

DIOCESE IN EUROPE

THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND



## SS PETER AND PAUL, TORREVIEJA

*The Church of England worshipping in Word and Sacrament at Lago Jardín, Los Balcones and La Siesta and ministering through the southern Costa Blanca and eastern Murcia.*

*A truly Eucharistic community of faith and love.*

Chaplain (equivalent of Parish Priest):

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Chaplaincy Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/anglicantorrevieja>

Chaplain's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/chaplaintorrevieja>

Chaplain's Facebook Group (to be used at the moment for livestreaming of liturgies):

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/chaplaintorrevieja/>

### THE CHAPLAIN'S WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2020

**TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**



**WELCOME TO THE CHAPLAINCY OF SS PETER AND PAUL, TORREVIEJA.  
ALL ARE WELCOME TO SHARE IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN THIS  
CHAPLAINCY.**

### FINANCIAL GIVING TO THE CHAPLAINCY

There are various ways of giving financially to the Chaplaincy for the work of the Church:

You can give in the plate each week.

You can join our envelope scheme to give a regular amount on a weekly basis – and set aside money for those weeks when you cannot be here.

You are encouraged to set up a standing order to the Chaplaincy – this helps us budget more effectively.

If you are a UK tax payer you can gift aid your giving.

If you are a Spanish tax payer you can have a tax offset by notifying your accountant when arranging your yearly tax along with the Spanish bank account number who will then arrange a claim and the money will be donated back to the Chaplaincy.

One off donations would be gratefully received to assist us at this difficult time.  
Thank you for your help.

For more information contact Father Richard, the Churchwardens, the Treasurer or your Congregational Warden.

### THE PANDEMIC AND THE MONTHS AHEAD

Church services have resumed in accordance with Spanish Law, the advice of the Bishops of the Diocese, the advice of the Spanish Episcopal Conference and FEREDE.

1. Lago Jardín Church will remain closed until further notice. This is because of the difficulty of social distancing in the church and its already limited capacity.
2. There is to be a building project to renovate the church but **Los Balcones church is now closed until April 2021. All services for the Chaplaincy will be held at La Siesta.**
3. La Siesta - these services will be for the whole Chaplaincy so please make every effort to be there and support the liturgical life of the Chaplaincy as we begin again in limited circumstances.

Future celebrations of the Holy Eucharist are:

Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup> September	1130
Saturday 12 <sup>th</sup> September	1700
Sunday 20 <sup>th</sup> September	1130 - HARVEST
Saturday 26 <sup>th</sup> September	1700
Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup> October	1130
Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup> October	1700
Sunday 18 <sup>th</sup> October	1130
Saturday 24 <sup>th</sup> October	1700
Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> November	1130
Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> November	1130 – ALL SOULS DAY
Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup> November	1700 – REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

The live-streamed liturgies continue:

1. Go to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/chaplaintorrevieja> and ask to join the group.
2. You will be asked three questions. Please complete them and agree to the rules of the group.
3. When the livestream starts it will appear on your device in the Facebook stream. The stream will start a few minutes before the broadcast so you can get settled in. You can only see this when I start the livestream. You can see and hear me but I cannot see you.

We will very much be adopting a hybrid approach for the foreseeable future.

On the Sundays where there is a Mass at La Siesta, there will be a live-streamed Mass on Saturdays at 1700 so that those unable to come to church will still be able to see Mass celebrated.

On the Saturdays where there is a Mass at La Siesta, there will be a live-streamed Mass on Sundays at 1100 so that those unable to come to church will still be able to see Mass celebrated.

The weekday live-streams will continue. The general pattern is:

Monday	1100	EP	1800
Tuesday	0930	EP	1800
Wednesday	1100	EP and Rosary	1800
Thursday	0930	EP	1800
Friday	no live stream (Father Richard's rest day)		
Saturday	no live stream in the morning, Mass when indicated.		

There will also be a liturgy still included in the weekly sheet for those unable to access the internet. This means there will be "physical" worship, live-streamed worship and "printed" worship.

