

The Wisdom of Job

In Old Testament times people had a very simple vision of God's justice. The idea that life could go on after physical death seemed strange. The dead, most Jews believed, went to a place called "Sheol" where they would never see the light again. Good and bad alike would share together in this common ending. Yet they knew God was just - that he would reward good deeds and punish bad - so how would this justice be felt? What would mark the good apart from the rest? The answer we find in the stories they left behind.

A common feature of so many Old Testament stories is the extraordinary number of years that are lived by the great figures. This, people thought, was the reward that God gave - the good would enjoy happiness, prosperity and long life, whilst the wicked would find only sorrow and die before their time. The image prevailed until the great Wisdom writers looked more deeply and saw that human life did not always follow that pattern. God's justice, they perceived, had to extend beyond the world we see. There had to be more to death than Sheol.

The Book of Job is an early part of that Wisdom tradition. The main character does not fit the established mould. Job is a good man. He has great wealth, a good family, much land and many possessions - yet he is not proud; he uses it all well. He is generous and kind. He trusts in God and lives by God's Law. By every Jewish expectation he should experience nothing but happiness, and live rejoicing to a glorious old age. But this is not so - Job suffers greatly. His family, his wealth, even his own health are lost, and "comforters" come to tell him that only his sins could have brought this disaster upon him. He must repent, and then all will surely be well again. But Job refuses - he knows he has not sinned so as to deserve all of this. And yet he will not speak against the God who has allowed it to happen either. He just wonders, "Why?"

It is a question we continually face today in a world that falls so far short of the Garden of Eden. All around us, in our communities, in our families and in our own lives, we see suffering that admits of no reason, pain that has never been deserved. "Why me?" "Why him or her?" Try as we may, in this life the answers will continue to elude us.

Jesus, too, was surrounded by such "unjust" suffering. In today's Gospel, crowds bring in the sick one after another, for Jesus to offer healing and solace. Why were they suffering in the first place? He has no time to stop and answer - his time is better spent doing good. And so is ours.

True wisdom is about more than knowing facts and answers. It admits of truths which are beyond us - it encompasses the Divine. So our prayer today is that, by God's Grace, we may ourselves learn to share in this true wisdom. A wisdom which is not always seeking answers to the question "Why?" but is ready to ask, instead, "Lord, what can we be doing to help?"



NB
**SPUC
APPEAL
AT BOTH
MASSES**

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMME 2011/12

Remaining dates for 2012 are as follows:

(Please let Fr Martin or Denise know if you expect to have any problems getting here)

NEXT SUNDAY (12th February)

Special Family Mass: 10.00am
with *Baptisms* of those children on the programme who are not already baptised

Wednesday 29th February

"We are people who follow Jesus" 6.30pm

Sunday 4th March

Mass: 10.00am

Wednesday 28th March

Lenten Reconciliation Service:
7.00pm with the people of the Parish

(As always, this date and time is subject to the availability of other clergy from the Deanery, upon whose help we rely)

Sunday 1st April,

Special Mass for Palm Sunday
10.00am

Wednesday 2nd May

"We are the Body of Christ" 6.30pm

Wednesday 9th May

Confirmation Service: 7.00pm

Sunday 13th May

Mass for the newly Confirmed:
10.00am

Wed 30th May

Preparing for First Communion:
6.30pm

Sundays 10th & 17th June

3.00pm

First Communion Masses

Wednesday 11th July

"We are people who live our Faith"
+ Children's Party: 6.30pm

Sunday 15th July

Mass with presentation
of certificates:
10.00am

* *New to Holy Family parish?*

* *Know someone who is sick or in hospital (or the hospice)?*

* *Like a visit from the priest?*

* *Think the parish may be able to help you, or you us, in any way?*

Please speak to Fr Martin, after Mass or at any convenient time.

Mass times at Holy Family

Saturday (Vigil Mass): 6.30pm
Sunday Morning: 10.00am
with **Children's Liturgy**
(Tea and Coffee served after morning Mass)
Weekdays: See Calendar, below
Holydays: Eve 7.00pm
9.30am on the day

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday after Midday Mass, and 6.00-6.15pm,
or at any reasonable time on request.
(Rite II Reconciliation Services are celebrated in Advent and Lent)

Baptisms, Weddings & Funerals

by arrangement *(6 months' notice required for weddings)*

Weekday Calendar

Monday: No Service today

Tuesday - Mass: 9.30am, Sacristy

Church cleaning afterwards

"Olympic Torch Assembly" at 2.00pm, Holy Family Primary School
torch being received from Sacred Heart Primary School - see separate entry

Wednesday - Mass: 8.10am Sacristy

"Olympic Torch Assembly" at 9.10am, Holy Family Primary School
torch being carried on to St Gabriel's Primary School, in Castleton

Thursday - Evening Mass: 7.00pm

Friday (day of abstinence) Mass: 12.30pm, Sacristy

Saturday - Mass: 12.30pm, Sacristy

OLYMPIC ASSEMBLIES

... at our Primary School. As part of the Catholic Schools' Network's preparation for the forthcoming Olympic Games, a replica torch is being carried and passed around the schools of the Diocese, with assemblies to mark its journey. It will be received from Sacred Heart on Tuesday, (with an Assembly led by the arriving Sacred Heart children at about 2.00pm), and then continue on its journey to St Gabriel's on Wednesday (with an Assembly first, led by Holy Family children, at 9.10am). **Parishioners are welcome to attend either of these assemblies.**

LONDON MARATHON

Holy Family School's torchbearer as the Olympic Torch is delivered to St Gabriel's will be Site Manager and Parishioner, Bernard. He will also be running in the London Marathon in April, to raise funds for the Suubi Project (children's homes) in Uganda. Sponsorship forms for his run will soon be available at the back of Church. *(And watch this space for **another** worthy sponsorship call, in aid of children with cancer, to be announced soon).*

HOLY FAMILY RC CHURCH

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WE PRAY THIS WEEK

... for the following, for whom Masses will be offered - **the sick:** Sharon, John, Olga, Veronica and David, Dan, Kathleen, Christine, Mary, Teresa, Winnie, Bill, Julie, Peggy, Anne-Marie, John, Denis, Marjorie, Denis, Margaret, Marie, Jane, Christine, Elva, Sister Alphonsus, Kathleen, Margaret, Mary and Bridie, Helene and Ann Marie, -----

----- and **those who have died:** Ernest Davey, Stephen Brett, Veronica Earnshaw, Mary O'Neill, Gerard Bates, Helena Davies, Clarisse Wrigley, Marie Terese Anastasi, Jim Jordan and Giovanni Natale. **We also pray** for peace and for a number of Special Intentions. **DEANERY PRAYERS:** prayers are offered every Sunday in each parish of our Deanery for the people of one of these parishes. This week, we pray for the priest and people of St Hilda's, Tottington.

OFFERTORY Thank you for last week's collection of £301.16.

RETIRING COLLECTION

This week: our White Flower appeal, in support of the work of SPUC, will take place at both Masses, as we welcome Rab and Detta McDonald to speak once more. Next week: SVP monthly collection.

MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL

throughout the coming week and always

SRC DT Registered Charity No 250037

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