

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 Group (to be used at the moment for livestreaming of liturgies):

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

FATHER RICHARD'S WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

11th September 2022

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

18th September 2022

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

25th September

TWENTY-SIXTH 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.**

Home Communions

Father Richard will take Holy Communion to people at home according to their circumstances. This is a privilege and enables for prayer in the home at difficult times and for the communicant to receive Holy Communion at home. Please never hesitate to contact me if you would like Holy Communion at home if you are unable to come to church because of sickness or being housebound. Obviously Covid circumstances are taken into consideration.

Here are some guidelines to assist you:

1. If you can, please arrange a surface with a white cloth upon which I can place the Blessed Sacrament. If this is difficult please do not worry too much but it is appreciated.
2. The Priest will not enter into general conversation until after the celebration which lasts about ten minutes. Then he would appreciate a cup of tea and chat with you but if your circumstances don't allow, please do not worry.
3. Please consider giving a donation to the Church for the Priest's ministry. He will have had to drive to you and it also enables you to give your weekly collection to support the priestly ministry in the parish / chaplaincy. This means there can be a Priest available for you and for others with a priestly presence in the parish / chaplaincy. It is a long-established custom – if you can – to make an offering to the Church in thankfulness for the ministry of the Church.
4. You don't have to tidy up before the priest arrives! Just prepare spiritually for an encounter with Christ in the Eucharist by being prayerful before his arrival.

Father Richard writes:

Dear friends



Last Sunday I announced the difficult news that Father Helge has had to return to Norway because of his deteriorating health condition. He is receiving palliative care for cancer. He had been due to return, with Solveig his wife, in October and I was planning a farewell for him to give thanks for his wonderful ministry in the Chaplaincy over many, many years. He has been a dignified, humble, gentle, wise priest, pastor, and friend. He has never sought to push himself forward but has, gently, given us the example of Our Lord in preaching, teaching and liturgical celebrations. He has been a trusted friend and a wise counsellor. I know how much he has touched the lives of so many people in the Chaplaincy over the years. We simply love him! I know you will all join in this spirit of thanksgiving as we acknowledge the priestly ministry of dear Father Helge for seventeen years to us. We continue to pray for him – there are up and down days – and for Solveig, his wife, and wider family at this time and all who care for him in Norway.

(My final piece about prayer will follow in a few weeks.)

God bless you all.

Your priest and friend, Father Richard

FINANCIAL GIVING TO THE CHAPLAINCY

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

1. You can give in the plate each week.
2. 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.
3. **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, or your Congregational Warden.

The Chaplaincy relies on generous and sacrificial giving in response to a generous God who sacrificed his Son for us all on the cross.

Spanish Bank details. Banco Sabadell.

IBAN number ES65 0081 2061 7900 0106 0414

BSAB ESBB / Capellania Anglicana de Torrevieja

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

Account number: 40317039 Sort code: 20-06-13. Address : Tufton Street,London Please state TORREVIEJA as the reference so the money is correctly applied. The IBAN number is: GB16 BUKB 2006 1340 31 70 39.

God bless you all for your support.

Peter and Jennifer (Churchwardens)





We are always grateful for your giving to the Chaplaincy. It is the main way by which the Priestly Ministry and Chaplaincy life is sustained. Without your giving there would be no Chaplaincy. Thank you to all who give so generously.

If you don't already, please would you consider a monthly standing order to either our UK to Spanish bank accounts? This would help us enormously in our financial planning.

It means your giving happens on a regular basis and we would be so grateful for this. Think of what the Chaplaincy means not only to you but the wider church community and the Church of England presence in this area.

Please see Peter or Jennifer or send Father Richard an email if you could help. Thank you.

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE RESPONDED POSITIVELY AND GENEROUSLY ABOUT THIS.



Sue's Homemade Lemon Curd and Pickled Onions and Jill's Homemade Marmalade

Sue Brassington is selling *made to order* homemade lemon curd after each service. Please see her if you would like order some. Thank you, Sue! (She also taking orders for pickled onions available in six weeks.) Jill Dorsett is receiving orders for homemade marmalade. Thank you, Jill!



