

Feast Days This Week:**Tuesday:** St Jerome Emiliani and St Josephine Bakhita**Thursday:** St Scholastica**Friday:** Our Lady of Lourdes**Saturday:** The Blessed Virgin Mary**The Cycle of Prayer (winter; ordinary time):**

For peace; For Christian unity; For victims of human trafficking and those who work to combat it (8 Feb, St Joseph Bakhita); For the sick and those who care for them (Day of the Sick 11 Feb); For racial justice (Racial Justice Day 13 Feb); For the unemployed (27 Feb)

Attendance and Collection:**23 January:** Attendance 52 | Collection £130.00

Parishioners Who Are Unwell: If you would like the parish to pray for someone, please email news@stfrancisgoosnargh.org.uk or ring Father Sony on 01772 865229 for inclusion in the newsletter. We have an area in church where you can write a prayer intention on a card and hang it up if you prefer.

Church Opening Daily: Church will be open Monday to Friday throughout January and February (during term time; roughly school hours) for people to call in during the day to say a prayer. It will also be open on Sunday afternoons.



St Francis Hill Chapel

Parish Newsletter

The Hill, Horns Lane

Goosnargh, Preston PR3 2FJ

Telephone: 01772 865229

Clergy: Father Sony Joseph Kadamthodu

www.stfrancisgoosnargh.org.uk

Email (for newsletter items only):

news@stfrancisgoosnargh.org.uk

In case of emergency (and unable to contact Father Sony) please ring Father Dutton on 01772 782641 or Canon Doyle on 01772 782244

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**6 February 2022 (Readings: Year C)*****Parish Mission Statement***

Our Parish, guided by the example of our patron St Francis of Assisi, seeks to be a welcoming Catholic Community, by living, sharing and growing in faith. We strive to deepen our own relationship with Christ and meet the needs of others.

Mass today is for George and Eleanor Bancroft.

Please remember in your prayers the family of Raeya Hill. Raeya will be baptised today. We welcome her to the parish family and to the wider family of God.

Every Tuesday there will be mass at Hill Chapel at 9.30am.

Please pray for all those whose anniversaries occur about this time, especially Joan Marshall Gornall. *May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen.*

Safety Rules For Mass

- * **Sanitise hands** on entry.
- * Please **keep your distance** – use the high visibility tape on floor as a guide.
- * Place your collection on the collection plate **as you enter**.
- * Please take a newsletter on entry and **take it away when you leave**.
- * **Please wear a mask** as you go up the aisle to communion and remove the mask before you receive the sacrament.
- * **At Holy Communion**, please wait until you are guided by the stewards.

Synod Gatherings – second meeting today!

All Parishes have been asked to express their views for the Synod that is scheduled to take place in Rome. We have been asked by Bishop Paul to have three gatherings to discuss: **Communion, Participation and Mission. This is to give all parishioners the opportunity to pray, listen and speak together** before filling in the Diocesan survey. **The remaining meetings will take place after Sunday mass on:**

* **February 6th**

* **February 13th**

This is an ideal opportunity for people to come together and to share ideas. Your attendance would be very gratefully appreciated.

Request from the Gardening Team

Please could all Christmas arrangements and wreaths be removed from the churchyard before 26 February. On this date the gardening team will remove any that remain as they start working towards preparing for spring. Many thanks.

From The Archives

International Holocaust Day

(Held over from last week due to the Synodal announcement)

I refer this week to the horrific genocide that took place in Europe during World War 2. By the time the war ended in 1945, the Holocaust had claimed the lives of more than six million Jews. In addition, Nazi Germany also engaged in the systematic killing of eleven million others, including POWs and those from different ethnic, social, political, or religious backgrounds, including thousands of Christians. In 2005, the United Nations General

Assembly voted to designate January 27 as International Holocaust Remembrance Day. The date coincides with the liberation of Auschwitz concentration camp, which occurred on 27 January 1945.

I recently came across the story of Bernhardt Goebel, who was a 34-year-old Catholic priest living in Poland when the Gestapo arrested him in 1939 and sent him to Dachau concentration camp. Whilst at Dachau, Fr Goebel and a fellow priest, Fr Bedrich Hoffman, stole records and secretly recorded Nazi atrocities against 1,700 imprisoned Catholic priests. Goebel himself endured beatings, torture, deprivation, and constant degradation. At significant risk, the priests documented the suffering, determined to tell the world the truth of Dachau. Many priests did not survive, some perished in the camps simply because they had given help and support to Jewish families. On 29 April 1945, American troops liberated Dachau. Fr Hoffman managed to smuggle the records to his native Czechoslovakia, and Fr Goebel emigrated to America, settling in San Antonio, Texas. Fr Goebel spent more than forty years fighting to have the records he helped obtain translated into English. Finally, in 1995, five thousand copies of, *And Who Will Kill You?* were published. Fr Goebel continued to serve as a priest in Texas until his death in 2001 at the age of ninety-six.

