



# The narrow gate

The serious disciple knows the necessity and value of discipline. Thinking of discipline as something punitive in nature, we underscore its place in our spiritual lives. Discipline is really about a radical trust in God and his guidance. "When you are conducted by a guide who takes you through an unknown country at night across fields where there are no tracks, by his own skill, asking no advice from anyone, giving no inkling of his plans, what choice do you have but to give yourself completely to his guidance? If you are convinced that he is a good guide, you must have faith in him and abandon yourself to his care (Jean-Pierre de Caussade)."

If someone wants to be physically fit, they readily find a competent trainer who sets them on a rigorous schedule. Determined to reach their goals, they sacrifice personal pleasure and trust in his guidance. Why should it be any different with God? In order to remain true to the way Jesus places before us, we have to listen, learn, and be willing

to change. Falling in love with God and maintaining that relationship requires an investment of time, energy, and hard work. Putting personal preferences aside in pursuit of the Gospel and giving proper attention to our spiritual lives is challenging work. At first, "all discipline seems a cause not for joy but for pain, yet later it brings the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who are trained by it (Hebrews)."

"What God does is essentially good. It does not need to be reformed or controlled...If you would live according to the Gospels, give yourself completely and simply to the action of God (Jean-Pierre de Caussade)." Submission to the holy will of God is not a submission to a set of pre-ordained set of circumstances. Rather, it is an abandonment and trust in God's creative, life-giving, and salvific power. God brings light out of darkness and life out of death. Nurturing this bond of trust and seeking God in all things creates an intimate and particular relationship and bond between our

# Everyday Stewardship

## Chancing the narrow gate

From doctors to counsellors, anthropologists to schoolteachers, it seems like everyone has their own parenting style to peddle, guaranteeing it will result in a happy and well-adjusted kid.

You've got "gentle parenting," predicated on respect for the child's feelings and needs. You've got "attachment parenting," based on the belief that kids need time to adjust to being outside of the womb. You've got "free-range parenting," where self-sufficiency reigns supreme.

But of all the parenting approaches I've come across, I've never encountered a philosophy that rejects discipline altogether. There are lots of conflicting

opinions on how best to administer that discipline, but I've never heard any parent or parenting "expert" worth their salt say that a mother or father should completely ignore misbehaviour that threatens the well-being of the child himself.

Discipline is in our human DNA. Consider for a moment what the world would look like if it came to be filled with people who had never been taught to reflect on their life challenges. People who bristled at the suggestion of personal growth.

And yet we become this way with God. Even the most "devout" among us shy away from occasions of divine constructive criticism. We avoid confession and forego daily examinations



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Creator and us. When He comes, there will be no issue with us recognising Him or Him recognising us. We will have met before.

# Living the Paschal Mystery

God has promised salvation from that first fateful fall of humanity. God has never forsaken us. While salvation is a gift freely given by God, we must choose it, work at it, desire it with all our hearts. This Sunday's gospel uses two images that indicate to us that we have worked out for us: a "narrow

gate" and locked door. We must squeeze and push our way through life if we wish to be saved. We must squeeze out any weakness that leads us astray; we must push aside anything that gets between God and us. To squeeze and push our way to salvation, we must be strong.

# Live the Liturgy

Discipline is necessary for us to focus our attention and develop and refine our skills. A disciplined person has integrity and can make difficult but necessary choices. Most people do not like discipline, especially children. When we have to rise above our impulses and desires and do something challenging, it can appear as a punishment. The struggles of living a good and effective Christian life, especially when we actively choose by God and necessary for

reaching spiritual maturity. God invites us to share in His Kingdom. Hearing and accepting that invitation requires an active, conscious decision on our part. Reforming our lives and changing how we do things does not come easily. But it is precisely what is necessary for us to enter through the narrow gate that leads to life. Discipline is essential if we are going to discover our desire for union with our Creator and live in God's house. In this way, we will not risk finding the door

