



Our Lady & St Joseph's Parish Bulletin

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**SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY
IN ORDINARY TIME
JULY 25TH 2004**



THIS WEEK'S MUSIC Entry 708 *Holy God we praise your name* Offertory 967 *O, the love of mercy is the essence*
Communion 938 *Soul of my Saviour* Recessional 969 *Lord of all hopefulness*

Thanks for your kindness last week with the second collection for the APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA. We were able to send £390 to them to further their important work with seafarers.

Talking about seafarers - our canoe club goes from strength to strength! Here's an invitation for 16 parishioners to enjoy a day's canoeing on Derwentwater departing Newman School at 9.0 and returning about 5.30 on Sunday August 8th. Roy Wadson and Gerald Richardson, both BCU level 2 coaches, will lead the party paddling to St Herbert's Island for a picnic and then up the River Derwent. Bring a set of old clothes and food. All safety equipment will be provided. Transport via shared cars. (High winds will cause the trip to be cancelled!). Interested? Phone Gerald Richardson 537791. New canoeists wanting to learn more are welcome.

Last year we had a very successful Mass for the sick and our older parishioners with a strawberry tea afterwards on the lawn. The SVP are organising a similar event this year on the Feast Day of our parish - Sunday August 15th, the Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady. The sacrament of the sick will be administered at the 4.30 Mass and those who have difficulty with transport are asked to contact any member of the SVP or one of the clergy.

The Sister who preached for the Missions at all the Masses a couple of weeks ago mentioned the fact that the Arms Trade was directly responsible for suffering in many Third World countries. If you would like the Prime Minister to know of your concern about the large amount of arms the UK exports throughout the world you can send a pre-printed post card to him. There is a pile of them at the back of church.

There's another second collection at all the Masses today - the last for some time, I hope! This one is for the Lancaster Diocesan Catholic Caring Services. This is our own charity caring for the deaf, blind, homeless children, and the mentally and physically incapacitated. There's an office in Carlisle, Barrow, and Whitehaven, as well as the head office in Preston. In Spenser St you might have seen the recently opened shop which caters for those who are hard of hearing.



MASS INTENTIONS FOR THIS WEEK

SAT	6.0 (Alston) The parish
SUN	10.0 Derek Wilson 4.30 Richard McDonald
MON	12.10 Kathleen Poland
TUE	8.0 Deceased Person 12.10 Special Birthday
WED	9.15 (St Gab) Private Intention (BM) 12.10 Bob, Agnes, Bill Smith
THU	8.0 Dec'd Rooney family 12.10 William & Roseanne Hayhoe
FRI	8.0 Carmelite Sisters 12.10 Ruby Wedding (D&ER)
SAT	12.10 Jack Finlison
SUN	6.0 (Alston) The parish 10.0 Bill Scott 4.30 Pat Lord's Intentions

PLEASE PRAY FOR John Turner (once of Alston) who is sick. It's Edwina Fraser's anniversary about this time. Kathleen McGrellis (St Cuthbert's Court) died recently. She is being cremated at 4.0 on Monday.

The Power of Prayer

In a recent series of bizarre experiments in America, (San Francisco — where else?!), a Dr. Elizabeth Targ has been studying the therapeutic effects of prayer on AIDS and cancer patients.

She is investigating what she calls "distance healing," in which those offering the prayers are far removed from the patients, who themselves are not even aware that incantations are being recited on their behalf.

It's an effect that would seem to defy reason — yet Targ reports striking results. After selecting practising healers from a number of traditions — Christians, Buddhists, Jews, Indian shamans — she supplied them with the first names, blood counts and photographs of 20 patients with advanced AIDS. For an hour a day, over a ten-week period, the healers concentrated their thoughts on the pictures of these patients, but not on those of a control group of 20 other AIDS patients.

According to Targ, the prayed-for patients had fewer and less severe new illnesses, fewer doctor visits, fewer hospitalizations and were generally in better moods than those in the control group.

The research has sparked controversy in America because it is being funded at the tax payer's expense. (Time Magazine Jan 2002)

The first thought that comes to mind is Jesus' admonishment "This wicked generation; it is asking for a sign. The only sign it will be given is the sign of Jonah." (Lk. 11:29).

We may be appalled that such a cold and clinical test should be carried out on those suffering from terminal illness; in effect, testing God; and yet, are we not ourselves, frequently guilty of the same sin of testing God?

We pray fervently for our own needs and the needs of those we love and we look for immediate results. We want that job, better health, a successful relationship, the resolution of our problems. And yet, when we pray, do we really believe that God will hear and answer our prayers, or are we not putting him to the test? Are we not frequently amazed when our prayers are answered? Or filled with doubt when the results are not forthcoming?

Essentially, prayer is a recognition that we are wholly dependent upon God for our wellbeing. It is our "communion" with God in a very real sense; he works in and through us for our good and the good of the whole "community".

God knows each thought we have, so why not go to him and talk with him as you would if you were to meet him on the street. Prayers do not have to be long, drawn out affairs, but we need to be precise in what we are asking, and ask according to what is right for us and those around us, rather than asking blindly for what we want. If it glorifies the Lord, then it will be something good for us. If it does not, then we shouldn't be asking for it in our prayers.

