

**NEWSLETTER FOR ST BRENDAN, HARWOOD
& ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, BROMLEY CROSS
12TH AUGUST 2012
NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

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The bread that comes down from heaven is not just a bread which nourishes the body, but one which gives renewed life - be this in the form of energy and purpose (as we see in the story of Elijah) or in the form of a gift of eternal life. As Jesus continues his discourse on the Bread of Life, he faces the complaints and criticism of the crowd, who take a very short-sighted view of what he says, and affirms for them that true life, a life that will never end, is found in him. He is the one who has come from the Father, and so is the living bread which gives life. Jesus here makes an explicit link between “belief” and “eating the bread of life”: the two lead to each other, and they both bring about that which man most desires - to live for ever. The Response to the Psalm in many ways sums this up: ‘Taste and see that the Lord is good.’

Liturgy & Activities This Week <i>Sunday Cycle B; Weekday Cycle 2; Divine Office Week 3</i> <i>Patmos Room - St John's (SJ); Harbour Room - St Brendan's (SB)</i>		Prayers Please
Sunday	9.15am Mass (SJ) 11.15am Mass (SB) 2pm Baptism (SJ)	<p>Sick: Gladys Hall, Kevan Dunleavy, Mary Leigh, Joan Coles, Isabelle Owen, Laura Shuttleworth, Ethel Caton, Tony Winstanley, Bernard Edmundson, Jonathan Rimmer, Eunice Brierley, Elizabeth Patterson, Bernard Callaghan, Kathleen Humphreys, Betty Boyle, Eileen Jones, Cecilia Guest, Joseph Walton, Jean York, Caroline Vickers, George Cowley, Marie Donnelly, Alice Coyne, Robin Tootill, Gerard Walker, Elzie Ball, Karen West, Tricia Jennings, Mick Collins, Bernard & Rita Holder, Michael, Baby Rose, Calum Russell, Margaret Edge, Frank Brazel, Graham Roberts, Eileen Murphy, Brendan O'Grady, Pauline Bowling, Paul Buckley, Margaret Walsh, Joan Plumbley, Emma Turner, Vincent Wood, Margaret Wood, Joan Rankin, Guy Ryan, Maria Stott, Fiona Preston, Kathleen Hopwood, Trevor Gee, Catherine Crowley, John Barrett, Fr Patrick Quinlan, John Devine, Bea Gilmore, Tara Vinden, Roy Smith, Isabelle Karzynski, Bob Whaley, Fiona Oldham (nee Clappison), Amanda Calcutt, Dr Bernard Higgins and all who are sick or recovering from serious illness.</p> <p>All the people on this list were prayed for by name when we were in Lourdes.</p> <p>Lately Dead: Judith Oldham, Brian Turner, John Booth</p> <p>Anniversary: Stanley Mellor, Joan Hyland</p> <p>Mass Intentions: Thanksgiving to St Jude for prayers answered, Ron Higson (Birthday Remembrance), Stanley Mellor, Special Intention, Brian Turner, John J Coupe (Birthday Remembrance), Joan Hyland</p> <p>Cycle of Prayer Part 5 (of 6): We pray especially for: a deeper understanding between Christians and Jews; those who suffer persecution, oppression and denial of human rights; Europe; human life; seafarers</p>
Monday	9.30am Mass (SJ) 8pm SVP (SJ)	
Tuesday <i>St Maximilian Mary Kolbe</i>	No Mass today 7.30pm SVP (SB) <i>Note: No vigil Mass for the Holyday this time</i>	
Wednesday <i>Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i>	9.30am Mass (SJ) Holyday of Obligation 7pm Mass (SB)	
Thursday	9.15am Mass (SB)	
Friday	No Mass today	
Saturday	6.30pm Mass (SJ)	
Next Sunday	9.15am Mass (SJ) 11.15am Mass (SB)	
<p>Collections, Donations, Gift Aid <i>All cheques (even for special collections) should be made payable to St Brendan's or St John's as appropriate. If you are a tax-payer, the parish can claim back the tax you have paid on any donations you make if you simply sign a Gift Aid form once. Please ask. Thanks.</i></p>		
<p>Don't forget the online forum discussion on the parish website – www.sbsj.org.uk</p>		

Holyday: Please note that we will not have a vigil Mass for the holyday on this occasion but just two Masses on the day itself: 9.30am at St John's and 7pm at St Brendan's.

Congratulations: To Blossom Russell who was baptised at St Brendan's on Sunday 29 July. We pray that she and her family may continue to grow in faith.

Lourdes: The deanery group had a wonderful experience on the diocesan pilgrimage. There is a report on the website (PP Blog 12), together with a gallery of photographs (Lourdes 2012) and the homily I preached at the Grotto is reproduced on this newsletter. A big "Thank You" to Terry Smith for organising things for us.

SVP: Many thanks to all who supported the recent sponsored walk. The total amount raised was £2045 of which St Brendan's contributed £430 and St John's £1000. On behalf of the needy recipients of this sum, grateful thanks and prayers.