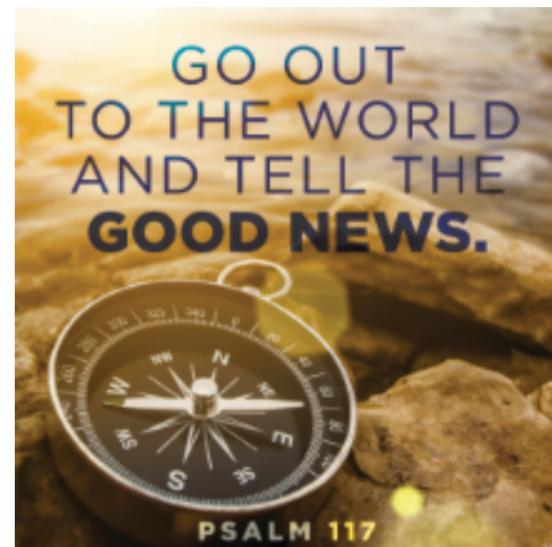
What strength is needed to enter "through the narrow gate," the locked door? The strength that comes from living so that the "master of the house" knows us and opens to us. The strength that comes from faithfully living "in the kingdom of God." The strength of conviction in following Jesus and seeking his way over our own way. This strength only comes from God who offers it to everyone, those "from the east and the west and from the north and the south." Because of this strength we choose to journey "to Jerusalem," we choose to pass through death to Life, we choose salvation. Only this strength is truly "strong enough," for it is God's very Self, God's very Life. Yes, God desires that we be saved. The door of salvation is open to all those who have chosen to pass through the "narrow gate" of self-surrender and the locked door of curbed passions and false desires. So, why would we choose this journey? Because the immediate destination Jerusalem, with its promised death) is the way to a greater destination (new and eternal Life).

By "making his way to Jerusalem" Jesus is being faithful to his own mission; by going to Jerusalem he fulfils his Father's will even when that means he must suffer and die. Jesus walks the journey with us and shows us the way to what we desire most for our lives—salvation. Our salvation is a great gift from God, but it is not without cost. We must pass through the "narrow gate" of conform-

ing ourselves to Jesus and participating in his dying and rising. Being disciples of Jesus, then, demands more than being in Jesus' company (for example, being faithful to personal prayer and celebrating liturgy); it means we must take up the mission of Jesus to die and rise, that is, we must be on the way to Jerusalem.

What limits the scope of salvation is not God's reach (which is to east, west, north, and south—that is, salvation is offered to all people) but our response. We gain eternal salvation by the difficult and demanding path of following Jesus on his way to Jerusalem; we do this by dying to self and being faithful disciples.

We all claim to know Jesus; after all, we are for the most part faithful churchgoers who weekly eat and drink in his company. This gospel warns us that this isn't enough. There is an urgency about our paschal mystery living; we don't have forever to make up our minds to respond to God's offer of salvation. Each day we must take up our own cross, die to self, and live for the sake of others. This is how we enter through the narrow gate and how we get to know Jesus intimately enough to receive salvation: we must live and act like Jesus. Becoming least is a metaphor for dying to self; this is what Jesus asks: that the first become the last. What limits the scope of salvation is not God's reach but our weak response. We must beg God for the strength to respond fully. Our strength comes from God.



locked when we need it to be open.



**First Reading**

They shall bring all your brothers and sisters from all the nations as an offering to the Lord. (Is 66:20)

**Psalm:**

Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News. (Ps 16[17])

**Second Reading:**

My son, do not disdain the discipline of the Lord or lose heart when reproved by him; for whom the Lord loves, he disciplines. (Heb 12:5-6)

**Gospel Acclamation:**

Alleluia, alleluia! Jesus said: 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one can come to the Father except through me.' Alleluia!

**Gospel:**

And people will come from the east and the west and from the north and the south and will recline at table in the kingdom of God. (Lk 13:29)

**21 TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (C)**

Is 66:18-21/Ps 117:1, 2/Heb 12:5-7, 11-13/Lk 13:22-30  
 08:00 **Morning Prayer** Mercy Chapel  
 09:00 **Mass** Convent Ronnie Foster (RIP)  
 10:30 **Mass** St Mary's Thomas Hourigan & Family (RIP)  
 17:00 **Mass** St Mary's People of the Parish

**22 The Queenship of Mary**

2 Thes 1:1-5, 11-12/Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 4-5/Mt 23:13-22  
 08:00 **Morning Prayer** Mercy Chapel  
 09:00 **Breakfast with God** Mercy Chapel  
 12:05 **Mass** St Mary's George Cain (RIP)  
 17:15 **Evening Prayer** Mercy Chapel

