



**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):

Father Richard A. Seabrook SSC

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

Chaplain's Facebook Group:

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

FATHER RICHARD'S WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

15th October 2023

TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

22nd October 2023

TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

29th October 2023

THIRTIETH 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.**

**Please remember to turn off your mobile phone
before our services begin. Please don't use a mobile phone in church.**

**Please remember to talk to God in prayer before our services begin. There
is plenty of time to talk to each other afterwards.
Your talking may distract someone else's praying.
Please keep a devotional silence.**

Father Richard's contact details are on the front of this newsletter.

Our Churchwardens are:

Peter Maude (churchwardenpeter@gmail.com)

Jennifer Saville (chaplaincywardenjennifer@gmail.com)

They also act as Joint Treasurers.

The Vice-Chairman of the Chaplaincy Council is:

Joan Berry (losbalconeswarden@gmail.com)

The Honorary Secretary to the Chaplaincy Council is:

Mary Western (honsectorrevieja@yahoo.com)

**We take the Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults seriously. Our Safeguarding Policy
is displayed at La Siesta and is available on our website:**

<https://www.c-of-e-torrevieja.com/safeguarding-policy/>

Our Safeguarding Officer is Anna Horsnell who can be contacted at

safeguardingtorrevieja@gmail.com

The Congregational Warden at La Siesta is:

Sue Maude (wardenlasiesta@gmail.com)

Our church Lago Jardín is in the process of being used again.

Nuestra Señora de la Asunción at Los Balcones is closed for a major rebuilding project.

Home Communion

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

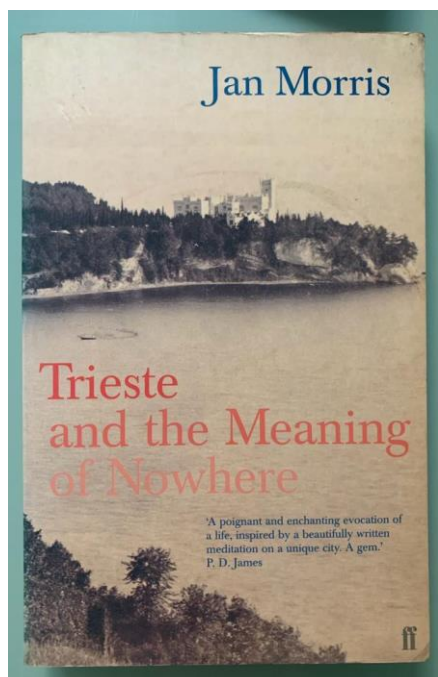
priestly ministry in the parish / chaplaincy. This means there can be a Priest available for you and for others with a priestly presence in the parish / chaplaincy.

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



Back in July, when I celebrated thirty years as a Priest in the Church of God, you gave me, generously and unexpectedly, a wonderful monetary gift. Thank you once again. As I have some holiday still I have decided to use it for – and share this with you – a trip to a city in Italy that I have always wanted to visit. Many years ago I read a lovely little book called *Trieste and the Meaning of Nowhere* by the travel writer Jan Morris, a city part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire until the end of the First World War, then given to Italy in 1919, a free territory after the Second World War and then handed back to Italy in 1954. Surrounded by the then Yugoslavia and now Slovenia with Croatia not very far away, it has been on my bucket list of places to visit. Thank you to all of you who so kindly gave towards my gift I am using your kindness to go to a place I have always wanted to visit. Thank you.

We have new gift aid envelopes. They have replaced the old brown ones. If you give in the collection by cash – or give one off donations to the Chaplaincy – and you are a UK taxpayer, I would encourage you to use the new envelopes. We convert the euros you give to sterling and then can claim an additional 25% on your donation to enhance your

