

# OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH In NEW MILTON

Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth

15 Mount Ave, New Milton. BH25 6NT.

Parish priest: *Father George Ngwa*

Church opening hours **07.30- 17.00** ( during winter)



**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time    Year B    21 January 2018**

## AM I ALLOWED TO HAVE AND ENJOY A HOBBY?

We know that Peter and his brother, Andrew, were fishermen: so too were the brothers James and John. Fishing was their profession. Our Gospel reading tells us that they were all called when they were fully engaged at their profession. After the Call, they became Disciples of Christ and were fully engaged in this apostolate of Preaching and Ministering to the people. After the resurrection of Christ we see these zealous servants of the **WORD** taking some time off to do some fishing not now as a profession anymore but as a **HOBBY**. After the resurrection Christ met them at the Tiberias, catching fish.

This is an excellent question and one many Christians grapple with at various times. We know that we are responsible before God to faithfully steward our time and money. We know that we have important and unfinished business in this world. Sometimes we wonder if there is any value in committing time, energy, and money to our hobbies, and especially to hobbies that are not clearly connected to spiritual growth and maturity.

God is pleased when we pursue hobbies. We can confidently pursue them and do them for the glory of God even if there is no obviously religious value in them. There are two good reasons for this. The first is that God created us to be limited beings. None of us can be fully engaged with people all the time. We need activities apart from our professions that dominate our lives. Hobbies provide an important means through which we rest, through which we gain refreshment not through the complete cessation of activity but through pursuing a particularly enjoyable activity. In this way, hobbies are a means of rest, relaxation, and refreshment. They help us live better in the rest of life.

Secondly, God gives us the gift of enthusiasm. It is God himself who makes each of us enthusiastic for different interests and activities. We can embrace these and have no reason to fear them or be embarrassed by them. We can experience joy—God’s own joy, when we follow this enthusiasm to activities that bring us pleasure and satisfaction. Hobbies give us the opportunity to pursue interests apart from the ones that consume the rest of our lives.

But even as we pursue hobbies we do well to ask ourselves a couple of questions (apart from the obvious questions of whether this activity harms others or whether it delights in what God says is evil). A hobby is something done in the context of leisure and for the purpose of pleasure.

The first question is the question of priorities: What has the best of your time, money, and attention? God’s gifts are meant to be enjoyed with self-control and moderation. Food is wonderful when enjoyed in moderation but makes an awful master if self-control is overlooked in favour of gluttony. Hobbies are much the same. They are not meant to be the main thing in life, but to be a welcome break from the main thing. By definition, a hobby is something done in the context of leisure and for the purpose of pleasure. But like all pleasures, a hobby will threaten to infringe on the main thing. The money you spend on a hobby needs to come as a lower priority to the money you give to the Lord and the money you use to the family. The time for your hobby cannot be prioritized ahead of the time set aside for work, family, and worship. If your hobby is dominating your thoughts, if it is threatening to displace family, church, or vocation, the gift has become your god.

The second question is the question of purpose. What is the purpose of this hobby? What do you gain from it? Can you thank God for it and can you confidently say, “I can do this for the glory of God”? A hobby should

provide a means for you to unwind and relax from the activities that otherwise consume your time and dominate your mind. It is for good reason that so many hobbies are quiet and meditative, whether fishing, colouring, or gardening. A hobby can even feed your soul in some way, helping you to grow in love for God and the world he has made. At its best, a hobby increases your joy in life and in the God who created your life. Hobbies are a gift to us and that we can joyfully, confidently pursue them, provided they take their proper place in our lives.

#### LEISURE AND HOBBIES ARE NOT SINFUL.

Scripture nowhere forbids hobbies. It nowhere forbids leisure time. After God finished creating the world and everything in it, he rested. And in his rest, he established the principle of rest for all time for his people. God rested and acknowledge his creation *good*. Therefore, insofar as leisure time is enjoying things God has created for our good, they are by no means sin. They become sin when they take primacy in our lives and cause us to neglect our calling from God to work and minister to our families. Scripture clearly and curtly forbids laziness: “If a man won’t work, then he shall not eat.” (cf. 2 Thess. 3:10; and Prov. 6:6) If leisure and hobbies lead to laziness then they’ve evolved into God-replacements that can entangle our hearts like. But in and of themselves, most hobbies are not sin nor sinful.