DATES AHEAD:



Tuesday 27th
September at
4.30 p.m.

A Spanish themed social event at the home of Sue Brassington (Los Altos, Orihuela Costa)

Tapas, Spanish quiz, Spanish music
Tickets 10€ each to include food and
1st drink.

Raffle

Tickets will be on sale from Sunday
21st August. Donations of raffle prizes
would be most welcome.

Please contact Sue (councillorlosbalcones@gmail.com) or
Joan Berry (losbalconeswarden@gmail.com)



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Church of England Chaplaincy of SS Peter and Paul, Torrevieja

We are a Covid 19 secure Chaplaincy.
If you have COVID-19 symptoms please stay at home.

You no longer have to wear a mask in church
(though if you chose to that is perfectly acceptable to protect yourself and protect others).

Hand sanitizer will still be available as you enter the church.

You are encouraged still to use this to protect yourself and others.

Holy Communion will still be administered in one kind for the time being.

You will be able to line up for Holy Communion instead of coming up individually.

Holy Communion is offered with the words "The Body of Christ" to which you say **Amen**
before consuming the Sacred Host.

Holy Communion (in one kind still for the time being) will continue to be offered in front of
the altar as we have been doing since the Pandemic.

Regarding the sharing of the Sign of Peace,
we will remain with the status quo for the time being.

POST-PANDEMIC INFORMATION

1. Lago Jardín Church will remain closed until further notice. *In due course the Chaplaincy Council will decide the way forward. However, as the Church is being used to store so much stuff from Los Balcones we will need to wait.*
2. There is to be a building project to renovate the church but **Los Balcones church is now closed for the foreseeable future. It will re-open but it is impossible to say when. 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.

Saturday 10th September 1700

Sunday 18 th September	1130
Saturday 24 th September	1700
Sunday 2 nd October	1130 – HARVEST THANKSGIVING
Saturday 8 th October	1700
Sunday 16 th October	1130
Saturday 22 nd October	1700
Saturday 29 th October	1700

The live-streamed liturgies continue in a limited form now:

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.

WORSHIP FOR THE WEEK AHEAD:

Saturday 10 th September	1700	Holy Eucharist	<i>La Siesta / Live-streamed</i>
Sunday 11 th September	<i>No live-streaming</i>		
Sunday 18 th September	1130	Morning Prayer	<i>La Siesta / Live-streamed</i>
Saturday 24 th September	1100	Requiem Mass	<i>La Siesta</i>
	1700	Holy Eucharist	<i>La Siesta / Live-streamed</i>
Sunday 25 th September	1100	Holy Eucharist	<i>Live-streamed</i>

The Blessed Sacrament Lamp at Lago Jardín

Because Lago Jardín is not going to be used for the foreseeable future (until Los Balcones is re-opened) 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.

Father Richard's Prayer List for September 2022:

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

time: Father Helge *in extremis*, Solveig Pettersson, Finn Husebekk *in extremis*, Bill Bennion, Val Donkin, Karen Moon, William McDonald, Jennifer Saville, Johanna McNab, Wendy, Liz Shouksmith, Paul McNab, David, Anne John, Lesley Critchley, Charlie Smith, David, Patricia Gilbert, Marie Creighton, Jennifer Moody, Erol Moody, Faras, Justin Clarke, Peter John, Mo and Bryan Bailey, Bernice, Luke Thompson, Gwen Simmons, Isaac Jalal, Father Terence, John Mileham, Samantha Shaw, Alex, Gerry Hopkins, Eileen Catlin.



Please pray for the recently departed:

Those killed as a result of the conflict in Ukraine.

+ 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.

Sunday 11th September 2022

Entrance Antiphon

Cf. Sir 36: 18

Give peace, O Lord, to those who wait for you,
that your prophets be found true.
Hear the prayers of your servant,
and of your people Israel.

