

St Osmund's Catholic Church, Gainford

Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle

Parish Priest: Fr. Thomas Mason e-mail: gainford.stosmund@rcdhn.org.uk

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Hogarth Partnership

St Anne, St Augustine, St Mary, St Osmund, Holy Family, St Teresa, St Thomas Aquinas, SS William & Francis De Sale

FoodBank: The Well:

46 East Green, West Auckland. DL14 9HJ. Opening times: Wednesday-Friday 9am - 3pm
Items may be left at the Foodbanks during their opening times or placed in St. Osmund's Church porch.

Please Pray for:

The sick of the Parish: Nico Human, Patrick Heffernan, Hilary Fletcher, Mike Griffiths, Luca Gallucci, Pat Aveson and Matthis Klein

Offertory

If you wish to make your donations directly to St. Osmund's. Bank account details are:

HSBC: D.H & N Gainford St. Osmund's.

Account No. 41164015.

Sort Code 40-34-18.

Make Your Giving Go Further with Gift Aid! Did you know that if you're a UK taxpayer, your donations to the parish can go even further at no extra cost to you? With Gift Aid, the government adds 25% to your gift, helping us support our church, ministries, and community projects even more!

Sign up today by contacting your local parish Gift Aid Organiser or visit <https://forms.office.com/e/Brx2TPm3a?origin=lprLink>

Together, we can strengthen our parish and continue our mission to serve God and our community. Thank you for your generosity!

Safeguarding

The Parish operates in accordance with Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) and Diocese's policies and procedures at all times. Details of our Parish Safeguarding Representative can be found on the notice board in the porch and the Parish Centre, or alternatively the Diocesan Safeguarding Team can be contacted on [0191 2433305](tel:01912433305) or at safeguarding@diocesehn.org.uk



October: Month of the Holy Rosary

29th Sunday of Ordinary Time Theme: God as supreme King

Then he said to them, 'Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.'

**St Osmund's will be open for Parish Mass each
Tuesdays at 10.00am.**

Saturday 17th October 6.30pm

Sunday 25th October 9.30am

Saturday 31st October 6.30pm

Sunday 8th October 9.30am

Church Restoration – a great pleasure to be back in church for Mass, and especially to see the excellent work on the ceiling and walls. Thank you to everybody who worked hard cleaning the church; but especially to Rachael for tirelessly running the whole project.

Children's Liturgy

There will be a Children's Liturgy Sunday 25th October



First Holy Communion – forms are available for First Holy Communion. If you know of any children in Year 4 who would be interested, please do pass forms on.

Peace for the people of Ukraine

We continue to pray earnestly for peace in Ukraine, joining our prayers to Our Lady's Immaculate Heart – may her prayers bring a swift end to the conflict, and consolation to the bereaved and to the many thousands of refugees.

World Mission Sunday – there will be a collection for the work of *Missio* supporting missions across the world. This will remain open next week

First reading Isaiah 45:1, 4-6

‘I have grasped the right hand of Cyrus to subdue nations before him.’

Thus says the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped, to subdue nations before him and to loose the belts of kings, to open doors before him that gates may not be closed:

‘For the sake of my servant Jacob, and Israel my chosen, I call you by your name, I name you, though you do not know me.

I am the Lord, and there is no other, besides me there is no God;

I equip you, though you do not know me, that people may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none besides me;

I am the Lord, and there is no other.’

Responsorial Psalm 96(95): 1, 3-5, 7-10. R7

Ascribe to 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.

For the Lord is great and highly to be praised,
to be feared above all gods.

For the gods of the nations are naught.

It was the Lord who made the heavens.

Ascribe to the Lord, you families of peoples,

ascribe to the Lord glory and power;

ascribe to the Lord the glory of his name.

Bring an offering and enter his courts.

Worship the Lord in holy splendour.

O tremble before him, all the earth.

Say to the nations, ‘The Lord is king.’

He will judge the peoples in fairness.