Many of these victims have been forgotten as their families and contemporaries have passed away. However, the Israeli Holocaust Museum, Yad Vashem, in Jerusalem, has made every effort to record their names and stories. I was privileged to visit Yad Vashem several years ago and the experience was something I will never forget. Primarily it was extremely upsetting and disturbing; it was hard to grasp that so many people had contributed to or, at best, had been compliant in such heinous behaviour against their fellow human beings. The experience I had and the exhibits I witnessed, made me determined to oppose all forms of discrimination and prejudice. Sadly, acts of violence and genocide are still taking place in many parts of the world today. Antisemitism occurs in our own country and, as Christians we must do all in our power to oppose it.

Mike Bryan

READINGS

First reading

Isaiah 6:1-2,3-8

Here I am: send me

In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord of Hosts seated on a high throne; his train filled the sanctuary; above him stood seraphs, each one with six wings.

And they cried out to one another in this way,
'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts.

His glory fills the whole earth.'

The foundations of the threshold shook with the voice of the one who cried out, and the Temple was filled with smoke. I said:

'What a wretched state I am in! I am lost,

for I am a man of unclean lips

and I live among a people of unclean lips,

and my eyes have looked at the King, the Lord of Hosts.'

Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding in his hand a live coal which he had taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. With this he touched my mouth and said:

'See now, this has touched your lips,

your sin is taken away,

your iniquity is purged.'

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying:

'Whom shall I send? Who will be our messenger?'

I answered, 'Here I am, send me.'

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 137(138):1-5,7-8

Second reading

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

I preached what the others preach, and you all believed

Brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, the gospel that you received and in which you are firmly established; because the gospel will save you only if you keep believing exactly what I preached to you – believing anything else will not lead to anything.

Well then, in the first place, I taught you what I had been taught myself, namely that Christ died for our sins, in accordance with the scriptures; that he was buried; and that he was raised to life on the third day, in accordance

with the scriptures; that he appeared first to Cephas and secondly to the Twelve. Next he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died; then he appeared to James, and then to all the apostles; and last of all he appeared to me too; it was as though I was born when no one expected it.

I am the least of the apostles; in fact, since I persecuted the Church of God, I hardly deserve the name apostle; but by God's grace that is what I am, and the grace that he gave me has not been fruitless. On the contrary, I, or rather the grace of God that is with me, have worked harder than any of the others; but what matters is that I preach what they preach, and this is what you all believed.

Gospel Acclamation

Jn15:15

Alleluia, alleluia!

I call you friends, says the Lord,

because I have made known to you

everything I have learnt from my Father.

Alleluia!

Gospel

Luke 5:1-11

They left everything and followed him

Jesus was standing one day by the Lake of Gennesaret, with the crowd pressing round him listening to the word of God, when he caught sight of two boats close to the bank. The fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats – it was Simon's – and asked him to put out a little from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat.

When he had finished speaking he said to Simon, 'Put out into deep water and pay out your nets for a catch.' 'Master,' Simon replied, 'we worked hard all night long and caught nothing, but if you say so, I will pay out the nets.' And when they had done this they netted such a huge number of fish that their nets began to tear, so they signalled to their companions in the other boat to come and help them; when these came, they filled the two boats to sinking point.

When Simon Peter saw this he fell at the knees of Jesus saying, 'Leave me, Lord; I am a sinful man.' For he and all his companions were completely overcome by the catch they had made; so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were Simon's partners. But Jesus said to Simon, 'Do not be afraid; from now on it is men you will catch.' Then, bringing their boats back to land, they left everything and followed him.

HOMILY: Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time 2022

Isaiah 6:1-8; 1 Cor 15: 1-11; Luke 5:1-11

There can be scarcely anyone on planet Earth who is not aware that Meat Loaf died a few weeks ago, as it was plastered across all the communications media. Even the Queen's guard took note: at the Changing of the Guard at Buckingham Palace, "I'd do anything for love (but I won't do that)" formed part of the band's repertoire. Had Christopher Robin been still alive, he would no doubt have gone down with Alice for it.