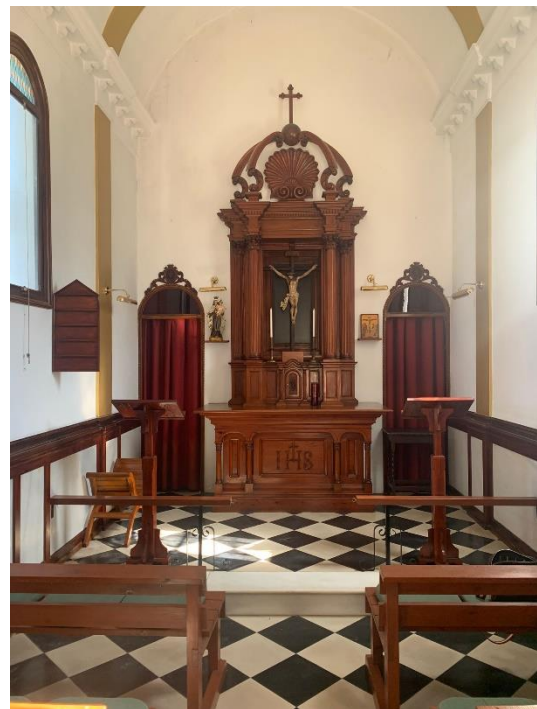
giving. Please do help the Chaplaincy. Remember we can only afford to pay half a stipend as it is and still we have a monthly deficit. I receive only half a stipend. So every little towards our financial situation helps. The envelopes are available as you come into church. **We also now have giving cards for those who give by standing order. We are grateful you give this way. These cards are available as you come into church. The idea is that the card is placed in the collection as a sign of your giving by standing order and as an offering and sign of your support for the Chaplaincy and the work of the church and her ministry here.**

Last week Sue Brassington and I met with the new Catholic Priest from San Roque in Torrevieja. His parish covers Nuestra Señora de la Asunción at Los Balcones, the Catholic church we have used for many years but since early 2020 has been closed for rebuilding. As you may know the project has stalled and no work done on the building since January of this year. We were hoping to return to the church for Holy Week earlier this year. I have to report to you there is no sign of any more progress on the church at this time and Father Paco could give no more information. So we have to remain patient.



But the good news is that Lago Jardín can be used again! Thank you for the working parties that have toiled at getting the church ready again for public worship and to be returned to reflect the glory of God for which it was dedicated. We will be using the church in a limited way and so on Friday 27th October when we have our Holy Hour from 1700 – 1800 **it will be at Lago Jardín church.** The church is on the Lago Jardín urbanisation which is opposite the Dña Monse hotel as you leave Torrevieja and go towards San Miguel de Salinas on the CV95. I hope you would like to come and see the church again, for maybe for the first time, and, most importantly, join in the Holy Hour.

A Holy Hour is a time of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. We believe that Our Lord is truly present in the Blessed Sacrament and so the presence of Christ is real indeed – not symbolic. More details are elsewhere on this newsletter. The Host, consecrated at a celebration of the Eucharist, is placed in the monstrance. Honoured with incense, we pray Evening Prayer and then there is a time of silent and led prayer. We conclude with Benediction – this is when the Priest makes the Sign of the Cross over us and truly Our Lord blesses us. It is lovely and beautiful devotion. I invite you to come along! Then please join me in the Pool Bar across from the church for a drink if you would like. (More photographs can be found on Facebook.) You can see the video about our Holy Hour at:



<https://www.facebook.com/anglicantorrevieja/posts/pfbid0fU4zYcEkJMgXgKpcEYduz1huK3faFqcMFkECAw6BWdGNxBcZQgEEMBzqxq6jvp6eol?mibextid=YxdKMJ>

Last week I went to Madrid to spend some time with Father Solomon Uche. Father Solomon is the curate at S. George's Madrid and the Bishop and Director of Training asked me some months ago to be his *Interim Training Incumbent* during the Chaplaincy vacancy in Madrid.

This is a supervisory role which is done remotely via Zoom but last week I was able to spend two days with Father Solomon in some liturgical training of how to celebrate the Mass correctly. Priests have a duty to God and to the people of God to ensure that the Eucharist is celebrated with dignity and in accordance with the tradition of the Church and the rubrics of the liturgical books. There is a right way of celebrating!

Finally, on both a personal note and some diocesan news, I have been elected to serve as one of the three clergy (*Proctors in Convocation*) who represent the Diocese in Europe on the General Synod of the Church of England. There was recently a by-election for two of these places and I have been elected by my fellow clergy. This will be my second time on the General Synod as I served as a Proctor in Convocation for the Diocese of Chelmsford from 2001 – 2005). This means I will be going to the General Synod three times a year in the UK. This Chaplaincy is extraordinarily well-represented in the wider Church: Both Joan Berry and I are on the Bishop's Council for the Diocese, I service on the Finance, Audit, and Personnel Committee of the Diocese, and now I've been elected to General Synod again.

