

You will all have recognised today's passage from St Paul – we all have feelings about it, too. It may remind you of where you last heard it. Actually it may be the number one Bible passage which is stuck in people's memory as it is nearly always (even if vaguely) requested by Brides for weddings – not sure it is always mentioned at golden wedding celebrations, though?

The trouble is that we can read it, particularly at weddings, expecting something to force these feelings and temperaments on others (maybe on Bridegroom?). When we hear the passage we feel like we're being buttered, or honeyed, or sitting in a warm bath – its nice, but who is going to make it happen?

Let us not forget that we are in the middle of a letter St Paul is writing to the Christian Community in Corinth because they are going off the rails in some ways. It is, as we have seen, a stiff letter with a number of serious 'tellings off' involved. Does he suddenly have a poetic and 'lovely' period out of the blue? No, he is reminding them that what the community thinks is important and should be aimed at is nothing at all if it does not understand what love is and live it – the general community in Corinth values knowledge, power, wealth, self aggrandisement, etc!

But Paul is also reminding the Christian Community that they are different. That 'love' for them is the love which God has shown in creating and redeeming his people, and the love shown by his son Jesus, is something new and strong and not easy! They cannot lie on a beach and let love flow over them – they need to start to live it in the same way as Jesus did.

Paul is kind enough to speak of love from an attractive direction, but he is not afraid to mention what the absence of love looks like – and he is hinting (strongly) that he has heard and seen the negative aspects in Corinth! How direct and painful this would be for those who are hearing this passage read to them in Corinth – and not at a wedding!:

*Love is always patient and kind;
it is never **jealous**; love is never **boastful or conceited(!)**;
it is never **rude or selfish(!)**;
it does not **take offence, and is not resentful(!)**.
Love takes no **pleasure in other people's sins(!)**
but delights in the truth;
it is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope, and to endure whatever comes.*

It is as if Paul is accusing the people of Corinth that they know the 'Price of everything and the value of nothing'. What a great and worrying list of things that are not 'love' – it is as if Paul is defining love by sieving out the bad things in society – what you are left with is love. One of our definitions of Jesus is 'like us in all things: but sin' – when Jesus speaks of 'Love' it is always tough love, not gooey love.

This is why, for Paul, we must only define love, even our own experience of giving and taking it, by looking at the life of Jesus himself which we find in the Gospels. Ultimately Paul will speak of the Crucifixion –

Now that we have begun to recognise the real meaning of 'Love' it is worth reading the passage again – and imagine you are at a wedding! (This is where our Church's understanding of Marriage as a Sacrament begins)

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 16, 2020

“The experience of the pandemic has taught us that none of us is saved alone. We have experienced at first hand the vulnerability of the human condition that is ours and that makes us one family. We have come to see more clearly that each of our personal choices affects the lives of our neighbours, those next door and those in distant parts of the world. The turn of events has forced us to recognize that we belong to one another, as brothers and sisters dwelling in a common home. Having failed to show solidarity in wealth and in the sharing of resources, we have learned to experience solidarity in suffering.”

Pope Francis

MESSAGE TO THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE FORUM OF THE “EUROPEAN HOUSE-AMBROSETTI” SEPTEMBER 4-5, 2020

PARISH NOTICES:

Parish Quiz for CAFOD – *Please pass this on to other parishioners and encourage them*

Hi - Because we can't all gather together in person at the moment, we have decided it would be a great idea to have a Parish online quiz. This will take place on Sunday 13th September at 12 noon. We will be raising funds for Cafod - if you would like to play, please visit

<http://cafod.org.uk/celebration>

and search "online quiz". You will then see our fundraising page where it would be fantastic if you could make a donation to take part.

If you would like to take part, please also email me on deborahhelenwood@gmail.com. We will be hosting the quiz on Zoom. I will send you the Zoom link and details explaining how you access everything. For the best quiz experience, it would be great if you are able to access Zoom on one device and have another online device, e.g. mobile phone, to play along with on Kahoot. If not, please don't worry. If you can access Zoom, bring a pen and paper along and you can play along this way too.

