



Our Lady of Victories

Market Harborough

28th June 2020
Week 13 of Ordinary Time
Psalter Week 1

PLEASE READ THIS WITHOUT SHOCK OR HORROR OR RAGE. WHEN YOU HAVE READ IT FROM TOP TO BOTTOM, PLEASE READ IT FROM BOTTOM TO TOP. Only in that way will it make sense.

(Written by Brian Bilston)

*They have no need of our help.
So do not tell me,
these haggard faces could belong to you or me.
Should life have dealt a different hand.
We need to see them for what they are,
Chancers and scroungers
With bombs up their sleeves.
Cut throats and thieves.
They are not
Welcome here.
We should make them
Go back to where they came from.
They cannot
Share our food,
Share our homes,
Share our counties.
Instead let us
Build a wall to keep them out.
It is not OK to say
These people are like us.
A place should only belong to those who are born there.
Do not be stupid to think that
The world can be looked at another way.
NOW READ FROM BOTTOM TO TOP*

THE FOLLOWING PRAYER was found on the body of a soldier, killed in action during World War One

***Look, God, I've never spoken to you before, but now I just want to say "hello".
They told me you didn't exist, And like a fool I believed them***

***Last night I looked up at the sky from a small hole when I saw the beauty of the stars,
and thought how big the Universe is. Then I knew they were telling me a lie.***

I wonder if you would shake hands with me when we meet. Somehow I feel you would understand my failures.

Strange how I had to come to this horrible place to get to know you. What was I doing before this!.

***There isn't much more to say, but I'm sure glad I got to know you this day,
I feel the zero hour will soon be here.
This is going to be a horrible fight. Who knows, but I might come to your house to-night.***

***I'm crying! Fancy me crying! I never thought this could happen to me.
I have to go now. Strange since I met you, I'm no longer afraid to die.***

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Although to-day is the 13th. Sunday in Ordinary Time, our Liturgy to-day celebrates the feast of Saints Peter and Paul, those 2 great Apostles of the infant Church. As with a number of the solemn feast days that used to have their own particular date for observance, for example Peter and Paul, always on June 29th, and was always a Holy Day of Obligation, the celebration of the feast is now moved to the nearest Sunday to give people a greater opportunity in ordinary circumstances, to make the feast more meaningful through their presence and their celebration of the lovely liturgy of the feast. In my view it was a very wise and understanding move to do so, but of course not everybody would agree. When the feast day was celebrated on a week day, the Church expected everybody to attend. That of course is now impossible for many, because of their work situations. No employer will give people time off to attend a Church service on a Holy Day. It is very hard to expect somebody who has been a work all day, perhaps having to drive a long distance to and from work, maybe stuck in a traffic jam on the motorway or elsewhere, by the time they might get home, to expect them to go to Mass. A more understanding and compassionate view has been taken, and hopefully is being appreciated by the many.

June 29th. has a very special memory for me. It was on June 29th. 1986 that my brother Joe, the father of 7 little children, died suddenly of a heart attack. The eldest was only 12, the youngest one year and a half. It was a day I will never forget, the saddest day of my life. Joe was an outstanding Dad, a hard working farmer, a devoted brother. Breda, his wife undertook, with the support of her brother, the complete responsibility of caring and rearing the family. And what an outstanding family they are, each and every one of them have done remarkably well. They are a real credit to their mother, and I know will always be. Some of them have happily married and now have their own children. You will recall their presence at my Golden Jubilee. I am blessed, as you know, to have 3 sisters and their families, but my greatest blessing is to have Breda, who is like a sister to me, and her family, each and all, whom I love to bits – bless them.

All of you will have heard the Prime Minister say on Tuesday, that places of worship can open on July 4th. This was quickly followed by an email from our Bishop stating that as we were not yet informed of regulations and conditions attached, no church in the Diocese could, or should open until we were fully informed of what was, and will be required for the safety of all. On Wednesday morning, an email arrived from the Bishop's conference of England and Wales, under the name and authorisation of Cardinal Nichols, saying more or less the same as Bishop Patrick, but with the following few words of hope, joy and affirmation.

Continued overleaf.....

I quote:

“The past few months have been a time of fashioning new patterns of prayer, new ways of exploring and enriching our faith and vigorous ways of reaching out to those in need. We can build on these, forgetting nothing of the graces we have been given. Yet now, with the experiencing of opening our churches for individual prayer already gained, this return to more normal patterns of worship will be of great importance to all Catholics.

“This time of our ‘Eucharist fast’ has made our hearts grow in longing for that moment when we can come together and receive again the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist. That moment is now very near and for that we thank God”

So at this point in time, it is a waiting game to hear what we must do, how it must be done and when we can truly begin to celebrate Mass in Church again. I believe that any serious transgression or violation of Government regulations, can result in an up to 2 years in prison. (I don't fancy 2 years in Gartree or any other prison!!!!!!!)

As we opened the Church for private prayer under the required conditions and regulations last Sunday, there was a trickle of Parishioners during the opening times of 10a.m. to 12 noon. On Wednesday there were more. This Newsletter will be on your website by Friday, so at this time of preparation, I cannot comment on Friday attendance.