May the Lord bless you all and keep you in his gracious love.

Your priest and friend,
Father Richard

Dates ahead:

Friday 27th October, 1700, NOW AT LAGO JARDÍN CHURCH
HOLY HOUR – A time of prayer in the presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament (*sunset is at 1912 so there is plenty of time to get home before it gets*

dark)



You are invited to come and pray in the presence of the Lord. We begin this hour of prayer by celebrating Evening Prayer together and then a period of silent prayer follows. The Blessed Sacrament, the Sacred Host, is placed in the monstrance (*see image to the left*) and we are truly close to Christ in his sacramental presence. Incense is offered to honour Our Lord's holy presence and as a sign of our prayers. Jesus

is truly present in the Blessed Sacrament. A time of silent prayer is interspersed with hymns and prayers. At the end the Priest blesses us with the Blessed Sacrament as he makes the sign of the cross with the monstrance. We then praise God for the presence of his son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the Eucharist:

Blessed and praised be Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Sacrament. Hosanna in excelsis!

Come quietly and in silence and be still. For the presence of the Lord, the Holy One is here.

Wednesday 1st November, ALL SAINTS'

1030 (please note time)

Holy Eucharist at La Siesta Church



On this day the Church and her faithful people give praise to God for the witness of the saints and their prayers, this great community of heaven who never cease praying for us day and night. We offer Mass to honour the saints of God, that countless number whose faith inspires us still.

*For all the saints who from their labours rest,
O Blest Communion, fellowship divine, alleluia!*

Saints of God, come to our aid!

Thursday 2nd November, ALL SOULS'

1030 (please note time)

Requiem Mass at La Siesta Church



This is the day in the life of the Church where we pray for our departed brothers and sisters and remember at the altar by name. This yearly commemoration enables us to give thanks for them and pray for them that they may be forever with God in eternity. If you would like a loved one remembered by name please write their name **IN CLEAR CAPITAL LETTERS** on the sheet at the back of church. Most importantly, don't leave it up to others to pray for them. You are invited to hear their names read out *and pray for them*. It is the greatest way we can honour those who have gone before us.

*+ Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them.
May they rest in peace. Amen.*

Monday 6th November, La Siesta Church

1030 (please note time) Praying The Holy Rosary



During the Pandemic many of us were introduced to praying the Holy Rosary each week online. Now we have an opportunity to come together as a group of praying Christians and bring our intentions of prayer together. More details will be given nearer the time and full teaching given. If you don't have a Rosary Father Richard has some spares but you might like to try and get one yourself (or ask him to get one for you).

Dates ahead for Advent and Christmass for your diaries now.

Advent Carol Service at La Siesta:
Monday 4th December at 10.30am.

Chaplaincy Christmass Quiz: Olive Tree, San Miguel de Salinas
Tuesday 5th December at 6.30 p.m. Cost 15,50€ euro plus 1€ tip.
Names and payment to Sandra Harbut as soon as possible please.

Holy Eucharist for the Immaculate Conception at La Siesta:
Friday 8th December at 10.30am.

Carol singing outside Lago Jardin:
Tuesday 12th December at 6 until 7pm.
Followed by drinks and tapas at the Pool Bar. Please see Liz Shouksmith.

Chaplaincy Christmass Lunch:
Sunday 17th December at 1.30pm, La Marina Bar, 20 euros.
Bookings and payment to Sue Maude as soon as possible please.

Holy Eucharist, Fourth Sunday of Advent, La Siesta:
Saturday 23rd December at 5.00pm.

Nine lessons and Carols, La Siesta:
Tuesday 19th December at 6.00pm.
Followed by shared buffet supper.

Midnight Mass at La Siesta:
Sunday 24th December at 11.30pm.

Christmass Day Mass of the Day:
Monday 25th December at 10.30am.



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)



Church of England Chaplaincy of SS Peter and Paul, Torrevieja

The Chalice containing the Precious Blood of Christ is offered for those who wish to receive it. Holy Communion is offered with the words "The Body of Christ" to which you say **Amen** before consuming the Sacred Host. The words "The Blood of Christ" are said to which you say **Amen** before receiving from the Chalice. The Chalice is optional.

