

Sunday 2nd August 2020

18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Knowing, loving and following Jesus

Parish Church of St Richard

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Worship at St Richard's

For the foreseeable future, the 10:00 Sunday Masses, will be celebrated in church and live-streamed onto the St Richard's Facebook page.

In the coming couple of weeks, the times and formats for Masses will be changing. The details for this week can be found below. The Services in **black text** will be live-streamed onto Facebook.

The Masses in **red text** will be celebrated in church and live-streamed.

Services this week

Tuesday 4th	Mass	10:00
Wednesday 5th	Mass	19:00
Thursday 6th	Mass	11:00
Saturday 8th	Mass	10:00
Sunday 9th (19 th Sunday in OT)	Mass	10:00

Followed by tea & coffee on Zoom at **11:30**

Communion by extension

If you are unable to attend church because you are continuing to shield, or do not want to be in a public place at this time, or because you are unable to physically get there, due to the Government guidance on travel. Then it will still be possible for you to receive communion, using a simple service, which is effectively an extension of the Mass at your home. Simply let Fr Chris know and the necessary arrangements will be made (which will also be compliant with all safety guidelines).



Open for private prayer

This coming week St Richard's will continue to be open for private prayer at the following times:

Sunday	13:00 – 16:00
Monday	08:00 – 12:00
Tuesday	16:00 – 19:00
Wednesday	08:00 – 12:00
Thursday	16:00 – 19:00
Friday	08:00 – 12:00
Saturday	13:00 – 16:00

When coming into church, please avoid touching any surfaces unnecessarily, and if you feel unwell, you should stay at home and not come into church.

If you would like an idea of what to expect before visiting the church, there is a short video which can be viewed on the homepage of the St Richard's website: www.strichards.co.uk

St Richard's in bloom

Another sunflower picture from Nicky to brighten our week! Keep sending in your photographs.



200 Club Draw – July

Fr Chris made the 200 Club draw using the random number generator application on his phone. You can see a video of him making the draw on the St Richard's Facebook page.

The winning numbers were:

3rd Prize – #6 – Zoe Fryer

2nd Prize – #12 – Helen Thomas

1st Prize – #20 – Phyllis Hadden

Prizes will be given as soon as possible. Congratulations to all the winners!

Messy Church at Home

Parents and pupils at St Wilfrid’s school will be familiar with ‘Rich’ Fr Chris’ furry friend who has helped him with a couple of video assemblies.



Rich has been busy helping prepare some Bible-based family craft activities which can be done at home. If you have not yet taken a look, check out the St Richard’s [Messy Church at Home](#) page on the website. And don’t forget to send in photographs of your completed activities!

Of your charity, please pray for, those in need:

Mimi Palmer, Hannah Hales, Paul Moore, Celia Avery, Christopher Grimwood, Linda Miller, George Jobson, Sheila Jobson, Ann Oddy, Doreen Sparks, Pauline Caffin, Fr John Edwards, Margaret Barter, Adrian Taylor, Pamela Waugh, Fr David Palmer, Tony Costa, Brian Waggar, Una Wade, Barbara Liddington, Shaun Moore, Jean McCarthy, Fr Tony Whitfield, Joe Griffin, Pat Longhurst, Michael Langford-Jackson, and Becky.

Those who have died recently: Tom Miller, Jennie and those whose anniversary falls around this time of year:

2nd) Cicely Bartley, Walter Thomas, Margaret Ray, 3rd) Albert Strange, Annie Strange, Francis Hallett, Dorothy Butler, Pamela Dear, 4th) Victor Spang, Freda Plant, 6th) Dorothy Knight, Francis Bagot, 7th) George Dene, Beryl Neale, 8th) Florine Flintoff, Dolly Elsey, Josephine Jones, Nina Eldridge.

*If you would like anyone added to the prayer list, or would like someone prayed for, but **not** added to the list, please submit your prayer details using the form on the website www.strichards.co.uk/prayer.*

Fr Chris’ homily – 2nd August 2020

Aside from the Resurrection, Jesus’s feeding of the 5,000 with five loaves and two fishes is the only one of his miracles to appear in all four gospels. Clearly it is significant and extends beyond the miracle itself.

