

Poem:
Jesus at the Sermon on the Mount

Did Jesus use a modem
 At the Sermon on the Mount?
 Did He ever try a broadcast fax
 To send His message out?
 Did the disciples carry beepers
 As they went about their route?

Did Jesus use a modem
 At the Sermon on the Mount?
 Did Paul use a Laptop
 With lots of RAM and ROM?
 Were his letters posted on a BBS
 At PaulRome.Com?

Did the man from Macedonia
 Send an E-Mail saying "Come?"
 Did Paul use a Laptop
 With lots of RAM and ROM?
 Did Moses use a Joystick
 at the Parting of the Sea?
 And a Satellite Guidance Tracking System
 To show him where to be?

Did he write the law on tablets
 Or are they really on CD?
 Did Moses use a joystick
 At the parting of the Sea?
 Did Jesus really die for us
 One day upon a tree?
 Or was it just a hologram
 Or technical wizardry?

Can you download the Live Action Video Clip
 To play on your PC?
 Did Jesus really die for us
 One day upon a tree?
 Have the wonders of this modern age
 Made you question what is true?

How a single man in a simple time
 Could offer life anew?
 How a sinless life, a cruel death
 then a glorious life again
 Could offer more to a desperate world
 Than the inventions of man?
 If in your life, the voice of God
 Is sometimes hard to hear.
 With other voices calling
 His doesn't touch your ear.
 Then set aside your laptop and modem
 And all your fancy gear.
 And open your Bible, open your heart
 And let your Father draw you near.

by Ellis Bush



The Parish of
STONY STRATFORD
 with
CALVERTON

St Mary & St Giles, Stony Stratford
with All Saints, Calverton
THE SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (Sexagesima)
 19th February AD 2017

"So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect." What does this mean? Becoming perfect is not about how people look at us but how we look at others.

How do people typically look at each other? Well, as we know: we divide into factions and we look at the other side as if they were idiots. This is called polarization. It means not only that we don't see the other person's point of view but that we don't want to. Polarization doesn't just affect politicians. History teaches us that it's the ordinary way humans treat each other - on the level of society and even in our closest relationships. It takes a great effort - and a special grace - to see things from the other person's perspective.

Yet that's what Jesus asks us to do. Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect. He makes the sun rise on the bad and the good and causes the rain to fall on the just and the unjust. People in Palestine considered rain a blessing. God blesses the just and the unjust. To be perfect means to desire a blessing not only for the person who treats one well but the person who treats one badly.

One day Mother Teresa went to a local bakery to ask for bread for orphan children. The baker, outraged at people begging bread from him, spat in her face and refused. Mother Teresa calmly took out her handkerchief, wiped the spit from her face and said to the baker, "Okay, that was for me. Now what about the bread for the orphans?" Silence followed and the baker gave her the bread.

Here we see the wisdom St. Paul describes - the hidden wisdom referred to in last week's homily. It's not a feel good wisdom. It's the cross.



Welcome to the Parish Church where, after the example of the early church, we celebrate the Eucharist: the "apostles teaching and fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42)

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Honorary Assistant Priest: Fr Joseph Loveday SSC - Tel: 01327 351511

Church Army Officer: Sister Janet Northing CA - Tel: 01908 562148
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Arrangements for Banns, Holy Matrimony & Baptisms:
 May be made by contacting Fr Ross on 01908 562148

Confessions: May be made after Masses or by appointment.

Parish Website: www.parishstonystratfordcalverton.com

To Hire the Parish Hall: 'phone Nicola Crompton on 07979 653515

INFORMATION

The Order of Mass is on the laminated card. The references to the Scripture Readings, which may be either listened to or followed in the Bibles provided, along with the Psalm and the Prayer of the Faithful are also included in this Sheet. Hymns are unannounced but are indicated on the boards towards the front of the Nave.

AA Large Print Orders of Service are available at St Mary & St Giles. Please ask a Sidesman for a copy.



A Loop System is in operation at St Mary & St Giles - please set hearing aids to the "T" position.



Access for the Disabled at St Mary & St Giles is via the path on the north side of the church. At All Saints it is via the South Porch.



Gluten-Free Hosts: if you are on a Gluten-Free diet and would like a Gluten-Free Host when you receive Holy Communion please mention this before Mass to one of the Sidesmen who will arrange this for you. Please make yourself known to the Parish Priest so that he is aware of your need.