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### **Church of England Chaplaincy of SS Peter and Paul, Torrevieja**

In conjunction with the Diocesan guidelines and the local laws, the following instructions have been agreed by the Chaplaincy Council as the most workable in order to provide an environment that is as safe as possible for those wishing to attend a church service. You are required to comply with these instructions to ensure the safety and protection of everyone.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR ATTENDING CHURCH AT LA SIESTA**

1. Only the main entrance will be used (disabled access) and the door will be secured in an open position from before the time when people gather for the service until after the last worshipper has left. The windows will be open for ventilation and fans will be operating to cool the Church.
2. You will be required to give your name and contact details on arrival as a register has to be kept of attendees. This will be done outside before you enter the church. This measure is only needed to facilitate any contact tracing.
3. Hand sanitizing facilities will be provided at the church entrance for your use prior to, and after, the service.
4. The Churchwardens who will have used the hand sanitizer beforehand will be at the entrance and will direct you to a seat as each area will be specifically marked out in compliance with distance seating regulations. Only family members may sit together
5. The use of face masks is compulsory to reduce transfer of respiratory droplets into the environment. You are requested to provide your own mask (a few spare ones will be kept at church) Entrance to the church will not be permitted without a mask.
6. It is your choice if you wear plastic gloves or not. It is our intention that the need to touch anything will be reduced to the bare minimum.
7. Door handles and hand railings will be disinfected on a regular basis.
8. There must be no physical contact with another person i.e handshakes, kissing, hugging. You must ensure physical distancing is observed at all times.
9. Members of the congregation are advised to carry tissues and use them to catch coughs and sneezes. All tissues must be taken home for disposal.
11. Congregational singing will not take place as it appears to increase significantly the transmission of potentially infected droplets.
12. As it is not permitted to use any service books, a shortened version of the Order of Service will be emailed to worshippers each week. You are requested to print this off at home and bring it with you and keep it for your own use.
13. Father Richard will be the celebrant of the Eucharist and will proclaim the Liturgy of the Word.
14. There will be no sharing of The Peace
15. Holy Communion will be distributed in one kind with the Host only. Both elements will be consecrated, but the Precious Blood will not be distributed and will be partaken of by the Priest alone. It is a clear principle of Anglican theology that the sacrament of the Eucharist is present and complete in either of the consecrated elements.
16. For the time being, it is preferable that only the presiding minister handles the vessels and administers Holy Communion so no one will be required to act as altar server. Given that it will be in one kind for now, and in most places for not more than 50 persons, it is much easier to control hygiene if this is one person's responsibility.
17. Father Richard, presiding at the Eucharist, will cleanse his hands with an alcohol-based sanitizer, just prior to commencing the liturgy of the Eucharist and will do so again just before the distribution of the Host. Extra measures in terms of hygiene, just prior to the administration of communion to the people will be adhered to, by using alcohol-based sanitiser. At all times, the priest in administering the sacrament must avoid contact with the hands of the communicants.
18. The priest will say 'The Body of Christ' to which everyone will reply **Amen** collectively before approaching the altar. The Churchwardens will direct you to the altar at the appropriate time. *Standing in front of the Priest, place your hands in front of you to receive the Host, using the lower hand remove your mask at the side, consume the Host, and then replace your mask. Only when you have replaced your mask should you go to your place.*
19. At this point return to your seat.
20. The collection baskets will not be passed among the congregation. All collections are to be placed in a basket at the exit. *Please do not leave coins as this adds to the complexity of hygiene.*

21. The Churchwardens will be responsible for the counting and banking of the collection. They will wear plastic gloves and sanitize their hands afterwards. Better still, we would encourage you to consider changing to on-line giving or direct debit.
22. The Churchwardens will be responsible for maintaining the ordered entry, seating, movement for communion, and exit. Please wait until a Churchwarden instructs you to leave the Church. If the church is filled to permitted capacity, no further entry is possible.
23. Father Richard, wearing a face mask, will stand at the exit after the Eucharist to greet you keeping a two metre distance, but will not shake hands.
24. There will not be any refreshments provided after the service and you should avoid gathering outside the exit. It will be at your own risk if you go to a local bar for coffee afterwards. We are only responsible for maintaining safety within the church building itself.
25. An appointed team will be responsible for the cleaning of the church after the service in compliance with the Government and Diocesan guidelines
26. Father Richard is taking responsibility for the cleaning of the altar area, the vessels and the altar linen.
27. The toilet will be available. Paper towels and hand sanitizer will be provided.