INTINCTION IS NOT PERMITTED.

ONGOING INFORMATION FOR OUR THREE CHURCHES

1. **Lago Jardín Church** is in the process of being re-opened. Services will be advertised when they as and when they happen.
Friday 27th October 1700 Holy Hour
2. There is a building project to renovate the church at
Los Balcones, Nuestra Señora de la Asunción.
There is no indication when this will be completed.
3. **La Siesta:**

Sunday 15 th October	1130
Saturday 21 st October	1700
Saturday 28 th October	1700
Wednesday 1 st November	1030 - ALL SAINTS
Thursday 2 nd November	1030 - ALL SOULS
Sunday 5 th November	1130
Saturday 11 th November	1700 – <i>Eve of Remembrance Sunday</i>
Sunday 19 th November	1130
Saturday 25 th November	1700
Sunday 3 rd December	1130
Monday 4 th December	1030 – ADVENT CAROL SERVICE
Friday 8 th December	1030 – IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

There is a liturgical Facebook group.

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.

The Blessed Sacrament Lamp at Lago Jardín

The Blessed Sacrament has been removed from Lago Jardín.
It will be returned there soon.

Father Richard's Prayer List for October 2023:

Please pray for the sick and those in particular need at this time: Tony Sage, Eileen Shaw, Anna Horsnell. Liz Shouksmith, Chloe and Lorena, Peter John, Martin Skillen, Bert Nelson, Garth Sutherland, Andrew Little, Philip Howse, Jamie Hill, Raj Panchal, Peter Passey, Paul McNab, Lesley Critchley, Luke Thompson, Gwen Simmons, Gerry Hopkins.
Please help Father Richard by letting him know when people can be taken off the prayer list.



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).

Sunday 15th October 2023

Entrance Antiphon

Ps 129: 3-4

If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities,
Lord, who could stand?
But with you is found forgiveness,
O God of Israel.

Collect

May your grace, O Lord, we pray,
at all times go before us and follow after
and make us always determined
to carry out good works.
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

Isaiah 25:6-10

The Lord will prepare a banquet for every nation

On this mountain,
the Lord of hosts will prepare for all peoples
a banquet of rich food, a banquet of fine wines,
of food rich and juicy, of fine strained wines.
On this mountain he will remove
the mourning veil covering all peoples,
and the shroud enwrapping all nations,
he will destroy Death for ever.
The Lord will wipe away
the tears from every cheek;
he will take away his people's shame
everywhere on earth,
for the Lord has said so.
That day, it will be said: See, this is our God
in whom we hoped for salvation;
the Lord is the one in whom we hoped.
We exult and we rejoice
that he has saved us;
for the hand of the Lord
rests on this mountain.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 22(23)

In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for ever and ever.

The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures
where he gives me repose.
Near restful waters he leads me,
to revive my drooping spirit.

In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for ever and ever.

He guides me along the right path;
he is true to his name.
If I should walk in the valley of darkness
no evil would I fear.
You are there with your crook and your staff;
with these you give me comfort.

In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for ever and ever.

You have prepared a banquet for me
in the sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing.

In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for ever and ever.

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me
all the days of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell
for ever and ever.

In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for ever and ever.

Second reading

Philippians 4:12-14,19-20

**With the help of the One who gives me strength, there is nothing I
cannot master**

I know how to be poor and I know how to be rich too. I have been through my initiation and now I am ready for anything anywhere: full stomach or empty stomach, poverty or plenty. There is nothing I cannot master with the help of the One who gives me strength. All the same, it was good of you to share with me in my hardships. In return my God will fulfil all your needs, in Christ Jesus, as lavishly as only God can. Glory to God, our Father, for ever and ever. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Jn1:14,12

Alleluia, alleluia!
The Word was made flesh and lived among us:
to all who did accept him
he gave power to become children of God.
Alleluia!

Or:

cf.Ep1:17,18

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!

