

**First Reading: Elijah's Encounter with the Lord (1 Kings 19:9.11-13)**

This magnificent story of Elijah's encounter with the Lord is read today in church to pair with Peter's encounter with Jesus, the Son of God, on Lake Galilee. Elijah was fleeing from the threat of persecution, and had trekked for forty days and forty nights. Mount Horeb is an awesome place, a rocky mountain on Sinai. No earth, vegetation, or animals there - just stark rock, some iron-ore red, some granite-grey, some almost sulphur-green. It was here that Moses and the People of Israel had their experience of God, too, and the silent mountains almost speak of the Lord. There are experiences which cannot be put into words, whether it is the ecstasy of love or music or beauty. No one can adequately express in words the experience of an encounter with God, and Elijah's is described quite differently from that of Moses, who experienced God in thunder, lightning and earthquake: the light, murmuring sound (the 'sound of a gentle breeze') which Elijah hears is literally 'a sound of silence'. In this case the meeting so strengthened Elijah that he returned to his mission. It is because of these encounters that Moses and Elijah are present at the Transfiguration, when the closest disciples experience the divinity of Jesus on the holy mountain. Do you know of other people's stories where an encounter with God has changed their lives? How has God touched your life?

**Second Reading: The Holy People of Israel (Romans 9:1-5)**

After his exposition of Christ's saving work Paul turns to the question which tortures him: how is it that Israel, so long prepared, failed to recognize the fulfilment of the prophecies. Paul was a Jew through and through, and was deeply wounded by the failure of his own people to welcome Jesus, despite all the privileges given them which he enumerates in today's reading. For Paul, Christianity is the conclusion to which Judaism was meant to lead. But God never revokes his gifts, and these gifts still belong to the Jews; it can never be said that the Jews have been superseded and lost their status as God's chosen people. For the next two chapters in Romans Paul quotes every conceivable scripture to show that the rebellions of the Jews against God throughout their history made it inevitable that they would fail to recognize the Messiah. Nevertheless, he insists, a remnant will turn to the Lord in the end. The dead branches have been cut off to make room for the gentiles to be grafted in, and the old branches will be grafted in again at the end. However, this horticultural image does not quite work - you can't graft in dead branches - so in the end Paul simply throws up his hands and praises the inscrutable wisdom of God.

What place do the Jewish people have in God's plan for the world?

**Fr Henry Wansbrough**

**Welcome to our Parish Newsletter:**

**St. Mary's & St. Aidan's R.C Churches**

**Rev. Sean Hall**

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**Sunday 13th August 2023:****The Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

After listening to today's Gospel, Jesus and Peter on the Water (Matthew 14:22-33), consider Fr Henry Wansbrough's reflection:- The Christian people are often depicted as a boat, with Peter at the helm. As in a boat, everyone has their part to play: kids to bring the excitement and the challenge, parents to take the responsibility, grandparents just to be there to comfort and reassure. Without Jesus the disciples were getting exhausted, frustrated and probably bad-tempered and quarrelling. When Jesus appears everything changes: first, terror and awed amazement, then Peter rushes to meet him - and loses confidence, only to be swiftly rescued.

How does Jesus come to me? In the joys of family? In the unwelcome criticism of an angry neighbour who tells me the truth about myself? In the worries of a job or the agonies of a failed relationship? In the staggering beauty of creation? In physical pain? In all these situations we may discover God's presence, and without that presence we cannot expect to cope. Jesus does not force himself upon us. He just jogs us, and says, 'Here I am if you want me.' He may disappear into the sea-mist again for a time, and we may sink into the water like mistrustful Peter. But it all ends with a welcome and a recognition that Jesus can help, even in a life-threatening situation. Why is Peter such a good role-model for us?

**Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB**

**ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY**- Tues 15th August (see Mass times opposite)

"All-powerful and ever-living God: You raised the sinless Virgin Mary, mother of your Son, body and soul, to the glory of heaven.

May we see heaven as our final goal and come to share her glory."

