashes from the Jews; three times I have been beaten with sticks; once I was stoned; three times I have been shipwrecked and once adrift in the open sea for a night and a day. Constantly travelling, I have been in danger from rivers and in danger from brigands, in danger from my own people and in danger from pagans; in danger in the towns, in danger in the open country, danger at sea and danger from so-called brothers. I have worked and laboured, often without sleep; I have been hungry and thirsty and often starving; I have been in the cold without clothes. And, to leave out much more, there is my daily preoccupation: my anxiety for all the churches. When any man has had scruples, I have had scruples with him; when any man is made to fall, I am tortured.

If I am to boast, then let me boast of my own feebleness.

Matthew 6:19-23

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Do not store up treasures for yourselves on earth, where moths and woodworms destroy them and thieves can break in and steal. But store up treasures for yourselves in heaven, where neither moth nor woodworms destroy them and thieves cannot break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

'The lamp of the body is the eye. It follows that if your eye is sound, your whole body will be filled with light. But if your eye is diseased, your whole body will be all darkness. If then, the light inside you is darkness, what darkness that will be!'

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

Today's comment on the scriptures will be brief, partly because we have Paul Bradley's funeral which deserves parish care and attention, but also because St Paul's passage today is straight to the point!

St Paul is very upset with whatever is being said about him in Corinth!

He is not happy with the bragging which is being done by some people who regard themselves as better than him. His response is, probably, surprising to us as he decides to create his own brag list! It is easy to read and the items he sets before us are honourable! Its just the shock of this tactic that hits us!

But then we begin to ask ourselves what we should boast about? About ourselves?

Perhaps the best way through is to read St Paul's list again and recognise that he is actually boasting about what God has done with him – even the shipwrecks and five times the thirty-nine lashes! When you think about it they are grand things to share around the dinner table as 'what has God done with you, then?'

So, what has God done with you, then, that is worth sharing with others. They may not be as life threatening as being shipwrecked but they will be great memories and experiences. They will also be 'discussion starters to encourage others to actually notice what God has done with them!

FRIDAY, JUNE 18, 2021

"In everything, Jesus teaches that poverty is not the result of fate, but a concrete sign pointing to His presence among us. We do not find Him when and where we want, but see Him in the lives of the poor, in their sufferings and needs, in the often inhuman conditions in which they are forced to live. As I never tire of repeating, the poor are true evangelizers, for they were the first to be evangelized and called to share in the Lord's joy and His kingdom (cf. Mt 5:3)."

Pope Francis

MESSAGE FOR THE FIFTH WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

PARISH NOTICES:

21st June COVID Changes:

the only real liturgical change is that wedding ceremonies can go beyond the 30 cap to match the present daily Mass and funeral limit based on social distancing. I presume there will be no further loosening until 19th July.

17th May Changes in Church service COVID Safety:

Mass: Not much change unless you miss bidding prayers and offertory processions – I think we will leave Mass as it is and see what the June day brings! (I hope the stewards can provide for us until then – their welcome ministry is great!

Funerals: The number at funerals increases to the Guide number set by the size of the individual church (If you hear people speaking of this please let them know that the rule is NOT: 'you can have as many as you want!') Practically, here, I will demand that people get permission from the family (who I will speak to before as usual) otherwise we could have too many people arriving to be safe!

Baptisms: Have legal limit now of 30 people – one Baptism at a time and not within Mass. Please invite families to contact me if they wish to arrange a baptism date. Now that we can have 6 people in the house we can also provide Baptism preparation for parents again.

COVID 19 Security - When you come to Mass:

Now that we have been allowed to move from private prayer to being able to celebrate Mass together please remember to do so safely. 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 by being careful.

- ✓ 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.
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ Please do not greet other people outside church – but remember to distance yourself and do not meet in groups that are obviously more than six.

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.

- **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. 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. “

Thoughts contributed by Virus Times readers:

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

Friday:

You mentioned "New Start with Jesus" this morning. I can't remember a lot of detail about it, but know that I was very impressed with what was happening. One memory is of going, as part of a group, into Cardinal Allen School and mingling in small groups with the students, who were very welcoming and open in their approach to discussion. It really felt as though something great was beginning and I was so hopeful. Then, after Bishop Brewer's untimely death, I think it was mainly scuppered by finance (and the "new broom " approach). I really grieved about that.

I seem to remember prayer cards being issued before any other action was taken and I feel that this was very important.

The two articles from the Tablet are interesting and informative, and give me the same sense of anticipation which I had with "New Start". There is such a lot to pray for; how to get a truly representative group, who will proceed at the right pace, for one. Is this something that the housebound people could be involved in? There is such an untapped source there, and they could be such an important part of the foundation of "synodality" in our parish and diocese. Like an iceberg we will only see the part of the whole that goes on view at actual meetings, but there needs to be so much more unseen supporting mass.

Thursday:

Funny you should mention mantillas - I found mine the other day, when turning a drawer out. I always carried it in my bag, just in case. I would offer to wear it as a demonstration, but couldn't cope with it along with a mask and hearing aids!

Saturday:

Thanks for guiding us so well through thus Easter period and particularly for concentrating on the significance of the Act of the Apostles. We are praying in this period for a renewal of our understanding of the work and action of the Holy Spirit, as did Pope John XXIII when he called for the Council. It occurs to me today to ask: "In the light of our scripture reading during this period and in the light of the call of John XIII for a "new Pentecost", what would a Spirit filled parish look like today? Perhaps we might write down a list of what we would expect to see in the life and practice of such a parish and ponder how it would be a witness to our joyous and strong belief in the Resurrection of the Lord?" I for one am going to start that task and see where it leads me.

Dangerous and exciting territory!

People being prayed for by our parish groups:

Maureen Brown is in hospital	Please keep her in your prayers, thanks.
Peter Brownwood	Who is worried about his health – but progressing 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.

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

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

As we seem to be moving out of lockdown, are there some things we have learned and must not forget?

How we missed people, our loved ones and their touch	
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