Gospel

Matthew 22:1-14

Invite everyone you can to the wedding

Jesus began to speak to the chief priests and elders of the people in parables: 'The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a feast for his son's wedding. He sent his servants to call those who had been invited, but they would not come. Next he sent some more servants. "Tell those who have been invited" he said "that I have my banquet all prepared, my oxen and fattened cattle have been slaughtered, everything is ready. Come to the wedding." But they were not interested: one went off to his farm, another to his business, and the rest seized his servants, maltreated them and killed them. The king was furious. He despatched his troops, destroyed those murderers and burnt their town. Then he said to his servants, "The wedding is ready; but as those who were invited proved to be unworthy, go to the crossroads in the town and invite everyone you can find to the wedding." So these servants went out on to the roads and collected together everyone they could find, bad and good alike; and the wedding hall was filled with guests. When the king came in to look at the guests he noticed one man who was not wearing a wedding garment, and said to him, "How did you get in here, my friend, without a wedding garment?" And the man was silent. Then the king said to the attendants, "Bind him hand and foot and throw him out into the dark, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth." For many are called, but few are chosen.'

Sunday 22nd October 2023

Entrance Antiphon

Cf. Ps 16: 6, 8

To you I call; for you will surely heed me, O God;
turn your ear to me; hear my words.
Guard me as the apple of your eye;
in the shadow of your wings protect me.

Collect

Almighty ever-living God,
grant that we may always conform our will to yours
and serve your majesty in sincerity of 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**Isaiah 45:1,4-6****I have taken Cyrus by his right hand to subdue nations before him**

Thus says the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus,
whom he has taken by his right hand
to subdue nations before him
and strip the loins of kings,
to force gateways before him
that their gates be closed no more:
'It is for the sake of my servant Jacob,
of Israel my chosen one,
that I have called you by your name,
conferring a title though you do not know me.
I am the Lord, unrivalled;
there is no other God besides me.
Though you do not know me, I arm you
that men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun
that, apart from me, all is nothing.'

Responsorial Psalm**Psalm 95(96):1,3-5,7-10**

Give the Lord glory and power.

O sing a new song to the Lord,
sing to the Lord all the earth.
Tell among the nations his glory
and his wonders among all the peoples.

Give the Lord glory and power.

The Lord is great and worthy of praise,
to be feared above all gods;
the gods of the heathens are naught.
It was the Lord who made the heavens,

Give the Lord glory and power.

Give the Lord, you families of peoples,

give the Lord glory and power;
give the Lord the glory of his name.
Bring an offering and enter his courts.

Give the Lord glory and power.

Worship the Lord in his temple.

O earth, tremble before him.

Proclaim to the nations: 'God is king.'

He will judge the peoples in fairness.

Give the Lord glory and power.

Second reading

1 Thessalonians 1:1-5

We constantly remember your faith, your love and your hope

From Paul, Silvanus and Timothy, to the Church in Thessalonika which is in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ; wishing you grace and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

We always mention you in our prayers and thank God for you all, and constantly remember before God our Father how you have shown your faith in action, worked for love and persevered through hope, in our Lord Jesus Christ.

We know, brothers, that God loves you and that you have been chosen, because when we brought the Good News to you, it came to you not only as words, but as power and as the Holy Spirit and as utter conviction.

Gospel Acclamation

Jn17:17

Alleluia, alleluia!

Your word is truth, O Lord:
consecrate us in the truth.

Alleluia!

Or:

Ph2:15-16

Alleluia, alleluia!

You will shine in the world like bright stars
because you are offering it the word of life.

Alleluia!

Gospel

Matthew 22:15-21

Give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar

The Pharisees went away to work out between them how to trap Jesus in what he said. And they sent their disciples to him, together with the Herodians, to say, 'Master, we know that you are an honest man and teach the way of God in an honest way, and that you are not afraid of anyone, because a man's rank means nothing to you. Tell us your opinion, then. Is it permissible to pay taxes to Caesar or not?' But Jesus was aware of their malice and replied, 'You hypocrites! Why do you set this trap for me? Let me see the money you pay the tax with.' They handed him a denarius, and he said, 'Whose head is this? Whose name?' 'Caesar's' they replied. He then said to them, 'Very well, give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar – and to God what belongs to God.'

Sunday 29th October 2023

Entrance Antiphon

Cf. Ps 104: 3-4

Let the hearts that seek the Lord rejoice;
turn to the Lord and his strength;
constantly seek his face.

