

DOWNSIDE ABBEY

ST BENEDICT'S PARISH NEWSLETTER

THE TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR (C)
29TH SEPTEMBER 2019

'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' (Luke 16, 31).

Ofted, the Government office for standards in education has put Democracy at the head of its list of British values. As we witness events in Parliament it is hard to believe that British democracy is especially admirable. What does the Church say about democracy?

The Church maintains that no form of civil government is imposed on man by God. Leo XIII said that any form of government could be good provided it was aimed at the common good, that good for which social authority is constituted. Catholics are free to prefer one form of government to another, provided it is not opposed to sound reason or the maxims of Christian doctrine.

Pope St John Paul II said, 'The Church values the democratic system inasmuch as it ensures the participation of citizens in making political choices, guarantees to the governed the possibility both of electing and holding accountable those who govern them, and of replacing them through peaceful means when appropriate.' He distinguished between authentic and inauthentic democracy.

Authentic democracy is possible only in a State ruled by law, and on the basis of a correct conception of the human person. Democracy is inauthentic when it ceases to rest upon belief in an objective moral order. It can then fast become intolerant, dangerous, and even inhuman. This danger confronts us today because agnosticism and sceptical relativism have become the norms for our democratic structures. What this looks like has been spelt out in the USA when Justice Anthony Kennedy defined the heart of liberty to be a radical autonomy where each individual defines his or her good and has 'the right to define one's own concept of existence, of the universe and of the mystery of human life.' Christian tradition understands the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil as precisely taking to ourselves the right to decide what is good or evil, rejecting God's teaching and law (Genesis 2, 17).

In such a context Catholics in politics begin to be seen as unreliable or a threat because they believe there are truths to which we must adhere, that truth is not determined by the majority, and that it cannot be bent to suit changing political trends. If there is no ultimate truth to guide and direct political action, then ideas and convictions can easily be manipulated for reasons of power. A democracy without values or that pretends democratic systems are of themselves the supreme value soon becomes thinly disguised or open totalitarianism.

For these reasons Catholics will not be content with a hierarchy of values that places



www.downsideabbey.co.uk

monks@downside.co.uk 01761 235100

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democracy at the top. Simply as a process, Democracy is morally neutral. It becomes virtuous when its goals and the means chosen to reach them are good. Therefore Democracy is subject to an objective moral order to which it must answer. The loss of respect for the moral order is translating into a general loss of respect in our Houses of Parliament, engulfing us in political chaos. As Catholics we should pray for our politicians to recover respect for one another and respect for the moral law that we must all serve if we would be truly free and happy. Love of God and neighbour is the only safe guide and the highest value.

Dom Leo Maidlow Davis

Br John George's Solemn Profession. On Tuesday 1st October at 10 a.m. Br John George will make the profession of his Solemn Vows. All parishioners are warmly invited to attend the Mass of Profession in the Abbey Church and for refreshments afterwards in the Abbey Visitor Centre. Please pray for Br John that, as he dedicates his life to God the Father, he may, at the glorious coming of his Son, be admitted to the joy of the eternal Pasch.

Marie-Louise McGarvey's funeral will take place in the Abbey Church on Monday 14 October at 2 p.m. followed by cremation at the Mendip Crematorium, near Shepton Mallet.

Parish Harvest Celebration Weekend of 5th and 6th October - This year we would like to celebrate the harvest and thank God for the food He provides. Refreshments will be served after every Mass and there will an opportunity to buy some fresh produce. Donations of fresh fruit and vegetables (home-grown or otherwise) and packaged food will be very welcome. The money raised will go to CAFOD and the packaged food will be donated to the food bank. If you wish to know more please contact Julie Justin (07930 062552).

Pope Francis established 1 September as the **World Day of Prayer** for the Care of Creation as the beginning of Creation Time which ends on the 4th October, the feast of St Francis of Assisi. To support this Caroline Lane from CAFOD is showing the Global Healing Film in the Church Hall after the 9.00 and 11.00 Mass on the 29th September. After the 11.00 showing there will be a chance to discuss the film and what we can do as a Parrish to support Pope Francis' encyclical Laudato Si to care for this earth. We hope as many parishioners as possible will come to watch the film.

St. Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) Awareness Month 2019: 'Love your neighbour' Week 5

"Charity must never look to the past, but always look to the future" Blessed Frédéric Ozanam.