Collections: for the continuing mission of Christ are taken while the altar and gifts of bread and wine are being prepared. If you are a visitor and a taxpayer and would like to make a donation please use the Gift Aid envelopes provided at the end of each row - please fill in your details. This enables us to reclaim, from the Inland Revenue, 25p for every £1 donated.



We observe a period of quiet prayer and reflection before the celebration of Mass, between the end of the Organ Voluntary and the Sacristy Bell being rung, in order that we may be better prepared to worship almighty God.

Reception of Holy Communion: All Baptised and Confirmed Christians are encouraged to receive Holy Communion. If you are unwell or uncertain about receiving the Precious Blood please do still receive the Host. Our Chalice Assistants are not authorised to permit the intincting (dipping) of the Host.



Please join us at the back of church for tea or coffee after Mass. A priest will be near the main door, shortly after the end of Mass, should you need to talk with one.

Please take this Service Sheet home with you and use as part of your devotions during the week.

At St Mary & St Giles this week:

Sidesmen Team 3
Serving Team: Team 1
Offertory bearers: Daniel & Louise Mullins
Church Gardeners: Team 2
Church Cleaners Team 3

Worshipping Numbers Last Sunday: 136

Worshipping Numbers on the weekdays prior: 28

Prayer Thought: The sacrament of the Eucharist, reminds us of the Church, the body of Christ. One of the four notes, distinguishing characteristics, of the Church is that it is holy: One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. We are God's holy people, called to be holy as God himself is holy.

The Collect

Almighty God, you have created the heavens and the earth and made us in your own image: teach us to discern your hand in all your works and your likeness in all your children; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit reigns supreme over all things, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD (SIT)

The First Reading Leviticus 19:1-2, 17-18
Reader at SMSG: Lesley Salter
Reader at All Saints: Diane West

(Old Testament Page 87 in the Bibles) the Israelites, God's chosen people, are told that they must be 'holy, for the Lord their God is holy. Each one is to love his neighbour as himself. In the Gospel Jesus explains that these truths apply in a fuller sense to Christians.

The Responsorial Psalm (from Psalm 103)

R/. The Lord is compassion and love.

My soul, give thanks to the Lord,
all my being, bless his holy name.
My soul, give thanks to the Lord
and never forget all his blessings. ®

It is he who forgives all your guilt,
who heals everyone of your ills,
who redeems your life from the grave,
who crowns you with love and compassion. ®

The Lord is compassion and love,
slow to anger and rich in mercy.
He does not treat us according to our sins
nor repay us according to our faults. ®

As far as the east is from the west
so far des he remove our sins.

As a father has compassion on his sons,
the Lord has pity on those who fear him®

St. Paul recognizes the existence of a natural law when he describes the moral responsibility of those ancients who did not have the benefit of the Law revealed by God to the People of Israel through Moses. "Pagans," he says, "who never heard of the Law but are led by reason to do what the Law commands, may not actually 'possess' the Law, but they can be said to 'be' the Law. They can point to the substance of the Law engraved on their hearts - they can call a witness, that is, their own conscience—they have accusation and defence, that is, their own inner mental dialogue" (Romans 2:14-15).

A lazily repeated assertion: has become increasingly commonplace among certain elements who have a love of pithy soundbites, but lack any real depth of study. The assertion to which I am referring is that "religion is the cause of all wars." John Lennon would give voice to this ill-founded belief in the lyrics of his song "Imagine." This becomes a heart-chilling vision in which Lennon imagines a world with no hope of heaven and no fear of hell. And he adds, "no religion too." Only then, he suggests will "all the people" be "living life in peace." Yet the fact is, the wars of the last century, bringing with them atrocities and destruction on a scale never seen before, were largely inspired by secularist and, indeed, openly anti-Christian ideologies. In reality, it is human sin which lies at the root cause of war. Conflicts, writes St. James, arise within the human heart wherever "bitter jealousy and selfish ambition" are found (James 3: 14). The Church declares that Christ came to "save us from our sins," to enable us to give glory to God and to bring peace amongst men. Christ calls all who would follow Him to have, as St. Paul's also teaches: "no ambition except to do good" (Titus 2:14).

THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH

7th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (Sexagesima)
8:30am Morning Prayer at St Mary & St Giles
9:30am PARISH MASS at St Mary & St Giles
11:00am FAMILY MASS at All Saints
Intention: Our Parish

Monday: Feria
9:30am 'Squeals on Wheels' in the Parish Hall
8:00pm Bellringing Practice
Pray for: the Sick, Housebound & Handicapped

Tuesday: St Peter Damian, Bishop & Doctor
10:30am Mass + Elevenses at All Saints
Intention: For all Bishops

Wednesday: The Chair of St Peter, Apostle
7:30pm Mass at St Mary & St Giles
7:30pm Milton Keynes Deanery Synod
Intention: For the Unity of the Church

Thursday: St Polycarp, Bishop & Martyr
10:30am Mass at St Mary & St Giles
2:00pm Rector to Bless Grave & Memorial to Miss Ellen Keward
2:30pm Calverton Almshouses Trustees
Intention: For those facing martyrdom today

Friday: Feria
8:00am Mass at SMSG Sch (North Site)
7:30pm Parish Singers Rehearsal
Intention: For those falsely imprisoned

Saturday: Feria
3:00pm Family Organ Recital at SMSG by Laurence Caldecotte
Pray for: Visitors to our Parish Churches

Next Sunday:
8th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (Quinquagesima)
8:30am Morning Prayer at St Mary & St Giles
9:30am PARISH MASS at St Mary & St Giles
11:00am FAMILY MASS at All Saints
1:00pm Holy Baptism
Intention: Our Parish

Readings next Sunday 8th Sunday in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Isaiah 49: 14-15
Psalm: 62 (part)
2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 4:1-5
Gospel: Matthew 6:24-34



Carthusian monk. He failed. He just hadn't got what it took. He decided to become a permanent pilgrim and walked to the shrines all over Europe. He was on the pilgrimage to St James at Compostella when he heard a human moan and found a man lying half-killed by robbers. Benedict stopped, bathed and dressed the man's wounds. Just at that moment two horsemen came along and took Benedict to be a robber. Well, you've seen this scene in the soaps, haven't you; someone finds a body, bends down, picks up the smoking gun to look at it, then the police walk in..... Benedict was bound and dragged behind their horses to the nearest town gaol and locked up. The town was St Bertrand. However the wounded man soon recovered and Benedict was freed.

Many people, in such circumstances would have left the area immediately, but not Benedict. He stayed at St Bertrand for a fortnight, helping in the hospital.

Eventually Benedict settled in Rome, spending his time with the poor. He lived rough, but spent nearly all his time in the churches, praying. He had amazing spiritual gifts. He could read people's minds and see deep into their souls. Like a very few people he could predict the future: he foretold the French Revolution. He had hardly anything to eat but would often give away what food he had to other beggars. Benedict lived nine years like this, then one Holy Week (1783) he collapsed at Mass and died.

In his life Benedict was thought by many to be a failure. He thought he was a failure too. He spent years trying to be a monk, something that he wasn't meant to be. Do we spend time and waste energy trying to be what God doesn't intend us to be?

A lot of the time we look at things in the short term and can't see further than the end of our noses. God doesn't do that. Neither does the Church. In 1881 Benedict was canonized. Saint

Benedict Joseph Labre is the patron saint of tramps and the homeless.

Cicero on Natural Law: "There is a true law, a right reason, conformable to nature, universal, unchangeable, eternal, whose commands urge us to duty, and whose prohibitions restrain us from evil. Whether it enjoins or forbids, the good respect its injunctions, and the wicked treat them with indifference. This law cannot be contradicted by any other law, and is not liable either to derogation or abrogation. Neither the senate nor the people can give us any dispensation for not obeying this universal law of justice. It needs no other expositor and interpreter than our own conscience. It is not one thing at Rome and another at Athens; one thing today and another tomorrow; but in all times and nations this universal law must for ever reign, eternal and imperishable. It is the sovereign master and emperor of all beings. God himself is its author,—its promulgator,—its enforcer. He who obeys it not, flies from himself, and does violence to the very nature of man. For his crime he must endure the severest penalties hereafter, even if he avoid the usual misfortunes of the present life." *De Re Publica IOf The Republic, Book III Section 22*

N.B. a definition of Natural Law:

As distinct from revealed law, it is "nothing else than the rational creature's participation in the eternal law" (Summa Theologica, 1a 2ae, quest. 91, art. 2). As coming from God, the natural law is what God has produced in the world of creation; as coming to human beings, it is what they know (or can know) of what God has created.

It is therefore called natural law because everyone is subject to it from birth (*natio*), because it contains only those duties which are derivable from human nature itself, and because, absolutely speaking, its essentials can be grasped by the unaided light of human reason.

