

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 7.30- 5pm (from June 7-7)



6th Sunday of Easter Year B 6 May 2018

HAS GOD FAVOURITES?

DOES HE FAVOUR SOME PEOPLE OVER OTHERS?

This is a question that will never go away, because it is based upon our human understanding of favouritism, which usually means unfair treatment and suffering of anyone who is not favoured. When we think of favouritism, we imagine a place of higher status and less responsibility. But God's favour often comes with added duties and more difficult challenges. In our first reading from ACTS, Peter told Cornelius and his household that, "*The truth I have come to realise is that God does not have favourites, but that anybody of any nationality who fears God and does what is right is acceptable to him.*"

To completely understand this question whether God favours some people over others; we have to start with the truth that God is always just (Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 7:11). We know He loves everyone because every human being is created in His image (John 3:16; Genesis 1:26). His judgment is always right. So if He favours someone, it is only a sign that such an individual has been given a singular grace for the accomplishment of all.

If we are trying to determine whom God loves based on how much good things happen in their life, then we are only going in a very frustrating direction. It's impossible to tell whom God favours by looking for positive circumstances in people's lives. The Scriptures makes us know that Jesus was the Beloved of God on whom his favour rested. Yet Jesus died the shameful excruciated and bloody death on the cross. The angel Gabriel greeted Mary with these words: "Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you" (Luke 1:28). We have no further record as to why Mary was chosen, but the result of God's favour upon her was that she had to bear great sorrow and difficulty as the mother of the Messiah. The "sword" would "pierce her soul" (Luke 2:35). God chose prophets and kings for His own sovereign reasons (Exodus 33:17; Daniel 10:11; 1 Samuel 2:26). We know how these prophets were treated and these Kings suffered.

Take Job, God favoured him and God allowed him to suffer. God favoured Moses and the Jews enslaved in Egypt and he let them wander in the desert for two generations and Moses never entered the Promised Land. God "favoured" John the Baptist and God allowed him to be imprisoned and die by beheading. Peter was the stone on which Christ built the Church but he died a martyr's death. Paul was close to God, and someone cut off his head. The Apostles were Christ chosen few suffered very much and all except John were killed. Joseph was close to God, and was sold and worked as a slave in Egypt. Stephen was also very close to God, and a mob stoned him to death. God chose Solomon from all of David's sons to become the next king (1 Chronicles 28:5-6). He gifted him in wealth, in popularity, and in wisdom not for his own good but to rule the people of God. (1 Kings 5:12). However, many of those whom God favoured were persecuted and suffered hardship because of the mantle of responsibility God placed upon them. God says to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.' It does not, therefore, depend upon human desire or effort, but on God's mercy." By Favouring Abraham, many nations are blessed. By Favouring the prophet, the people are led from slavery into the Promised Land. By Favouring Israel, many nations are blessed.

The truth is this; God favours you so that you can know and reciprocate His Desire to favour all. Because by favouring some over all, He seeks to favour all who relate with the some. It is like He is choosing vocal cords that can be shaped to carry His Voice to all the earth. In this way, the gospel is preached to many and so God favours some so that the some can become His ambassadors to all. However, as long as we are on this earth, it is worth nothing that God's ambassadors suffer and die. This is because favour comes with suffering for God here on earth but this suffering is crowned with glory in heaven.

Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. It is true that God does answer the prayers of His children. He makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. – Matthew 5:45. God blesses people because He chooses to do so for his own kind reasons. It is not about an individual's ability to merit God's good favour, but always about His unfathomable mercy.

So is God's favour arbitrary? Do our choices have any impact on whether we are among His favourites? Isaiah 66:2 says, "These are the ones I look on with favour: those who are humble and contrite in spirit, and who tremble at my word." God wants to show us all His favour, but in His sovereign knowledge, He chooses some for special assignment and blessing. When God gave Moses instructions about building the tabernacle, He named two men that He had specifically chosen to do the artistic work. (Exodus 31:1–4, 6). Sometimes, God chooses people because He has gifted them in special ways for special service. As they fulfil the calling He placed on their lives, they find favour with Him (Exodus 33:13).