Collect

Look upon us, O God,
Creator and ruler of all things,
and, that we may feel the working of your mercy,
grant that we may serve you with all our heart.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.

First reading

Exodus 32:7-11,13-14

The Lord relented and did not bring on his people the disaster he had threatened

The Lord spoke to Moses, 'Go down now, because your people whom you brought out of Egypt have apostatised. They have been quick to leave the way I marked out for them; they have made themselves a calf of molten metal and have worshipped it and offered it sacrifice. "Here is your God, Israel," they have cried "who brought you up from the land of Egypt!"' the Lord said to Moses, 'I can see how headstrong these people are! Leave me, now, my wrath shall blaze out against them and devour them; of you, however, I will make a great nation.'

But Moses pleaded with the Lord his God. 'Lord,' he said 'why should your wrath blaze out against this people of yours whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with arm outstretched and mighty hand? Remember Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, your servants to whom by your own

self you swore and made this promise: "I will make your offspring as many as the stars of heaven, and all this land which I promised I will give to your descendants, and it shall be their heritage for ever."

So the Lord relented and did not bring on his people the disaster he had threatened.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 50(51):3-4,12-13,17,19

I will leave this place and go to my father.

Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.

In your compassion blot out my offence.

O wash me more and more from my guilt
and cleanse me from my sin.

I will leave this place and go to my father.

A pure heart create for me, O God,
put a steadfast spirit within me.

Do not cast me away from your presence,
nor deprive me of your holy spirit.

I will leave this place and go to my father.

O Lord, open my lips
and my mouth shall declare your praise.

My sacrifice is a contrite spirit.

A humbled, contrite heart you will not spurn.

I will leave this place and go to my father.

Second reading

1 Timothy 1:12-17

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, and who judged me faithful enough to call me into his service even though I used to be a blasphemer and did all I could to injure and discredit the faith. Mercy, however, was shown me, because until I became a believer I had been acting in ignorance; and the grace of our Lord filled me with faith and with the love that is in Christ Jesus. Here is a saying that you can rely on and nobody should doubt: that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. I myself am the greatest of them; and if mercy has been shown to me, it is because Jesus Christ meant to make me the greatest evidence of his inexhaustible patience for all the other people who would later have to trust in him to come to eternal life. To the eternal King, the undying, invisible and only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!
May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ
enlighten the eyes of our mind,
so that we can see what hope his call holds for us.
Alleluia!

Or:

2Co5:19

Alleluia, alleluia!
God in Christ was reconciling the world to himself,
and he has entrusted to us the news that they are reconciled.
Alleluia!

Gospel

Luke 15:1-32

There will be rejoicing in heaven over one repentant sinner

The tax collectors and the sinners were all seeking the company of Jesus to hear what he had to say, and the Pharisees and the scribes complained. 'This man' they said 'welcomes sinners and eats with them.' So he spoke this parable to them:

'What man among you with a hundred sheep, losing one, would not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the missing one till he found it? And when he found it, would he not joyfully take it on his shoulders and then, when he got home, call together his friends and neighbours? "Rejoice with me," he would say "I have found my sheep that was lost." In the same way, I tell you, there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one repentant sinner than over ninety-nine virtuous men who have no need of repentance.

'Or again, what woman with ten drachmas would not, if she lost one, light a lamp and sweep out the house and search thoroughly till she found it? And then, when she had found it, call together her friends and neighbours? "Rejoice with me," she would say "I have found the drachma I lost." In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing among the angels of God over one repentant sinner.'

He also said, 'A man had two sons. The younger said to his father, "Father, let me have the share of the estate that would come to me." So the father divided the property between them. A few days later, the younger son got together everything he had and left for a distant country where he squandered his money on a life of debauchery.

'When he had spent it all, that country experienced a severe famine, and now he began to feel the pinch, so he hired himself out to one of the local inhabitants who put him on his farm to feed the pigs. And he would willingly have filled his belly with the husks the pigs were eating but no one offered him anything. Then he came to his senses and said, "How many of my father's paid servants have more food than they want, and here am I dying of hunger! I will leave this place and go to my father and say: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as one of your paid servants." So he left the place and went back to his father.