The Second Reading 1 Corinthians 3:16-23

Reader at SMSG: Tricia Brassington

(New Testament Page 139 in the Bibles)
Paul reminds the Corinthians that the Holy Spirit dwells in the Church, the people of God. They are' the temple of God and, consequently, should be holy.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! Whoever keeps Christ's word, in him truly love for God is perfected. **Alleluia!**

The Gospel Matthew 5:38-48

(New Testament Page 4 in the Bibles)
Christ tells us that our holiness should be modelled on the infinite love and mercy of God. We should forgive injuries and be kind to all, even to our enemies.

The Prayer of the Faithful

(Intercessor at SMSG: Matthew Lucas)

Priest: My brothers and sisters, we are gathered to celebrate the mystery of our salvation in Jesus Christ. Let us ask God the Father to open for all the world this fountain of life and blessing.

Intercessor: For all who have dedicated themselves to God..... that he will help them to be faithful to their promise, let us pray to the Lord:

V/. Lord, hear us.

R/. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

For peace among nations.....that God may rid the world of violence, and let us serve him in freedom, let us pray to the Lord:

For our parish and our common life..... that we may hearken to the voice of the Lord and obey his commands, let us pray to the Lord:

For the sick and infirm... Fiddy Abraham, Anna Archer, Gerry Bonner, Shirley Brown, Steve Cooper, Larry Francis, Jane Holman, Terry Mason, Sue Maton, Isla Mullins, Pete, Tony Oakley, Wendy... and

for the aged who suffer from loneliness and infirmity, that we will help sustain them by our love, let us pray to the Lord:

For the faithful departed... Henry Blake, Muriel Francis, Eileen Haseldine, Cyril Millward, Betty Spicer... and for those whose anniversaries of death occur during this week...19th Melville Somerton, Malcolm Ward; 22nd Isao Iwase, Rose Shillingford; 23rd John Payne (priest), John Barnes, Wendy Herbert; 24th George Parsons, Violet Wright, Les Mathers, Jeffrey Coles; 25th Emma Read, Eva Tomkins Dulcie Chown, Charles Tracey, Duncan Aird... that they may be granted the fullness of life and peace, let us pray to the Lord:

✠ Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord.

And let light perpetual shine upon them.

For all of us gathered here..... that God will teach us to use wisely the good things he has given us, that we may be drawn closer to him, and to the eternal blessings he promises, let us pray to the Lord

Priest: Father, hear the prayers of your people and grant us what you have inspired us to ask of you in faith. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Communion Reflection:

The Eucharist is a Sacrament, an indication that what it stands for, that of which it is a sign, can and must become a reality in our lives through the all-powerful grace of God. We are called to be holy. Communion with Christ the bread of life, the source of life, brings us this holiness. This holiness is not something merely internal, within our souls. Communion with Christ, with the Body of Christ, in the Eucharist must mean concern for and communion with Christ's brothers and sisters around us, in particular with the weak, the neglected, the hungry. May our communion with the living Christ in this Eucharist bring us into that wider communion with all that Christ and the Eucharist stand for.

PARISH NEWS & NOTICES

2018 - Parish Celebration: Bishop Jonathan wants us to mark the important part our Parish played in the Oxford Movement with a major celebration for both Parish Churches. It seems fitting to do this next year when it will be 160 years since Rector Perceval died and when we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Re-Consecration of the now St Mary & St Giles Church.

As part of these celebrations it would be good to produce an historical record of the Parish. There have been small publications in the past, but these are now out of print. To that end, the Rector would be pleased to receive copies of historical documents, or the loan of former publications, and pointers as to what records are available online and still in print. *Thank you.*

Parish Weekend Pilgrimage to The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham 2017:

Thank you to all those who have booked places so far. Please could all completed booking forms along with deposits of £30 per person be given to Fr Ross as soon as possible, so that we can give the Shrine an early indication of numbers and secure rooms. If you have not been to Walsingham before this is an ideal introduction to the wonderful ministry of the Shrine. Fr Ross or any previous pilgrims will be only too pleased to tell you more.

DVD Presentation on Walsingham: a number have people have asked if more could be explained about Walsingham and the Pilgrimages that take place there. It is said that 'a picture paints a thousand words,' so perhaps a DVD presentation may paint millions! Fr Ross will be showing a DVD produced by the Shrine in the Parish Hall This will be of interest to those who have been on Pilgrimage and to those who might be con-

sidering doing so, but really would like to know more about what happens on a weekend Pilgrimage. So make a date in your diary for the 15th March after the 7:30pm Mass. See Fr Ross for more details.