God is not limited in His favour. He does not rank us in order of importance, nor is His favour something we must compete with one another to earn. Every child of God who comes to Him through faith in Jesus Christ has the favour of God. Psalm 5:12 says, "For you bless the righteous, O Lord; you cover him with favour as with a shield." It is not our own righteousness that earns us favour; we are declared righteous through the cleansing of our sins by the blood of Christ. As we grow in faith and seek to please Him, God demonstrates His favour by drawing near to us. He desires to bestow favour on everyone who seeks Him. He grants spiritual gifts to all His children to use in His service (1 Corinthians 12:5–7; 1 Peter 4:10). Even the Lord's discipline is a means of showing favour to His children. Hebrews 12:5–6 says, "My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son."

God's favourites are His children, purchased through the blood of His Son (John 1:12). As we honour Jesus, God's favour follows us. That favour may manifest itself through greater responsibility, blessing, or even suffering for His sake (Acts 5:41). The reward of His favour is His promise that "all things work together for the good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28). When we are God's favourites, we know He is always with us and will reward us for everything done for Him (Matthew 28:20; Revelation 22:12).

Some people have gifts that help in society. If they identify the best arena to use that gift, some become exceptional. If they do not, many consider themselves below-average because their gifts are poorly used. In particular, one can look at the young man that asked Jesus what he could do to become perfect. Jesus, knowing the young man's heart, recognized that he loved his wealth and possessions. For such a person, the greatest trial is to give them the wealth and possessions and then ask them to share, but this challenge caused the young man to go away sad. As such, we should not reach particular conclusions about who God loves based on how they are created or what they have acquired, instead focus on their relationship with God and their fellow men.

Fr George Ngwa

Share the Journey - a conference on refugees

"Responding to Pope Francis's and Caritas Internationalis call to "Share the Journey", CAFOD and Caritas Diocese of Portsmouth are co-sponsoring a conference on refugees on the 12th May in St Edward the Confessor Church in Chandlers Ford. The conference will also be entitled "Share the Journey" so come along and see what we can practically do as a diocese to assist refugees including coming together as parishes to sponsor and house refugee families. More information and registration on the Portsmouth diocese website.

Portsmouth People Magazine.

We have a great number of the current magazine left over. Please can everyone take a copy and place somewhere in the public domain, like hairdressers, library, dentists, doctors perhaps. With permission of course.

Parish diaries – if you wish one please take one, otherwise they will be thrown away.

Gardeners. More required please . The flowerbed by the side of the Hall would benefit from someone taking the lead and looking after it. Please let Johanna know if you would like to do this on behalf of the parish. Thank you

Poor Box money. If you know of anyone or cause locally that would benefit from the small amount we have available please let Father know.

Legacy Received.

Mrs Mary Eugenie Thomas sadly passed away on 15th March 2017. We have just been notified that in her will she very kindly left our Church a legacy of £500. May she rest in peace.



Rosary round the Coast.

17 people braved the elements to gather and say the Rosary marking the occasion with others all round the UK on Sunday 29th April at 3pm. Other parishioners were there with us in spirit. (Photo courtesy of Pam Loftus)

On Saturday 12th May, the Annual Rosary Rally takes place at St John's cathedral starting with Holy Mass at 12.15 in the cathedral. If you are interested in attending there is a poster up on the noticeboard.

New Forest Basics Bank.

From Anthony Kirke, Treasurer: "Thank you for listening and responding to my appeals for Standing Orders for the Basics Bank. Please may I remind you, if you haven't already done so, to complete the form and return it to me as soon as you can. We will be most grateful for any contributions."

Note from the office: There are standing order forms for the Basics bank available at the church entrances.

Polish Pilgrimage 17-28 September. There are 3 places still available. Please contact Father Marcin at mdrabik@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk or via St Swithuns's Portsmouth.