Collect

Almighty ever-living God,
increase our faith, hope and charity,
and make us love what you command,
so that we may merit what you promise.
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 22:20-26

If you are harsh with the widow and orphan, my anger will flare against you

The Lord said to Moses, 'Tell the sons of Israel this:

“You must not molest the stranger or oppress him, for you lived as strangers in the land of Egypt. You must not be harsh with the widow, or with the orphan; if you are harsh with them, they will surely cry out to me, and be sure I shall hear their cry; my anger will flare and I shall kill you with the sword, your own wives will be widows, your own children orphans.

“If you lend money to any of my people, to any poor man among you, you must not play the usurer with him: you must not demand interest from him.

“If you take another's cloak as a pledge, you must give it back to him before sunset. It is all the covering he has; it is the cloak he wraps his body in; what else would he sleep in? If he cries to me, I will listen, for I am full of pity.”

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 17(18):2-4,47,51

I love you, Lord, my strength.

I love you, Lord, my strength,
my rock, my fortress, my saviour.
My God is the rock where I take refuge;
my shield, my mighty help, my stronghold.
The Lord is worthy of all praise,
when I call I am saved from my foes.

I love you, Lord, my strength.

Long life to the Lord, my rock!
Praised be the God who saves me,
He has given great victories to his king
and shown his love for his anointed.

I love you, Lord, my strength.

Second reading

1 Thessalonians 1:5-10

**You broke with idolatry and became servants of God; you are now
waiting for his Son**

You observed the sort of life we lived when we were with you, which was for your instruction, and you were led to become imitators of us, and of the Lord; and it was with the joy of the Holy Spirit that you took to the gospel, in spite of the great opposition all round you. This has made you the great example to all believers in Macedonia and Achaia since it was from you that the word of the Lord started to spread – and not only throughout Macedonia and Achaia, for the news of your faith in God has spread everywhere. We do not need to tell other people about it: other people tell us how we started the work among you, how you broke with idolatry when you were converted to God and became servants of the real, living God; and how you are now waiting for Jesus, his Son, whom he raised from the dead, to come from heaven to save us from the retribution which is coming.

Gospel Acclamation

cf.Ac16:14

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

Or:

Jn14:23

Alleluia, alleluia!

If anyone loves me he will keep my word,
and my Father will love him,
and we shall come to him.
Alleluia!

Gospel

Matthew 22:34-40

The commandments of love

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees they got together and, to disconcert him, one of them put a question, 'Master, which is the greatest commandment of the Law?' Jesus said, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second resembles it: You must love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang the whole Law, and the Prophets also.'

Prayer over the Offerings

Look, we pray, O Lord,
on the offerings we make to your majesty,
that whatever is done by us in your service
may be directed above all to your glory.
Through Christ our Lord.

Communion Antiphon

Cf. Ps 19: 6

We will ring out our joy at your saving help
and exult in the name of our God.

Or:

Eph 5: 2

Christ loved us and gave himself up for us,
as a fragrant offering to God.

Prayer after Communion

May your Sacraments, O Lord, we pray,
perfect in us what lies within them,
that what we now celebrate in signs
we may one day possess in truth.
Through Christ our Lord.

Homily 15th October

Immediately after criticizing the religious leaders through the parable of the tenants in last Sunday's Gospel, Jesus proceeded to tell another parable, again directed at the religious leaders. We hear this parable in today's Gospel.

In the parable of the wedding feast, Jesus offers an image of the kingdom of heaven using the symbol of a wedding banquet. In today's first reading from the prophet Isaiah and in today's psalm, the Lord's goodness is evident in the symbol of a feast of good food and wine. Jesus' listeners would have been familiar with the image of a wedding feast as a symbol for God's salvation. They would consider themselves to be the invited guests. Keeping this in mind helps us to understand the critique Jesus makes with this parable. The context for this parable is the growing tension between Jesus and the Jewish religious leaders in Jerusalem. This has been the case for the past two Sundays and will continue to be true for the next several weeks.

The parable Jesus tells is straightforward. The king dispatches his servants to invite the guests to the wedding feast that he is planning for his son. The listeners would have been surprised to learn that the first guests refused the invitation. Who would refuse the king's invitation? A second dispatch of servants follows. Again to the listeners' great surprise, some guests ignore the invitation. Some of the invited guests even go so far as to mistreat and kill the servants. The king invokes his retribution against these murderers by destroying them and burning their city.