**Please bear in mind your own self-care, your level of vulnerability and your age according to the risks involved.  
If you have COVID-19 symptoms please stay at home.**

Please would you make your own arrangements with Sue Maude regarding informing her ([wardenlasiesta@gmail.com](mailto:wardenlasiesta@gmail.com)) when you are coming to church. You need no longer do it each week so, for example, if you are intending to come to all services then tell her that.

**Worship for the week ahead:**

Saturday 5 <sup>th</sup> Sept	1700	Holy Eucharist	<i>Live-streamed</i>
Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup> Sept	1130	Holy Eucharist	<i>La Siesta</i>
	1800	Evening Prayer	<i>Live-streamed</i>
Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> Sept	1100	Holy Eucharist	<i>Live-streamed</i>
	1800	Evening Prayer	<i>Live-streamed</i>
Tuesday 8 <sup>th</sup> Sept	0930	Holy Eucharist	<i>Live-streamed</i>
	1800	Evening Prayer	<i>Live-streamed</i>
Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup> Sept	1100	Holy Eucharist	<i>Live-streamed</i>
	1800	Evening Prayer and Holy Rosary	<i>Live-streamed</i>
Thursday 10 <sup>th</sup> Sept	0930	Holy Eucharist	<i>Live-streamed</i>
	1800	Evening Prayer	<i>Live-streamed</i>
Saturday 12 <sup>th</sup> Sept	1700	Vigil Mass	<i>La Siesta</i>
Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup> Sept	1100	Holy Eucharist	<i>Live-streamed</i>
	1800	Evening Prayer	<i>Live-streamed</i>

For Evening Prayer, if you wish to join in the common texts they are follows:

Angelus – see later in the newsletter

Introduction - + O God, come to our aid.

**O Lord, make haste to help us.**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.**

**As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end.**

**Amen. Alleluia!**

Magnificat: + **My soul glorifies the Lord,  
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.  
He looks on his servant in her lowliness;  
henceforth all ages will call me blessed.**

**The Almighty works marvels for me.**

**Holy his name!**

**His mercy is from age to age,  
on those who fear him.**

**He puts forth his arm in strength  
and scatters the proud-hearted.  
He casts the mighty from their thrones  
and raises the lowly.**

**He fills the starving with good things,  
sends the rich away empty.**

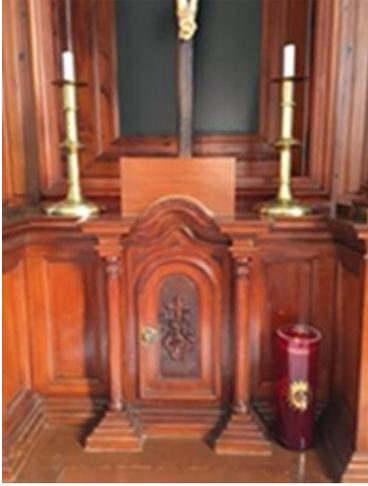
**He protects Israel, his servant,  
remembering his mercy,  
the mercy promised to our fathers,  
to Abraham and his sons for ever.**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit,  
as it was in the beginning,  
is now, and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen.**

*"Participants in a streamed service of Holy Communion should not be encouraged to place bread and wine before their screens. Joining together to share in the one bread and the one cup as those physically present to one another is integral to the service of Holy Communion; ... and it is not helpful to suggest otherwise. Any idea of the 'remote consecration' of the bread and wine should be avoided."*

The words above are an extract from a letter from Bishop Robert and Bishop David from 2nd April. Under Church of England formularies the Priest himself must set the bread and wine upon the Altar which is going to be consecrated during the Eucharist.

This post underlines The Church of England position.



### **The Blessed Sacrament Lamp at Lago Jardín**

Because Lago Jardín is not going to be used for the foreseeable future (until social distancing rules change) the Blessed Sacrament has been removed from Lago Jardín to be kept safely at the Chaplaincy House.

If you would like a Mass intention, please contact Father Richard.

