

PETERPOST

Parish of St. Peter and the Winchester Martyrs

Alresford • Stockbridge • Winchester

12th November 2023

Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time - Year A

Heaven Spent – Give Me Oil in My Lamp, Keep Me Burning

Father Mark writes:

In our Gospel this weekend we have a powerful parable, told by Jesus about ten 'bridesmaids' waiting for the bridegroom in the dark of night...

"The principal moment of a wedding at this date was when the groom went to fetch the bride from her father's house and took her to his own. The torches should be pictured as oil-soaked rags, flaming on the end of a stick, to usher him either into one house or into the other. (The little oil-lamps found in archaeological excavations would hardly be suitable for such a celebration: they provide minimal light and would blow out in any gust of wind)." (Fr Henry Wansborough OSB)



The problem was, that for the five foolish 'bridesmaids', they had the stick and the rags but no oil. As incredible as it may seem, given my increasingly advanced years, and the number of times I've read and heard this parable, I'd never noticed that detail before. It wasn't just that they didn't bring *enough* oil. It was that they hadn't brought *any* oil at all! It wasn't just that the batteries in their torch were flat, it was that they had a torch without any batteries at all! They really were rather dozy...

In parables, there is often a symbolism to be found in the different characters and elements. In other words, Jesus wasn't really talking about oil, he was meaning something else. But what? Well, there are many different theories, but I think we get a clue from the Sermon on the Mount, and two readings that some couples choose for their wedding:

"Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."

Here we find the same contrast between wise and foolish. The wise hear the words of Jesus and put them into action, whereas the foolish ones don't.

Again, right at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says:

"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

This line of interpretation seems to be supported by some of the Church Fathers:

St. Hilary: *"The 'oil' is the fruit of good works".*

St. Augustine: *"But the wise took oil with their lamps,' that is, the gladness of good works..."*

St. John Chrysostom: *"...the 'oil' denotes charity, alms, and every aid rendered to the needy..."*

St. Jerome: *"The virgins that have oil are they who, besides their faith, have the ornament of good works – they that have not oil, are they that seem to confess with like faith, but neglect the works of virtue..."*

Perhaps we might then say that the oil is "good works, prompted by listening to the Word of Jesus and fuelled by the Holy Spirit"? Or, put another way, that through "soaking their rags" in the Word of Jesus and the Holy Spirit, the wise 'bridesmaids' enabled the light of their good works to shine forth.

So, what does this mean for us? There will come a time, at an hour only God knows, when Jesus will come to lead us into the heavenly wedding feast. At that time, will he find our lamps shining brightly with a love and mercy and compassion fuelled by His Word and Holy Spirit?

Last week, I reflected on how St. Paul spent himself in love on the community in Thessalonica, handing over to them not just the Gospel but his whole life. I reflected on how Jesus had handed over his body and blood, spending Himself on us without counting the cost. They could only do this because they had both been fuelled by the Holy Spirit.

What about us? How have we been spending ourselves? In trying to ensure our own fragile luxury and comfort? Or in works of compassion and mercy? Where have we been "soaking our rags"? In the fleeting pleasures of this world or have we allowed ourselves to become "soaked in the Spirit"?

Let me finish with some words of Thomas Merton, the Trappist monk and author:

"We must learn during our lifetime to trim our lamps and fill them with charity in silence. . . if the spirit that kept the flame of physical life burning in our bodies took care to nourish itself with the oil that is found only in the silence of God's charity, then when the body dies, the spirit itself goes on burning with the same oil, its own flame. But if the spirit has burned all along with the base oils of passion or egoism, or pride, then when death comes, the flame of the spirit goes out with the light of the body because there is no more oil in the lamp."

Give me oil in my lamp, Lord, keep me burning! Come, Holy Spirit, come.

Stewardship Sunday (18th/19th November)

Next weekend will be our parish "Stewardship Sunday". Stewardship, simply put, is a recognition of the many gifts with which God has blessed us, and our appropriate response in thanksgiving. People often talk about Stewardship in terms of "time, talents and treasure". It will be an opportunity for me to say thank you to all of you who generously contribute to our parish family and our mission together by the giving of your time, talents and treasure. In particular, I will be focussing on the "treasure" you give to enable us to bring people closer to Jesus in hope and joy and I will be offering an enormous thank you to you all. I will also be inviting you to 'pledge' your giving for next year as part of our worship. There is nothing 'binding' about this but simply an opportunity to symbolically make your regular giving to the parish linked with our offering at Mass and Jesus's offering on the Cross. I know that many of you aren't in a position to give of your 'treasure' at this time, so there will also be the opportunity for you to continue to support us with your prayers and gifts of time and talents. We cannot and must not measure our faith by what we give, but our giving can always be done prayerfully, as an expression of our faith in God and his promises. More next week...

**THIRTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (Year A) –
12th November 2023**

Entrance Antiphon: Cf. Ps 87:3
Let my prayer come into your presence.
Incline your ear to my cry for help, O Lord.

First reading: Wisdom 6:12-16

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 62:2-8. R.v.2
For you my soul is thirsting, O God, my God.

Second reading: St Paul to the Thessalonians 4:13-18

Gospel Acclamation: Mt 24:42,44

R. Alleluia, alleluia!
Stay awake and stand ready,
because you do not know the hour
when the Son of Man is coming.
R. Alleluia!

Gospel: Matthew 25:1-13

Communion Antiphon: Cf. Ps 22:1-2
The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose,
Near restful waters he leads me.

Changes to Masses in the Coming Week.

Blessing of the Graves in St James Cemetery is at 3pm on Sunday 12th November.

Blessing of the Graves in Alresford is also at 3pm on Sunday 12th November.

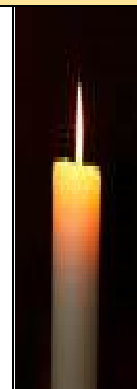
Mass at St Peter's on Wednesday 15th November will be at 12.15pm.

Magdalen Hill Cemetery Service will be at 3pm on Sunday 19th November.



PRAYER CORNER: Each week, this section will contain an intercession that I hope every parishioner will pray for during the coming week. In this way, we will all pray to the Lord for the parish's mission, because "if the Lord does not build... in vain do the builders labour" (Ps 127:1) Fr. Mark

This Week's Intention: Let us pray for all those taking part in the Leadership Summit this week as they focus on The Art of Accompaniment, that through talking, sharing and praying they may find new ways for us to support each other in our mission to bring others closer to Jesus Christ in hope and joy.



PLEASE PRAY FOR the repose of the souls of those who have died recently:

Kim Woodham RIP
David Smith RIP
Denise Howard RIP
Jennifer Cummings RIP
Barbara Harwood RIP
Andrei Saunders RIP
Philip Arnold RIP

Funeral Notices:

Kim Woodham RIP – at **St Peter's Church, Winchester**, Funeral Service on **Tuesday 14th November at 2pm.**
David Smith RIP - **Private Funeral Service** (family only) at **Chesil House.**
Denise Howard RIP - **Funeral Service** at **Chesil House**, on **Friday 1st December at 2.30pm.**
Barbara Harwood RIP – **Funeral Service** **Test Valley Crematorium, Romsey**, on **Friday 15th December at 2pm.**
Please pray for their family and friends at this difficult time. May God grant them eternal rest.



Remembrance Sunday

This Sunday, 12th November, is Remembrance Sunday, as we mark the Armistice and the end of World War One. In our parish, we take time to remember and pray for all those who have died in war and conflict, aware that to pray for the living and the dead is one of the seven spiritual works of mercy. At many of our Masses this weekend we will have a moment of silence in which to offer our own heartfelt prayers. Our 10:30am Mass on Sunday will be offered as a "Mass for the Dead", with appropriate prayers from the Missal.

Night Church Returns Friday, 24 November.

Why not start Advent with an evening of adoration, praise, encounter and healing? Night Church returns with a difference. We will begin with Mass at 7.00 pm, followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. There will be opportunities for worship and the Sacrament of Reconciliation (confession), concluding with prayers for healing.

Night Church is an opportunity to encounter Our Lord, hear His word, spend time with Him, and experience the Father's love. We are looking forward to seeing many of you there.



THE HOLY SPIRIT IN SCRIPTURE - RECORDINGS NOW AVAILABLE

Deacon Martin's series on *The Holy Spirit in Scripture* is continuing. The recordings of [episode 1](#), [episode 2](#), [episode 3](#) and [episode 4](#), plus copies of the presentations with links to Scripture texts, are available via [our parish YouTube site](#), so you can view them in your own time. (You may need to expand the Description in the grey box under the title on YouTube, to get to the link with the PDF presentation documents).
The recordings and presentations can also be found via [our parish website](#) - scroll down the home page until you see the heading "The Holy Spirit in Scripture".

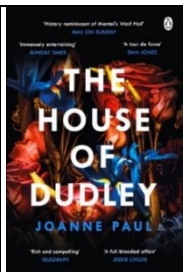


Prayer stations for peace

Come and explore our prayer stations for peace. You'll find them dotted around St Peter's church from now until Advent. We hope they help everyone, of all ages, to pray creatively for peace in our world at this time when there are many conflicts.

