

**Thought for the week**

Sunday, 1st November, 2020

31st Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lord Jesus Christ,  
our Divine Physician,  
we ask you to guard and protect us  
and all people from the  
coronavirus and all serious illness.

For all who have died from it ,  
have mercy;

For all who are ill now,  
bring healing;

For all searching for a remedy,  
enlighten them;

For medical caregivers, helping the sick,  
strengthen and shield them;

For all working to contain the spread,  
grant them success;

For those afraid,  
grant peace of mind.

By your grace,  
may you turn the evil of disease  
into moments of consolation and hope.

We abandon ourselves into your  
infinite mercy.  
Amen.

Today we celebrate and give thanks for the life and example of all the saints – canonised and not canonised – who have gone before us. This may be a good opportunity to listen really closely to today's Gospel, and try to hear the Beatitudes as if for the first time. They are a summary of the values of the kingdom of God and seem to go above and beyond the Ten Commandments. Rather than giving us a list of things we must and must not do, Jesus invites us to take individual responsibility for understanding the Beatitudes in the context of our own lived experience – we might think of them as the 'Beatitudes of attitudes', a blueprint for the Christian life, the fulfilling of the Law that Jesus promised.

I find it hard sometimes to internalise this teaching as we move from one familiar maxim to another, and it can be more fruitful to focus on just one or two at a time. 'Blessed are those who mourn: they shall be comforted.' There can be few of us who are not grieving for the loss of a family member or friend, or for the loss of health, of work, or of our accustomed freedom and way of life. The Greek word *makarios* used in this Gospel is usually translated as 'happy' or 'blessed', but it is more than that: the Greek implies something like an enviable God-given joy or grace. The question that arises in my mind is 'How can I be filled with God's joy at such a time?' A clue is given in the first of the Beatitudes:

*'Blessed are the poor in spirit; theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'*

These are people who are aware of their vulnerability and their dependence on God and one another, and who know they can bring their sorrows to the Lord as the Gospel acclamation urges us to: 'Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest.'

The kingdom Jesus talks about is a society in which we live by the values he puts before us. He acknowledges the depth of human suffering and loss, and invites us to respond to others in humility, love, truth and justice. The saints, then, are those who embrace the attitudes of the kingdom and allow their lives to be transformed by them. Our own favourite saints may be the people who have walked with us along the path of faith; people who have fought for justice and peace in the face of opposition and persecution; those who grieve, trusting that they will be comforted; those who reach out to others in compassion and love. Let us give thanks today for the saints whose lives have inspired our own, and let us pray that we too may live by the values of the kingdom.

Cecilia



### Prayers Please

Maddy Sharman has asked for our prayers.

Vera Bird has asked for our prayers for her Great, Great Grandson Harry

Please pray for Patricia Cox (Sister of Sheila Rush)

Please pray for Cecilia Fung, the mother of Fr Jojo. She has had a stroke.

Please pray for Timothy Kehoe, who is very ill.

Prayers please for Antonita's nephew Peppin who has been readmitted to hospital due to the coronavirus.

Please pray for Caroline Mikhail (daughter – in - law of Jane and Ramsay Mikhail) who suffered a stroke.

Please pray for Peter Halter's sister Jean who has macular degeneration and for Jean's great grandson Rogan who is 8 and has leukaemia. Rogan continues to need our prayers.

Please pray for Ted Cotter (brother of Philomena) who has cancer and is undergoing chemotherapy.

Please pray for children under stress.

Please pray for the residents and staff at the two nursing homes in our parish, Abbeycrest and St Luke's.

Please pray for all victims of the Coronavirus.



**Please also remember in your prayers those whose anniversaries occur at this time including;**

Deacon Paul Grosvenor, Fr Frank Dawson, Margot Gubbin, Suzanne Meyers, Patrick Barke, Henry Prendergast, Bertha Rementina Rodrigues, Jan Rehor, Alan Johnson, Archbishop Maurice de Couve de Murville,