

*Parishes of St Andrew's Cathedral
and Our Lady of Good Counsel*

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**Sundays 13 & 20 September 2020 -
24th & 25th Sundays of Ordinary time
Year of Matthew [A]**

Dear Friends and Parishioners,

We begin this Sunday a “*season of parables*” in the Gospel of Matthew. Over the next few Sundays, the stories Jesus tells will cut to the spiritual core. We will discover what makes a parable a parable, as we are invited into the “Kingdom” or “Reign” of God, here and now, through our hearing of them. Many of the parables were provocative to the ears and minds of their original hearers, and perhaps they are to ourselves today, at first hearing. They are often given by Jesus in response to a question, as in this Sunday’s Gospel, when Jesus tells a lengthy story about the implications of being forgiven, in answer to Peter’s query of *How many times?*

The parables proclaim powerfully the reign of God and invite their hearers into that reign, to shape their lives according to the divine plan revealed in Jesus. His healings, exorcisms, and table fellowship with the sinners and tax collectors are all illustrations of the teaching he gives through his parables. Let’s enjoy them and savour them as they are proclaimed in our midst, and take their implications away with us for the week ahead.

Absence from the parish

I hope to be able to have a few days away this coming week and I am very grateful to Monsignor Ken McCaffrey, Father Greg Murphy OP and Father Mark Cassidy who will celebrate the Masses in the parishes from Tuesday 15th until Friday 18th.

There will be no newsletter next Sunday.
Please retain this one for the Mass times etc.

If you or a loved one is in hospital, and you wish a priest to visit, please urge the **charge nurse** of the ward to ‘phone the **duty chaplain on 07821 624 124.**

**THIS WEEK
& NEXT WEEK**

Our Lady of Good Counsel

Sunday 13 September:

**Vigil Mass on Saturday at 5.30pm;
Morning Mass at 9.45am.**

Monday 14 September: Mass at 10am
Tuesday 15 September: **Mass at 12noon**
Wednesday 16 September: **Mass at 12noon**
Thursday 17 September: **Mass at 12noon**
Friday 18 September: **Mass at 12noon**
Saturday 19 September: **No Morning Mass**

Sunday 20 September:

**Vigil Mass on Saturday 5.30pm;
Morning Mass at 9.45am.**

Monday 21 September: Mass at 10am
Tuesday 22 September: Mass at 10am
Wednesday 23 September: Mass at 10am
Thursday 24 September: Mass at 10am
Friday 25 September: Mass at 10am
Saturday 26 September: **No Morning Mass**

Sunday 27 September

**Vigil Mass on Saturday 5.30pm;
Morning Mass at 9.45am.**

St Andrew's Cathedral:

Sunday 13 September:

**Vigil Mass on Saturday at 4pm;
Sunday Mass at 11am and 6pm.**

Monday 14 September: Mass at 1pm
Tuesday 15 September: Mass at 1pm
Wednesday 16 September: Mass at 1pm
Thursday 17 September: Mass at 1pm
Friday 18 September: Mass at 1pm
Saturday 19 September: Novena and Mass at 10am

Sunday 20 September:

**Vigil Mass on Saturday 19th at 4pm;
Sunday Mass at 11am and 6pm.**

Monday 21 September: **Mass at 11am**
Please note time

Tuesday 22 September: Mass at 1pm
Wednesday 23 September: Mass at 1pm
Thursday 24 September: Mass at 1pm
Friday 25 September: Mass at 1pm
Saturday 26 September: Novena and Mass at 10am

Sunday 27 September:

**Vigil Mass on Saturday 26th at 4pm;
Sunday Mass at 11am and 6pm.**

Sacrament of Reconciliation/Confession:

Please approach the priest before weekday Mass if you wish to have Confession.

I will celebrate the **Evening Prayer of the Church** for the 24th Sunday of the Year at 4pm in the Cathedral today. Vespers attached/enclosed if you’d like to share in it at home..



A Season of Parables

The physical, external life and the spiritual, inner life are not disconnected! Growth in both comes from making positive connections between various elements. As an example: in the physical life, once I make a connection between the facts that I feel tired, lethargic and bloated and that the reason for this is because my diet is not healthy enough and I don't take enough exercise, then I can begin to do something about the problem.