#### LEISURE AND HOBBIES ARE NEEDED IN LIGHT OF HUMAN WEAKNESS AND LIFE RHYTHMS.

In today’s work force, some researchers have found the average work week for many people is roughly estimated as 50 hours. Thus, after a long and laborious week, our weak bodies and minds often stand in need of refreshment. God set a pattern in the created order (evening/morning/end of the day) for six days, and then established a day of rest on the seventh. Our rhythms of life tend to follow along that line: work five or six days and then rest one or two. Rightly used, periods of rest and leisure are helpful. Therefore leisure activities are indented to recharge the physical and mental batteries. Walking in pleasant places, conferences which are delightful without offence, poetry, music, gardening and golf, and other allowable sports fit with people’s several dispositions for comfort and refreshment.

#### LEISURE AND HOBBIES MAY BE VIEWED AS GOOD GIFTS FROM GOD.

God intended for us to enjoy his creation in this fashion so long as we understand that it is only a pointer and not ultimate glory. The created order, though beautiful and amazing, was designed as a pointer to an even more beautiful and breathtaking Creator. In other words, it possesses glory because of its Creator, not in itself. This is what King David is telling us in Psalm 19: ***“The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.”*** Our hobbies and leisure time afford us the opportunity to enjoy the created order, to enjoy the gifts God has given us.

#### LEISURE AND HOBBIES CAN BECOME IDOLS.

“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.” (cf. Ecclesiastes 3:1) There is a time for everything and a time to refrain from doing some things. When our hobbies begin to interfere with our families or our work, then they’ve become a detriment and the danger is, they’ve become an idol and we all know how God feels about idolatry. When hobbies take over a person’s life, they begin to hurt self and others. Neglect of work, family, friends, or church can start to have a cumulative effect. There is a time for enjoying hobbies but there’s also a time for enjoying others. The human heart is an idol factory. Leisure can be grossly deficient in the end as a means of ultimate satisfaction, becomes “chasing after the wind.”

When our leisure time and hobbies replace the worship of our Saviour, they have become functional idols. Hobbies too should not be a means of draining the family resources, since statistics show that many people spend so much on whatever they think can give them happiness. This as stated, this too can be grossly deficient in the end as a means of ultimate satisfaction, and become “chasing after the wind.”

#### LEISURE AND HOBBIES SHOULD BE DONE TO GOD’S GLORY.

Here Paul’s words come to bear: “So then, whether you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, do all things to the glory of God” 1 Cor. 10:31. In other words we should pursue God’s glory even in the most mundane things we do. God declared all of his creation good. So it is fully biblical to say hobbies are pursuits that may be done to God’s glory. That is to say, from playing or following sports to gardening to exercise to music to outdoor activities to many other things; all of these may be enjoyed by the Christian. So, we should not waste

our leisure time but use it to glorify the One who gives them and bestows on us life, breath, and strength to enjoy them.

**CONCLUSION:** Again, hobbies are not necessarily wrong, but when they consume us and take our eyes off Christ, then they are definitely wrong. A good test is to ask this question: *how important is this hobby to me?* Is the Lord alone enough? If it were stripped away from me, would I still be content in Christ? As Christians we can have hobbies. Many people have addictions to things like video games and this causes them to neglect other important things like family, work, house maintenance etc. They can spend hours in a day playing the same game, always trying to reach another level. It is okay to enjoy your hobbies and spend time with your friends who have the same hobbies, but let us not forget to spend time in prayer, with family, in church, at work, and whatever is essential in our life. So, yes, Christians can have hobbies, but we have to make sure they never replace Christ. That is the temptation, and we must be sure to avoid it.

**Fr George Ngwa**

#### **Vatican news - update**

The Pope is just finishing his visit to Chile in South America where he met relatives of the Pinochet dictatorship regime, and met, prayed and cried with victims of sexual abuse. On a happier note, he performed a marriage ceremony on his plane.

He spoke with various groups of people. He spoke to academics to urge them to promote national coexistence. He spoke to the youth using the language of computers, asking them to stay “connected” to Christ to be protagonists of change. He spoke to the people to be “artisans of God’s unity” and urged all Chileans to ensure that no one misses “the joy of the party” (summarised from Vatican news official website)

#### **Portsmouth Diocese enews (18<sup>th</sup> Jan)**

Don’t forget to sign up if you have an email and internet connection. Keep abreast of current news.

