

Mother Teresa's reluctance to talk about her painful childhood is understandable; her near-silence about her ancestors, especially on the mother's side, reflects how little she knew about them. She was annoyed when Malcolm Muggeridge wrote in 1971 that "she comes of peasant stock". She became more sensitive to remarks regarding her rustic roots as her fame grew, sometimes expressing her displeasure at the "misinterpretation". Asked by her friend and biographer Eileen Egan in 1986 if "her people had been mountain people", she had retorted: "no, they were not. As far as we can know, they were city people. They say that we were peasants, but that is not true."

Mother Teresa was right about her paternal relatives, who had lived for generations in the city of Prizren in Kosovo. On her mother's side, however, her ancestors were of peasant origin. They were originally from Mirdita in Albania, arriving in Kosovo in search of a better life around the middle of the nineteenth century, an example of Albanian internal migration traceable since Illyrian antiquity. Cases of forced evictions of Albanians from their lands were recorded throughout the Ottoman rule, sometimes carried out with the help of the Albanians' Slavic neighbours. A significant number of the people driven out were relocated in neighbouring Albanian territories, including regions in present-day Albania like Puka, Tropoja and Mirdita. This is one of the reasons why family connections between the populations of these regions with Kosovo, especially its southwestern part, Dukagjin, were maintained for centuries. The ancient connection explains why the Bardhis, Mother Teresa's maternal ancestors, moved to Gjakova, which is part of the Dukagjin region of Kosovo. I have traced their involvement in the blood feud phenomenon: at least three members of the family, including Mother Teresa's grandfather, lost their lives for vendetta-related reasons. In the wake of her husband's death, Mother Teresa's grandmother Drane and her two young children - her daughter Roza (Mother Teresa's mother) and Mark (her uncle) - left the region of Gjakova and relocated in Skopje. Once they arrived there, Drane changed the family name and never mentioned her husband to the two little children. Mother Teresa grew up never hearing anything about her maternal grandfather or other paternal relatives. The only people she knew on her mother's side were Mark and his family, all of whom except her grandmother Drane and cousin Filomena perished during the pandemic.

In the lives of the saints, as in the lives of all celebrity-heroes, what the protagonists would prefer not to be known about them - and what they themselves are unaware of - is sometimes the key to understanding what drove them to achieve remarkable things.



# Our Lady of Victories

Market Harborough

23rd August 2020  
Week 21 of Ordinary Time  
Psalter Week 1

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Parish Pastoral Council Members: see photos on notice board

Diocese of Nottingham: Company Number 7151646 Charity Number: 1134449  
Registered Address: Wilson House, 25 Derby Road, Nottingham, NG1 5AW

## Times of Services

### Sunday: 21st of Ordinary Time

Saturday: 6.00pm - Marian Kwacz R.I.P. (13th Anniv.)

**N.B.** 9.00am Mass - The Parishioners

**N.B.** 11.00am Mass - Peter Cockrell R.I.P. (F.M.)

### Monday: St Bartholomew, Apostle

Private Mass - Sr Gemma Kenny (Platinum Anniv.)

### Tuesday: Feria

Private Mass - Betty Atkins R.I.P. (1st Anniv.)

### Wednesday: Feria

Private Mass - Mary, Raymond, Ray (Jr) Cunningham R.I.P.

### Thursday: St Monica

Private Mass - Margaret Lunn R.I.P.

### Friday: St Augustine

Private Mass - Sr Margaret Finnegan - Diamond Jubilee

### Saturday: St The Passion of St John the Baptist

Private Mass: Personal Intention

11.00am - Sacrament of Reconciliation - CONFESSION

6.00pm: First Mass of Sunday August 30th - George Boyko R.I.P.

### Sunday: 22nd of Ordinary Time

**N.B.** 9.00am: Mass - The Parishioners

**N.B.** 11.00am: Mass - Bill Brown R.I.P.



*You are Peter,  
and I will give you  
the keys of the  
Kingdom of  
Heaven.*

**PLEASE NOTE: YOU MUST PRE BOOK FOR OUR WEEKEND MASSES:**

### **TO PRE BOOK TO COME TO MASS:**

You can only make your booking on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings between 5pm and 7pm.

TO BOOK TO COME TO THE 6PM MASS, please ring Angela Wade on 01858 462293.

TO BOOK TO COME TO THE 9AM MASS, please ring Jo Shellard on 01858 440983.

TO BOOK TO COME TO THE 11AM MASS, please ring Stephen McGlone on 01858 465939.

