

St Michael and All Angels Catholic Church

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Newsletter for the Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

12th September 2021

Peter's Profession of Faith

The just person is sustained by the firm belief that God is with him. (Isaiah 50:5-9)

Faith without good works is dead. (James 2:14-18)



Jesus and Peter depicted in *the Tribute Money*, by Masaccio, 1425

Even though Peter declares his belief in Jesus as the Messiah, he has no idea what this means. (Mark 8:27-35)

A Vocation Prayer *O God, you sent your Son, Jesus, to bring eternal life to all who believe. I join him in praying for labourers for your harvest. May your Holy Spirit inspire men & women to continue his mission through your priesthood, diaconate, religious life & lay ministry. May this same Spirit make known your will for my life. Amen*

First Holy Communion Certificates are now available.

Please ask Canon Gerard at any Mass.

The Caritas newsletter, copies of which are available in the Welcoming Area, features beautiful photos of our wildflower patch here at St Michael's.

Our Liturgies this week

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is available during the half hour before Mass.

Thank you for continuing to wear a face-covering, use sanitiser & sit where advised.

Saturday 11th September, Our Lady on Saturday

10 am Mass for refugees throughout the world

6 pm Mass for the intentions of the Parish

Twenty-Fourth Sunday of Ordinary Time, 12th September

Prayer of the Church Week 4

10 am intentions of Peter & Pauline Birks (GDF)

11.30 am for our schools, their staff, students and governors

Monday 13th September, St John Chrysostom

10 am Mass Susie Shore RIP

Tuesday 14th September, The Exaltation of the Cross

Canon Gerard will be concelebrating Masses at Oaklands School on the School Feastday.

Wednesday 15th September, Our Lady of Sorrows

10 am Mass for the intentions of Dom Alban Hood

10.30 -11.30 am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Thursday 16th September, Ss Cornelius & Cyprian

10 am Mass Rupert Kirkham (family request)

Friday 17th September, St Hildegard of Bingen

10 am Mass for all those who work in our schools

Saturday 18th September, Our Lady on Saturday

10 am Mass Colin Staggs RIP

6 pm Mass for the intentions of the Parish

Twenty-Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time, 19th September

Prayer of the Church Week 1

10 am Mass Denis McCarthy RIP (request of Ellen McCarthy)

11.30 am Mass intentions of Carole & Brian Maddock (request of Marie & Colin Cooper)

Please pray...



... in thanksgiving for Kate Sadler and Ashley James, married at St Michael's last weekend, and for all parishioners in particular need at this time.

Forthcoming collections

11th & 12th September for the Catholic Education Service

18th & 19th September for Home Missions

Friday 8th October Cafod Harvest Family Fast Day

16th & 17th October Foreign Missions

First reading Isaiah 50:5-9 The Lord has opened my ear.
For my part, I made no resistance, neither did I turn away.
I offered my back to those who struck me, my cheeks to those who tore at my beard;
I did not cover my face against insult and spittle.
The Lord comes to my help, so that I am untouched by the insults.
So, too, I set my face like flint; I know I shall not be shamed.
My vindicator is here at hand. Does anyone start proceedings against me?
Then let us go to court together. Who thinks he has a case against me? Let him approach me.
The Lord is coming to my help, who will dare to condemn me?

Psalm 114(116):1-6,8-9

*I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the
land of the living.*

I love the Lord for he has heard
the cry of my appeal;
for he turned his ear to me
in the day when I called him.

*I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the
land of the living.*

They surrounded me, the snares of death,
with the anguish of the tomb;
they caught me, sorrow and distress.
I called on the Lord's name.
O Lord, my God, deliver me!

*I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the
land of the living.*

How gracious is the Lord, and just;
our God has compassion.
The Lord protects the simple hearts;
I was helpless so he saved me.

*I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the
land of the living.*

He has kept my soul from death,
my eyes from tears
and my feet from stumbling.
I will walk in the presence of the Lord
in the land of the living.

*I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the
land of the living.*



Second reading James 2:14-18 Take the case, my brothers, of someone who has never done a single good act but claims that he has faith. Will that faith save him? If one of the brothers or one of the sisters is in need of clothes and has not enough food to live on, and one of you says to them, 'I wish you well; keep yourself warm and eat plenty', without giving them these bare necessities of life, then what good is that? Faith is like that: if good works do not go with it, it is quite dead. This is the way to talk to people of that kind: 'You say you have faith and I have good deeds; I will prove to you that I have faith by showing you my good deeds – now you prove to me that you have faith without any good deeds to show.'

Gospel Acclamation Alleluia, alleluia! I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, says the Lord;
No one can come to the Father except through me. Alleluia!