If you have any questions at all, please just give me a call on 07883599511 or drop me an email.

Best wishes

Debbie Sumner

- **When you come to Mass:**

Despite getting used to physical distancing over the past three months returning to a familiar situation, like church, can make us forget we are still threatened by a virus that could kill vulnerable people. We have been asked to ensure Government and Church rules which might seem intrusive but they are designed to remind us to be careful and, above all, to keep distances. Please help us with this.

- Government guidelines demand that all the congregation (except those with exemption certificates) wear mouth and nose masks in church
- Please maintain a 2m distance as you approach and enter church and be guided by the stewards.
- Please note there is a 'one way' system – entering church by the left hand door.
- Please sanitise your hands as you enter church
- You will be invited to leave your name and contact detail for 'Track & Tracing' in case of need.
- If you wish to wear a face mask you may do this – but please bring your own.
- To minimise movement in church Stewards will direct you to fill the benches from the front. You will probably not be able to go in your 'usual' bench but that will give you a new perspective!
- Please remove your mask just before approaching for Holy Communion and then replace afterwards.
- You will receive instructions for coming forward for Holy Communion. But please respect distancing (don't bunch), move for Communion using the one-way system, please stretch out your arms fully as you request Holy Communion, you will not be invited to speak "Amen" before receiving Holy

Communion. These will need to be kept in mind at first and we do need to remember they, though not the best liturgy, are about distancing and staying well.

- Holy Communion must be received only on the hand. (No gloves, please)
- Please sanitise your hands as you leave church by the other door than the one you entered.
- As you leave church please move away from the door and remember to distance yourselves if you speak to other people.

- **10.09.2020 News from Victoria Hospital** : Yesterday Dr Jim Gardner provided the staff of the trust with his latest weekly update. He noted that there was only one patient in the hospital who had had a positive test result in the last 14 days, and that this was good news. However, the trust had reported 2 further deaths over the last week, and these were **not** due to statistical adjustments. Locally, the rate of infection is 17 per 100,000, which is above the national average, and represents a significant increase on the previous week's rate of 9 per 100,000. Mirroring the national picture, younger people in the population represent a major part of the increase in infections. Dr Gardner's concern is that in other countries where a similar pattern has been observed (e.g. France and Germany) this is followed by an increase in hospitalisations in 3-4 weeks' time. Please continue to keep all healthcare staff and volunteers in your prayers. *Fr Andrew Dawson, Catholic Chaplain*

- **Know any parishioners housebound or who may need contacting?** - At the start of this lockdown a number of parishioners offered to find a way of being help to those parishioners who are in need or just housebound. Many people are in contact with the parish through this email or the WhatsApp group, but you may think of some who are not getting parish contacts – but they may get family support and food. If you have suggestions please email their names and addresses to the parish address and we can get parishioners to drop a message in to them. Thanks.

- **Fleetwood Food Bank:** If you know of anyone you think has need of a parcel of food from the Food Bank please telephone 01253 774313 – they will need an address to have it delivered to.

- **Local COVID19 Helplines** *(Official message from our Parish Organisers)*
The Wyre Council have a dedicated helpline for COVID19 isolation support. If you are struggling to get essential items, or need help, please ring 01253 891000 and select OPTION 7 when prompted. Alternatively, if you have access to the internet, you can fill in the online request for help here: https://www.wyre.gov.uk/forms/form/257/en/coronavirus_isolation_support_form
There is also another local network being organised by the Methodist Church - called POULTONCAN. The helpline there is 01253 670800 between 8am and 10pm, 7 days a week.

We have a group of parish volunteers who are going to be working with the council to respond to requests. If anyone would like to offer help, please email Jenny at jennifer.hillman.sutcliffe@gmail.com or telephone on 07568502749.

- **Parish WhatsApp Group:** Emily Halliwell (as part of the above group) has set up a closed parish WhatsApp account. I have finally been beaten into joining but am a bit of a WhatsApp virgin as yet! Emily says: "My number is 07969643648 if you want to be added just reply with your mobile number or text me. "

Thoughts contributed by Virus Times' readers:

(A few responses from these Virus Times Reflections from our parishioners: Thanks to contributors.)