Please note. From the beginning of June, the church opening times will be changing to 7am – 7pm.



Parishioner, Jane Gow, receiving the Knight's cope below the Miraculous Holy Cross, on the main Sanctuary of the Cathedral of St Vitus, Rieka, Croatia. This permits her to undertake the directions of the Rector of Cathedral monsignor Matija Canon Maticic Phd. OSB Oliv., archbishop's vicar - deputy. She is at present involved with finance for the desperate needed restoration of historic precious Cathedral items.

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

Please be aware that if you give your email or telephone number to be included in the newsletter it becomes public as the newsletter is published on line.

Church live streaming – April Totals

Number of Viewers:	7924
Number of Unique Viewers:	1744
Total Time Viewed:	3492 Hours

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Sunday	6	May	6 th Sunday of Easter	18.00 Vigil Mass – <i>Jeanette Patching RIP</i> 10.00 Holy Mass – <i>Ray & Jean Carlile RIP</i>	Coffee & tea in hall after Mass
Monday	7	May			
Tuesday	8	May	Of the 6 th week of Easter	18.00 Exposition, 18.30 Rosary 18.50 Benediction 19.00 Holy Mass - <i>Brian Matthews RIP</i>	7 pm Tap classes
Wednesday	9	May	Of the 6th week of Easter Vigil of The Ascension of the Lord	0900Exposition, 09.30 Rosary 09.50 Benediction 10.00 Holy Mass - <i>Frank Howell RIP</i> 19.00 Holy Mass – <i>Missa Pro Populo</i>	
Thursday	10	May	The Ascension of the Lord	09.00 Exposition, 09.30 Rosary 09.50 Benediction 10.00 Holy Mass – <i>Ellen Taylor RIP</i>	
Friday	11	May	Of the 6 th week of Easter	09.00 Exposition, 09.30 Rosary 09.50 Benediction 10.00 Holy Mass – <i>Jimmy Loftus RIP</i>	
Saturday	12	May	Of the 6 th week of Easter <i>Ss Nereus & Achilleus</i> <i>St Pancras</i>	09.30 Divine Mercy chaplet veneration of the relic of Sr Faustina 10.00 Holy Mass – <i>Stevie & Maureen Flynn RIP</i> 18.00 Vigil Mass – <i>John Williams 80th birthday intentions</i>	Confessions after morning Mass & before Vigil Mass
Sunday	13	May	7 th Sunday of Easter	10.00 Holy Mass – <i>Pearl Wall RIP</i>	Coffee & tea in hall after Mass

The next Living Rosary Group meeting is on Monday 14th May as the first Monday is a Bank Holiday.

IMPORTANT: MASS OFFERINGS/intentions If you would like a Mass said for your intention then please take one of the envelopes on the shelf by the Confessional and fill in your details, add an offering and pop it into the general collection at one of the weekend masses. The next available day will be booked in the diary. If you wish a specific date, please give plenty of time and phone the office during opening times or call in to check the date is available. Thank you.

Collections 28/29 April	
loose	£387.45
envelopes	£217.00
Easter Offering £2210.32	
Thank you for your continued support	

	Sat 5 May	Sun 6 May	Sat 12 May	Sun 13 May
Reader	B Dempster	P Caffyn	M Hobbs	C Barrett
	M Newland	P Caffyn	C d'Espagnac	C Barrett
EMHC	T Gearey	A Joseph	F Fallon	S Salinger
	B Dempster	J Nichols	J Thomas	A Caneda
	K Dempster	M Buckland	M Newland	J Kurian

Second Collection for World Communications 13 May

Parish priest: Father George Ngwa

email: gngwa@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk emergency mobile: **07475753040**

Parish office: 01425 614968 Hall Booking via Parish Office

ololnewmilton@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Secretary: Lizzie Davies Wed/ Fri 10.30-1300 from May 9th Hours TBC

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

Website: www.nfwf.org.uk

Safeguarding: Katherine Dempster Tel: **01425 611643** email: katherine.dempster@btinternet.com