

ST ETHELBERT'S CHURCH, LEOMINSTER  
& ST JOSEPH'S, BROMYARD

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**23rd August 2020: 21<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time**

Sunday Reflection

In the Gospel Reading, Christ tells Peter that the rock on which he will found his church is exactly, Peter. The gates of hell will not prevail against him or against the church which is built on this rock. This seems a deeply comforting thought.

The Church is not a collection of the sinless, and it was not meant to be.

The problem is that it so often looks as if the gates of hell have prevailed against Christ's church. The problem actually begins with Peter. The apostle who is the rock of the Church betrayed the Lord he loved in Jesus' worst need. A betrayal like that seems to have something hellish about it, doesn't it?

In fact, wasn't Peter's betrayal of Christ just like the betrayal of Judas? But the Gospels say that Satan entered into Judas before Judas betrayed Christ (John 13:27). There is something hellish about the betrayal of Judas, then. Why not think that the gates of hell prevailed against Peter too?

What is left of that deeply comforting thought about Christ's Church and the rock that it is founded on being safe from Hell?

But there is a difference between Judas and Peter. It is not that Peter repented and Judas didn't. The Gospels say that Judas repented, too (Matthew 27:3). Rather, the difference is this. When Judas saw the sin of his betrayal for what it was, he killed himself. He threw himself away as irredeemable. Peter came back to Christ. He cleaved to the Lord he loved even in the face of his own brokenness.

And that is why Peter is the rock on which the Church is founded. The Church is not a collection of the sinless, and it was not meant to be. The Church was founded on Peter, who loved, and sinned, and held on to the Lord anyway.

The gates of Hell cannot prevail against this kind of love. This *is* a deeply comforting thought.

*Eleonore Stump, Professor of Philosophy, Saint Louis University*

## Services during the week

Sun 23 Aug	21 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time	<b>Mass 9.00am Leominster</b> <b>Mass 11.00am Bromyard</b> <b>Mass 5.30pm Leominster</b>	People of the Parish Sisters in Devizes Community
Mon 24 Aug	St Bartholomew	<b>Mass 9.00am Leominster</b>	Deceased Friends and Benefactors
Tue 25 Aug		Private Mass	
Wed 26 Aug	St David Lewis	Private Mass	
Thur 27 Aug	St Monica	Private Mass	
Fri 28 Aug	St Augustine	<b>Mass 9.00am Leominster</b>	
Sat 29 Aug	The Beheading of John the Baptist	<b>Mass 5.30pm Bromyard</b>	
Sun 30 Aug	22nd Sunday of Ordinary Time	<b>Mass 9.00am Leominster</b> <b>Mass 11.00am Bromyard</b> <b>Mass 5.30pm Leominster</b>	People of the Parish Catherine Stockford

### St Ethelbert's Leominster

At present there will be Public Masses at St Ethelbert's at 9.00am and 5.30pm on Sundays and at 9.00am on Monday and Friday. The number of people that can be accommodated at the Masses is limited and face coverings are essential in order to comply with government regulations. To book a place at one of the Sunday Masses, please contact Fr Paul preferably by email [leominster@rcadc.org](mailto:leominster@rcadc.org) or by phone.

### St Joseph's, Bromyard

It was a great joy to be able to celebrate Mass at Bromyard last weekend after the 5 month hiatus. Due to the restrictions on the number of people we can accommodate in the church at present, not everyone who wished to attend the Mass could do so. In order to give more people the opportunity to come to Mass I will, as a temporary measure, celebrate an additional Mass at Bromyard on Saturday evening at 5.30pm.

Once again I remind you that face coverings are essential in order to comply with government regulations. To book a place at one of the Masses, please contact Fr Paul preferably by email [leominster@rcadc.org](mailto:leominster@rcadc.org) or by phone.

### Confessions

At present it is still not possible to hear confessions in the usual way however if you wish to go to confession, please contact the presbytery and I will make suitable arrangements.

### Hospital Chaplain

Fr Patrick Lobo is the Catholic Hospital Chaplain. His mobile number is 07922323603.



‘ O God, who cause the minds of the faithful to unite in a single purpose, grant your people to love what you command and to desire what you promise, that, amid the uncertainties of this world, our hearts may be fixed on that place where true gladness is found.’

*(Collect Twenty First Sunday in Ordinary Time)*

Due the Covid pandemic, the Year of the God who Speaks is to be extended into 2021. The scripture team are eager to keep up the momentum of the year by sending resources to be include in parish newsletters.

The Bible profiles hundreds of men and women. Their life stories are fascinating to read about, especially when the ‘heroes’ of the stories seem just as flawed as anybody else. This week the team have sent a link to a fascinating list of some of the well known and lesser known Biblical characters.

<https://www.godwhospeaks.uk/the-god-who-speaks/word-at-home/our-top-tens/our-top-ten-heroes-villains/>