**23 Tuesday**

2 Thes 2:1-3a, 14-17/Ps 96:10, 11-12, 13/Mt 23:23-26  
 08:00 **Morning Prayer** Mercy Chapel  
 12:05 **Requiem Mass** St Mary's Mary Scott  
 13:00 **Over 60s** St Mary's Catholic Centre  
 16:00 **Chosen Tuesday** Upper Room  
 17:15 **Evening Prayer** Mercy Chapel

**24 St Bartholomew**

Rv 21:9b-14/Ps 145:10-11, 12-13, 17-18/Jn 1:45-51  
 08:00 **Morning Prayer** Mercy Chapel  
 12:05 **Mass** St Mary's Dec'd Members of Burns Family (RIP)  
 17:15 **Evening Prayer** Mercy Chapel

**25 Thursday**

1 Cor 1:1-9/Ps 145:2-3, 4-5, 6-7/Mt 24:42-51  
 08:00 **Morning Prayer** Mercy Chapel  
 10:00 **Open House** St Mary's Catholic Centre  
 10:15 **Confessions** St Cecilia's  
 10:30 **Mass** St Cecilia's Ronnie Foster (RIP)  
 12:05 **Mass** St Mary's Ints of Fr Frank Trias  
 17:00 **Evening with Jesus and Friends** Mercy Chapel

**26 Friday**

1 Cor 1:17-25/Ps 33:1-2, 4-5, 10-11/Mt 25:1-13  
 08:00 **Morning Prayer** Mercy Chapel  
 12:05 **Mass** St Mary's Janet Ann Atkinson (RIP)  
 17:15 **Evening Prayer** Mercy Chapel

**27 St Monica**

1 Cor 1:26-31/Ps 33:12-13, 18-19, 20-21/Mt 25:14-30  
 08:00 **Morning Prayer** Mercy Chapel  
 10:30 **Confessions** St Mary's  
 11:00 **Mass** St Mary's Delfina Carvajal (RIP)  
 11:45 **Confessions** St Mary's  
 18:00 **Vigil Mass** St Cecilia's Clive Chiraldi (RIP)

**28 TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (C)**

Sir 3:17-18, 20, 28-29/Ps 68:4-5, 6-7, 10-11/Heb 12:18-19, 22-24a/Lk 14:1, 7-14  
 08:00 **Morning Prayer** Mercy Chapel  
 09:00 **Mass** Convent Ints of Jack Foster  
 10:30 **Mass** St Mary's People of the Parish  
 17:00 **Mass** St Mary's Elizabeth Ann Rodwell (RIP)



Bernadette, Jean Maur-  
 een, Christopher, Paula,  
 Peter, Emilia, Jean, Teresa,  
 Cath, the sick sisters at  
 Oaklea, David, Marion, Dave, Neil, Paul, Andrew, Jacob,  
 Stella, David, Alisa, Susan, Mary, Jack, Richard, Margaret,  
 Moira, Colin, Gerry, Nick, Maureen and Stella.



Fr Dermott Donnelly,  
 Maud Todd, Peter Algar,  
 George Cain, Mary Eliza-  
 beth Hallan Scott, Veronica Stafford; George Bowler

Let us know if you would like a name added to the list.

**Questions for the Week**

**First Reading:** The final prophecy in the Book of Isaiah speaks about the end times when God will gather "all nations and tongues" and all the world will finally see the full "glory" of God. Why do you think this event has been revealed to us?  
**Second Reading:** The Our author of Hebrews speaks of the trials and tribulations of our lives as a "discipline" from God meant to teach and train us. Can you think of a lesson learned from some difficult situations in your life?  
**Gospel:** As Jesus continues on his journey to Jerusalem, he teaches the crowds about the urgency to accept his invitation for salvation. Why do you think so many people lack this sense of urgency for their own salvation?

**Why do we do that?**



**Question:** How can I practice gratitude in my everyday life?

**Answer:** God has given each

of us many blessings. Fostering an "attitude of gratitude" might be easier than you think. Simple, concrete practices can help us to be more thankful more often. Incorporate it into your dinner with your spouse, or as you tuck the kids into bed at night. "What are three things you're thankful for today?" Make a habit of writing one note a week to someone special in your life, thanking them for how

they've impacted you. This is also a good practice in the workplace. Consider opening your weekly meetings with a quick round of gratitude sharing. "I'm grateful John helped me with that last-minute change to my presentation last week. I wouldn't have finished it in time for the meeting without him."