In the spiritual life, if I neglect the things of the soul – and forsake giving adequate time to God, give up participating in the Eucharist, be dilatory in attempting to grow in prayer, then, though it may not be evident immediately, if I neglect these things of grace, then God becomes more and more remote, distant, irrelevant, until of course the worst happens and I really **need** the spiritual life but find I no longer have the inner resources that I once did.

The Father is not a cold calculating God of our lives; he is rather that loving parent [*as all the parents reading this column are and strive to be*], wanting the best for us, giving us lives to **live** and not just **exist in**; offering us himself, not least through other people who “companion” [*break bread*] with us in life, and above all assuring us, most powerfully in the living, dying and rising of Jesus – present here mysteriously in the liturgy, that we are loved eternally; that though there may be a tension between sin and grace in this life, in the next, grace triumphs gloriously, and that we will be our destiny.



The **Book of Ecclesiasticus** is a very ancient “wisdom” book, which found its way into the Old Testament scriptures. It says as much about human beings and human nature as it does about the things of God. It advises that if we want to know God's mercy then we should not exact vengeance from those who sin against us.

[Take time to read this Sunday's First Reading again: Ecclesiasticus 27:30 – 28:7]

As we all know from our experience - sin is grievous.

Sin is always wrong. It is always bad. It always hurts someone.

But the incredible news is - while sin always hurts - its power to hurt **ends** when forgiveness is applied to it. We **have been** forgiven by God. Sin no longer has the power to harm our relationship with God to the point of death, it has been washed away, it has been nailed to the cross, it has been buried, never to rise again, and in place of it, new life has come forth, a life that we have only to reach out for in prayer in order to receive.

That is what God does for us.

- Instead of punishing us for our sin,

- Instead of keeping us at arm's length,

- Instead of turning his face away from us as we may deserve, **God turns to us.**

God turns to us, and in pain, and in tears, and finally in death itself, he forgives us and calls us - and empowers us - to live as ones who are able, like Jesus, are able to bring the word of life to those who are in darkness, the word of love to those are just spiritually perishing on account of their lack of it.

As the scripture teaches, God doesn't condone our sin, nor does he compromise his standards. He doesn't ignore our rebellion, nor does he relax his demands. Rather than dismiss our sin, he assumes our sin and, incredibly, he sentences himself to death on Calvary to show his love. And so, we are redeemed. Christ's cross, experienced now in the present moment by our communion in the Mass is redemption.

It is grace that God grips us with, so that we remain his very own people as we go through life. Sometimes - it is true - we give in to sin's power, even throwing away our birth right, but still, the Father looks on us with ownership and a love that can never be diluted.



After listening to Jesus speak to him and to the other disciples about how to treat a brother or sister who has sinned against them, Peter comes to Jesus and asks him "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?"

And Jesus gives his famous answer "I tell you not seven times, but seventy seven times".

And then Jesus tells a parable about how the Kingdom of heaven is comparable to a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants - and how one of these servants - even though he is forgiven a massive debt by his master - fails to be equally forgiving of a fellow servant who owes him only a small debt.

"You wicked servant" says the master to the one he had forgiven so much, "I cancelled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?" And in anger his master turned him over to the jailors, until he should pay back all he owed.

Serious food for thought, don't you think? Especially when you remember the "punch line" of the parable which Jesus solemnly delivers.

"This", says Jesus, "is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you each forgive your brother from your heart."

We could call this parable alarming or shocking, because most of us find it difficult to forgive. But, we can be reassured - If we are worried about being unable to forgive someone one time, let alone seventy seven times, there is something we can do about it.

And that *something* is this: surrender your judgement to God, and keep praying the prayer that Jesus taught, and pray it with deep earnestness. The *Our Father* is surely the perfection of prayer. When we rush through it as if it were just a list of words, then we surely do God no favours, and do ourselves no favours either. What begins as prayer, when said unthinkingly, unlovingly, untruly, ends up a nothing.

Pray the prayer of Christ and savour the grace of God of which our Psalm sings this Sunday:
The Lord is compassion and love, slow to anger and rich in mercy,

Sin is sin - and it does hurt -
and yet God removes it from us *as far as the east is from the west;*
he forgives us,
he has compassion on us, *like a father has for his children,*
like a mother has for her child.

If we are to become spiritually mature and not bland people, we indeed need to savour what this Psalm and the *Our Father* can mean for us. To become spiritually mature, you need think of how God has shown love for you, shown forgiveness to you,
even before you asked, even before you thought to ask.