Tuesday: *Your piece on the family and us all being one body made me rethink my position in life. Sometimes we go around thinking "Gosh I'm very glad I don't have his life or her life" or "thank goodness I'm not addicted to drugs and all that goes with it " etc. when we see folk out on the streets of our towns and cities (which we still do even in these COVID times). It's difficult when we think of some people we really would not want to share the one body with in Christ and to accept that God loves us all the same - whatever our background. Food for thought.*

Sunday: *Gosh! He's a tough teacher!*

Thinking back, the forgiveness of the Prodigal Son is understandable, reading it as a parent, but the brother in the story had a similar dilemma in forgiving his father and his wayward sibling, as Peter had in today's reading. He often gets our sympathy.

I liked a quote I read in the paper this week relating to a long departed historical figure, something like, 'Praise his achievements and forgive his misdemeanours, he was human'. Thank God for forgiveness!

Sunday: Thank you, and thanks to Elaine for the Julian of Norwich quotes. Question - does anchorite come from the same source as anchor?

Belated comment re stewards. I am so grateful that they enable us to attend Mass. They tend to be mainly "background" people who have found the courage to be seen (perhaps the masks help?). I hope that you are going to treat them to a slap-up meal eventually.

Elaine Brownwood has been reading this prayerful work and she has offered to share some revelations with us:

"These extracts are taken from "Enfolded in Love" Daily Readings with Julian of Norwich, Published by Darton, Longman & Todd (1980). Translation by Members of the Julian Shrine, Norwich. Original thought to have been written in the late 14th century England."

DAY 4

The Motherhood of God

As truly as God is our father, so just as truly is he our mother. In our father, God Almighty, we have our being; in our merciful mother we are remade and restored. Our fragmented lives are knit together and made one. Through giving and yielding ourselves to the Holy Spirit we are made whole.

I, the strength and goodness of fatherhood; I, the wisdom of motherhood; I, the light and grace of holy love; I, the Trinity; I am the sovereign goodness in all things. It is I who teach you to love.

A mother may sometimes let her child fall and suffer in various ways, so that it may learn by its mistakes. But she will never allow any real harm to come to the child because of her love. When we fall, our mother holds us lovingly and graciously and swiftly raises us.

People being prayed for by our parish groups:

John O'Hagan who has died	John's requiem will be on the 22 nd September at St John's. COVID19 restrictions mean that only invited family and friends can attend – but others can join us at the grave after the Mass. The 9.30am Mass will be for John – others are welcome.
Alan	Could we pray for Judith Reeves' dad She says: <i>I wanted to drop you a short email to let you know that my Dad has been diagnosed with liver cancer. I wanted to thank everyone for their prayers and ask for their continued prayers as we move forwards. Dad was taken into hospital on Monday and is quite weak. The hope is that if he gets stronger we will be able to bring him home. He is yet to start the appropriate treatment and we will know more in the coming days.</i>
Jacinta's Nana Lyn	Poorly and asks for your prayers
A Lady in Intensive Care	The Parish WhatsApp Group ask for your prayers
The People of Beirut	
Various Older People we worry about	Whilst we are enjoying the promise of loosening lockdown we still have concerns for relations and friends who have signs of Covid-19 and who have been taken to Hospital. Please pray for these people – and for those we don't know as well.
From Jayne Clark	Could I please ask that our parishioners pray for all the staff in children's social care who are still working to safeguard children in our area and around the country. It never ceases to amaze me how hard they work generally, despite the abuse that they often are subjected to, but more so currently given the extra risk that they are putting themselves under to visit the vulnerable.

Maureen O'Connell & Family(Not Covid-19)	Mrs Donnelly's Mum
Paul Sharrock (Not Covid-19) (and family: Kathryn, Mary & Rachael)	<i>Is showing continued, but slow, progress. He is eating a proper diet and having a lot of physiotherapy – which he's not enjoying! Fr Peter</i>
Our Teachers	