



parish newsletter

6 November 2022 | Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

They are the ones who will rise!

Facing her 50th birthday and recently diagnosed with Type-2 Diabetes, Rebecca was at a crossroads. Realising that she had neglected her health and fitness over the years and allowed herself to gain significant weight, she felt poorly about who she had become. While it was easier to give in to temptation and the gratification received from food, her family needed her, and she desired a long life. She had an image of the person she could become. She wanted to be more trim, focused, disciplined, and healthy. She liked what she saw in her mind and set out on a journey to create it. With great effort, she succeeded and accomplished her goals. When we have a goal ahead of us, we are more apt to do whatever is necessary to get it.

Is heaven a goal you want to achieve? Our popular images and metaphors to describe heaven can leave some people wondering if this is something they want for all eternity. Living like an angel, wearing white robes, meeting St. Peter, and reconnecting with loved ones are all welcome notions to some extent. But do

they really inspire and captivate us enough to want to dramatically change how we live our lives? Heaven's reality is more profound than any human image or idea can fathom. Even though we believe in a bodily resurrection, heaven is more about attaining union with God. To achieve heaven is to attain eternal happiness and fulfil all desire. How do we awaken within us an ardent and passionate desire for heaven?

St. Isaac of Nineveh counsels, "Enter eagerly into the treasure house that lies within you, and so you will see the treasure house of heaven, for the two are one and the same, and there is but one single entry into them both. The ladder that leads to the kingdom is hidden with you, and is found in your own soul. Dive into yourself and in your soul you will discover the rungs by which to ascend." Our souls are made to be eternal. Once we discover our true selves and are captivated by the wonder of who we really are, we will unleash our unwavering desire for a lasting union with our Creator. Heaven is about who we are. "For seeing you,



our God, as you are, we shall be like you for all the ages."

Everyday Stewardship

The God of the Living

"*Sic transit gloria mundi*," is what they used to say at papal coronations. "So passes earthly glory." Everything is fleeting. Nothing is here to stay. But in reality, some things are forever. Our actions on earth do have the potential to reverberate in eternity.

Everyday Stewardship is a lifestyle that embraces what will last. It is being aware of how our choices and our actions can be received by God, and through

His grace, amplified to showcase His glory.

Your great-grandparents were married for 60 years. Maybe they shared the greatest love anyone in your family has ever seen, and maybe they raised up a whole family of kids. But they've been gone for a generation now, and no one living remembers the softness in their eyes when they looked at each other. And to read today's Gospel, you might even get the impression that their marriage was nothing more than an

earthly whim. Gone. Fleeting. Temporal.

This week's readings invite us to contemplate the question: what exactly is immortal? What lasts beyond our earthly sojourn?

The seven brothers and their mothers whose martyrdom is told this weekend in Maccabees didn't die for the letter of the law, they died for the One who gave the law. In the same way, a marriage contract does not extend into eternity, but the fruits of a sacrificial love will live forever.

Good works, devotion, gratitude, selflessness, graciousness, accountability — these are all of God. He is not God of the dead; He is God of the living — and these are the things that last an eternity.

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS



Living the Paschal Mystery

Few of us are satisfied with things the way they are. We want a better job with more income, a bigger house with lots of bathrooms (especially when the children hit the teens), more security about health care. And this is a good thing. Ambition, future-looking, desiring a better life spur us on, keep us from settling into the status quo, help us achieve more than just what is ne-

cessary. The Beatitudes can be a kind of wish list, a challenge to move us out of our spiritual status quo and a help for making not only a better life for ourselves, but also for others in our family, neighbourhood, world. When we live the Beatitudes, we hasten a reversal of plight (for example, those "who mourn... will be comforted") and therefore are personally active in

changing things, in helping others have what we have, in reaching for the kind of life Jesus taught. But moving forward is not easy. Not everyone will like our choices, our challenges, our upsetting the status quo. So, like Jesus we also will face insult and persecution that comes from having another vision for the way things can be.

Jesus "began to teach" his disciples the Beatitudes; "began" implies not over and finished, but an ongoing way of living for his followers. The Beatitudes are not an easily learned way of life, nor easily lived. Disciples' learning is not only in the hearing, but even more importantly in the daily living. Throughout their lives the saints faithfully opened themselves to the transforming action of Christ within them. This transforming action strengthened their identity as God's children (see second reading and gospel) and enabled them to embody the Beatitudes as their way of living. For us who share this same identity and way of living, our reward will not only be with the saints in heaven, but is already on earth: we are even now the blessed of God bathed in comfort, mercy, and peace. The paradox of the Beatitudes is that we already are what we try to live: those blessed by God.

