

# PARISH OF BLESSED JAMES BELL

*Serving St Benedict's, St Mary's & St Oswald's,  
Warrington*



## Mass in Honour of Our Lady of Lourdes

17th Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)  
26th July 2020

### Entrance Procession

*Music:* Immaculate Mary!

### Greeting & Introduction

#### Penitential Act

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

**R. For we have sinned against you.**

Show us, O Lord, your mercy.

**R. And grant us your salvation.**

#### Collect

May the venerable intercession of Our Lady of Lourdes come to our aid, we pray, O Lord, and free us from every danger, so that we may rejoice in your peace. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

**R. Amen.**

## Liturgy of the Word

### First Reading *(1 Kings 3: 5, 7-12)*

A reading from the first book of the Kings

The Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream and said, 'Ask what you would like me to give you.' Solomon replied, 'O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in succession to David my father. But I am a very young man, unskilled in leadership. Your servant finds himself in the midst of this people of yours that you have chosen, a people so many its number cannot be counted or reckoned. Give your servant a heart to understand how to discern between good and evil, for who could govern this people of yours that is so great?' It pleased the Lord that Solomon should have asked for this. 'Since you have asked for this' the Lord said 'and not asked for long life for yourself or riches or the lives of your enemies, but have asked for a

discerning judgement for yourself, here and now I do what you ask. I give you a heart wise and shrewd as none before you has had and none will have after you.'

The word of the Lord.

**R. Thanks be to God.**

### Psalm Response

**R. Lord, I love your commands.**

### Gospel Acclamation

#### Gospel

*(Matthew 13: 44-52)*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

**R. Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus said to the crowds, 'The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field which someone has found; he hides it again, goes off happy, sells everything he owns and buys the field.

'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls; when he finds one of great value he goes and sells everything he owns and buys it.

'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet cast into the sea that brings in a haul of all kinds. When it is full, the fishermen haul it ashore; then, sitting down, they collect the good ones in a basket and throw away those that are no use. This is how it will be at the end of time: the angels will appear and separate the wicked from the just to throw them into the blazing furnace where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.

'Have you understood all this?' They said, 'Yes.' And he said to them, 'Well then, every scribe who becomes a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out from his storeroom things both new and old.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

**R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### Homily

### Bidding Prayers

## Liturgy of the Eucharist

### Preparation of the Gifts

*Music:* Ave Maria for Treble Voices – Mervyn Cousins

### Prayer over the Offerings

Receive, O Lord, we ask, the prayers of your people with the sacrificial offerings, that, through the intercession of Mary, the Mother of your Son, no petition may go unanswered, no request be made in vain. Through Christ our Lord.

**R. Amen.**

### Eucharistic Acclamations

Sanctus En Fa Majeur – Lourdes

*The Mystery of Faith*

**When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup,  
we proclaim your Death, O Lord,  
until you come again.**

### **Communion Rite**

*Music:* O Virgin Fair, Star of the Sea – Estelle White

### **Prayer after Communion**

Renewed with this heavenly food,  
we humbly implore you, Lord,  
that, having received your Son, born of Mary,  
under sacramental signs,  
we may profess him in words  
and hold fast to him in deeds.  
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.  
**R. Amen.**

## **Concluding Rite**

### **Blessing & Dismissal**

### **Distribution of Communion**

*Music:* Magnificat – Peter Jones

### **Acknowledgements**

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## **SUNDAY REFLECTIONS**



### **Reflection by Eamonn Murphy, a parishioner of St Bartholomew's Parish, Rainhill**

As a teenager I recall thinking that by the time I would be 25 or 30 years, I would have life 'sorted'. I would have found whatever it was I was searching for... And then in my thirties I remember thinking that if only I could... if only I could rid myself of fear and self-doubt, I would get my life sorted. Today, I have come to terms with the fact that I will never have myself sorted. There is consolation in U2's song, 'I still haven't found what I'm looking for.' The lyrics express this relentless quest:

'Yes I have climbed the highest mountains.  
I have run through the fields.  
I have crawled.  
I've scaled city walls.'

This search is expressed in the first reading today when Solomon asks God to give him a heart to understand;

and then the psalmist cries out, 'Let your love come to me and I shall live.'

Jesus seems to understand the searching that is part of life and also that we might have a hard time believing that God is at the heart of our search. With no easy answers Jesus reaches out to us as he reached out to the Samaritan woman, the rich young man and so many others... to invite, accept, cajole, encourage us to seek that which will bring us to another place as we follow the quest that will culminate in the fullness of life.

Jesus' conviction that life is more than what we can physically see entices us by telling us that it is like a treasure hunt. We will not be disappointed! We will discover that our lives have been touched by the joy, the wonder, the surprise of the God who, as today's second reading says, 'turns everything to our good'.

During recent times we have all had to deal with many harsh realities. We have had to dig deep within ourselves; to learn to read the signs of the times; to discover what is important in our lives – our real treasure. We have been called to pay attention to our inner life, to listen, to let go of some things.

Letting go seems to have been a feature of this unusual time of pandemic. It is not something we are comfortable with or indeed encouraged to strive for in our culture. Quite the opposite! But maybe we are learning how to lose in order to win authenticity, to seek God 'with a sincere heart' not outside ourselves but within. As St Augustine wrote 'Don't scatter yourself around. Look to your intimate being. Truth resides in the inner person.'

Bono continued his song:  
'I believe in the kingdom come.  
Then all the colours bleed into one.  
Bleed into one.  
But yes still I'm running.'

As we return to the 'new normal', let us never give up this wonderful, intriguing, sometimes bewildering search. Life will never be sorted but that's ok.

### **Poem by R. S. Thomas**

#### *The Bright Field*

I have seen the sun break through  
to illuminate a small field  
for a while, and gone my way  
and forgotten it. But that was the pearl  
of great price, the one field that had  
treasure in it. I realize now  
that I must give all that I have  
to possess it. Life is not hurrying

on to a receding future, nor hankering after  
an imagined past. It is the turning  
aside like Moses to the miracle  
of the lit bush, to a brightness  
that seemed as transitory as your youth  
once, but is the eternity that awaits you.