One Bolton 5k: Sponsorship money from the two parishes amounts to £992 (with a further £35 still to collect). This is a fantastic response; thank you for your support. The money is going to Bolton Hospice.

Survive-MIVA: The recent appeal by Kath Denton raised £1041.64 – another fantastic response. There was also an estimated £141.55 from gift aid pledges. Many thanks.

CAMEO Group: The next meeting will be on Wednesday 22 August (2-4pm) in the Harbour Room: *A Little Bit Extra* by Win Dawson. All welcome.

St John's 200 Club: The August winners are:

£50 E Brooks (147)

£30 Mr & Mrs Whittleston (49)

£20 J Jenkins (61)



CAFOD: A donation of £70 has been received from a recent Golden Wedding celebration. Thanks.

This Newsletter is sponsored by

HOWARTH'S FUNERAL SERVICE

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Think Vocation

St Paul tells us to "follow Christ by loving as he loved you". We are all called to follow Christ and his way was the way of love. We are to be friends with each other. All friendship comes from God. Jesus invites us to follow him into a deeper friendship with God the Father.

Parish Forum Meeting

The minutes of the joint parish forum meeting held on 16th July 2012 have been posted on the parish website at www.sbsj.org.uk. They have also been emailed to parishioners who have previously supplied their email addresses. Parishioners who wish to receive the latest minutes and future forum information are invited to email Tony Proctor, the forum secretary, at secretarysb@sbsj.org.uk

Consultation is taking place via on-line forums within the parish website, as well as on paper for those without internet access, to maximise involvement.

Homily for Mass at Lourdes Grotto – Friday 3 August

[Genesis 3:9-15,20; Ps 97:1-4; Ephesians 1:3-6,11-12; Luke 1:26-38]

On 11 February 1858, a young girl went out to collect firewood. She probably ought not to have done so – it was cold and damp and she was not particularly well – but her family were in need and so she came here and something spectacular happened; she saw an apparition (a vision) of a beautiful lady.

Our gospel today tells us that, over 1900 years earlier, another young girl had an apparition. She had a vision of an angel, who told her of God's plan. God's family were in need – and she responded. She was the beautiful lady who eventually appeared to Bernadette.

Together these two young girls help us to learn something of God's ways. To their contemporaries, neither of them would have seemed very important. Their families would no doubt have had plans for them – but could hardly have anticipated the plans God had in store. One was "to conceive and bear a son...Jesus...the Son of the Most High"; the other was to bring the message of Jesus alive in a particular way in this poor 19th century town – and on into our own time.

Bernadette said that the beautiful lady wanted the priests to build a chapel and invite people here in procession. Over the past 154 years, countless pilgrims have responded to that invitation. They have come here, not looking for firewood (as Bernadette did) but looking for the word of God, the love of God, that would set their hearts on fire. They have walked through this grotto and touched its stone. They have sat in front of this grotto and contemplated the story of Lourdes. They have reflected on the message of the apparitions. They have reflected on the Gospel.

This year's theme here in Lourdes is "With Bernadette, praying the Rosary". People often make the mistake of thinking that, when we describe the Rosary as a Marian devotion, we are praying to Mary (making her like God). But Bernadette told of how herself and the beautiful lady prayed the Rosary together – and Mary would hardly be praying to herself! The Rosary is a Gospel prayer – it points us, not to Mary but to God. The twenty mysteries tell us the story of salvation – from the Annunciation (that we heard about in today's Gospel), through significant aspects of Jesus public ministry, to his death and resurrection, and on to the glory of the kingdom of heaven that Mary experiences when her earthly life is over.

This is God's plan for putting right the error of our ways – the error depicted for us in our First Reading today, when Adam and Eve choose to disobey God and spoil things for everyone. God wasn't happy to leave things that way; he hatched a plan to put things right and restore the close relationship he had intended to have with us. As St Paul puts it in our Second Reading today (Ephesians): "Before the world was made, [God] chose us, chose us in Christ, to be holy and spotless, and to live through love in his presence". Since we were designed to live in his presence, God would not rest till he had found the way to make that possible again.

Each time we pray the Rosary (or any part of it) we are reflecting on some aspect of that plan of salvation. And so, yes, there is a Marian dimension – because Mary, as the pre-eminent disciple of her Son, walks beside us and contemplates that plan of salvation with us. She joins us, today, in the words of our Responsorial Psalm which echo her own great prayer of praise: "Sing a new song to the Lord for he has worked wonders".

I said earlier that we have not come here, like Bernadette, to collect firewood but, as we come to the Grotto this morning – and for the rest of our time on pilgrimage – let us come here with our needs, whether they are simple or complex. Let us reflect on what part those needs play in God's plan for us; how do they draw us closer into the mystery of salvation, closer to the gift God wants to give us? In seeking to accept that plan, let us put our trust in God – and ask the intercession of Bernadette and the beautiful lady.

Fr Cooke