The most telling mark of being children of God is that we are "blessed." This is who we are—those who belong to God, are loved by God, are raised up by God. The Beatitudes describe a way

to live consistent with our identity as God's children immersed in Christ. In Christ, who we are and how we live come together as one. The saints we honour today are those who took Jesus' Beatitudes to heart and lived them well. They now dwell in the land of inheritance—"the Kingdom of heaven" where they "see God" and know the fullness of what it means to be called "blessed." Let us "Rejoice and be glad" with them on this, their feast day.

The saints stand out as models who give us courage and strength that we, too, can be faithful to the demands of the way of living that the Beatitudes lay out for us. We know some saints by name (those who have been canonised). There are countless others (our deceased relatives and friends) whom we know by name in a different way. This multitude of faithful followers of Christ beckons us to hear what Jesus teaches in this gospel: "Blessed are [you]... your reward will be great in heaven."

At first glance the Beatitudes seem an impossible blueprint for Christian living; most of us aren't near at all to the ideal that they express. But nine times is the word "blessed" addressed to us. When our blessedness is our focus, then fidelity to our Gospel way of life is no ideal, but becomes a way of expressing who we are in Christ—blessed. The Beatitudes help us reach our daily living beyond what is now to the eternal Life that is to come.

Live the Liturgy

Every believer wonders about what the experience of heaven will be like. Popular images of people walking around in white robes, becoming like angels, and reunions with those who have gone before us all tickle human imagination. Jesus never got too specific about what heaven actually looks like. But he assures us that it exists and that all are alive in God. Clinging to the traditions of our faith, we persevere through life's challenges confident that

God's promise of eternal life will come to be. We are told that we shall become like God and see God as He is. As God has made us, He also loves us and sustains us. Desiring to be with God above all other desires gives us the hope that when we close our eyes in death, we will fall into the arms of the One who will gently bring us where we need to be. Knowing ahead of time what we find when we arrive changes little.





First Reading:
“You are depriving us of this present life, but the King of the world will raise us up to live again forever. It is for his laws that we are dying.” (2 Mc 7:9)

Psalm:
I shall be filled, when I awake, with the sight of your glory, O Lord. (Ps 16)

Second Reading:
May our Lord Jesus Christ encourage your hearts and strengthen them in every good deed and word. (2 Thes 2:16-17)

Gospel Acclamation:
Alleluia, alleluia!
Stay awake, praying at all times for the strength to stand with confidence before the Son of Man. Alleluia!

Gospel:
“And he is not God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive.” (Lk 20:38)

6	THIRTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (C)	2 Mc 7:1-2, 9-14/Ps 17:1, 5-6, 8, 15 [15b]/2 Thes 2:16-3:5/Lk 20:27-38 or 20:27, 34-38 08:00 Morning Prayer Mercy Chapel 09:00 Mass Convent Jan Furtak (RIP) 10:30 Mass St Mary's People of the Parish 17:00 Mass St Mary's Dominican English (RIP)
7	Monday St Willibrord	Ti 1:1-9/Ps 24:1b-2, 3-4ab, 5-6/Lk 17:1-6 08:00 Morning Prayer Mercy Chapel 09:00 Arise Mercy Chapel 12:05 Mass St Mary's Bob Potts (RIP) 12:45 Chaplet of Divine Mercy St Mary's 17:15 Evening Prayer Mercy Chapel 18:30 Catholicism St Mary's Catholic Centre
8	Tuesday	Ti 2:1-8, 11-14/Ps 37:3-4, 18 and 23, 27 and 29/Lk 17:7-10 08:00 Morning Prayer Mercy Chapel 12:05 Mass St Mary's Maya Chappell (RIP) 13:00 Over 60s St Mary's Catholic Centre 16:30 Chaplaincy Tuesdays Upper Room
9	Dedication of the Lateran Basilica	Ez 47:1-2, 8-9, 12/Ps 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9/1 Cor 3:9C-11, 16-17/Jn 2:13-22 08:00 Morning Prayer Mercy Chapel 12:05 Mass St Mary's Dominican English (RIP) 17:15 Evening Prayer Mercy Chapel 18:30 RCIA Upper Room
10	St Leo the Great	Phlm 7-20/Ps 146:7, 8-9a, 9bc-10/Lk 17:20-25 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 Maisie & Jim Mason (RIP) 12:05 Mass St Mary's Holy Souls 17:00 Restore Mercy Chapel
11	St Martin of Tours	2 Jn 4-9/Ps 119:1, 2, 10, 11, 17, 18/Lk 17:26-37 08:00 Morning Prayer Mercy Chapel 12:05 Mass St Mary's Bill Murray (RIP) 12:45 Holy Rosary St Mary's 17:15 Evening Prayer Mercy Chapel
12	Saturday St Josaphat	3 Jn 5-8/Ps 112:1-2, 3-4, 5-6/Lk 18:1-8 08:00 Morning Prayer Mercy Chapel 10:30 Confessions St Mary's 11:00 Mass St Mary's Holy Souls 11:45 Confessions St Mary's 18:00 Vigil Mass St Cecilia's Holy Souls
13	THIRTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (C)	Mal 3:19-20a/Ps 98:5-6, 7-8, 9/2 Thes 3:7-12/Lk 21:5-19 08:00 Morning Prayer Mercy Chapel 09:00 Mass Convent Ints of Sr M Raphael & Family 10:30 Mass St Mary's Dead of both World Wars 17:00 Mass St Mary's People of the Parish