It is an account that is loaded with theology and symbolism. When talking about the sermon of parables last week, I mentioned how Matthew’s gospel bridges the Old and the New, to point to Jesus being the Christ, the Messiah, of whom the prophets spoke. Today’s gospel reading is, in part, another illustration of this.

It looks back to the past and looks forward to the future. Looking back, the miracle has undertones of the Old Testament account of the people of Israel, under Moses leadership, being fed with manna in the wilderness. And there are also clear parallels with Elisha’s miracle of feeding 100 men with 20 Barley loaves, not least in the Lord’s words uttered by the prophet: *“They will eat and have some leftover”*

In the case of the gospel, 12 baskets full were leftover, a reference to the 12 tribes of Israel and of the 12 apostles chosen by Jesus. The past links to the future.

In Matthew’s gospel, the feeding of the 5,000 follows immediately after the death of John the Baptist. An event that clearly affected Jesus, we’re told how when he heard the news he withdrew with his disciples to a lonely place. But how striking the contrast is between the lavish self-centered, temporal banquet that Herod and his *select* guests enjoyed in celebration of the King’s birthday, and at which he ordered the death of John the Baptist. And the setting in the deserted place in which Jesus takes pity on the uninvited crowds, by healing their sick and feeding them in abundance. And here we see how the feeding of the 5,000 looks to the future, to the Last Supper, the institution of the Eucharist and the eternal Heavenly banquet, in which we are able to participate today through the Eucharist.

In the gospel reading we hear how Jesus *“took the five loaves and two fish, raised his eyes to heaven and said the **blessing**. And **breaking** the loaves handed them to his disciples who **gave** them to the crowds”*

Twelve chapters later, Matthew tells us how Jesus: **“took some bread, and when he had said the blessing he broke it and gave it to his disciples”**

The words we hear in today’s gospel reading prefigures what was to come at the last supper. And notice the emphasis is not on what Jesus *says*, but on what he *does*.

He **takes, blesses, breaks** and **gives**.

These actions continue to be important today. They are lived out every time we celebrate the Mass. The priest, following Jesus’s command, **takes, blesses, breaks** and **gives** the blessed sacrament.

But this pattern: of **taking, blessing, breaking** and **giving** has application beyond the actions in the Eucharist. It can be applied to our own lives in Christ, in our vocations as members of the universal priesthood, that we share through our baptism, our individual callings.

In the gospel today, we hear how the disciples show concern for the people – they identify that they are hungry and need feeding. Their solution is to send them to the village to get food for themselves. Jesus sees the situation differently. He agrees that the crowd need food, but he tells the disciples to feed them themselves. Their reaction is unsurprisingly *“we can’t do that”*.

But Jesus takes what little they have, blesses it, breaks it and then gives it back to them so that **they can** feed the people. It can be the same for us. If we identify a need that is consistent with the Lord’s will, and we consult him through prayer, and offer ourselves to him, he will take what we have, whatever it might be: ideas, money, food, a sense of humour, time, energy, talents, love, artistic gifts, skill with Words, quickness of eye or fingers, whatever it is we have to offer, Jesus will take, hold it before his Father with prayer and blessing.

Then, he will break it, not in a negative way, but he will change it, change us, to make what we offer fit for his purpose and he hands it back to us, so that we can give to those in need.

What we end up with may be different to where we started, so one might say, that what we have to offer, is both *ours* and *not ours*. It may be at the same time *what we had in mind*, and yet different to what we had in mind.

It is greater and different, more powerful and mysterious, yet still our own. This is what Christian service is all about, at every level.

And we should look on in amazement to see what God does with the bits and pieces we dig out of the meagre resources we have to offer to him.

But we really shouldn’t be surprised by this, after all in John 14:12, Jesus says: *“Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these.”* Only Jesus knows what we have the potential to do and to be. And if we let Jesus into our lives and really offer to him what we have, he will help us achieve incredible things. What Jesus sees in us, is very different to what we see in ourselves, *or for that matter in other people*.

Jesus sees in us, in all of us, potential way beyond our wildest imagination. He saw it in the disciples on the banks of the Sea of Galilee, and he sees it in us today. If we let him, he will **take, bless, break** and **give** back to us our gifts to use to the glory of his name.

Amen