Soup & Pud at St Gregory's for Basics Bank – Thank You

A HUGE thank you to everyone who came and supported the Soup & Pud lunch at St Gregory's on Tuesday. A magnificent **£401.00** was raised for the Alresford **Basics Bank**.



Winchester Catholic History Society

The AGM will be held on Wednesday 15 November at 6.30 pm in the Parish Centre, Jewry Street, SO23 8RY. Our November lecture will follow immediately afterwards at 7.15 pm when Dr Joanne Paul will be speaking on her new book, The House of Dudley. Told for the very first time this is the shocking and extraordinary story of the most conniving and manipulative Tudor family you have never heard of! New members and visitors most welcome. Enquiries win.cath.history@gmail.com

THANK YOU from the CWL to all who supported their November Soup and Pud Lunch at St Peter's. The event raised £155 for the charity Winchester GoLD (Learning Difficulties). The next Charity Lunch at St Peter's will be on **Friday 8th December**, and monies raised will be donated to Winchester Salvation Army. All are very welcome.



Bookshop. Advent Calendars, Christmas Cards and Christmas Cribs will be on sale after 10.30am Mass at St Peter's at the back of Church and at the Bookshop on Advent Sunday; cash or cheque is preferred.

We have a good selection of **Advent Calendars, Advent Booklets, Christmas Cards, Diaries and Bible Diaries**, Bibles, Missals, Annual Missals, Alpha books, Prayerbooks, Rosaries, general books, crosses, small statues and gifts, as well as cards for all occasions and copies of the new encyclical "LAUDATE DEUM". Thank you for your support. Susan Henry.

CAFOD Israeli-Palestinian Crisis Appeal

Donate to CAFOD's Israeli-Palestinian Crisis Appeal at cafod.org.uk/ipc or call 0303 303 3030 to support those affected and get funds to local trusted experts in Gaza and southern Israel who have been working alongside communities, helping those most in need. Your donation will help support aid workers providing urgent humanitarian aid including food, water and emergency shelter to those in need. Thank you for your prayers

Ukraine Gratitude

A parishioner met a lovely Ukrainian lady who expressed her immense gratitude at the welcome that she and all Ukrainians received at St Peter's Church when they arrived in Winchester. She was overwhelmed by the amazing assistance and advice given by so many skilled volunteers to guide them through a very challenging and stressful time in their lives, She is now in full time employment and many of her fears and anxieties have subsided. She lives in Winchester with her mother and pregnant sister and will be forever grateful to St Peter's and the exceptional volunteers.

Pies & Puds Wed 15th November

It's time for our monthly lunch event... on **Wednesday 15th November** at the Pastoral Centre, 12.45 for 1pm. We'll be serving home-made pies, all the vegetables you can eat, vegetarian and gluten-free alternatives, and proper puddings with custard. Lunch, social time, and then a talk:

This month the Parish's own **Mike Gretton** will be telling us about the naval warfare in WW2:



A Convoy Battle at the Turning Point in the Battle of the Atlantic (1939-45)

Come along and find out more. Everyone is made welcome, and you can come on your own or with a partner or friend. There is no booking or commitment necessary, but do contact moirar@msn.com with any questions, or to be added to our mailing list.

Laudato Si Corner

At present the wars raging in the Ukraine and in Gaza are dominating the headlines. While we continue to pray for a resolution to these conflicts, they are taking place against the preparations for COP28 which opens at the end of this month in Dubai. Let us pray that the key task of this conference – which is to ensure food systems resilience across the world – will be successful and have an impact on the current conflicts and the hunger for land – our source of food - that is contributing to them.

Here, against this background, our shops are already full of Christmas goods. So how can we have a climate friendly Christmas and contribute to mitigating climate change? One good way would be to avoid buying and throwing away Christmas wrapping paper – but there are lots of tips on the web – just type in "Ideas for a climate friendly Christmas".

As Pope Francis writes in Laudate Deum "climate change calls for involvement on the part of all".

Crosskeys Deadline for Christmas

The deadline for the Christmas edition of CrossKeys, the parish magazine, is **Monday, 13 November**. If you have an article or item of news or picture you would like to be included please send your submission to the editor, Brian Mustoe, at the following email address: crosskeys@stpeterswinchester.org.uk as soon as possible.

St Stephen's Travelling Nativity

This Advent, Mary and Joseph are travelling with the little donkey to Bethlehem. On their way they are hoping to find a different inn to stay at every night. Could they come to stay at your house?

The Travelling Nativity will come to you for a night and then you are expected to pass them on to the next family. This is a lovely opportunity to explore the Advent story with your family and even meet other families to have a cup of tea/glass of wine, and pray together during Advent (although we know that people are busy so a get together is not always possible).

