

THE YEAR OF SAINT MARK EATING WITH THE BRIDEGROOM

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT – YEAR B

LOOKING FOR THE ONE YOU DO NOT KNOW

SUNDAY 13 DECEMBER 2020

One of the best ways to come to know Jesus, is through John, who is a prophet. If you are seriously looking for 'the One True Light', a full awareness of what is real and a genuine illumination into Sacred Things, there is only One who can do this, and His name is Jesus. John, the one who isn't the true light who enlightens everything, cannot produce that much wattage. Even though Jesus called him 'a burning and shining lamp', His greater light makes John a mere reflection - like us. One who prepares others to meet Him.

John is sent by God, but those who have come to interrogate him are from the authorities in Jerusalem. They want to know who he is, but all John will tell them is who he is not. Irked, they offer to help by supplying identities, but John refuses them. They cannot return to Jerusalem empty handed or with a list of what John is not, so they almost plead for an answer. John answers by hinting again that they are looking in the wrong place. Now, these have been sent by the Pharisees, so they have one last pop at the question. They are curious about John's activity of baptising. That would be okay if he were a prophet or a messiah. But even here, John sidesteps them. If they want to know who he is they will only find the answer in the one who is coming, who stands amongst them unknown. The interview is over. They have to start looking in the right place.

Here is a great little story which explores this theme. The theme is clear. In the woods surrounding a monastery, a Rabbi lived in a small hut. Sometimes, the Monks would see the Rabbi walking in the woods and would wonder why he was there.

The Abbot was very distressed as the monastery was in terminal decline. He has prayed and pondered over the situation. He had admonished the mood and behaviour of the monks. All to no avail. One day he saw the Rabbi walking in the woods and decided to ask his advice. He walked up behind the Rabbi. The Rabbi turned, and when the Abbot and the Rabbi looked into each other's eyes, they began to weep. The sorrow of the situation affected them both deeply. The Abbot knew he did not have to explain the decline of the monastery. He just asked, "Can you give me some wise words to help our community thrive again?" The Rabbi said, "One of you is the Messiah". Then he turned and continued to walk in the woods. The Abbot returned to the monastery and the Monks asked him, "What did the Rabbi say?"

"One of us is the Messiah," the Abbot said the words slowly, almost in disbelief.

The Monks began talking to one another. "One of us? Which one? Is it brother John? Or perhaps brother Andrew? Could it even be the Abbot?

From that day, things started changing at the monastery. The Monks began to look for the Messiah in each other and to listen to each other for the Messiah's voice. Soon, new younger Monks joined them and people started coming back to the monastery for spiritual leadership.

In 'The Gift' Poems by the Great Sufi Master', the poet Hafiz wrote on the same theme.

How
Do I
Listen to others?

As if everyone were my Teacher.

Speaking to me
Their Cherished Last Words.





ENCYCLICAL LETTER
FRATELLI TUTTI
OF THE HOLY FATHER
FRANCIS
ON FRATERNITY AND SOCIAL FRIENDSHIP

Insufficiently universal human rights

22. It frequently becomes clear that, in practice, human rights are not equal for all. Respect for those rights "is the preliminary condition for a country's social and economic development. When the dignity of the human person is respected, and his or her rights recognized and guaranteed, creativity and interdependence thrive, and the creativity of the human personality is released through actions that further the common good".[\[18\]](#) Yet, "by closely observing our contemporary societies, we see numerous contradictions that lead us to wonder whether the equal dignity of all human beings, solemnly proclaimed seventy years ago, is truly recognized, respected, protected and promoted in every situation. In today's world, many forms of injustice persist, fed by reductive anthropological visions and by a profit-based economic model that does not hesitate to exploit, discard and even kill human beings. While one part of humanity lives in opulence, another part sees its own dignity denied, scorned or trampled upon, and its fundamental rights discarded or violated".[\[19\]](#) What does this tell us about the equality of rights grounded in innate human dignity?