#### **As a taster this week...**

Bishop Philip has started a series of reflections, writing about the *Kyriale Vaticanum*. This is a collection of 18 mass settings/ chants. Each has a name and recommendation for its use at a particular season or on a certain feast day. This week Bishop Philip writes about “Lux et Origo” which originated in the tenth century and is recommended for use during the Eastertime. If you are interested there is an audio of the music being chanted, available on the website.

Thank you for your prayers. We now have some Mass cover for the time Father George is away. A big thank you to Father Aneesh ( who comes all the way from Wimbledon) and Father Quarmby ( from Brockenhurst).

Please check the diary for the details.

Father Vervenne said he would have loved to have celebrated with us but is not able anymore. Please keep him in your prayers.

Looking ahead. The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord is on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> February followed by the memorial to St Blaise on Saturday the 3<sup>rd</sup> February, when Father George is back with us again to celebrate this day and bless throats. Please remember that **there is a Quiz planned for the**

**evening of February 3<sup>rd</sup>. Please put the date in your diary.**

The month of January is the month dedicated to the Most Holy name of Jesus.

**There is a second collection next week for Racial Justice Sunday.**

Lent starts with ASH WEDNESDAY on the 14th February this year, so time for us all to rethink our practices. The Matthew Kelly book “Rediscover Jesus” which everyone should have a copy of by now, has 40 chapters and someone has already told me that they are planning to use it as a means of Lenten reflections. Good idea and thank you Margaret!

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B 21 January 2018

<b>Sunday</b>	21	January	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday in ordinary time	<b>18.00</b> Vigil Mass - <i>Helen Taylor RIP</i> <b>10.00</b> Holy Mass – <i>Joseph Matthew RIP</i>	Coffee & tea in hall after Mass
<b>Monday</b>	22	January	<b>St Vincent</b>		
<b>Tuesday</b>	23	January	Ordinary time	<b>No Mass today</b>	
<b>Wednesday</b>	24	January	St Francis de Sales	09.00 Exposition, 09.30 Rosary 09.50 Benediction <b>10.00 Holy Mass – Holy Souls</b>	Rosary intention for the sick of the parish
<b>Thursday</b>	25	January	Conversion of St Paul	<b>10.00 Holy Mass – private intention In thanksgiving</b>	Celebrant: Fr D Quarmby
<b>Friday</b>	26	January	St Timothy, St Titus	<b>10.00 Holy Mass – private intention In thanksgiving</b>	Celebrant: Fr D Quarmby
<b>Saturday</b>	27	January	St Angela de Merici Our Lady on Saturday	<b>No morning Mass</b>  <b>18.00 Vigil Mass of the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – Helen Taylor RIP</b>	Confessions before Vigil Mass Celebrant: Fr Aneesh Joseph
<b>Sunday</b>	28	January	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary time	<b>10.00 Holy Mass - Joseph Mathew RIP</b>	Celebrant: Fr Aneesh Joseph Coffee & tea in hall after Mass

**Prayer to St Michael, said at the end of Masses.** St Michael, the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who wander through the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen

Collections 13/14 January	
loose	412.78
envelopes	267.80
SPUC - £299.09	
Thank you for your continued support	

	Sat 20 Jan	Sun 21 Jan	Sat 27 Jan	Sun 28 Jan
<b>Reader</b>	P Thorpe		M Newland	J Thomas
	J Marriott	C Fradd	M Hobbs	M Tanner
<b>EMHC</b>	F Fallon	A Caneda	B Coyne	A Joseph
	J Thomas	J Kurian	J Coyne	J Nichols
	R or M Yon	M Tanner	M Newland	M Buckland

Any cheques to the Parish please make payable to PRCDTR- New Milton. Thank you

**Parish priest: Father George Ngwa**

email: [gngwa@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:gngwa@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk) emergency mobile: **07475753040**

**Parish office: 01425 614968** Hall Booking via Parish Office

[lolnewmilton@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:lolnewmilton@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

Secretary: Johanna Thomas Wed/ Fri 10.45-12.00.

Our Parish Live streaming: <http://churchservices.tv/newmilton>

Website: [www.nfwp.org.uk](http://www.nfwp.org.uk)

**Safeguarding: Katherine Dempster Tel: 01425 611643 email: [katherine.dempster@btinternet.com](mailto:katherine.dempster@btinternet.com)**