### **The Chaplain's Prayer List for September 2020:**

*Please pray for the sick and those in particular need at this time:*

Denise Taylor, Dorothy Hanson, Eileen Catlin, Father Helge, Solveig Pettersson, Gwen Simmons, Gerry Hopkins, Benjamin Saville, Colin, for all those suffering in mind, body and spirit as a result of the coronavirus.

### **Please pray for the recently departed:**

Linda Heard RIP

*For all those who have died as a result of the coronavirus.*

+ Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them.

### **Please advise Father Richard if there are any corrections to the above list.**

*If you wish a name to be added to the list of the sick you need to email Father Richard or write to him giving permission for yourself or ensure permission has been granted by someone else for their name to appear on this list. (GDPR regulations).*

*Please pray for the Anglican Church in Perú, for Bishop Jorge Aguilar, and the Bishops, Priests, Deacons and Laity there.*

**Father Richard's Study Group...** will resume when we can.

### **From the Churchwardens:**

It has been so good to see so many of our congregations returning to Church and we thank the dedicated team who prepare for worship and deep clean afterwards. We must also thank those who have been putting their giving away and have now brought it back to Church. This is really needed as is the continued giving to maintain the life of our Chaplaincy. The ideal for the Chaplaincy would be for people to set up standing orders or direct debits. This allows us to have a good idea of what we can expect to receive and plan our finances.

If you feel you can manage to set up a standing order. The bank details to do this are as follows:

**Spanish Bank details.** Banco Sabadell. IBAN number ES65 0081 2061 7900 0106 0414 /BSAB ESBB

**UK Bank details.** Barclays Bank PLC Account name: Diocese in Europe Fund

Account number: 40317039 Sort code: 20-06-13. Please state TORREVIEJA as the reference so the money is correctly applied.

Meeting with people again we hear many differing attitudes. Please remember whether you like the Church building is insignificant. The Altar inside is all that is important. Remember God expects us to love one another. The Priest is a human being sent by God to lead us in worship. He is human like us, who has feelings like us and deserves the blessings of us all. Imagine the Chaplaincy without a leader, not able to receive the Eucharist, where would we be? Remember God is with us all the time and expects us to live the life he has laid out for us.

Thank you so very much for your help,

*Peter and Jennifer*

Elizabeth Kaldor's lemon curd and marmalade is still available. Please contact her on 966721947 or [elizabethkaldor@gmail.com](mailto:elizabethkaldor@gmail.com).

**Making a Spiritual Communion. Something recommended for us all each day when we cannot participate in the Holy Eucharist.**

Even if we are watching a livestreamed Mass (and the times of our Chaplaincy livestreamed celebrations of the Eucharist are listed in the newsletter) we are invited to pause when the Priest receives Holy Communion and make our own spiritual communion. We can say it silently to ourselves or speak it out loud. In this way we are joined with Our Lord in his suffering and death for the world and we are united to His Most Sacred Heart. In these most worrying of days we know Our Lord is there and we can join ourselves to him just as he joins himself with us. This is a great blessing, comfort and strength.

Choose one of these prayers:

*My Jesus,*

*I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.*

*I love You above all things,*

*and I desire to receive You into my soul.*

*Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally,*

*come at least spiritually into my heart.*

*As though you have already come, I embrace You as if You were already there*

*and unite myself wholly to You.*

*Never permit me to be separated from You.*

*Amen.*

or,

*Lord Jesus Christ, you are the bread of life and the one true vine. I believe that you are truly present in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist. I seek you. I worship and adore you. Since I cannot receive you in the eucharistic bread and wine, I pray that you will come into my heart and soul, that I may be united to you, by your all-powerful and ever-present Holy Spirit. Let me receive you, and be nourished by you. Become for me the manna in my wilderness, the bread of angels for my very human journey through time, a foretaste of the heavenly banquet, and solace in the hour of my death. I pray all this, trusting that you yourself are our Life, our Peace, and our everlasting Joy. Amen.*