Oaklea, David, Marion, Dave, Neil, Paul, Andrew, Jacob, Stella, David, Alisa, Susan, Mary, Jack, Richard, Margaret, Moira, Gerry, Nick, Maureen, Stella, Rose, Keith, Kelly and Tracy



Dominic English, Miriam Rogers, Florence Isabella Davis, Alan & Maureen

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

Questions for the Week

First Reading: The story from Second Maccabees is one of the earliest writings from the Old Testament that speak to the Jewish belief in the resurrection from the dead for those who suffer for the faith. Would you have the courage to die for your faith?

Second Reading: Paul asks the believers in Thessalonica to pray for him, Silvanus, and Timothy “to be delivered from perverse and wicked people.” What would you like your faith community to pray about for you?

Gospel: The Sadducees attempted to trap Jesus with a marriage riddle about the resurrection of the dead. How do you deal with friends who challenge what you believe?

Why do we do that?



Question: November 9 is the feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica in Rome. What is the significance of this feast?

Answer: Every diocese has a mother church, the bishop's cathedral where the diocesan church gathers and celebrates. The cathedral is the seat of the bishop's authority over the diocese. That authority is intended to be one of service to God's people, shepherding and guiding them in a truly pastoral mode. The pope is first and foremost the Bishop of Rome, as

well as the head of the Roman Catholic Church. St. John Lateran is his cathedral, and its prominence derives from that reality. St. John Lateran cathedral traces its origins to Emperor Constantine who converted a portion of the Laterani family palace into a church, and gave it to Pope Sylvester (314-335) as the papal church and residence; St. John refers to the two saints in whose honour the

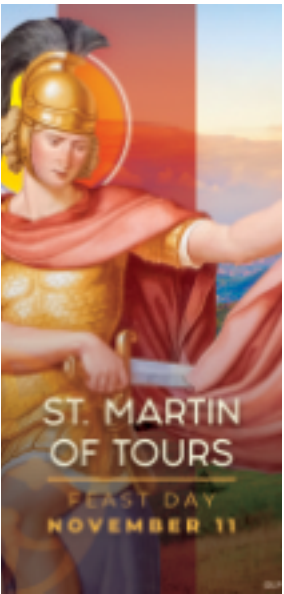
church is dedicated, John the Baptist and John the Evangelist. It became known as the cathedral of the pope, and its facade's inscription refers to it as “the Mother and Head of all Churches, in the City and of the World.” The universal celebration of this feast stresses the unity among Roman Catholics, as they unite themselves with the chair of Peter.