**BOOK NOW**

**FOR INFORMATION:** Because of the second Lockdown in Leicester City, as of yet, very few parishes have been able to open their Churches in Leicestershire as a city and county. However I do believe that some few churches are now beginning first steps to re-open, which we have been able to do and implement for almost 5 weeks ago now. To give you some idea of what is actually happening re. attendance here, last weekend at the Vigil Mass at 6pm on Saturday evening 54 parishioners had pre-booked - 52 came. For the 9am Mass on Sunday morning 37 had pre-booked - 34 came. For the 11am Mass, 55 had booked - 52 came. It is so very important that all attending to come must pre-book. Our maximum space, adhering to social distancing is 57. The attendance so far is very encouraging indeed. Understandably, people are cautious and being sensible and careful. Our team of stewards are absolutely amazing, and without them we could not, and would not be able to celebrate Mass as we are doing. So in short - so far, so good, all going well in keeping with the conditions and regulations in place for the safety of all of us.



**AS YET NO NEWS AND NO MOVEMENT** on being allowed to open our parish rooms for the many activities that were in situ before Lockdown. Not only is this going to cause great anxiety and difficulty for the many who were using our ancillary rooms before Lockdown, but it is also a big drop and loss in financial income to our parish funds. Again in short - we wait and see and hope and pray, but above all must be, the safety and wellbeing of all. More on this when any glimpse of hope is available to us. For your further information, it is important for you to know that the government has a department/committee dealing with church matters among the many others. The church can only act when that government department gives the step by step go ahead to the church. Churches authorities must legally and morally comply with the step by step release that are granted to them.



**REPLACING THE CHURCH LIGHTING SYSTEM:** Work is well advanced at this point in time. Possibly another 2 full weeks before everything will be completely finished. When it is completed, in addition to our weekend Masses the possibility of some weekday Masses, will be considered. More on this when the time is right. Hopefully it will be possible.



**CONGRATULATIONS AND VERY BEST WISHES** to Helen McEvoy and Kai Ross Page, being married here this coming Saturday. May you be blessed with happiness, joy and fulfilment for many, many, many, years to come.

**PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION:** I recommend that you pray this prayer every morning. **A "Spiritual Communion" encouraged when we are unable to receive Holy Communion Sacramentally. This prayer was composed by St Alphonsus Liguori:** *My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since this moment I cannot receive you sacramentally, I embrace you as being already there and unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.*

### **OUR MASS READINGS FOR THIS WEEKEND:**

**Our first reading** from the Old Testament is from the prophet Isaiah, Ch 22: 19-23. We read about one man being dismissed from high office, and the keys of authority are passed to another. The New Testament applies this text to Jesus.

**Our second reading** is from the New Testament from the letter of St Paul to the Romans, Ch 11: 33-36. This is a hymn of praise to the wisdom of God, which is far too deep for us to fathom.

**Our Gospel reading is** from Matthew's Gospel, Ch 16: 13-20. This contains Peter's declaration of faith in Jesus, and Jesus's promise to make him the Rock on which he will build his church.

**This week's Feast days: Monday 24th:** St Bartholomew, one of the 12 apostles chosen by Jesus himself. **Thursday 27th:** St Monica, Mother of St Augustine, 4th cent.

**Friday 28th:** St Augustine 4th cent. - from being a great sinner by God's grace, and the prayers of his mother, became a great Saint.

### **THE ROOTS OF A SAINT** - an article in "The Tablet" by Gerzin Alphon.

You may recall last weeks newsletter and part of the above titled article I printed in it about Mothers Teresa of Calcutta and her relationship with her father. Mother Teresa seldom spoke of her father who died a painful death, believed to have been poisoned in 1919. This week's inclusion is a continuation of last weeks....

Mother Teresa did not see Filomena again for 41 years, when she met in 1969 in Melbourne, where Filomena had been living with her family since 1952. After that, the two cousins stayed in touch until Filomena's death in 1979. Filomena's children and grandchildren shares with me during two visits to Australia in 2011 and 2013 what she had told them about her life with her beloved cousin Gonxhe in Skopje. Filomena's recollections, even at second hand, fill several gaps in the story of Mother Teresa's childhood and teenage years. They are especially important in understanding the impact of bereavement on her calling.

Mother Teresa lost her maternal grandmother Drane in 1922. In less than three years she had lost nine people very dear to her. It was in this same year she received what she called the "first call" from God. It was at this time of grief and loss that Mother Teresa grew increasingly attached to Jesus, and it is not unreasonable to speculate that he became an omniscient surrogate paternal authority to her. The mourning may also have triggered a lifelong "dark night of the soul". Her decision to become a missionary and the choice of India as a destination were motivated by the desire to serve Jesus by assisting "the poorest of the poor". This life-changing decision was by her own admission undertaken primarily "for the sake of her soul".

The depth of Mother Teresa's spiritual darkness was revealed when *Mother Teresa: Come Be My Light: The revealing private writings of the Saint of Calcutta* was published in 2007. These very personal diaries and letters suggest that the seeds of her lifelong spiritual aridity were sown during the formative years in Skopje. Mother Teresa would talk about her dark night of the soul only to her spiritual advisor's; as her public profile grew she became increasingly unwilling to discuss it.