

BRINDLE St JOSEPH'S

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Ampleforth Abbey Trust – Registered Charity no: 1026493

Fourth Sunday of Ordinary Time 28th January 2024

(Sunday cycle year B, weekday cycle year 2, psalter week 4)

RACIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY



He taught them with authority

Prayer for an end to racism and discrimination

God of light and truth, you call all men and women to live lives of holiness and justice. Help us to see in one another: a heart which is tender, a mind which is humble and a care for our brothers and sisters; so that together we may build up the Body of Christ as a sign of hope and mercy for all. We make this prayer through Jesus our Lord. Amen.

(Catholic Bishops Conference)

THIS WEEK

Sat 27 th	10.30am	Pope's intentions	BVM
	6.00pm	For the Parish	Fourth Sunday of Ordinary Time
Sun 28 th	9.30am	Bob Abbott	
Mon 29 th	No Mass today		Feria
Tue 30 th	9.30am	Fr Jonathan Cotton OSB	Feria
Wed 31 st	9.30am	Joseph and Margaret Jamieson	St John Bosco (memorial)
Thu 1 st February	No Mass today		Feria
Fri 2 nd	9.30am	Deceased of the Elliott and Craven families	The Presentation of the Lord (feast)
Sat 3 rd	10.00am	Confessions	St Blaise (memorial)
	10.30am	Abbot's intentions (Anointing of the sick during Mass)	
	6.00pm	Pauline Nixon	Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time
Sun 4 th	9.30am	For the Parish	

First Saturday of the Month: Confessions at 10.00am, Anointing of the sick during 10.30am Mass

This week		Reader		Eucharistic Minister		Bookshop
Sat 27 th		L Gardner		J Hothersall		L Gardner
Sun 28 th		C Snape		S Schofield		K Slater
Bidding prayers	L Gardner	Children's Liturgy	L Worswick, G Fowler	Collection counters	L & M Gardner	
Next week		Reader		Eucharistic Minister		Bookshop
Sat 3 rd		M Russell		G Hopkinson		Not open
Sun 4 th		K Snape		M Gardner		Not open
Bidding prayers	G Hopkinson	Children's Liturgy	J Grogan, C Snape	Collection counters	B Kellett & M Russell	

Last weekend: attendance: 114, collection: £520.70 – thank you!

Readings: Deuteronomy 18:15-20, 1 Corinthians 7:32-35, Mark 1:21-28.

I would like to see you free from all worry. An unmarried man can devote himself to the Lord's affairs, all he need worry about is pleasing the Lord, but a married man has to bother himself about the world's affairs and devote himself to pleasing his wife: he is torn two ways...says St Paul to the Corinthians in our second reading and he says the same of women too.

The question of celibacy is the subject here as it has been for centuries.

We know that St Peter was married from St Matthew's reference to Jesus healing his mother-in-law (Mt 8:14) and St Paul, while not known to be married, nevertheless asks whether it is unreasonable for himself and those working with him for Christ, *to take a Christian woman around with us like all the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? (Peter)* (1 Cor. 9: 5) [A textual note: Christian woman could mean 'a sister, a woman (wife)' to look after the apostles needs.]

But from the 4th Cent. various church councils started pushing for the celibacy of priests (including the *Council of Nicaea in 325 AD* but it was rejected).

However, the second Lateran Council of 1139 decreed marriage of clerics not only unlawful but invalid and this was ratified at the *Council of Trent (1545-63)* and the *Second Vatican Council (1962-63)*

The Church of England abolished celibacy along with many other Catholic practices as a result of the reformation. More recently, St John Paul II spoke of priestly celibacy as *a priceless gift from God for the church* and of its *prophetic value to the world* – inasmuch as it points to that higher future state of which Jesus speaks in the Gospels: of the resurrection and the heavenly state in which men and women do not marry because they are like the angels – celibacy points to that heavenly future. (Mk 12:25)

Before becoming Pope, Francis supported celibacy as a matter of discipline, not of faith and which, therefore, could change – it is not *essential* to the priesthood.

In the Eastern Orthodox Church, while bishops and monks remain celibate, priests and deacons may marry before ordination but not after.

History shows that abuse in either state is possible, but the pervading thread throughout the history of priestly celibacy is, as St Paul says: to be able to serve the Lord with an undivided heart and to give witness to a future heavenly spiritual state.

However, on Wednesday, we commemorated a Saint who believed that true devotion **can** be practiced by anybody in any walk of life, so to conclude this reflection upon whether one can serve God best in the married or celibate state, I will paraphrase a little of what St Francis de Sales says in his *Introduction to the Devout Life: In the creation, God commanded the plants to bring forth their fruits, each one after its kind. So does he command all Christians, who are the living plants of his church, to bring forth the fruits of devotion, each according to his character and vocation.*

He then speaks of the gentleman, the workman, the prince, the widow, the maid and the married woman each practicing devotion in their different ways and he asks: is it fitting that a bishop should lead the solitary life of a Carthusian or that married people should lay up no greater store of goods than the Capuchin or whether a tradesman should remain in church like a religious or whether a religious should be exposed to the worldly affairs of a bishop – such devotions, he says, would be ridiculous.

To conclude, St Francis says: *True devotion is like a bee that extracts honey from a flower without injuring it. For it does no injury to any vocation or employment, on the contrary, it adorns and beautifies it.*

If celibacy is an outward sign of devotion to God with an undivided heart, then let us pray for the **spiritual celibacy** that will enable us to do just that in whatever walk of life we find ourselves in.

Reflections

It is an error, rather a heresy, to try to banish the devout life from the regiment of soldiers, the shop of the mechanic, the court of princes or the home of married folk.