23. Similarly, the organization of societies worldwide is still far from reflecting clearly that women possess the same dignity and identical rights as men. We say one thing with words, but our decisions and reality tell another story. Indeed, "doubly poor are those women who endure situations of exclusion, mistreatment and violence, since they are frequently less able to defend their rights".[\[20\]](#)

24. We should also recognize that "even though the international community has adopted numerous agreements aimed at ending slavery in all its forms, and has launched various strategies to combat this phenomenon, millions of people today – children, women and men of all ages – are deprived of freedom and forced to live in conditions akin to slavery... Today, as in the past, slavery is rooted in a notion of the human person that allows him or her to be treated as an object... Whether by coercion, or deception, or by physical or psychological duress, human persons created in the image and likeness of God are deprived of their freedom, sold and reduced to being the property of others. They are treated as means to an end... [Criminal networks] are skilled in using modern means of communication as a way of luring young men and women in various parts of the world".[\[21\]](#) A perversion that exceeds all limits when it subjugates women and then forces them to abort. An abomination that goes to the length of kidnapping persons for the sake of selling their organs. Trafficking in persons and other contemporary forms of enslavement are a worldwide problem that needs to be taken seriously by humanity as a whole: "since criminal organizations employ global networks to achieve their goals, efforts to eliminate this phenomenon also demand a common and, indeed, a global effort on the part of various sectors of society".[\[22\]](#)

Conflict and fear

25. War, terrorist attacks, racial or religious persecution, and many other affronts to human dignity are judged differently, depending on how convenient it proves for certain, primarily economic, interests. What is true as long as it is convenient for someone in power stops being true once it becomes inconvenient. These situations of violence, sad to say, "have become so common as to constitute a real 'third world war' fought piecemeal".[\[23\]](#)

26. This should not be surprising, if we realize that we no longer have common horizons that unite us; indeed, the first victim of every war is "the human family's innate vocation to fraternity". As a result, "every threatening situation breeds mistrust and leads people to withdraw into their own safety zone".[\[24\]](#) Our world is trapped in a strange contradiction: we believe that we can "ensure stability and peace through a false sense of security sustained by a mentality of fear and mistrust".[\[25\]](#)

27. Paradoxically, we have certain ancestral fears that technological development has not succeeded in eliminating; indeed, those fears have been able to hide and spread behind new technologies. Today too, outside the ancient town walls lies the abyss, the territory of the unknown, the wilderness. Whatever comes from there cannot be trusted, for it is unknown, unfamiliar, not part of the village. It is the territory of the "barbarian", from whom we must defend ourselves at all costs. As a result, new walls are erected for self-preservation, the outside world ceases to exist and leaves only "my" world, to the point that others, no longer considered human beings possessed of an inalienable dignity, become only "them". Once more, we encounter "the temptation to build a culture of walls, to raise walls, walls in the heart, walls on the land, in order to prevent this encounter with other cultures, with other people. And those who raise walls will end up as slaves within the very walls they have built. They are left without horizons, for they lack this interchange with others".[\[26\]](#)

28. The loneliness, fear and insecurity experienced by those who feel abandoned by the system creates a fertile terrain for various "mafias". They flourish because they claim to be defenders of the forgotten, often by providing various forms of assistance even as they pursue their criminal interests. There also exists a typically "mafioso" pedagogy that, by appealing to a false communitarian mystique, creates bonds of dependency and fealty from which it is very difficult to break free.

[18] *Address to the Civil Authorities*, Tirana, Albania (21 September 2014): AAS 106 (2014), 773.

[19] *Message to Participants in the International Conference "Human Rights in the Contemporary World: Achievements, Omissions, Negations"* (10 December 2018): L'Osservatore Romano, 10-11 December 2018, p. 8.

[20] Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (24 November 2013), 212: AAS 105 (2013), 1108.

[21] *Message for the 2015 World Day of Peace* (8 December 2014), 3-4: AAS 107 (2015), 69-71.

[22] *Ibid.*, 5: AAS 107 (2015), 72.

[23] *Message for the 2016 World Day of Peace* (8 December 2015), 2: AAS 108 (2016), 49.

[24] *Message for the 2020 World Day of Peace* (8 December 2019), 1: L'Osservatore Romano, 13 December 2019, p. 8.

[25] *Address on Nuclear Weapons*, Nagasaki, Japan (24 November 2019): L'Osservatore Romano, 25-26 November 2019, p. 6.

[26] *Dialogue with Students and Teachers of the San Carlo College in Milan*: L'Osservatore Romano, 8-9 April 2019, p. 6.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE REPOSE OF THE SOULS OF:



JENNY BASHFORD, RIP who died on Saturday 28 November, 2020. Jenny's Requiem Mass will be at St Joseph & St Margaret Clitherow Church on **Tuesday 15 December 2020** at 12.30pm, 2.30pm EHP Crematorium.