Gospel Mark 8:27-35

Jesus and his disciples left for the villages round Caesarea Philippi. On the way he put this question to his disciples, 'Who do people say I am?' And they told him. 'John the Baptist,' they said 'others Elijah; others again, one of the prophets.' 'But you,' he asked 'who do you say I am?' Peter spoke up and said to him, 'You are the Christ.' And he gave them strict orders not to tell anyone about him. And he began to teach them that the Son of Man was destined to suffer grievously, to be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and to be put to death, and after three days to rise again; and he said all this quite openly. Then, taking him aside, Peter started to remonstrate with him. But, turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said to him, 'Get behind me, Satan! Because the way you think is not God's way but man's.' He called the people and his disciples to him and said, 'If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me. For anyone who wants to save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it.'

Education Sunday Message to all those working in Catholic schools

Over the last eighteen months we have seen an upheaval affecting everyone in our society, the like of which has not been witnessed since the end of the Second World War. The Covid-19 pandemic has changed not only aspects of how we live our lives but has given us a chance to reflect on the fragility and preciousness of human life, on human solidarity, and the capacity to show love and support to our neighbours. Like many other front-line workers, teachers, school leaders, and support staff have exemplified this love throughout the pandemic, going above and beyond to support the young people in their care. It is only right therefore that on Education Sunday, we take this opportunity to offer prayers of thanksgiving for all who work in our Catholic schools and colleges, and to express our gratitude for their outstanding dedication and professionalism, especially during the pandemic. Throughout the challenges they have faced in two national lockdowns, two sets of exam cohorts, and a managed return to schooling, the staff of all our schools have exemplified what it means to follow the command of Our Lord Jesus Christ to love our neighbour. On behalf of the Catholic Education Service, I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to them and my appreciation for the vocation and mission they exercise in the community of the Church. + Marcus

Rt Rev Marcus Stock, Bishop of Leeds, Chair of the Catholic Education Service

Dear Lord, Thank you for the gift of Catholic schools. Thank you for all those who have given their talents to educating our young people. Through the challenges they encounter each day, lead them to an ever deeper appreciation of the sacred duty to which you have called them. Thank you for all those who contribute to the efficient running of our schools; support staff, kitchen staff, maintenance staff, governors and chaplains. We thank them for their hard work and dedication. Thank you for all those who lead our Catholic schools. May they be people of integrity so that they can be witnesses as well as teachers. We pray that the schools they lead will become places where our young people can experience your love in their lives. Thank you for our pupils. May your love strengthen and nurture them through the influence and example of those who care for them. We pray that through their time at school they will flourish and grow to discover who you have called them to be. We make this prayer through your Son, Jesus Christ, our teacher and our Lord, Amen

Homily for 24th Sunday of OT 11th & 12th September 2021

I need to get his out the way....as a Pompey fan I can totally relate to the phrase "destined to suffer grievously."

It would be easy to think these days that maybe one of the biggest factors that make us the United Kingdom could be disillusionment. It just seems to be everywhere and all around us.

We most likely won't agree on what we are disillusioned about, but I truly believe that it's a common disease that we all suffer with. Disillusionment with our leaders, political system, economic opportunities, wars, violence, prejudice, oppression, racism, vaccinations, Brexit, refugees, education, NHS, religion, and the church. That is just the tip of the iceberg!

I suspect that disillusionment plays a big part in getting leaders elected and helps keep supporters loyal. But disillusionment is also what gives energy to those that oppose that same leader.

You can't escape disillusionment. TV, social media, radio, and I hear it in conversations and accusations I hear around me. It is recognisable in declining church attendance and church influence.

And no doubt, each of us here today could tell a story or two about our own personal disillusion. A personal and unique disillusion to our life and our own personal circumstances. I know that we all have had times when our lives and the world wasn't what we thought it would be and that it may never be.

This disillusion happens when what we have told ourselves, what we base our lives on, our beliefs, what we have committed ourselves to suddenly doesn't make sense. It is no longer relevant; it doesn't seem to work anymore or does not seem true. You can feel fearful, afraid, and panicking with real fear for the future. Things can feel chaotic or out of control.

Maybe you have some disillusionment in your life now.

But disillusion is not something that is just happening around us. It begins with us. Disillusion is a spiritual issue. In the gospel we have just shared, Peter is the poster boy for disillusionment.

Peter has just given the golden answer and proclaimed Jesus to be the Messiah or the saviour. Peter has an idea, an image, and a story in his mind of who the Messiah is and what he is to do and what he is all about. And we all have our own unique image and idea of Jesus. But Jesus is about to rip that up for Peter. Jesus says "Son of Man was destined to suffer grievously, to be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and to be put to death, and after three days to rise again;"

So much for Peter's understanding of the Messiah! What Jesus said wasn't what Peter wanted and it wasn't what he had expected. I think most of us love Peter as he is so much like us.... He makes another classic mistake which I can relate to and decides that he will remonstrate with Jesus. He wants to argue and complain about what he has said.

But we can all read, see, hear, and feel the disillusionment Peter has. Almost in the same breath, Peter confesses Jesus to be the Messiah and is then arguing or remonstrating with him in the same conversation.