'While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with pity. He ran to the boy, clasped him in his arms and kissed him tenderly. Then his son said, "Father, I have sinned

against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son." But the father said to his servants, "Quick! Bring out the best robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the calf we have been fattening, and kill it; we are going to have a feast, a celebration, because this son of mine was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and is found." And they began to celebrate.

'Now the elder son was out in the fields, and on his way back, as he drew near the house, he could hear music and dancing. Calling one of the servants he asked what it was all about. "Your brother has come" replied the servant "and your father has killed the calf we had fattened because he has got him back safe and sound." He was angry then and refused to go in, and his father came out to plead with him; but he answered his father, "Look, all these years I have slaved for you and never once disobeyed your orders, yet you never offered me so much as a kid for me to celebrate with my friends. But, for this son of yours, when he comes back after swallowing up your property – he and his women – you kill the calf we had been fattening."

'The father said, "My son, you are with me always and all I have is yours. But it was only right we should celebrate and rejoice, because your brother here was dead and has come to life; he was lost and is found."

Sunday 18th September 2022

Entrance Antiphon

I am the salvation of the people, says the Lord.
Should they cry to me in any distress,
I will hear them, and I will be their Lord for ever.

Collect

O God, who founded all the commands of your sacred Law
upon love of you and of our neighbour,
grant that, by keeping your precepts,
we may merit to attain eternal life.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.

First reading

Amos 8:4-7

I will never forget your deeds, you who trample on the needy

Listen to this, you who trample on the needy
and try to suppress the poor people of the country,
you who say, 'When will New Moon be over
so that we can sell our corn,
and sabbath, so that we can market our wheat?
Then by lowering the bushel, raising the shekel,
by swindling and tampering with the scales,

we can buy up the poor for money,
and the needy for a pair of sandals,
and get a price even for the sweepings of the wheat.'
The Lord swears it by the pride of Jacob,
'Never will I forget a single thing you have done.'

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 112(113):1-2,4-8

Praise the Lord, who raises the poor.

or

Alleluia!

Praise, O servants of the Lord,
praise the name of the Lord!
May the name of the Lord be blessed
both now and for evermore!

Praise the Lord, who raises the poor.

or

Alleluia!

High above all nations is the Lord,
above the heavens his glory.
Who is like the Lord, our God,
who has risen on high to his throne
yet stoops from the heights to look down,
to look down upon heaven and earth?

Praise the Lord, who raises the poor.

or

Alleluia!

From the dust he lifts up the lowly,
from the dungheap he raises the poor
to set him in the company of princes,
yes, with the princes of his people.

Praise the Lord, who raises the poor.

or

Alleluia!

Second reading

1 Timothy 2:1-8

Pray for everyone to God, who wants everyone to be saved

My advice is that, first of all, there should be prayers offered for everyone – petitions, intercessions and thanksgiving – and especially for kings and others in authority, so that we may be able to live religious and reverent lives in peace and quiet. To do this is right, and will

please God our saviour: he wants everyone to be saved and reach full knowledge of the truth. For there is only one God, and there is only one mediator between God and mankind, himself a man, Christ Jesus, who sacrificed himself as a ransom for them all. He is the evidence of this, sent at the appointed time, and I have been named a herald and apostle of it and – I am telling the truth and no lie – a teacher of the faith and the truth to the pagans.

In every place, then, I want the men to lift their hands up reverently in prayer, with no anger or argument.

Gospel Acclamation

cf.Ac16:14

Alleluia, alleluia!
Open our heart, O Lord,
to accept the words of your Son.
Alleluia!

Or:

2Co8:9

Alleluia, alleluia!
Jesus Christ was rich,
but he became poor for your sake,
to make you rich out of his poverty.
Alleluia!