ANGELINA EDIALE, RIP who died on Wednesday 4 November, 2020. Angelina's Requiem Mass will be at St Joseph & St Margaret Clitherow Church on **Friday 15 January 2021** at 11.30am, Internment 1.30pm EHP Cemetery.

Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her.

WE ARE NOW OFFICIALLY LIVE!

All Masses and Exposition, weekday and weekend, are now streamed live; please see page 4 of the newsletter for Mass times.

MASS TIME CHANGE – FRIDAY MORNING MASS WILL NOW BE AT 9.00am EVERY WEEK.

To Watch Live, head over to our website: www.bracknellcatholicchurch.org/watch-live

TUNE IN TO AFTERNOON CONTEMPLATIVE TALKS - James Finley's "Following the Mystics Through the Narrow Gate", 6 more sessions, will be broadcast via our website and Church Services TV, giving an opportunity to listen and learn. Join these insightful sessions at 1pm on **Tuesdays**

22 December, 5, 12, 19, 26 January and 2 February. They'll be recorded and saved for later listening via the church website (on <https://www.bracknellcatholicchurch.org/watch-live>) too.

UPDATE ON THE WINTER MEAL DELIVERY APPEAL

A very big thank you to our wonderful community for responding so quickly and generously to this appeal. We now have enough drivers and cooks to begin delivering home cooked meals in the new year. We're so very grateful to all of you who have offered your time and talents as we simply could not do this without you. God Bless and let's pray for all those who find themselves suffering in such difficult circumstances.



JOIN US for the new **FAITH FORMATION GROUP** meeting, weekly online **Thursday evenings 7:30pm-9pm**. Reflection and discussion on the Sunday readings, to better understand how scripture calls us to a continuing, deepening, development of our faith, and what it means to be Catholic in our contemporary world in these times. For the zoom link please email [Mary McNab bracknellpa@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:Mary.McNab@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk).

GIVE A GIFT CHRISTMAS APPEAL – We have been deeply moved by everyone's generosity which has enabled us to provide gifts for the mums and children at BWA Women's Refuges, Bracknell LIFE House, local Care Homes, vulnerable parishioners, individuals and families in need in the wider Bracknell community known to the SVP. Thank you and God Bless.



POPE FRANCIS' ENCYCLICAL LETTER – 'FRATTELI TUTTI'

Pope Francis' third encyclical inspired by the life and example of St. Francis of Assisi, completed during this pandemic and speaks to the possibility that, through it, we may rediscover a sense of common humanity, we are serialising the whole letter. This week: '*Insufficiently Universal Human Rights*' and '*Conflict & Fear*'. To read and reflect upon the Holy Father's thinking and teaching on issues of global governance, charity, compassion, justice, inter-religious dialogue, friendship and peace.



THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD and OCTAVE

Limited Attendance Mass times are as follows:

Thursday 24 December: 5.00pm "Vigil Mass" - 8.00pm "Mass During the Night"

Friday 25 December: 8.30am "Dawn Mass" - 10.30am "Mass During the Day"

Saturday 26 December: 10.00am (no private prayer hour)

Sunday 27 December: 10.30am

Monday 28 December to Saturday 2 January 2021: 10.00am each day (no private prayer hour)

Sunday 3 January 2021: 10.30am



PASTORAL CARE - Are you lonely? Are you shielding? Are you ill and in need of prayer and/or support? Perhaps you haven't had contact with the Catholic Church for a while. Whatever the reason, please get in touch for a chat by emailing pastoralcare@bracknellcatholicchurch.org or by calling **07394 440 938** (Pastoral Care team mobile)

"Let us care for one another and let us be loving custodians of creation." Pope Francis



SOCIETY OF ST VINCENT de PAUL - Do you need help, particularly, as a result of the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic? The local Society of St Vincent de Paul (SVP) may be able to provide some assistance, as we have access to limited additional hardship funds from a variety of sources, including the generosity of local parishioners. Please contact **IN CONFIDENCE** the local SVP on 07731 862 349

WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN OUR PARISH COMMUNITY WHO ARE SICK, HOUSEBOUND OR IN HOSPITAL AND FOR THOSE WHO CARE FOR THEM