Please let me know if you would like any further information or to participate and I will add your family to the rota. If you would like to be added please send your name, email address, home address and a contact number by the 19 November. Your details will be shared with others participating in the travelling nativity, let us know if you have any concerns.

You can contact me on lidiaotero@hickman1@gmail.com. Thank you. Lidia Otero



Mass Timetable	11 th November 2023 – 18 th November 2023		
Date	Mass Times & Intentions		
SATURDAY – November 11 th – St Martin of Tours, Religious, Bishop, memorial. 32 nd Sunday in Ordinary Time - Vigil	9.00 AM	Mass at St Peter's	Souls in Purgatory
	5.30 PM	Mass at St Peter's	Deceased Members of the Kearney & Coote Families.
SUNDAY – November 12 th - Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time. Remembrance Sunday	8.00 AM	Mass at St Peter's	Nuala Halpin RIP
	9.00 AM	Mass at St Thomas More's	Catherine (Kay) Donaghy RIP & Katarina Kolachovska RIP
	9.15 AM	Mass at St Stephen's	People of Ukraine
	10.30 AM	Mass at St Peter's	Soul of Mary Lady Mannock
	11.00 AM	Mass at St Gregory's	People of the Parish
	3.00 PM	Blessing of Graves at St James Cemetery.	
	3.00 PM	Blessing of Graves at Alresford Cemetery.	
MONDAY – November 13 th – Feria.	5.30 PM	Mass at St Peter's	Intentions of the Neil Family
	12.15 PM	Mass at St Peter's	Soul of William Meader
TUESDAY – November 14 th – Feria.	10.00 AM	Mass at St Gregory's	
	12.15 PM	Mass at St Peter's	Soul of Julia Cave
WEDNESDAY – November 15 th – St Albert the Great, Religious, Bishop, Doctor of the Church.	12.15 PM	Mass at St Peter's	Eric Fry RIP
THURSDAY – November 16 th – ST EDMUND OF ABINGDON, Bishop, Joint-Principal Patron of the Diocese, solemnity.	10.00 AM	Mass at St Peter's	Claris Birthday Thanksgiving
FRIDAY – November 17 th – St Elizabeth of Hungary, Religious, optional memorial.	10.00 AM	Mass at St Gregory's	
	12.15 PM	Mass at St Peter's	Souls of the Dead & Founders
SATURDAY – November 18 th – Dedication of the Basilicas of St Peter & Paul, Rome, optional memorial. 33 rd Sunday in Ordinary Time - Vigil	9.00 AM	Mass at St Peter's	Our Parish Acorn Groups (that the Lord will continue to draw each member closer to Him)
	5.30 PM	Mass at St Peter's	Margaret Gardiner RIP

Confessions every Saturday 9.30am till 10.30am and 4.30pm-5.00pm at St Peter's Church – booking not required.

Morning Prayer (livestream and open to public), every weekday 8.00am at St Peter's followed by Adoration till 9.00am.

To participate in any service online (including Morning Prayer & Adoration) or to see the recorded services, go to our [YouTube channel](#)

ALL SERVICES (INCLUDING MORNING PRAYER) FROM ST PETER'S ARE LIVESTREAMED.

Hampshire Hospitals' Service of Reflection and Remembrance on Thursday 16th November 7pm, St Peter's Catholic Church, SO23 8RY

Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust invites you to a service of Reflection and Remembrance in Winchester on **Thursday 16 November**. The service provides an opportunity to gather and remember loved ones who have died. The Winchester service will be held at **St Peter's Catholic Church**, Jewry Street, Winchester, SO23 8RY. There is a service in Basingstoke at the same time.

Refreshments will be served after the service. If driving to the church, please use nearby car parks. The event is organised by the Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust's multi-denominational chaplaincy team.

Message from St Peter's School:



Dear Parents

Year 2 Visit to The Military Museum, Winchester

On Thursday 2nd November, Year 2 visited the Winchester Military Museums. Despite the strong winds and rain, we had an amazing time exploring the museums, learning about life in the Crimean War. We thought about the changes Florence Nightingale made to the hospitals, including encouraging handwashing and opening windows to stop germs spreading. The children loved dressing up in soldiers' jackets and hats and showed off their true St Peteronian selves!



We currently have vacancies for a Higher Level Teaching Assistant and a Teaching Assistant in EYFS. Please see our website for further details:

<https://www.stpetershants.co.uk/vacancies/>

If you have pre-school children and like the sound of St Peter's School, then why not contact us to find out about the application process?

Telephone 01962 852820 or email admin@st-peters.hants.sch.uk.

Best wishes Louise Buxton (Miss) Headteacher