Gospel

Luke 16:1-13

You cannot be the slave of both God and money

Jesus said to his disciples:

'There was a rich man and he had a steward denounced to him for being wasteful with his property. He called for the man and said, "What is this I hear about you? Draw me up an account of your stewardship because you are not to be my steward any longer." Then the steward said to himself, "Now that my master is taking the stewardship from me, what am I to do? Dig? I am not strong enough. Go begging? I should be too ashamed. Ah, I know what I will do to make sure that when I am dismissed from office there will be some to welcome me into their homes."

Then he called his master's debtors one by one. To the first he said, "How much do you owe my master?" "One hundred measures of oil" was the reply. The steward said, "Here, take your bond; sit down straight away and write fifty." To another he said, "And you, sir, how much do you owe?" "One hundred measures of wheat" was the reply. The steward said, "Here, take your bond and write eighty."

'The master praised the dishonest steward for his astuteness. For the children of this world are more astute in dealing with their own kind than are the children of light.

'And so I tell you this: use money, tainted as it is, to win you friends, and thus make sure that when it fails you, they will welcome you into the tents of eternity. The man who can be trusted

in little things can be trusted in great; the man who is dishonest in little things will be dishonest in great. If then you cannot be trusted with money, that tainted thing, who will trust you with genuine riches? And if you cannot be trusted with what is not yours, who will give you what is your very own?

'No servant can be the slave of two masters: he will either hate the first and love the second, or treat the first with respect and the second with scorn. You cannot be the slave both of God and of money.'

Sunday 25th September 2022

Entrance Antiphon

Dn 3: 31, 29, 30, 43, 42

All that you have done to us, O Lord,
you have done with true judgement,
for we have sinned against you
and not obeyed your commandments.
But give glory to your name
and deal with us according to the bounty of your mercy.

Collect

O God, who manifest your almighty power
above all by pardoning and showing mercy,
bestow, we pray, your grace abundantly upon us
and make those hastening to attain your promises
heirs to the treasures of heaven.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.

First reading

Amos 6:1,4-7

Woe to those who live in luxury

The almighty Lord says this:

Woe to those ensconced so snugly in Zion
and to those who feel so safe on the mountain of Samaria,
those famous men of this first of nations
to whom the House of Israel goes as client.
Lying on ivory beds
and sprawling on their divans,
they dine on lambs from the flock,
and stall-fattened veal;
they bawl to the sound of the harp,

they invent new instruments of music like David,
they drink wine by the bowlful,
and use the finest oil for anointing themselves,
but about the ruin of Joseph they do not care at all.
That is why they will be the first to be exiled;
the sprawlers' revelry is over.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 145(146):7-10

My soul, give praise to the Lord.

or

Alleluia!

It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever,
 who is just to those who are oppressed.
It is he who gives bread to the hungry,
 the Lord, who sets prisoners free.

My soul, give praise to the Lord.

or

Alleluia!

It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind,
 who raises up those who are bowed down.
It is the Lord who loves the just,
 the Lord, who protects the stranger.

My soul, give praise to the Lord.

or

Alleluia!

The Lord upholds the widow and orphan
 but thwarts the path of the wicked.
The Lord will reign for ever,
 Zion's God, from age to age.

My soul, give praise to the Lord.

or

Alleluia!

Second reading

1 Timothy 6:11-16

Do all that you have been told, until the Appearing of the Lord

As a man dedicated to God, you must aim to be saintly and religious, filled with faith and love, patient and gentle. Fight the good fight of the faith and win for yourself the eternal life to which you were called when you made your profession and spoke up for the truth in front of many witnesses. Now, before God the source of all life and before Christ, who spoke up as a

witness for the truth in front of Pontius Pilate, I put to you the duty of doing all that you have been told, with no faults or failures, until the Appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who at the due time will be revealed by God, the blessed and only Ruler of all, the King of kings and the Lord of lords, who alone is immortal, whose home is in inaccessible light, whom no man has seen and no man is able to see: to him be honour and everlasting power. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Jn10:27

Alleluia, alleluia!
The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice,
says the Lord,
I know them and they follow me.
Alleluia!