Brenda Theobald, Olga Maguire, Ena Stanton, Inge Walker, Eddie Moore, Peggy Pendergast, Ann Newton, Joyce Newland, Bridie Maughan, Josephine Timms, Freda Edgington, Anne Hardy, Patricia Holmwood, Evie & Ruby Shallom, Blanche Shap, Mike Garnham, Ethna Sweeney, Mary King, Mary Phelan, Tony Andrews, Derek Alexander, Margaret Clark, Shaun Howard, Sally Torode, Dorcas Innes-Grant, Veronika Jastrzebski, Jerry Tobin, Rico Morales, Reynalita Leysan, Donal Hanley, Jim and Frances McEvoy, Mary Murray, Thelma Briggs, Margaret Pearce, Audrey Lam, Pam Savage, Marie Swash, Terri Landmann, Jennie Tucker, Vilma Taborda, Zac Hoy, Terry and Mary Brennan, Brenda Lynch, Amanda Killestein, Doreen Pryor, Sharon Bryan, Fr John Chadwick, John Cliffe, Fr Padraig Faughnan

To add a name to this list with consent, or if you want a name removed, please contact the Parish Office.

PARISH OF ST JOSEPH and ST MARGARET CLITHEROW, BRACKNELL

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT – YEAR B

Sunday	13 th 10.30am	LIMITED ATTENDANCE MASS	<i>Parish Intentions</i>
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ST JOHN OF THE CROSS, Religious, Doctor of the Church

Monday	14 th	NO MASS	
Tuesday	15th	12.30pm REQUIEM MASS	Jenny Bashford, RIP
Wednesday	16 th	10.00am – 10.30am Mass 11.00am - 12.00 noon Private Prayer & Exposition	Sean McAuley, RIP (Foundation)
Thursday	17 th	10.00am – 10.30am Mass 11.00am - 12.00 noon Private Prayer & Exposition	Amy D'Souza (Private Intention)
Friday	18 th	9.00am – 9.30am 10.00am - 11.00am Mass Private Prayer & Exposition	Jerzy Gruszka, RIP
Saturday	19 th	10.00am - 10.30am Mass No Private Prayer & Exposition	Myriam D'unienville, RIP

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT – YEAR B

Sunday	20 th 10.30am	LIMITED ATTENDANCE MASS	<i>Parish Intentions</i>
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THE CHURCH WILL BE OPEN 30 MINUTES BEFORE EACH MASS FOR TEMPERATURE, SYMPTOM CHECKS AND TRACK & TRACE DETAILS FOR EACH PERSON ATTENDING THE CHURCH.

THE DOORS WILL BE CLOSED AT THE START OF MASS, PLEASE ARRIVE IN TIME FOR COVID PROCESSING BEFORE ENTERING THE CHURCH FOR MASS.

THE CHURCH WILL BE CLOSED FOR 30 MINUTES ON TUESDAY TO SATURDAY AFTER MASS TO SANITISE THE CHURCH BEFORE RE-OPENING FOR PRIVATE PRAYER AND EXPOSITION.

Parish Office: 39 Bracca Walk, Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 1HA

Telephone: 01344 425729 **Email:** stjb@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Pastoral Care: 07394 440938 **Email:** pastoralcare@bracknellcatholicchurch.org

Website: www.bracknellcatholicchurch.org

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DIRECT DEBIT, STANDING ORDER AND GIFT AID FORMS CAN BE DOWNLOADED FROM THE PARISH WEBSITE (drop down menu “Planned Giving”)

BANK DETAILS: Account Name: PRCDTR Bracknell St Joseph

Sort Code: 30-93-04; Account Number: 00875520; Bank: Lloyds Bank Plc, Palmerstone Road, Southsea

PLEASE MAKE CHEQUES PAYABLE TO (FULL NAME): PRCDTR BRACKNELL ST JOSEPH

Parish Priest: Fr. Daniel McAvoy **Deacon:** Rev. Aidan Lynch

Parish Secretary: Elizabeth Fisher **Pastoral Assistant:** Mary McNab

Safeguarding Representatives: Sarah Birch, Marion McGuire, Paula Read

Safeguarding phone and email: 07712 048695 safeguarding@bracknellcatholicchurch.org