We might stop here for a moment. Why would some guests kill the servants sent to invite them to the king's wedding feast? It might be possible that the king was a tyrant, evidenced by the destruction of the city of those who refused his invitation. But if we follow this idea, then the allegory seems to be about something other than the kingdom of heaven. It is more likely that the destruction of the city would have been a powerful image corresponding to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70, which would have been an important event for Matthew's audience.

With the invited guests now deemed unworthy to attend the king's wedding feast, the servants are sent to invite whomever they can find. The guests arrive, but it appears that accepting the king's invitation brings certain obligations. The guest who failed to dress in the appropriate wedding attire is cast out of the feast. We are reminded that while many are invited to the kingdom of heaven, not all are able to meet its requirements. God invites us to his feast, giving us his salvation. Yet he asks us to repent for our sins.

Jesus' message in the parable cautions against exclusive beliefs about the kingdom of heaven. The parable also teaches about humility. Those who assume that they are the invited guests may find that they have refused the invitation, and so others are invited in their place. To accept the invitation is also to accept its obligations. God wants our full conversion in complete acceptance of his mercy.

Homily 22nd October

In today's Gospel Jesus and the religious leaders in Jerusalem continue their tense exchange of questions and challenges. At this point the disciples of the Pharisees, together with the Herodians, try to entrap Jesus by their question about the payment of taxes.

Matthew sets up an unusual partnership between the Pharisees and the Herodians. The Herodians were supporters of Herod Antipas, a Jewish political leader who collaborated with

the Romans. Such collaboration would have required a compromised observance of the Mosaic Law. The Pharisees, on the other hand, taught scrupulous observance of the Mosaic Law and opposed Roman occupation. Herodians favored the payment of taxes; the Pharisees opposed it. The Herodians and the Pharisees approach Jesus, asking that he take sides in their dispute. If Jesus answers with the Pharisees, he shows himself to be an enemy of Rome. If he answers with the Herodians, he offends popular Jewish religious sensibilities.

Jesus' response to this attempt to trap him exposes the guile of his questioners. From his first words to them, Jesus shows that he is very much aware of what they are trying to do. He asks to see a Roman coin, which is readily provided to him. It may have come from the hand of a Herodian, but the Pharisees show themselves to be quite willing to accept this compromise. Jesus has already exposed the Pharisees as hypocrites.

Jesus takes his response one step further. He asks that his questioners examine the coin. Agreeing that it is Caesar's image on the coin, Jesus tells them that it must belong to Caesar. Avoiding the question of lawfulness altogether, Jesus answers their question with simple logic. Then, going further still, Jesus tells them that their obligation is to pay to God that which belongs to God.

Jesus' response to the Herodians and Pharisees suggests the ethic that Christians ought to adopt. It reminds us of the importance of keeping things in their proper perspective. Do we attach ourselves to worldly things at the expense of the love and honour that we owe to God?

Homily 29th October

This week's Gospel follows close behind the Gospel read last Sunday. It is the last of three questions put to Jesus by Jewish religious leaders who are trying to trick him into saying something that might get him arrested. This reminds us that the context for today's reading is the mounting tension between Jesus and the religious leaders in Jerusalem.

The Herodians and the Pharisees asked the first question, which was about taxes. The Sadducees asked the second question, which was about the Resurrection (see Matthew 22:22-33). The third question, considered in today's Gospel, is asked by a Pharisee who asks Jesus about the greatest of the commandments.

The question requires Jesus to interpret the Law of Moses. The Mosaic Law consists of the Ten Commandments and many additional rules, numbering over six hundred. Adherence to the Mosaic Law, for a devout Jew, is an expression of faithfulness to God's covenant with Israel. The ranking of the Commandments was regularly debated among the teachers of the Law.

Jesus answers the Pharisees' question with a two-fold summary. Jesus says that all of the commandments can be summarized in two commandments: love God and love your neighbor. Both of these were central elements of the religious tradition Jesus learned from his Jewish community. Indeed these continue to be central aspects of contemporary Jewish religious understanding. Jesus' response to his questioners proposed an integral connection between these two aspects of the Jewish Law. Love of God finds its expression in our love for our neighbour.



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.