I owe Meat Loaf a particular debt of gratitude as, for the past thirty nine years, I have used the closing lines of "Bat out of hell" in Reconciliation Services, in association with today's First Reading and Gospel. (Incidentally, some months ago I also decided that I would save that particular song from the waves in the unlikely event of my being cast away to a desert island.)

You probably don't need me to remind you that the closing lines of "Bat out of hell" are "Like a sinner before the gates of heaven, I'll come crawling on back to you", and I quote them in Services of Reconciliation in order to point out that they are the exact opposite of the way that God's mercy, and the Sacrament of Reconciliation work. Today's Mass Readings illustrate and reinforce the point.

Isaiah's vision provides us with a perfect template for Reconciliation/Penance/Confession and its aftermath. Isaiah encounters the majesty of God in the Temple, and all his senses are assailed. He is overwhelmed by the sight of God enthroned, surrounded by the six-winged seraphs. Their song thunders in his ears, as the foundations of the Temple are shaken, and he inhales the smoking incense. Shortly, he will feel and taste the burning coal, having used his voice to express his unworthiness.

How is Isaiah's unworthiness revealed to him? It is not by introspection, by delving into the lumber rooms of his conscience in an attempt to unearth every single sin or peccadillo of which he may, or may not, have been guilty: rather it is by looking outward, gazing upon the majesty of God, and recognising God's greatness and goodness, which show up his own sinfulness by contrast.

There are echoes here of the old "long" Act of Contrition, which many of you will have learnt as children, and which declares as our chief reason for sorrow that our sins "offend thine infinite goodness". In other words, we, like Isaiah, look towards God, rather than into ourselves, and recognise God as both awesome and loving, and therefore as deserving better of us.

Gazing at God, and recognising God's greatness, Isaiah makes his confession, and receives absolution, as the seraph uses the burning coal to purge his sinful lips, the gateway to his sinful heart. Then, having been

healed of his sin, Isaiah is given a mission, to be the Lord's messenger, as we are sent out from Confession to be messengers for God, to fulfil our baptismal role as prophets.

Our Lord's encounter with the fishermen shows the same process at work. Peter and his companions are brought to an awareness of their sinfulness, again not by looking into themselves, but by gazing at Jesus Christ, seeing the miracle which He has worked, and recognising their own inadequacy in the mirror of His majesty.

Like Isaiah, Peter makes his confession: "Leave me Lord, I am a sinful man." Like Isaiah, he receives absolution: "Do not be afraid". Like Isaiah, he is given a mission: "You will be fishers of men". (Unfortunately, the play on words—fishermen/fishers of men—works only in English: there is no equivalent in the Greek original.)

As with Isaiah and Peter, so it is with us. We gaze at the love, the mercy, the majesty of God, and so are brought to recognise our own unworthiness. We receive absolution, and we are given a mission. Where, then, does Meat Loaf come in?

Well, that is the point: he doesn't. His image of the crawling sinner is the opposite of the reality, and yet it is the image so many people seem to have of this sacrament. "Bat out of hell" is bad theology—but, by heck, it is a cracking good song!

WEEKLY Reflections

Based on the gospel for 6 February, Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time: Luke 5:1-11

“We worked hard all night long and caught nothing, but if you say so, I will pay out the nets.”

Listening is difficult. We are usually much better at talking, or talking about listening, or hearing what we want to hear. But to truly listen is a real challenge.

Simon, John and James had been out fishing all night and have now returned to shore. Jesus' suggestion that they cast out the nets again may have seemed pointless and a waste of their energy, which must have nearly been spent.

In the preceding chapter, we hear that Jesus cured Simon's mother-in-law. While the idea of going back into the lake and paying the nets out may have seemed farcical to these seasoned fishermen, they had already experienced some of the wonders of Jesus' works. And the result of following Jesus' words completely exceeds their expectations!

This story has many similarities to the story at the end of John's Gospel (21:6), where Jesus appears after the Resurrection. While much time has passed between the events in Luke and John, and the relationship between Simon – now Peter – and Jesus has deepened, the response is still essentially the same: “Leave me, Lord; I am a sinful man.” Yet, as long as we turn back to Jesus, we can be assured that he will work marvels.

When Christ calls us each day, what is our response?

God of all fruitfulness, grant me more faith!
I am sorry for the many times I have turned away from you,
and thank you for always calling me back.
May your works always be done on earth;
use my hands as your vessel however you see fit.
Amen.