Listen to the disillusionment in your life or the life of another and most likely you will hear both blessings and curses coming from that one mouth. This is a sign of our internal division. It shows our panicked disillusion and reveals our arrogance. An arrogance that we know and believe exactly how things should be and how things should be going.

Our own disillusionment is not an excuse to then curse or rebuke others. It certainly is not a position for us to claim we know more than another person and we must never treat others as less than us because we have all been created and loved by the same God who created and loves us.

Jesus sees this in Peter and has to rebuke him and says, "Get behind me, Satan!" The same words Jesus used in the wilderness and facing various temptations. Jesus is seeing this as another temptation from the work and ministry he was sent to achieve and to be less than who he was.

Disillusion is tempting us to be less than who we truly are, tempts us to be arrogant and to be self-assertive. Disillusion tempts us to lose sight and lose focus of what we are really about.

Our own disillusionment means we put our own story in front of God's story, we give more importance to what we see that what God sees. Our story is more real. This is what Peter is doing also.

This happens in our own lives from small insignificant matters to bigger and major issues. These conflicts with others quite often come down to us asserting ourselves and ignoring or negating the other person in our words and actions. Our arrogance can easily and quickly betray ourselves, betray God and cause real hurt and damage to another person or people.

No matter how angry, scared, confused, or lost we might feel, we do need to embrace a different story. Jesus gives Peter and us a new story. Jesus is the story.

It is a story of self-denial. *"If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me."*

So not just a story that Jesus tells but a story Jesus lives. And to be a follower of Jesus it becomes a story that we must live also.

What could self-denial look like for you this coming week? I don't mean self-denial that you must be passive, weak or deny yourself needs and desires. And I am not expecting to see you walking around Leigh Park, Havant, and Rowlands Castle with a great big cross on your back whipping yourself.

But self-denial could be about separating ourselves from that which we often come to use as a definition of ourselves or define each other such as political parties, national identity, family of origin or economic status. It could be that we have to redefine ourselves, our priorities, and our beliefs to be more in line with those of Jesus.

Self-denial might be the key to loving our neighbour, our enemy, God or even ourselves. Self-denial might be what makes space and time for another person in your life and then helps them to recognise they are important and loved just as you are.

Self-denial could be the way to re-examine our beliefs and attitudes about who we are, who others are and who God is. Maybe it means we don't take ourselves more seriously than we take God.

Self-denial might just be the cure to disillusionment.

Maybe it means that I even love Southampton fans!

With love and prayers,

Deacon Nick

St Michael and All Angels
Patronal Feast
Sunday 26th September 2021

We will celebrate the Feast of our Patrons, St Michael and All Angels, with a Parish Lunch at 12.30 pm on Sunday 26th September. Please join us! We hope that many families will share in this, the Feast of our Parish Family.

A meal will be provided for everyone. To help us with the catering, could you please sign up on the sheets in our Welcome Area or simply email leighpark@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk with your contact details and the number of people for whom you would like lunch. If you have any prizes for a raffle to help pay for the meal we would be most grateful.



*Holy Michael, Archangel, defend us in the day of battle;
be our safeguard against the wickedness and snares of the devil.
May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O prince of the heavenly host, by
the power of God, thrust down to Hell Satan and all wicked spirits,
who wander through the world, for the ruin of souls, Amen.*

The Acts of the Apostles

A DVD course, led by Jeff Cavins, on this wonderful account of the beginnings of the Church, starts at St Michael's at 8 pm on 20th September, for twenty weeks, meeting monthly at church and by Zoom during the other weeks. All are most welcome to join.
Phone or text Kathy 07899 788146 for more details.

ADoRE Online spiritual mini-retreat morning 18th September 10 am – 1 pm on *Gifts of Healings* with Mass, Adoration, Reflection, Praise, Talk, Prayer and Discussion. Our focus is on charisms of Healing and Deliverance. Guest speakers are Geoff and Gina Poulter, former Directors of the Catholic Bible School, who have great experience in the healing ministry.

Please register for the Zoom meeting in advance at bit.ly/ADORESEP2021

A Mass on St Luke's Feastday for all healthcare professionals

will be celebrated by Fr Joe McNerney,
Bishop's Healthcare Adviser,
at 7.30 pm 18th October at St John's Cathedral, Portsmouth.

This is arranged by the
Catholic Medical Association of Portsmouth.
Everyone who works in healthcare will be most welcome.



A Lifeline for Marriage!

Has Covid put you under more stress as a couple?

Is your marriage become stressed, unloving, cold?

Do you argue more?

Do you want to improve your communication?

Have you separated, divorced, or are you thinking about it?

Do you want to try again?

The Retrouvaille programme may be just what you need!

The next programme commences with the weekend 21st – 24th October 2021.

For more information telephone or text 07887 296983 or 07973 880443

Complete confidentiality is assured.

Email: retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com

Website: www.retrouvaille.org

