

**Second Reading: Romans 5:12-15**

Sin entered the world through one man, and through sin death, and thus death has spread through the whole human race because everyone has sinned. Sin existed in the world long before the Law was given. There was no law and so no one could be accused of the sin of 'law-breaking', yet death reigned over all from Adam to Moses, even though their sin, unlike that of Adam, was not a matter of breaking a law. Adam prefigured the One to come, but the gift itself considerably outweighed the fall. If it is certain that through one man's fall so many died, it is even more certain that divine grace, coming through the one man, Jesus Christ, came to so many as an abundant free gift.

**Gospel Acclamation:**

Alleluia, alleluia!

The Word was made flesh and lived among us: to all who did accept him he gave power to become children of God.

Alleluia!

**Gospel: Matthew 10:26-33**

Jesus instructed the Twelve as follows: 'Do not be afraid. For everything that is now covered will be uncovered, and everything now hidden will be made clear. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the daylight; what you hear in whispers, proclaim from the housetops: . 'Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; fear him rather who can destroy both body and soul in hell. Can you not buy two sparrows for a penny? And yet not one falls to the ground without your Father knowing. Why, every hair on your head has been counted. So there is no need to be afraid; you are worth more than hundreds of sparrows. . 'So if anyone declares himself for me in the presence of men, I will declare myself for him in the presence of my Father in heaven. But the one who disowns me in the presence of men, I will disown in the presence of my Father in heaven.'



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**Twelve Sunday in Ordinary Time -Year A****First Reading: Jeremiah 20:10-13**

Jeremiah said: I hear so many disparaging me, "'Terror from every side!' Denounce him! Let us denounce him!' All those who used to be my friends watched for my downfall, 'Perhaps he will be seduced into error. Then we will master him and take our revenge!' But the Lord is at my side, a mighty hero; my opponents will stumble, mastered, confounded by their failure; everlasting, unforgettable disgrace will be theirs. But you, O Lord of Hosts, you who probe with justice, who scrutinise the loins and heart, let me see the vengeance you will take on them, for I have committed my cause to you. Sing to the Lord, praise the Lord, for he has delivered the soul of the needy from the hands of evil men.

**Responsorial Psalm:**

In your great love, answer me, O Lord.

It is for you that I suffer taunts,  
that shame covers my face,  
that I have become a stranger to my brothers,  
an alien to my own mother's sons.  
I burn with zeal for your house  
and taunts against you fall on me.

This is my prayer to you,  
my prayer for your favour.  
In your great love, answer me, O God,  
with your help that never fails:  
Lord, answer, for your love is kind;  
in your compassion, turn towards me.

The poor when they see it will be glad  
and God-seeking hearts will revive;  
for the Lord listens to the needy  
and does not spurn his servants in their chains.  
Let the heavens and the earth give him praise,  
the sea and all its living creatures

### **Fr. Philip writes**

Most of us react badly to folk who hurt us, annoy us, frustrate and betray us. Whether this is actual or imagined by us, we bear grudges and we pull away. We cut ourselves off, lest it happen again. Mercifully, God is not like that at all. Despite the behaviour of human beings in general and of His servants in particular, He continues to engage with us, trying to correct our faults out of love and to draw us into a saving communion with Himself.

Poor Jeremiah this Sunday experiences the evil thoughts and behaviours of those around him. He turns to God, Who is not like his neighbours and fellow citizens. God probes with justice and scrutinises the heart, so the prophet appeals to Him to take action. What he asks for is human and not divine. What is so encouraging is his trust in God to save his cause and his praise of the Almighty for delivering the needy.

In his letter to the Romans, St Paul asserts that God is greater and more understanding than human beings. He talks about the Father's overwhelming generosity in pouring His grace upon our faults through Jesus Christ. It is even more certain, he writes, that divine grace, coming through the one man, Jesus Christ, came to so many as an abundant free gift.

Such is God's generosity, that not only does He continue to speak to wayward humanity through the Prophets, but He actually sends His message, the Word made flesh, to communicate in person. And so it is wonderful to read the opening words of Christ in this Sunday's gospel, "Do not be afraid!" It may seem that things are unjust and going against us, but God will uncover the hidden and make clear His justice.

The Saviour goes on to speak of this love for us which is greater than human love. "Why, every hair of your head has been counted, so there is no need to be afraid; you are worth more than hundreds of sparrows."

All this adds up to an invitation to think and behave in God's way, rather than our own. Our happiness here and hereafter lies in conforming our wills to His. This is why Christ tells us to be perfect as Our Heavenly Father is perfect. We must aspire to higher standards. God's abundant free gift of power for right living will make this possible. He will not force His grace upon us, for violence is not His way. We are to see and embrace, His Power, His Love and His Way of Life.

We ask for your Prayers: for those who are sick in mind and body, in our parish family, our own family, the people of Cirencester and Tetbury.

For those who have died recently especially of the Corona virus and all whose anniversaries are at this time.

In our Diocesan prayer link, we remember the priest and parishioners of St Peter, Gloucester

### This week we celebrate the following:

- Monday: Feasts of Saints. John Fisher and Thomas More Martyrs
- Wednesday: Solemnity of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist
- Saturday: Our Lady on Saturday

**Reopen of Churches for Private Prayer** Thank you to those who cleaned both churches in the preparation of opening them for private prayer. Following the cleaning we have had to complete a questionnaire, in order to receive permission to open the churches. When this is received, we will be opening St Peters on Sunday morning @ 10.00am to 12.00noon. St Michaels will be open @ 10.00am until 12.00noon on a Wednesday morning. We will require volunteers to take on the role of stewards; please let us know if you can help, including the time and how long you can help. Thank you  
**Parish Finances:** Thank you to all those who continue to support our parishes through standing order; this is a great way to support your parish. If you do not currently donate this way; it is easy to do, whether you pay tax and 'Gift Aid' your contribution or not, please email the parish office and a form will be sent to you. A cheque made payable for your parish would also be most welcome. Make the cheque payable to the parish and put through the door of St Peter's or the post box for St Michaels. Thank you for your continued support.

**Mass Obligation:** There is no Sunday or weekday Mass – the Sunday obligation has been lifted for the time being. We can still pray together and look after one another. We can take care of those around us who might be in need. We can build up a sense of community in the area in which we live and maybe we relearn the simple things of faith whilst we hunger for the Bread of Life in the Eucharist.

### **Prayer for Spiritual Communion**

Lord Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Holy Sacrament of the altar. I love you above all things, and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my soul, so that I may unite myself wholly to you, now and forever. Amen

**Sunday Morning Coffee:** A group of parishioners is gathering online using Zoom on Sundays at 11am for coffee and chat and you are welcome to join using the link below.

Why not join us, catch up on the week's news: If you need further details contact Rachel on 01666 504877.

We can still be instruments of peace, of joy, of faith and love in so many ways. We are a community of hope and faith and love, and we can still be proclaimers of the Gospel even when our normal, everyday routine is upset. May God watch over each and every one of us, and remind us – always – that he is near.