Advent Boxes: Thank you to everyone who returned their Advent Boxes and/or participated in Carol Singing plus helped make the Christingle Service such a success. The final total of all monies raised for the MK Winter Night Shelter Project is £1582.12 - the largest amount we have collected.

Looking ahead: Lent begins with Ash Wednesday which, this year, is observed on 1st March. Easter Day is observed on 16th April. In the last few years trying to hold a Lent Course on a weekday evening has proved not to be a good time to get a sufficient number of people to attend; and yet there is a clear need for such a Course. Fr Ross would be grateful to hear from people as to what day/time of the week would be possible for a goodly number of people to participate.

Palm Crosses: Thank you to those who have returned their Palm Crosses so far. Those still to return them may hand them in to our Sacristan John in the Sacristy as soon as possible in order that he can burn them to make the ashes for Ash Wednesday. Those returning them to All Saints should hand them to the Rector, who will then give them to John.

1st March - Ash Wednesday Masses: this year as well as the 9:30am Said Mass and the 7:30pm Sung Mass at St Mary & St Giles, I am proposing to celebrate an 11:30am Mass at All Saints to be followed by a Lent Lunch of Soup, Bread and Cheese. Offers of soup, bread & cheese and help would be appreciated. Donations will go towards our Lenten Charity: The Additional Curates Society.

Lent Boxes: Our Lenten Appeal this year will be for the Additional Curates Society and Lent Boxes have been ordered and are available in both our churches as from today.

Lent Lunches: as well as the Lent Lunch on Ash Wednesday, there will also be lunches held on the Saturdays of Lent. A list of the dates can be found on the free-standing notice board at St Mary & St Giles, and offers of groups of volunteers to 'host' each lunch and provide soup and/or bread & cheese would be very much appreciated.

A Journey to the Cross: On Wednesday evenings during Lent the Mass will begin in the Parish Hall with a DVD presentation of one of a series of images of Christ's journey to the Cross. Each one includes reflective words, scripture references, a short prayer and concludes with one verse of a hymn. Mass will then follow church. The same pattern will be followed with the evening Masses on the first three days of Holy Week.

Sainsbury's Active Kids Vouchers: It's that time of year again when our Church School is collecting Sainsbury's Active Kids Vouchers 2017. If you, family members or friends shop in Sainsbury's and receive any vouchers, then please pass them to Kieran or Fr Ross We are collecting vouchers until 2nd May. Once all the vouchers are in and collated they will be used to get equipment for P.E. Thank you.

Invitation to the Calcutta Brasserie: on Tuesday, 28th March at 7pm. The Music for All group is organising a meal at the Calcutta Brasserie as a fundraiser, but mainly as a fun occasion for all who would like to enjoy an evening in good company with good food you haven't had to cook yourself! The price is £18

per person, the normal price for a 'Banquet meal' at the Calcutta Brasserie. If you would like a ticket, please see Eilish Friedman or Dai Evans as soon as possible.

The Tramp who became a Saint:

I would think that we all know what a soap opera is? One of the American ones, like Dallas or Dynasty? Or perhaps a British one like Coronation Street or Emmerdale.

What are the regular ingredients? Amazing places, crime, money, murder, monsters, people accused of crimes they didn't commit, romance.....

Well, this story has got all these ingredients. Apart from the romance bit anyway.

All of us, however young or old we are, have favourite places. Places we like, places where we feel at home. I discovered one of those places about ten years ago, when on a pilgrimage to Lourdes. It is in the southwest of France, about halfway along the Pyrenees, its name is Saint Bertrand de Comminges. It is a small mediaeval town under the mountains, with a wonderful cathedral that's got everything a cathedral should have. In the Middle Ages, several bishops- one of them later became Pope- spent lots of money beautifying it. The Shrine of St Bertrand, wonderful choirstalls with lots of 16th century marquetry work, monuments, a dragon that St Bertrand killed.....well, it's not actually a dragon, it is really a mummified crocodile!

Yet in the choir screen there is a statue that can be easily overlooked, of a man in 18th century clothing. The man's name is Benedict Joseph Labre.

Benedict was a Frenchman. He came from near Boulogne. He wanted to be a monk. He tried to be a Cistercian monk. He failed. Then he tried to be a