#### Prayer resources

1. Follow the Chaplain's Facebook page which will be used as an extension of my priestly ministry to you, the people of God. It can be found at: <https://www.facebook.com/chaplaintorrevieja>.
2. Join the new Chaplain's Facebook Group (different from the Facebook page). This will be used for livestreaming of liturgies. Join at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/chaplaintorrevieja>. There is further information on page 2 of this newsletter.
3. Download *Praying at Home A resource for those praying at home as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic*. I especially draw your attention to page 8 and "An Act of Spiritual Communion." I will also for this booklet to be attached to the email in which you receive this newsletter. [https://www.churchunion.co.uk/jscripits/tiny\\_mce/plugins/imagemanager/files/Resources\\_FIN\\_AL.pdf](https://www.churchunion.co.uk/jscripits/tiny_mce/plugins/imagemanager/files/Resources_FIN_AL.pdf).
4. I recommend you to watch this video from the Bishop of Fulham: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R6AmaVaY8-I>. Bishop Jonathan is the Bishop of Fulham in the Diocese of London.
5. Pray the Holy Rosary: <https://bishopoffulham.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/How-to-pray-the-Holy-Rosary-Final.pdf> and <https://bishopoffulham.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/printer-friendly-rosary-guide-draft-v3.pdf>
6. Follow the Anglican Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham. Open Facebook and put @shrineolw in the Facebook search bar. Every night at 1900 (Spanish time) the Rosary is offered.
7. Follow the Society of Saint Wilfrid and Saint Hilda on Facebook @thesocietyofsaintwilfridandsainthilda as there will be valuable teaching material during Holy Week.
8. Look at the pages of the Church Union, a well-established organisation in the Church of England: <https://www.churchunion.co.uk/news.php>
9. You are invited to say the *Angelus* at 0600 (!), or better still 1200 and 1800. The services of livestreamed Evening Prayer will begin with this.
10. Lastly, and most importantly, make a Spiritual Communion. I have written about this in the newsletter and there is more information in the booklet.
11. *Praying at home with the Blessed Virgin Mary*  
The Society of Mary has produced a booklet of readings, reflections and prayers that focus on some of the themes that are important at these times; and how Mary is an example for us, as well as someone who prays with us and for us. [https://www.churchunion.co.uk/uploads/SoM\\_May\\_2020\\_Marian\\_Devotional\\_Booklet.pdf](https://www.churchunion.co.uk/uploads/SoM_May_2020_Marian_Devotional_Booklet.pdf)
12. Devotions and Prayers to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. [https://www.sswsh.com/uploads/Sacred\\_Heart\\_of\\_Jesus\\_Devotions\\_and\\_Prayers.pdf](https://www.sswsh.com/uploads/Sacred_Heart_of_Jesus_Devotions_and_Prayers.pdf)
13. A video about Corpus Christi: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kXCRO5cQ4sE>
14. Praying in Church. [https://www.churchunion.co.uk/uploads/Praying\\_in\\_Church\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.churchunion.co.uk/uploads/Praying_in_Church_FINAL.pdf)
15. Praying with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. [https://www.churchunion.co.uk/uploads/Blessed\\_Sacrament\\_Resource\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.churchunion.co.uk/uploads/Blessed_Sacrament_Resource_FINAL.pdf)

## 16. *Saints of the month - SEPTEMBER*

Although we are praying and worshipping in our homes, we never pray alone. We pray with the Church around the world and our prayers are joined with those of the company of heaven. In this booklet there are a selection of biographies of saints and holy people whose feast days occur this month, as well as prayers you might find helpful.

[https://www.churchunion.co.uk/uploads/Saints\\_of\\_the\\_Month\\_-\\_September\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.churchunion.co.uk/uploads/Saints_of_the_Month_-_September_FINAL.pdf)

### **Father Richard writes:**

It has now been six weeks or so since we returned to La Siesta Church after the long period of lockdown. I want to thank the team of people who join in each week preparing the church and all the other works that are needed to ensure we are safe and compliant with all the extra things we have to do because of the Pandemic. It is an excellent team of workers for the Lord.

If you haven't come back to church, please be assured you will be afforded a warm welcome when you do. There is social-distancing and we are sensitive to the situation. If we are going to restaurants or out for coffee you will find equal attention to detail is made at church to the requirements. The celebration of the Holy Eucharist is at the heart of the Christian life. This is to assure you that everything is done well so that your visit to La Siesta is a safe one. Let's all continue to pray for each other in love and charity. Let us ask the Lord for his guidance. Be assured that your prayers are joined with the saints, especially Our Lady, the Holy Mother of God and our patrons, Ss Peter and Paul.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us.