Consider all the past as nothing, and say, like David: Now I begin to love my God. (St Francis de Sales)

Jacob did not cease to be a saint because he had to attend to his flocks. (St Teresa of Avila)

With Prayers,

Fr Raphael.

Commemorations this week

St John Bosco (1815-1888) A pioneer in educating the poor and founded the Salesian order. Ordained in 1841 in Turin and, influenced by St Joseph Cafasso, began to work to alleviate the plight of boys who came to seek employment in the city. Working in borrowed premises, he provided boys with education, religious instruction and recreation; eventually he headed a large establishment containing a grammar school, a technical school and a church, all built through his efforts. He also achieved a local reputation as a popular preacher. In Turin he and 22 companions founded the Society of St Francis de Sales (the Salesians) in 1859, and before his death it had spread to England, France, Spain and South America. With St Mary Mazzarello he founded the Daughters of Our Lady Help of Christians (Salesian Sisters of Don Bosco) in 1872, a congregation of nuns dedicated to similar work among girls.

The Presentation of Our Lord. St Sophronius (560-638) tells us that the Mother of God, the most pure Virgin, carried the true light in her arms and brought him to those who lay in darkness. We too should carry a light for all to see and reflect the radiance of the true light as we hasten to meet him – hence the tradition of the blessing and carrying of candles at this Mass.

St Blaise was bishop of Sebaste and was martyred, probably in the fourth century. He is particularly invoked for disorders of the throat.

There will be a Mass for the repose of the soul of **FR JONATHAN COTTON OSB** at St Mary's, Leyland, at 12.00noon this Tuesday. His Requiem Mass is at Ampleforth at 11.00am on **Thursday** so there will be **no Mass here** on that day.

For more information about **RACIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY**, go to <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/racial-justice-sunday/>.

There is a list at the back of church with **FOODBANK COLLECTION** dates for this year. If you can help with collection/delivery, please sign up – the more people we get, the easier it is. Thank you in advance.

REGISTRATION FOR CONFIRMATION is open until 15th March. Please go to <https://www.liverpoolcalled.co.uk/confirmation> for more details.

PLEASE PRAY for Fr Jonathon Cotton OSB who died recently and for those who are sick or housebound including Fr Laurence Mayne and Bill Warbrick, and for those whose anniversaries occur about this time.

DURING ORDINARY TIME (WINTER) ie up to Lent, we are asked to pray for these intentions: Peace on Earth; Openness to the Word of God; Christian Unity; The Sick and Those Who Care for Them; Victims of Trafficking and Those who Work to Combat it; The Unemployed.

100 CLUB: The winner for week 7 is number 7, Rachel Conboy.

TEA AND COFFEE are served after Mass on Sunday morning – come along, you'll be most welcome!

RISING COSTS

For everyone, the cost of living is presently rising at an alarming rate. Energy costs are at an all-time high, and the cost of essentials at the supermarket increases each week. So now is not a good time to appeal for additional help for the church's finances, but sadly, however, it is necessary. The heating bills for the church are rising just as much as in your homes, and the maintenance of the old buildings are a constant drain on the church's income.

So, we are asking that if you can do so without making your personal situation much worse, could you consider adding a little extra in your weekly offering or monthly standing order? Just a 10% increase will help offset the much greater costs of electricity, gas and essential maintenance the church faces in the coming months.

If you are setting up or amending a standing order, the account details are: **Account name:** Archdiocese L'Pool Brindle St Joseph's Presb 007, **Account number:** 71544691, **Sort code:** 40-29-12, **Account type:** Business.

Also, if you pay UK income tax, signing up for Gift Aid will cost you nothing, but allow the church to reclaim from the government an additional 20% of your offering.

Another extremely valuable benefit for the church, but one which is often not considered, is that of leaving a legacy to the benefit of St Joseph's. If you are considering writing or making amendments to your will, this would be a perfect time to add a clause defining the amount you would like to give to the church. It is very important that any alterations to a will are officially sanctioned to avoid any issues at the time of probate. Thank you.

BRINDLE PLAYERS pantomime, Knight Fever, will be staged in the Parish Hall on 9th, 10th, 11th, 16th and 17th February 2024. Tickets can be purchased at: www.ticketsource.co.uk/brindle-players. For large group bookings please contact them via ticketsbrindleplayers@gmail.com or call 07711 848994. More details at: www.brindleplayers.co.uk.

Bidding prayers for 27th and 28th January – 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time Racial Justice Sunday

Priest:

Let us ask our Father in Heaven for all our needs and those of the world.

Reader:

On this Racial Justice Sunday let us think about the words in our Entrance Antiphon – “Save us O Lord and gather us from the nations” as we remember we are all God's children irrespective of race, colour or creed. Lord hear us...

We pray for Pope Francis, Archbishop Malcolm and all the clergy as they continue to lead us in faith. Lord hear us...

Let us pray that there will soon be an end to war in the Middle East and that a compromise can be reached. Lord hear us...

Let us pray for those fleeing war or persecution, that they reach safety and are able to start new lives. Lord hear us...

We pray for our own parish, especially those who are sick, housebound or mourning the loss of loved ones. Lord hear us...

Let us ask Our Lady to join our prayers to hers as we say Hail Mary...

In a few moments of silence we put our private petitions to God our Father.

Priest:

May God Our Father hear all our prayers and in His infinite goodness bless us all. We ask this through Jesus Christ Our Lord, Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE SICK

Priest: As we thank God for the gift of his Son in Holy Communion, let us remember those of our Parish who are sick or housebound.

All: May the body and blood of your Son, which we now send to them through our Eucharistic Ministers, bring them consolation and peace. We ask this in the name of Jesus, Our Lord. Amen.