Our salvation is not lost by one act of malice,
or even by a series of such acts.
It can only be lost

if we commit what the scriptures call the unforgivable sin, the sin against the Holy Spirit
the sin which we understand to be the denial of God and God's power, the denial of the truth of God,
that seeks to leaven our life.

The truth of God is that God is forgiving.

The power of God is the power to help us stand firm and to show that truth to others, by the love we give.



Keeping this Sunday holy with a Home Liturgy

A prayer to begin

O gracious God,
your mercy exceeds the longing of our hearts,
your compassion fills our memories with hope,
and our days with grace. Create in us a new heart,
formed in the image of your Son,
a heart strong enough to bear every wound,
and gentle enough to forgive each offence,
so the world may see how your people
love each other and remember how much
you love all that you have made. Amen.

A Penitential Litany

We are all in debt to the generosity of God's love, so
we seek his mercy for our faults, that we may more
worthily hear his word.

Sometimes our hearts are full of bitterness toward our
neighbour, **forgive us Lord.**

Sometimes we put off expressing forgiveness to each
other, **forgive us Lord.**

Sometimes we lack love, compassion and care
for those whom you send our way, **forgive us Lord.**

Read the Scriptures of the day

Book of Ecclesiasticus 27: 30 – 28: 7

Remember the covenant of the Most High.

Psalm 102:

*The Lord is compassion and love,
slow to anger and rich in mercy.*

Letter of St Paul to the Romans 14: 7 - 9

*The life and death of each of us has its influence on
others.*

The Gospel of Matthew 18: 21 - 35

How often must I forgive my brother if he wrongs me?

A reflection

*Take time to read the reflection on the middle
pages.*

Intercessions

Take time to voice your own prayers, and conclude
with the *Our Father*.

Thanksgiving

Lord, God of tenderness, we implore you:
do not treat us according to our faults,
nor repay us according to our sins,
but treat us always with the love you bear for your
Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns
for ever and ever. Amen.

Season of Creation – a Prayer of Pope Francis

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole
universe and in the smallest of your creatures.
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.
Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.
Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.
O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned
and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes.
Bring healing to our lives,
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,
that we may sow beauty,
not pollution and destruction.
Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognise that we are profoundly united
with every creature as we journey towards
your infinite light.
We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage
us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace.
Amen

Booking a place for Sunday Mass

For Mass at **St Andrew's Cathedral** search for
'Eventbrite, St Andrew's Cathedral, Dundee'.

For **Our Lady of Good Counsel** search for
'Eventbrite, Our Lady of Good Counsel, Broughty
Ferry'.

If you don't have internet access, 'phone the
dedicated Mass booking number on **07561 699557**.
Leave a message (the phone won't be answered) with
your **name, number, the Masses** you require seats for
and whether you would prefer **upstairs** or **downstairs**.

Follow the reflections and music on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/StAndrewsRCDundee/>

A Liturgy for Children is on the Facebook page for this
Sunday. Thanks to the Liturgy Team.

Our Prayers..... for those who have died recently:

Iain Graham, Ken Murphy, Patrick McGarvey;

those whose anniversaries fall at this time:

Christina Rackham, Elizabeth Chaplain, Helen Moore.
Jessie McGuire, Sylvia Robertson, Guilia Fugaccia, Winnie
Smith, Margaret McDade, Noreen Dunphy, Jessie McGuire,
Elizabeth McBride, Deacon Barry Heywood, Pauline
Adigun, Zenon Kwietkowski;

all those who are sick and in need of our intercession:

Joe Jackson, Tony Beck, Mel Caullay, Jackey-Forrest-
Moore, May Forbes, Catherine Gallacher, Baby Ben Welsh,
Bill Boland, Thinley Chodron, Margaret McHattie, Sharon
McInally, Natalia Lucka, Benedict Stephens, Gillian
Steedman, Steven Kennedy, Sharon Davison, Aubrey
McMullan, Sonya Rostan, Lily Jane Douglas, Alexander
McNeil, Bridie Mossey, Sheila McCallum, Marie Manunga,
Allison Matthew.

Cathedral 200 Club winners

1st: Ian Culross - £50 2nd: Barbara Lynch - £30
3rd: Anne McSweeney - £20.