Your priest and friend,                      Father Richard

### **DATE AHEAD**

Our postponed Election of Churchwardens and Annual Chaplaincy Meeting will now take place at La Siesta on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> September beginning with the 1700 celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Because we cannot distribute papers these will be emailed to you in advance of the meeting. The meeting is open to anyone on the Electoral Roll. **Please let Sue Maude know if you are coming ([lasiestawarden@gmail.com](mailto:lasiestawarden@gmail.com)).**

**Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

**Entrance Antiphon**

**Ps 118: 137, 124**

You are just, O Lord, and your judgement is right;  
treat your servant in accord with your merciful love.

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**Collect**

O God, by whom we are redeemed and receive adoption,  
look graciously upon your beloved sons and daughters,  
that those who believe in Christ  
may receive true freedom  
and an everlasting inheritance.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

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**First reading**

**Ezekiel 33:7-9**

**If you do not speak to the wicked man, I will hold you responsible  
for his death**

The word of the Lord was addressed to me as follows: 'Son of man, I have appointed you as sentry to the House of Israel. When you hear a word from my mouth, warn them in my name. If I say to a wicked man: Wicked wretch, you are to die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked man to renounce his ways, then he shall die for his sin, but I will hold you responsible for his death. If, however, you do warn a wicked man to renounce his ways and repent, and he does not repent, then he shall die for his sin, but you yourself will have saved your life.'

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**Responsorial Psalm**

**Psalm 94(95):1-2,6-9**

*O that today you would listen to his voice! 'Harden not your hearts.'*

Come, ring out our joy to the Lord;  
hail the rock who saves us.

Let us come before him, giving thanks,  
with songs let us hail the Lord.

*O that today you would listen to his voice! 'Harden not your hearts.'*

Come in; let us bow and bend low;  
let us kneel before the God who made us:

for he is our God and we  
the people who belong to his pasture,  
the flock that is led by his hand.

*O that today you would listen to his voice! 'Harden not your hearts.'*

O that today you would listen to his voice!

'Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,

as on that day at Massah in the desert

when your fathers put me to the test;

when they tried me, though they saw my work.'

*O that today you would listen to his voice! 'Harden not your hearts.'*

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## **Second reading**

**Romans 13:8-10**

### **Your only debt should be the debt of mutual love**

Avoid getting into debt, except the debt of mutual love. If you love your fellow men you have carried out your obligations. All the commandments: *You shall not commit adultery, you shall not kill, you shall not steal, you shall not covet*, and so on, are summed up in this single command: *You must love your neighbour as yourself*. Love is the one thing that cannot hurt your neighbour; that is why it is the answer to every one of the commandments.

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## **Gospel Acclamation**

**Jn17:17**

Alleluia, alleluia!

Your word is truth, O Lord:

consecrate us in the truth.

Alleluia!

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## **Gospel**

**Matthew 18:15-20**

### **If your brother listens to you, you have won back your brother**

Jesus said to his disciples: 'If your brother does something wrong, go and have it out with him alone, between your two selves. If he listens to you, you have won back your brother. If he does not listen, take one or two others along with you: the evidence of two or three witnesses is required to sustain any charge. But if he refuses to listen to these, report it to the community; and if he refuses to listen to the community, treat him like a pagan or a tax collector.

'I tell you solemnly, whatever you bind on earth shall be considered bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth shall be considered loosed in heaven.

'I tell you solemnly once again, if two of you on earth agree to ask anything at all, it will be granted to you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them.'

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## Homily

The prophet Ezekiel borrowed an image from war and its threat to national survival. He knows that a people under threat needs its sentries. The real threat that sentry Ezekiel sees, is not an attack from without, but failure of the community from within, a breakdown that leads to death. The danger that he must warn about is the threat of sin. This warning of Ezekiel is not directed to the community as a whole but to the individual within it. Individual responsibility takes on a new force in his message.

