

**ST DOMINIC'S, DURSLEY**  
**&**  
**ST JOSEPH'S, NYMPSFIELD**

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**SUNDAY 9 AUGUST 2020**  
**NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR A**



**Collect**

Almighty ever-living God, whom, taught by the Holy Spirit, we dare to call our Father, bring, we pray, to perfection in our hearts the spirit of adoption as your sons and daughters, that we may merit to enter into the inheritance which you have promised.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen

## **Gospel (Matthew 14: 22 - 33)**

Jesus made the disciples get ahead into a boat and go on ahead to the other side while he would send the crowds away. After sending the crowds away he went up into the hills by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, while the boat, by now far out on the lake, was battling with a heavy sea, for there was a headwind. In the fourth watch of the night he went towards them, walking on the lake, and when the disciples saw him walking on the lake they were terrified. 'It is a ghost' they said, and cried out in fear. But at once Jesus called out to them saying, 'Courage! It is I! Do not be afraid.' It was Peter who answered, 'Lord', he said 'if it is you, tell me to come to you across the water.' 'Come' said Jesus. Then Peter got out of the boat and started walking towards Jesus across the water, but as soon as he felt the force of the wind, he took fright and began to sink. 'Lord! Save me!' he cried. Jesus put out his hand at once and helped him. 'Man of little faith,' he said 'why did you doubt?' And as they got into the boat the wind dropped. The men in the boat bowed down before him and said, 'Truly you are the Son of God.'

## **Reflection**

We are living in turbulent times, such that it can feel as if a storm is truly raging around us. The pandemic has thrown many of us into turmoil and at times it has been very frightening. It has not always been easy to stay calm, to trust that the storm will pass. In such times it is important that we get away to a quiet place where we can set aside our fears and worries and allow ourselves to rest in the consoling presence of God.

The disciples were seasoned fishermen, so their apparent lack of preparedness is surprising but once the storm was raging it was out of their control. Covid-19 is something that we have not been able to control. It has revealed our fragility and vulnerability as human beings. Here we are, all in the same boat, tossed and thrown about.

In our Gospel, Jesus does eventually rebuke the storm and the calm waters return. When he asks the disciples, 'Where is your faith?' he is asking us the same question. If we have faith, we know that God will not abandon us, that above the seemingly never-ending dark clouds, the sky is blue. This storm will pass. Let us continue to put our faith in God and learn from Him what he is trying to teach us.

### **Opening of our Churches for Private Prayer**

Our churches will be open this week as follows

St Joseph's: Sundays, 10 am to 11 am (note the change in times)

St Dominic's: Thursdays, 2 pm to 3 pm,

for individual prayer only. Please follow instructions and observe social distancing guidelines at all times.

Many thanks to those who have volunteered to act as stewards.

## **Celebration of Mass: Sunday 9 August**

We will be celebrating Mass again at St Dominic's on Sunday at **3 pm**

Because we are following the guidelines set down by the bishops, whose chief consideration is to create a safe environment for everyone, fewer people will be able to attend the Mass each week.

### **Arrangements for August**

Father Philip will be away on his annual leave and Father Gary Brassington from Stroud has very kindly offered to take Mass at St Dominic's in his place. Please note the later time of 3 pm for Sundays 9 and 16 August.

We are pleased to be able to announce that Masses will start again at Nympsfield on Saturday 22 August at 5.30.

### **Does everyone now need to attend Mass?**

The bishops have made it clear that the Sunday obligation remains suspended, so it is not necessary to attend Sunday Mass

Some Masses will continue to be streamed (eg Clifton Cathedral)

The elderly and those at special risk are asked to give careful thought about whether to return to Mass straight away

### **How can I attend Mass?**

As numbers will be limited, you will have to contact the Church Office in advance with your name and contact details: 01453 542039 or [dursley.stdominic@cliftondiocese.com](mailto:dursley.stdominic@cliftondiocese.com)

Be sure to arrive early for the Mass; stewards will be on hand to help with the seating

You will need to bring a mask and wear it

You will need to sanitise your hands on entry and exit

There will be no singing, no offertory procession, no bidding prayers

You may place an offering on a plate on entry; there will be no collection

At the distribution of communion you will need to stay in your place until a steward gives you the instruction to move forward

No paper copies of the Newsletter or Mass sheets will be handed out

**BUT** it will be wonderful to be together again at the Lord's table!

### **Stewards and Readers**

Two volunteer stewards, a reader and a cleaner will be needed for each Mass. These should not be from those groups considered at risk and more vulnerable to coronavirus or those over 70

## Prayer: A bridge between longing and belonging



We are blessed in our catholic tradition with writings on prayer which are filled with richness. So great is this richness we could spend all our time reading about 'prayer' and not finding the time to get down to 'doing' it. We are constantly seeking the right school of prayer or 'method' or 'technique' of prayer. We can so devote ourselves to the method or technique that we can begin to lose sight of why we are praying or even fail to get started.

We need to switch our focus and start to see prayer as a way of life with the living springs of that life found in the scriptures and especially with the various ways in which anyone who faithfully prays is led into Christ's Paschal Mystery and starts living the mystery. This suggests that prayer is about a real relationship with the Father. In relationships we invest time and energy... and that is what we need to do in our prayer. We make ourselves available to the Father so we can journey towards that 'wholeness'.

'The less you pray, the worse it goes' and we know the less we invest in a relationship the more it starts to break down and people drift apart.

Prayer is something more than an exterior act performed out of a sense of duty, an act in which we tell God various things he already knows. It is much more and there is a great hidden treasure waiting for us if we can commit to sit with the Lord of life and listen, sometimes listening to what he is not saying.

Prayer is the beginning of a lifelong conversation with God. To pray is to come into the presence of God. 'It is about leaving the heavy emotional, cognitive, and ideological baggage outside the door.'

When you sit down and come into the 'presence' it is then that you are most your self and where you come home to yourself and to God. It is this 'presence' that God sees us as we truly are. This presence is the nearest thing to God the Father.

*From cliffondiocese.com,*

*where there are many other resources for prayer*

### **Our Parish**

PLEASE PRAY for those who have died recently:

Margaret Holloway

#### **Diocesan Prayer Link:**

St Joseph, Stonehouse

The Annunciation, Woodchester

#### **Churches Together Prayer Rota:**

Church of the Holy Cross, Owlpen

#### **Parish Prayer Rota:**

The congregation at Nympsfield

### **200 Club**

Winners for July:

1<sup>st</sup>: Michael Baker £40

2<sup>nd</sup>: Elizabeth Archer £30

3<sup>rd</sup>: M Holder £20

Please contact Sue Whitney at the Church Office if you would like to join – the cost is 50p per week