Second reading 1 Thessalonians 1: 1-5

‘Remembering your faith, love and hope.’

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: grace to you and peace.

We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers, remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labour of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction.

Gospel Acclamation Philipians 2: 15,16

Alleluia, alleluia.

Shine as lights in the world,
holding fast to the word of life.

Alleluia.

Gospel Matthew 22: 15-21

‘Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.’

At that time: The Pharisees went and plotted how to entangle Jesus in his words. And they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, ‘Teacher, we know that you are true and teach the way of God truthfully, and you do not care about anyone’s opinion, for you are not swayed by appearances. Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?’ But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, ‘Why put me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the coin for the tax.’ And they brought him a denarius. And Jesus said to them, ‘Whose likeness and inscription is this?’ They said, ‘Caesar’s.’ Then he said to them, ‘Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.’

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Feast days this week

Monday 19th October: St John de Brébeuf, Isaac Jogues and their Companions

Thursday 22nd: St John Paul II

Friday 23rd October: St John of Capistrano

Saturday 24th October: St Anthony Mary Claret

The Cycle of Prayer**The Spread of the Gospel**

especially on *Evangelii Gaudium* Day: 3rd Sunday in September & World Mission Day: the penultimate Sunday in October

Background

World Mission Day is on the penultimate Sunday in October. A Mass ‘for the Spread of the Gospel’ may be celebrated on this Sunday. Each year the Holy Father writes a message for World Mission day. In England and Wales material is produced for parishes by the Pontifical Mission Societies. There may be a collection for their work on this day.

Prayer

*O God, whose will it is that all should be saved
and come to the knowledge of the truth,
look upon your abundant harvest
and be pleased to send workers to gather it,
that the Gospel may be preached to all creation
and that your people, gathered by the word of life
and sustained by the power of the Sacraments,
may advance in the path of salvation and love.*

Roman Missal

Rendering to Caesar

No sooner had the Berlin Wall fallen, marking the end of the Cold War, than another ominous divide in our world made its appearance. This new division is between the Muslim world and what was once the Christian West. The Muslim world has experienced an extraordinary growth in fundamentalism. Many countries there have imposed or are seeking to impose the law of the Koran as the law of the state. Algeria in North Africa, just off the southern tip of Europe, is presently the scene of a murderous East-West conflict. Some European countries feel threatened, particularly France, with its large Muslim population and close historical ties with Algeria. Muslims demands that their schoolgirls be allowed to wear the veil in French public schools. Strange how people so often adopt the attitudes and strategies of their adversaries. Muslim fundamentalism in Arab countries has been matched by a noticeable “move to the right” in western countries. Now even the more moderate mainstream parties are calling for tighter immigration laws. The signs for the future are ominous, to say the least.

The clash between religion and the secular state is not new. The story of the Christian West is largely a history of this conflict. For the first few centuries of its existence, Christianity was fiercely persecuted by the state, leaving in its wake, a bloody trail of martyrs. All that changed with the conversion of the emperor Constantine. Soon Christianity became the state religion. Now the boot was on the other foot. The high point of the power of religion came at Canossa in the high Middle Ages when an excommunicated emperor knelt in the snow and humbly submitted to a pope to regain his imperial crown. In the Caesar-God contest, that round went decidedly to God. All throughout the Middle Ages the church extended its sphere of influence into the secular domain. With the break-up of Christianity in the sixteenth century the process began to reverse. The French Revolution marked a decisive turning point in favour of the state. Napoleon made the point dramatically, when he took the imperial crown from the pope and placed it himself on his own head. Ever since the state has been clawing back the ground once claimed by the church. And the church has ceded its former influence reluctantly. The boot has changed feet once more.

Today's gospel, with its famous “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's” has a particular topicality in our world. While the principle is clear and unambiguous, its application in particular circumstances is quite another matter. The Catholic Church Catechism points out three circumstances where citizens are obliged in conscience to refuse obedience to the civil authorities. They are when the laws are “contrary to the moral order, to the fundamental rights of persons and to the teachings of the gospel.” The principle is clear. However, its application may not be so simple when there is an apparent clash of rights.