No word yet from the Electricians re. a start date for the renewal of the lighting system in the Church. You will be informed as soon as we are contacted. We do know that the Electricians are keen to start as soon as possible, so fingers crossed and high hopes it will be before long. As previously reported, there will be some disruption during the week days, but we have been assured that the Church will be available to us at week ends.

YES ON TRACK! Having spoken to the Bishop, my plans for retirement in mid September are still on track. Obviously I hope by then that Church life and practice will be back to some kind of normality. Whilst I will be very sad leaving the parish, I do know that this is now the right time for me. I have a very comfortable, furnished apartment awaiting me in Lutterworth. As I have previously written, the property is the now redundant Presbytery attached to the Church in Lutterworth, which by the way, is approx. 100 yards from Morrison's Supermarket and also Waitrose. When the late Fr. John Feeley, who was Parish Priest in Lutterworth for countless years, died some 7 years ago, it was obvious that the Presbytery needed some updating etc. Lutterworth parish was linked to Narborough, with the Priest from Narborough becoming Parish Priest of Lutterworth as well as his own Parish of Narborough. The Diocese decided on a complete overhaul and restoration of the old Presbytery, and I must say that the end product is everything you could wish and hope for. Over the past 5 years or so, the Presbytery was lived in from time to time, by Priests wanting a few quiet days to themselves or by Priests recovering after illnesses of one kind or another. Again as you will know, my Priest friend, Fr. John Joe Maloney, who retired last September, is living in the ground floor part of the Presbytery. I will have the entire upstairs floor which has a comfortable sitting room, 2 bedrooms and the bath room. The spare bed room will be ideal for any family members of Fr. John Joe, or from my side, to stay in when they come to visit us. We will have a shared kitchen, which is a fine size, fitted with all mod cons. As both of us can, and will cook simple but nourishing meals, we will never go hungry. And of course, there are a few golf courses within

drive from the Presbytery. And most blessed of all, the Presbytery is attached to the Church, which is absolutely ideal for us for daily Mass. We will have no Parish responsibilities whatsoever in the parish, but I will be quite willing to help out at week ends in parishes, when requested to do so. Finally I do know that the Bishop is “working on the Clergy moves” that normally take place in September, so I would expect that my successor would be named within the next few weeks. Whoever he is going to be, he will be one very lucky priest, and if he will be as happy and fulfilled as I have been here over the past 19 years, he will indeed be a blessed and grateful priest for the sheer joy, support, commitment and encouragement that he will receive, and share with this wonderful parish. I will always have such treasured memories of a very special parish and parishioners. I will be forever grateful to God, and to Bishop Malcolm McMahon, who was then our Bishop, for appointing me to this parish. It goes without saying that **my greatest joy**, or perhaps my two greatest joys were, the night our reformed Church was opened and consecrated, and the second, being the time when I was able to tell you, that we had cleared the debt on the Church. The seemingly impossible had become possible on both occasions. What a joy, what a relief.

My lowest moment in the parish was when we were about 4 months into the work on the Church, the 4 walls had disappeared, the roof was held up with scaffolding and all that stood there was an absolute wreck. I did take a bit of stick at the time from a few parishioners who said “I had raped the Church”. I sent for a priest friend of mine, now dead, God rest his soul. He came to see me. We stood together on the floor of the Church without walls, with scaffolding and rubble all over the place, with no semblance of Church or vision as to how it might look in the future. I said to him then “I think I will ask to see the Bishop with a view to a move, before they run me out of town”. I have never forgotten, nor never will, what he said to me : “Owen he said, hang in there. People may criticise you for what you are doing, but they will never criticise you, or can never criticise you for something of beauty, which I know this Church will eventually be”. I hung on to those words of encouragement in hope. How prophetic and true they were then, and are now in reality. And to their credit, some of those who criticised me, came back when the Church was opened, saying they were sorry for their criticism, but had no idea at the time of what the finished product might look like.

MASS INTS. THIS WEEK (in no particular order). *The Parishioners; Joe O'Neill R.I.P. : (34th. anniv.). For the healing of the nation; Sheila Fahy .R.I.P. ; wellbeing of Sr. Scholastica; Mary Cunliffe R.I.P. (anniv. on June 26th); Personal int.*

LACY “Leicestershire Active Catholic Youth” will be holding their next on line by **Zoom** meeting on Wednesday 1st July at 7.30 p.m. A warm invitation is extended to anyone interested in helping us put together new ideas to share “Faith and Fun” with our young people. Our recent “Via Lucis” Stations of the Resurrection, held on the feast of Pentecost, via Zoom, was well supported and as our meeting is also on line this may be an opportunity for you to share some time with us! **The ID is 753 4350 3073** and the password is **2j2bGp**. We look forward to seeing You! More information if required from paulinepayne@hotmail.com.

MAGGIE'S FACE MASKS: Maggie's Face Masks will no longer be on sale outside the Catholic Club. However Maggie still has a small supply at her home. Should you wish to order one please ring Maggie on 01858 - 461909