Saint of the Week

Saint Martin of Tours was born a pagan in what is now Hungary around 316, but he was raised in Italy where his father, a tribune, was posted. At 15 he was compelled to serve in the Roman military, though he was already a catechumen. There is a popular legend that while on campaign the saint cut his cloak in half to share with a cold beggar. That night he dreamed of Jesus and his cloak was restored. He was baptised at 18. Only two years after his baptism, he

was released from the military, he had refused his battle pay and to fight saying he was a soldier for Christ. He is the first recognised conscientious objector. After his release from the military, he became a disciple of Hilary of Poitiers. He worked diligently against the Arian heresy, which denies the divinity of Jesus Christ, and established a community of hermits near Poitiers in 361, the first French monastery. In 371 he reluctantly became bishop of Tour. Nearby, he founded a second monastery, Mar-

moutier, because he preferred the life of a monk he retreated often. In 384 there was a popular heresy infecting the Church in Spain, led by the bishop Priscillian and his followers. The emperor Magnus Maximus became involved, ordering the execution of the heretics. Saint Martin opposed the executions and protested the emperor's involvement in Church matters. Unfortunately, the Priscillians were executed anyway. Saint Martin died in Candes-Saint-Martin, Gaul in 397. He is notably one of the first saints who was not martyred. He is the patron



saint of France.

Announcements

Bank Details & Offerings
So few of us carry cash any more, so do you want to make your offering by direct debit? Please use the reference 'Offering' so we know where to account for it. Our bank details are:
Name: DHN Sunderland Our Lady of Mercy
Sort Code: 40-34-18
Acc No: 84456955

CAFOD Family Fast Day
Many thanks to everyone who contributed to CAFOD following Family Fast Day on 7th October. We raised £600 for our sisters and brothers, mainly in East Africa, where

a severe drought is causing a dreadful famine. This money has been sent to CAFOD. Please continue to support CAFOD through the collection boxes.

Calling Artists, Craftspeople and Creatives
The meetings to discuss the nativity scenes in our churches are this weekend after the 6pm Mass in St Cecilia's and the 10.30am in St Mary's.

November Lists for the Dead
Envelopes are available at

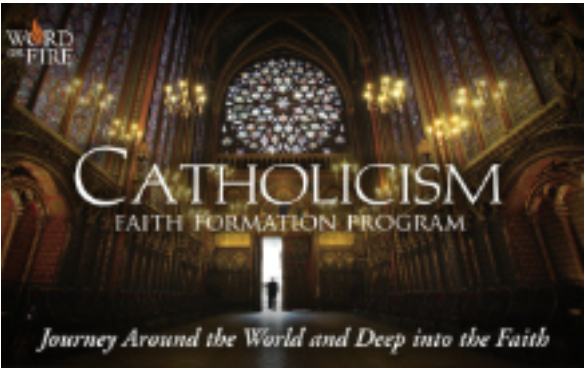
the back of the church for offerings and lists for the dead. Please put them in the basket in front of the altar.

Christmas Stars
In addition to the usual lists for the dead, please pick up a star from the back of the church and write the names of your deceased loved ones on it. Put them in the basket in front of the altar and we'll use them to decorate the Christmas Trees we put up on the sanctuary this Christmas.

Catholicism
Bishop Robert Barron's acclaimed series on the Catholic faith is starting next

Monday, 7 November at 6.30pm in St Mary's Hall. Filmed all over the world, the series looks at beauty of our faith.

Mass for the Deceased of the Parish
This year's Mass for the deceased of the parish where



Flock Notes

We can no more imagine what heaven will be like than a caterpillar can imagine what it is like to be a butterfly, and yet as surely caterpillars are created to become butterflies, we are created to dwell in glory in heaven for eternity. The fact that we can't imagine what heaven is like doesn't stop us from trying, and neither should it! The Bible even encourages us by using different images such as a banquet or a city. In all these images, the common thread is that all

relationships are put right, including our relationship with God and that's something we don't have to wait until after we die to sort out. Christians believe in life before death, as well as life after death. Eternity begins today and we can ready ourselves for it by looking at our relationships with family, friends and with God and taking steps to put right what has gone wrong. Heaven starts today! Are you ready?



Our Lady of Mercy Parish
27 Bridge Street, Sunderland, SR1 1TQ
(0191) 567 5354
sunderland.ourladyofmercy@rcdhn.org.uk
www.sunderlandcatholic.com
St Mary's Church • 27 Bridge Street • Sunderland • SR1 1TQ
St Cecilia's Church • Ryhope Road • Sunderland • SR2 7TG

Fr Christopher Hancock MHM • Parish Priest • christopher@sunderlandcatholic.com
Fr Emmanuel Nuh Mbeh MHM • Assistant Priest • emmanuel.mbeh@diocesehn.org.uk
Rev Eddy Barker • Parish Deacon

Rebecca Leighton • Lay University Chaplain • rebecca@sunderlandcatholic.com
Canon Alec Barras • Bishop Séamus Cunningham