The complexity of these issues may render them unsuitable topics for the pulpit. What the preacher can and must do, is advise believers on the obligation of Christian behaviour in all circumstances. No matter how deeply they hold their convictions or how warmly they espouse their causes, they must never resort to violence. And that includes intimidation in all its forms. Muscular crusades, whether modern or medieval, cause irreparable harm. The end never justifies the means. We live, in a world of pluralism. There are others whose principles and beliefs differ radically from ours. The state must also take cognisance of them. Our only resort is persuasion. Persuasion is always a gentle art. We best persuade by living our Christian lives to the full, remembering always that “the anger of man works not the justice of God.” (Liam Swords) associationofcatholicpriests.ie

The book of Job is one of the more challenging biblical texts to deal with, in many ways it sits neither within the unfolding pattern of revelation of God's plan and nature nor within the encouragement to goodness which we find in the wisdom literature. Perhaps part of the reason for its challenge is also that it doesn't offer a real resolution at the end – but perhaps that it also how we can find its true resolution. The origins of the text are unclear, most scholars consider that there was a process which produced the text which we currently have, rather than a single author providing a single coherent text.

The character at the centre, Job, is described as righteous; but the sufferings which he endures test that righteousness. It opens with Job as a wealthy and happy man; he has property and family, and is always faithful to God. As part of a conversation between Satan and God, Satan is allowed to inflict greater and greater sufferings on him – starting with the loss of his family and property, then with the loss of health. Satan claims that he is only faithful to God as he has received good, if he is challenged then he will quickly turn against God. As the various sufferings are given to Job, he remains steadfast in refusing the criticise God – the aphorism 'the Lord giveth, the Lord taketh away, blessed by the name of the Lord' comes from the book.

Some friends come to console Job and mourn with him; however, they also accuse him of wrong-doing. In their minds, God rewards the righteous in this life and only punishes evil – as Job is receiving punishment from God, it is clear (in their minds) that he has done something very wrong in order to deserve this punishment from God. Job responds by protesting his innocence, and by implication accusing God of inflicting punishment without cause. He also notes that many who themselves do evil deeds go unpunished. This all implies that God is not constant in promoting justice and punishing evil. Job demands a trial, confident that he would be acquitted in a court-like proceeding.

God finally speaks to Job – notably he does not accuse Job of deserving the evil he suffered, but also reprimands him for expecting to understand fully God's workings. God expresses the extent of his great knowledge and power, and states that if Job knew everything involved, he would realise God's righteousness. Job responds by humbly repenting of accusing God. He is restored to his former fortune, with wealth and family in abundance. But at no point does God respond to the question of why Job suffered.

This all deals with the question known as *theodicy*, why a good God permits suffering, especially suffering which is not caused by human misbehaviour. Ultimately this does often seem far beyond our understanding, when S. Thomas Aquinas deals with the existence of God, he seems to recognise this as the strongest argument for thinking that God doesn't exist. The answer, that once we see everything from God's perspective it will all become clear, is true...but is also often deeply unsatisfying.

We might go further and acknowledge that Job only makes sense in the light of the crucifixion. In that we see God who is willing to enter into our world of suffering, we see Christ who is willing to take a massive share in that suffering – we also see that as the route to his greater glory in the resurrection.

But we can, and always should, also feel great compassion for those suffering. We know that it is not merely the evil who suffer greatly, but often the righteous suffer as well. Regardless of their own morality, we should reach out with the love of Christ to all of those in suffering and need. – **Fr. Thomas.**

Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. Thank you to Ray Abbott from Darlington S.V.P. who spoke to us last week. A reminder that there will be an open meeting for all interesting in the work of the S.V.P. at S. Augustine's Parish Centre on 19 October.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy week ahead