Another way is to designate a few minutes to thank God. This could be the first

bit of your daily prayer time or after you receive communion on Sundays. You can also integrate it into your daily routine. How about while brushing your teeth? There's probably nothing so important it can't wait two minutes. Brush your teeth, quiet your mind, and thank God from your heart for His blessings throughout the day. Get creative! Any moment is an opportunity to praise and thank God.

**Saint of the Week**

Born Isabel Flores de Olivia in April 1586 in Lima, Peru to Spanish colonists, Saint Rose of Lima took the name Rose at her confirmation in 1597. Legend holds that she received this nickname as an infant because a servant saw her face transformed into a rose.

Even as a child Saint Rose was dedicated to Christ. Growing up she made many secret penances. And when she was old enough to be married, deterred suitors by

cutting off her hair and rubbing pepper on face to make it blister. She took a vow of chastity even though her parents wished her to marry. She fasted many times a week and permanently abstained from meat.

Eventually her parents gave in and allowed her to join the Third Order of St. Dominic, although she was not permitted to live in a convent. Saint Rose undertook severe penances, allowing herself only two hours of sleep a night in order to have more time to pray, wearing a heavy silver crown with spikes on the in-

side imitating Christ's crown of thorns, and even burning her own hands. However, she also cared for the sick and hungry, and sold her beautiful embroidery and fine lace, as well as flowers she grew to help raise funds for the poor.

She died at the age of 31 on August 24, 1617. Pope Clement X canonised her in 1671, she was the first saint of the New World, born in the Americas. Saint Rose of Lima is the patron saint of Latin America and the Philippines.



**Announcements**

**Famine in Panyangara**

Thanks to your generosity we've sent nearly £6,000 for famine relief. Fr Ignatius has sent us a letter of thanks and some pictures of the food we have brought being distributed. We'll continue to collect funds during the rest of this month. Thanks again for your generosity in helping our sister parish!

"Thank you to everyone who continues to support CAFOD through the collection boxes. Last month the collection raised £218, which has been sent off to CAFOD. CAFOD works throughout the world's most deprived areas and through its sister agency CARITAS in

**Ukraine. Please continue to give through this scheme"**

**Autumn 2022**

We've got loads of activities planned this autumn—here's a taste.  
 25 September **Meeting Parish Ministers:** an opportunity for you to share your experiences of ministering in the parish and say how the parish can better support you.

29 September–1 October **40 Hours' Eucharistic Devotion:** back by popular demand! An extended moment of prayer and grace for the parish and the city.  
 1–30 October **Rosary Rally:** Host a statue of Mary in your home and pray the

rosary with your family.  
 3 October **First Reconciliation and Holy Communion Programme** parents' meeting.  
 5 October **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults:** a course for adults thinking about being baptised or joining the Catholic Church.  
 10 October **Methods of Prayer:** a four-week course on different ways of praying, part of our ongoing formation series.

**St Arnold Society (SAS)**  
 St Arnold of Metz is the patron saint of beer and brewers (see his blessing of beer on the right). The parish and the university chaplaincy are launching a St Arnold Society and you're welcome to join! Once a month we meet in a pub for a chat



Bless, O Lord, this creature beer, that Thou hast been pleased to bring forth from the sweetness of the grain: that it might be a salutary remedy for the human race: and grant by the invocation of Thy holy name, that, whosoever drinks of it may obtain health of body and a sure safeguard for the soul. Through Christ our Lord.

**Flock Notes**

"I will live with my questions, since God can be trusted." Are you able to say that, and mean it?

That's the job of a disciple: to trust the Master, even when it doesn't make

sense or when there are lots of unanswered questions.

Not all our questions will be answered this side of eternity—the good news, of course, is that there is another side of eternity! This

side though, we might still have to live not knowing why good people suffer, why disasters strike the weakest and most vulnerable or why all manner of unfathomable (to us) things happen. Some people might take all this as a reason not to believe in God, and sometimes we too try to punish him by not believing in him for a bit. But God's invitation to trust remains, as well as our questions. So, do you trust God enough to live with the questions?



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