Volunteering can be both a challenge and a reward. Increasing SVP membership enables members to achieve the goal of helping and supporting people in need. We would welcome new members to maintain our current workload and to ensure we can fulfil future requests. We meet fortnightly for about an hour. Prayer is an important part of our meetings and Fr. Leo our Spiritual Adviser. Please look at either notice board for our members and who to contact. The SVP website is www.svp.org.uk



The Sycamore Course started last Tuesday with a good session on 'How to find happiness' – a small topic to begin! Those who came all said how much they enjoyed it, and found the video with Fr Stephen Wang very engaging. The next session will be on Tuesday, 1 October with the topic of "The existence of God". We gather in the parish hall from about 7pm and start the video at 7:15pm. We will finish by 8:45pm at the latest. All are very welcome – come and try it!

We pray for the sick and housebound of our parish: Arthur Haynes, Eileen Barrett and Will and Detta Duggan

October is the extraordinary Month of Mission and the Month of the Rosary. A decade of the Rosary will be recited before each of the Sunday Masses and before the weekday Masses in Midsomer Norton.

Diocesan Prayer Link: All University/College/School Chaplaincies in the Diocese.

Ecumenical Prayer Link: St Nicholas

If you are new to our parish or are visiting, please make yourself known to Dom Michael or Dom Leo. If you are at the 10 a.m. Mass in the Abbey, please make yourself known to the priest saying the Mass.

September Needs Coffee, Custard, Tinned fruit, Fruit juice, Ketchup/brown sauce, Milk (UHT or powdered), Macaroni cheese, Meat soup, Dry pasta, Pasta sauce, Rice puddings, Snacks (sweet and savoury), Sponge puddings, Instant mashed potato, Tinned potatoes, Tuna



CAFOD Harvest Fast Day Collection: No one should be beyond reach of the love and support they need to thrive. This Fast Day, Friday 4 October, CAFOD invites us to fast, pray and give, so we can extend the hand of friendship to the world's poorest people.

Fabiano's village in rural Uganda has been devastated by drought. Every day, children would trek miles for water, risking their education – and safety. Donations from parishioners across England and Wales helped install a solar powered water pump in the village. Now Fabiano and his friends can collect water quickly and safely.

On Family Fast Day, CAFOD invites us to eat a simple meal for lunch or dinner and give the money we save to help children like Fabiano. Please collect a Fast Day envelope from church this week and give generously at Mass the following Sunday.

Why not join us for a simple soup and cheese lunch on Wednesday 9 October from 12 noon to 2pm to raise money for CAFOD?

Soup and Cheese Lunch, Wednesday 9th October 12-2pm in St Benedict's Parish Room in aid of CAFOD. Bring and Buy table and raffle. Entrance £4.

Homemade soups and breads and always a warm welcome so do come and support us. Donations of raffle prizes always gratefully received. If you need a lift please call 01761 232183.

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Mass & Office Times

Everyone is welcome

Masses in St Benedict's church

Saturday Vigil Mass 5 p.m.
Sunday Masses 9 a.m. 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.

Weekday Masses in Holy Ghost church, Midsomer Norton

Tuesday, Friday & Saturday at 9.45 a.m.

Confessions

Saturdays at Holy Ghost 10.15-11 a.m.
Sundays in St Benedict's 10.15-10.45 a.m.
Sundays in the Abbey church 9.35-9.55 a.m.

Regular events

Adoration 9.30-5pm Monday to Saturday
and 11.30-6 p.m. on Sundays
Prayer group on Mondays at 7.30 p.m. in
Holy Ghost church
Rosary on Thursdays at 7 p.m. in
St Benedict's

The Abbey Church Weekdays

Vigils	6 a.m.
Lauds	7.10 a.m.
Mass	8.35 a.m.
Midday Office	12.30 p.m.
Vespers	6 p.m.

Sundays

Lauds	7.30 a.m.
Mass	10 a.m.
Midday Office	12.30 p.m.
Vespers/Benediction	5 p.m.

Parish Priest: Dom Michael
Clothier. Tel: 01761 235111

Assistant Parish Priest: Dom
Leo Maidlow Davis. Tel: 01761 235107



Martyrology: Sunday
September 29 is the Feast of
the Archangels Michael, Gabriel
and Raphael. We read of their
special missions in the Bible.
They serve God day and night
and, contemplating his face,
glorify him unceasingly. We wish
Fr Michael a happy and blessed
Feast Day.

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