

"Every day, as long as this 'today' lasts,
keep encouraging one another" (Heb 3:13)

Sunday February 19 20230
7th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Readings & Prayers p. 139

Leviticus 19:1 - 2.17 - 18

We imitate the holiness of God when we refuse to exact vengeance or bear a grudge against another.

1st Corinthians 3:16 - 23

Paul gives us a profound reason why we should respect one another: we are the Temple of God.

St. Matthew 5:38 - 48

What differentiates the disciples of Christ differs from others in their willingness to love as God loves.

"Love your
enemies and
pray for
those who
persecute
you."



'Rise above it'; 'Don't lower yourself to their level'; 'Turn the other cheek'. It sounds like good advice, but of course it is not always easy.

Major historical figures such as Gandhi show what can be achieved by taking a path of non-violence. If you've ever seen the film Gandhi starring Ben Kingsley, there is a harrowing scene where his followers, during a non-violent protest, offer themselves up one by one to be beaten, never retaliating. It is a fairly dramatic example of 'turning the other cheek', but eventually this peaceful resistance paid off. Gandhi described non-violence as 'the greatest force at the disposal of mankind'.

Turning the other cheek is one thing, but do we have to go as far as actually loving our enemies? Jesus says we do. Moreover, we should pray for them. A familiar sounding piece of advice from Jesus, we can sometimes forget to check if it applies to us. When is the last time you actually prayed for someone who was giving you a hard time? It is one of the more difficult sayings of Jesus. But it is an ideal to strive for.

"No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background or his religion. People learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite". - Nelson Mandela

Triona Doherty

Today's Psalm
Psalm 102

Today's psalm corrects the popular but mistaken notion that the Old Testament was all about a stern God of strict justice. The Lord is compassion and love, slow to anger and rich in mercy. Not only does God have compassion but God is compassion. In other words, it is the nature of God to be always compassionate.

In the Sermon on the mount Jesus sets up the ideal of not returning one wrong for another but of overcoming injustices by the greater power of love. 'In this way you will be children of your Father in heaven.' Children inherit the features of the parent.

There are different stages in responding to a wrong that has been suffered. At the lowest level, the hurt cries out for revenge and personal retaliation. One step higher is to let the due process of law establish the terms of retribution. In this case justice is sought in equitable compensation or in the form of a punishment to fit the crime. While justice seeks to restore the moral order of right and wrong, there may be a deep residue of hurt feelings. What is needed is forgiveness, a Godlike attitude which can heal the inner hurt and restore the broken relationship.

Our psalm today invites us to thank God for the blessings of divine forgiveness for all your guilt ...everyone of your ills ...who crowns you with love and compassion. He does not treat us according to our sins, nor repay us for all our faults. The challenge is to be perfect just as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Fr. Silvester O'Flynn OFM Cap.

St. Mary's Catholic Church, Euxton - Tel: (01257) 262665

Mass Intentions for w/cSunday February 19 2023

Sun: 7th Sunday in Ordinary Time

8.30.am. Parishioners

10.30.am. Fr. Kevin Snape

Mon: No Mass Today

Tues: Weekday of Ordinary time

9.30.am: David Loughlin

Wed Ash Wednesday

9.30.am: **Church:** 7.00.pm: **Parish Hall**

World Peace: Private Intention

Thurs: Thursday after Ash Wednesday

9.30.00am: Turkey/Srya earthquake

7.00pm: Friday after Ash Wednesday Jc

Sun 1st Sunday of Lent

8.30.am. Parishioners

10.30.am. Private Intention

0771 942 7926 (only for emergency use)

Email: stmary.euxton@rcaol.org.uk

Confessions

At your request

On Admittance to Hospital or Nursing Home

Staff need to be made aware by you: that you, or the member of your family, or the person you accompany, are Catholic, and require the services of the Catholic Chaplaincy.

Stations of the Cross

Friday 6.40.pm.

In Church

We pray for the Sick, especially the sick of the parish including Ryan Troop;

Catherine Thompson; Maureen Beardsworth; JC; TThomas Halligan.

Our prayers and sympathies go to the family of Briget Catherine Rooney who died on the 12/2/2023 and will be buried here on 1/3 following a Requiem at 11.am. May she rest in peace

Sunday 19th February 2023 On this day we pray for those who have lost their job and who are worrying about how to support their families. We pray for the long term unemployed and for those suffering specific difficulties and barriers. We pray for those who are unhappy in their jobs and for those who feel under-employed and underpaid. It's human nature to think that life conforms to our plans. But it doesn't! If it did, we wouldn't be unemployed or under-employed to begin with. Once we free ourselves from the rigid path we think we should be on, we open ourselves to the new opportunities and roads that will present themselves. When this happens, we need to be willing and ready to say yes. Building a powerful movement to unlock poverty has never been more important. The cost of living crisis threatens to sweep millions into poverty. No one should have to face the choice between heating and eating. To prevent more people being swept deeper into poverty, it's vital that those of us affected have a say. Now more than ever, churches and communities need to stand together and uphold each other's dignity, agency and power.

On Church Action on Poverty Sunday, join with other churches across the UK in giving, action and prayer. Celebrate the transformational possibilities of people coming together to reclaim their dignity, agency and power. You Can make a donation at www.church-poverty.org.uk/give/

Cost of Living Crisis There will be some families who will have to choose between freezing or starving, and some may face both.' The Money Saving Expert website lists over 90 tips for how to cut back on spending and manage the cost of living.

Visit www.moneysavingexpert.com/family/cost-of-living-survival-kit/

'Ash Wednesday is the start of Lent when we are invited for forty days to set aside more time for prayer and fasting in preparation for Easter. The Ashes, made in the sign of the cross on our foreheads on this day, are an outward sign of our inward sorrow for our sins and of our commitment to Jesus as Our Lord and Saviour.'

"Don't be yourself - be someone a little nicer."

(Mignon McLaughlin)