Our own era too is preoccupied with problems of national and international peace and security. For us, the watchman on the city wall is no longer a sufficient form of security. Our world leaders feel the need of sophisticated "early-warning" devices, so that our peace hangs upon a balance of terror. The threat of our times is no longer the fall of a city but an international holocaust.

When Ezekiel preached he was a prisoner in enemy territory and he could warn that it was not external force, but the enemy within, that is the real threat to life—that enemy is sin, the abandonment of God. It is the prophetic role of the Church to continue this preaching (even if its voice is treated like something coming from foreign soil.) The gospel of Christ is that life and peace come from faith in God and the doing of his will. This gospel calls us to repentance but is no mere denunciation of sin. Christ brought the gift of reconciliation and life. One might develop this further by reflecting on how we as a community can be a sign of what we preach, a repentant community that has found the life and peace offered by Christ.

A reconciled community: Today's readings confront us with two aspects of the question. Firstly the need for a sense of individual responsibility in the way of conversion. Ezekiel certainly made it clear that the individual is addressed by the Word of God calling for repentance. There is no way out of this personal responsibility.

But all of this should not be seen simply in terms of what the individual owes to the community. The whole Church is called to be supportive of each person who seeks reconciliation. This is especially important in a world where so many people feel threatened by the alienating force of impersonal state structures. The Church is not called to be mega-corporation.

Individuals who are perplexed by their own failures or oppressed by the weaknesses of others, need a community that does not drive them further into isolation but one which calls them through forgiveness and love into the life of fellowship. Living in this fellowship does mean that we owe debts to one another, and as Paul reminds us today the only obligation that ultimately counts is the debt of love we owe one another.

This reconciled community will be an effective sign to the world not because it creates a superficial harmony, but because it faces the reality of sin in itself. It finds forgiveness as the solution to this threat. Renewal of the ministry of reconciliation in the Church increasingly takes the form of communal services of penance, linked to the celebration of the sacrament. This is an effective way of bringing home to people that all sin affects the community and that reconciliation must include the community.

## **The Nicene ("Niceno-Constantinopolitan") Creed**

I believe in one God,  
the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all things visible and invisible.  
I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the Only Begotten Son of God,  
born of the Father before all ages.  
God from God,  
Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;  
through him all things were made.  
For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,  
*At the words that follow, up to and including 'and became man', all bow.*  
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,  
and became man.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,  
he suffered death and was buried,  
and rose again on the third day  
in accordance with the Scriptures.  
He ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory  
to judge the living and the dead  
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.  
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins  
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

## **THE GENERAL INTERCESSIONS**

As members of God's flock, let us confidently bring forward our prayers:

1. That leaders of nations may seek the path of peace (*we pray quietly in our hearts, then....*) Lord, hear us.
2. That the world may be spared from the horrors of nuclear war (*we pray quietly in our hearts, then....*) Lord, hear us
3. That people suffering because of the Pandemic or sickness in general may get the help they need (*we pray quietly in our hearts, then....*) Lord, hear us.
4. That all the members of the Church may courageously help each other to become more Christian (*we pray quietly in our hearts, then....*) Lord, hear us.

5. That prophets may never be afraid to speak the truth (*we pray quietly in our hearts, then....*) Lord, hear us.
6. That those who live close to us may receive love and understanding from us (*we pray quietly in our hearts, then....*) Lord, hear us.
7. For those who have gone before us in faith (especially N and N), that the Good Shepherd may include them in the heavenly flock (*we pray quietly in our hearts, then....*) Lord, hear us.

O God our creator, you are the rock who saves us: listen to our voice and help us in our needs, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Hymn:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OtOksSlc\\_1k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OtOksSlc_1k)

## The Angelus



The Angel of the Lord brought tidings to Mary,  
And she conceived by the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee,  
Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy  
womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners  
**now**  
and at the hour of our death.

Behold the handmaid of the Lord.  
Be it unto me according to Thy Word.

Hail Mary, (as above)

And the Word was made flesh,  
And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary, (as above)

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.  
That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Pour forth, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy grace into our hearts; that as we have known the incarnation of thy son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so by His + cross and passion we may be brought to the glory of His Resurrection. Through the same Christ, our Lord. Amen.