Or:

2Co8:9

Alleluia, alleluia!
Jesus Christ was rich,
but he became poor for your sake,
to make you rich out of his poverty.
Alleluia!

Gospel

Luke 16:19-31

Dives and Lazarus

Jesus said to the Pharisees: 'There was a rich man who used to dress in purple and fine linen and feast magnificently every day. And at his gate there lay a poor man called Lazarus, covered with sores, who longed to fill himself with the scraps that fell from the rich man's table. Dogs even came and licked his sores. Now the poor man died and was carried away by the angels to the bosom of Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried.

'In his torment in Hades he looked up and saw Abraham a long way off with Lazarus in his bosom. So he cried out, "Father Abraham, pity me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in agony in these flames." "My son," Abraham replied "remember that during your life good things came your way, just as bad things came the way of Lazarus. Now he is being comforted here while you are in agony. But that is not all: between us and you a great gulf has been fixed, to stop anyone, if he wanted to, crossing from our side to yours, and to stop any crossing from your side to ours."

'The rich man replied, "Father, I beg you then to send Lazarus to my father's house, since I have five brothers, to give them warning so that they do not come to this place of torment

too." "They have Moses and the prophets," said Abraham "let them listen to them." "Ah no, father Abraham," said the rich man "but if someone comes to them from the dead, they will repent." Then Abraham said to him, "If they will not listen either to Moses or to the prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone should rise from the dead."

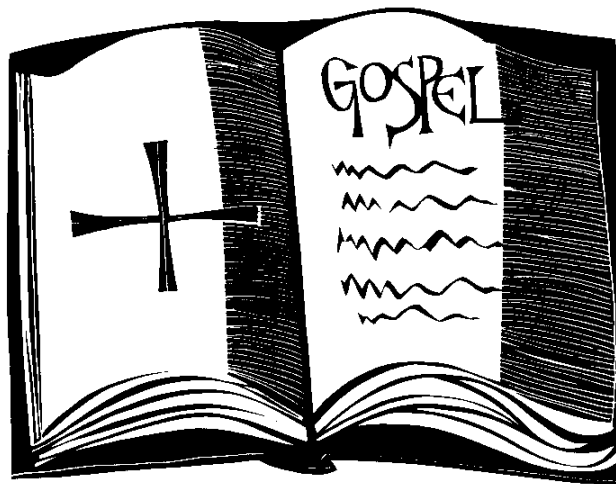
Homily

God loves the just but does not ignore the sinner, for whom there is always a place in his kingdom. The church is not an exclusive club. The Pharisees resent God's mercy. The parable of the lost sheep does not deny the goodness of the virtuous majority but makes the point that there's a special place for the repentant sinner. The lost coin is important to the careful housewife, and her joy at its recovery is shared because it is deeply felt. The sum may be modest but its sentimental value matters a lot to her. All are V.I.P.s in God's eyes, and especially what was lost and found.

But there is another side to this story: the Prodigal Son "came to his senses." He opened his eyes to see, his ears to hear; he reached out for help, and got in touch with reality. The father's welcome was extraordinary, but it could only happen because the son came back home. Are we willing to let the Father embrace us, and are we prepared to come to our senses too? His mercy is there for any of us who turn to him with all our hearts.

The parable of the prodigal son is a classic of narrative skill that is timelessly relevant. We need to know that a loving Father awaits our return home. We also need the reminder that the same loving God expects us to forgive one another and to keep in touch with one another. The joy of a son's homecoming was spoiled for the father by the sulking of the elder brother.

How sad that the elder brother resented his brother for having been such a waster in the past? God wants us all to be merciful. Leaving people helpless is no part of his plan. Though living under the same roof, the elder son was isolated from his father. Focussed on his own rights and needs, he could not stomach his brother's safe return. Calling him "this son of yours" must have grieved his father. Faithful and dutiful disciples need to be open to welcome home the wild ones, even the apparent wasters, for that is how things are done "up above", according to Jesus.





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.