**EXALTED YOUTH RETREAT WITH ANOINTING FIRE CATHOLIC MINISTRIES**

This 3-day residential retreat from 8th-10th Sept, takes place at Emmaus Youth Village in Consett and is aimed at 17-24 year old students who are embarking on the journey to Universities and Higher Studies. Led by AFCM ministers from Birmingham, it will start at 10am on Friday and wraps up at 4pm on Sunday. See <https://afcmuk.org/register> or contact Deacon Alison Rebello on 07931-136243 for more details.

**CONFESSION**: Saturday 19th August at St. Aidan's.

The first & third Saturday of the month at St Aidan's 11am - 11.30am

The second & fourth Saturday of the month at St Mary's 11am - 11.30am

**SONGS OF PRAISE AT ST GEORGE'S CHURCH, JESMOND**

Monday 21st August, 630pm - 930pm. There is a big space to fill at a relatively quiet time of year, so the more the merrier! It's free but people do need to book their place – [singwithus@ctvc.co.uk](mailto:singwithus@ctvc.co.uk) or 07734 030 888.

**ST MARY'S CHILDREN'S LITURGY**: Meeting after Mass on Sun 3rd Sept to plan a rota for the forthcoming term.

**COLLECTIONS**: w/c 6th August 2023

ST. AIDAN'S - Loose Plate: £193.00 / Envelopes: £72.00 / Hall Hire: £40.00

ST. MARY'S - Loose Plate: £204.10 / Envelopes: £40.00 / Donation: £171.50

Friday Coffee Morning: £46.70 (Little Sisters of the Poor)

***Thank you all for your continued support and generosity.***

**SUPPORT THOSE IN NEED THIS SUMMER**: There is a continuing need for food to help refugees in our area. Donations can be left at both churches and are taken to the St Vincent de Paul Centre on New Bridge Street. Non-perishable food is always in demand—sugar, rice, tea, tuna, tomatoes, biscuits etc. Thank you for your support.

**MASS INTENTIONS FOR w/c 13th August 2023**

Sat. 12th (St. Mary's) 5.30pm Maureen Jones

Sun. 13th (St. Aidan's) 9.15am People of the Parish

Sun. 13th (St. Mary's) 11.00am Honey B.N

Mon. 14th \*\*\* NO MASS \*\*\*

***Tues. 15th (St. Mary's) 10.00am Feast of the Assumption***

***Tues. 15th (St. Aidan's) 7.00pm Feast of the Assumption***

Wed. 16th (St. Aidan's) 10.00am Priest's Intention

Thurs. 17th (St. Aidan's) 10.00am Priest's Intention

Fri. 18th (St. Mary's) 10.00am People of the

***\* Sat. 19th (St. Aidan's) 11.00am Confession***

Sat. 19th (St. Mary's) 5.30pm Frances & Maurice Egan Anniversary

Sun. 20th (St. Aidan's) 9.15am Derek Savin

Sun. 20th (St. Mary's) 11.00am Honey B.N

***For Mass Intentions, please see envelopes at the entrances to our churches.***

**PREPARATION FOR NEXT WEEK:**

Sunday 20th August - The Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

*"We have been buried in baptism into Christ's death and now live with Christ's life."* The Obedience of All Nations (Romans 11:13-15. 29-32)

**CHILDREN'S PRAYER**: Loving God, you give us all the things we need to live good and true lives. Help us to follow the example of Mary, who was loving and faithful, so that we too may live forever with you. We ask this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

**WE ASK THAT YOU PRAY FOR**: Those who are sick. Those who have died recently. And those of our parishes whose anniversary occurs at this time.

**KEEP IN TOUCH**

Contact us via [parishsecretary@mail.com](mailto:parishsecretary@mail.com) or 0191 268 4222

Access weekend mass live via our Facebook page NE12Catholic.

Newsletters & Homilies can be viewed on [ww.stmarysforesthall.co.uk](http://ww.stmarysforesthall.co.uk)

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St. Stephen's Catholic Primary School [www.ststephensprimaryschool.co.uk](http://www.ststephensprimaryschool.co.uk)  
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