

OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH In NEW MILTON

Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth

15 Mount Ave, New Milton. BH25 6NT.

Parish priest: *Father George Ngwa*



FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT YEAR "B" 21ST MARCH 2021

We Wish to See Jesus (John 12:20-24)

In the Gospel this Sunday some Greeks came up to the Apostles and made a request to see him. We too would have made or love to make this same request. In response to the Greeks' request to see Jesus, Jesus announces that the hour has now come. This is the hour of the cross. Jesus is the grain of wheat that falls into the ground and dies so that it bears much fruit. Then Jesus applies this to us. His followers must also lose their lives even as Jesus would lose His. But, there are great rewards for those who do. So to see Jesus and His glory, look to the cross.

"Sir, we wish to see Jesus."

This is an interesting text for several reasons. First, it seems a bit unexpected to find Greeks in Jerusalem at this Jewish feast. These were probably Gentiles who were proselytes to Judaism. It's also rather odd that John tells us about their request to see Jesus, but then they pass off the scene and we never learn whether their request was granted or what came of it. My guess is that Jesus granted their request, but we aren't told. John just uses their request to turn the corner towards the cross. Philip seems rather confused by their request and talks to Andrew. Then the two of them come to Jesus with the Greeks' request. But it's not obvious on the surface how Jesus' reply relates to the Greeks' desire to see Him.

- It is clear, however, that Jesus sees this request as a pivotal point in His ministry. Up till now, there has been a repeated theme in John's Gospel that Jesus' hour or time has not yet come.
- When His mother came to Jesus at the wedding in Cana and informed Him that they had run out of wine, He replied that His hour had not yet come (John 2:4).
- When His brothers, who were not yet believing in Him, advised Him to go to the Feast of Tabernacles and make Himself known, Jesus replied that His time was not yet here (John 7:4).
- Later, at that feast, when the hostile Jews tried to seize Him, they were unable to lay a hand on Him, because His hour had not come (John 7:30).
- When Jesus taught openly in the temple, again His enemies could not seize Him, because His hour had not yet come (John 8:20).

But now, in response to the request of these Greeks to see Him, Jesus announces (John 12:23), "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified." Why? What was the significance of these Greeks and their desire to see Jesus? The answer is that these Greeks signalled a turning point in which the Jewish people have rejected Jesus as their Saviour and so now the gospel would go out to the Gentiles as well as the Jews. Salvation would now be proclaimed to the whole world.

This worldwide view of the gospel is portrayed in John 3:16-17, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him." We also saw it in John 4:42, when the Samaritan people told the woman who had met Jesus by the well, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Saviour of the world." The gospel came to the Jews first, but now that they have largely rejected it, the message goes out to the whole world. (Paul develops that theme in Romans 9-11. He practiced it in Acts 13:45-46.)

John makes this point in a subtle and skilful manner. First, he contrasts the Pharisees with the Greeks (John 12:19-20). The Pharisees were the religious leaders in Israel. They should have accepted Jesus as their Messiah and Saviour. But instead, they rejected Him and were seeking to kill Him. In contrast, the Greeks were seeking Him. John wants us to see that the Jews' rejection of Jesus did not thwart God's plan of salvation; rather, it means good news for the world (Rom. 11:15).

1. God's ultimate aim in history is to glorify His Son.

Jesus says (John 12:23), "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified." "Son of Man" was Jesus' favourite way to refer to Himself. It had overtones of His deity, but undertones of His humanity. "It was a way of alluding to and yet veiling His Messianicship, for His concept of the Messiah differed markedly from that commonly held." This term is always associated either with Christ's heavenly glory or with the salvation He came to bring."

The apostle Paul repeatedly made the same point. After mentioning how Jesus humbled Himself by being obedient to death on the cross, Paul added (Phil. 2:9-11):

For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus **EVERY KNEE WILL BOW**, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

In Ephesians 1:10, Paul said that God's purpose is "the summing up of all things in Christ." In Colossians 1:18, Paul said that Christ "will come to have first place in everything." In Revelation (21:22-23), John describes the New Jerusalem:

I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.

2. The cross reveals God's glory in Christ.

When Jesus said (John 12:23), "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified," He was referring to the cross. The same is true when He prayed (John 17:1), "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You" Jesus glorified the Father and the Father glorified Jesus through the cross. How? Here are three ways (there are many more):

A. The cross reveals Jesus' glory by having all people come to Him alone for salvation.

Jesus is the Saviour for the Jews first, but also for the Gentiles (Rom. 1:16). But whether Jew or Gentile, all must come through Jesus and his salvific death alone. There are not many ways to God. Jesus is the only way. He said (John 14:6), "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." Peter echoed this when he proclaimed to the Jewish leaders (Acts 4:12), "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

But when these Greeks approached Philip at the feast, he seemed a bit hesitant to bring them to Jesus. We don't know, by the way, why they went to Philip. Perhaps it was his Greek name or maybe, as John here reminds us (12:21), he was from Bethsaida of Galilee, which was near Gentile provinces. But before Philip went to Jesus with the Greeks' request, he conferred with Andrew and then together they went to Jesus.

Probably Philip's hesitation stemmed from Jesus' earlier instructions to the twelve before He sent them out on a preaching tour (Matt. 10:5-6), "Do not go in *the* way of *the* Gentiles, and do not enter *any* city of the Samaritans; but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Jesus' mission, in line with the Abrahamic Covenant to bless all nations through his descendants, was first to offer Himself to the Jews as their Messiah. He opened the door of salvation to the Gentiles only after Israel rejected Him. Now the gospel goes out to the nations through those who through faith are Abraham's true spiritual children (Gal. 3:7).

B. The cross reveals Jesus' glory by nullifying the boastful works of sinners.

This is Paul's argument in 1 Corinthians 1:18-31. He shows how God sets aside the so-called "wisdom" of this world and replaces it with Christ crucified. He states (1 Cor. 1:22-24), "For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."

The cross means that Jesus did *everything* necessary for our salvation. He paid in full the debt that we owe. He satisfied God's righteous judgment against our sins. There is nothing that we can do to qualify for heaven. All we can do is to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; but repentance and faith are His gifts, so that none can boast (Acts 11:18; Eph. 2:8-9). Thus He gets all the glory for our salvation and we get none. That's the practical point of the doctrine of election: God gets all the glory for our salvation. If He had not chosen us, we never would have chosen Him.

C. The cross reveals Jesus' glory by being the supreme revelation of God's perfect love and justice.

The cross showed God's love, not just for the Jews, but for the world (John 3:16). It reveals God's great love for us, "in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). John declares (1 John 4:10), "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins." Jesus didn't love us because we were worthy. He loved us in spite of our rebellion against Him.

Thus, God's ultimate aim in history is to glorify His Son. The cross reveals God's glory in Christ by having all people come to Him alone for salvation; by nullifying the boastful works of sinners; and by displaying God's perfect love and justice. As Jesus said (John 6:39), "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day." He did not shed His blood in vain, hoping that some might be saved. He shed His blood effectually to save all whom the Father had given Him.

Conclusion

So to see Jesus and His glory, you don't need to have a mystical vision. Rather, look to the cross. The cross reveals Jesus' glory. Ask God to open your eyes to the glory of Christ and Him crucified! Meditate often on the cross. It will humble your pride, which is your biggest impediment to loving God and loving others. It will stir your heart with love and worship for

the Saviour, who gave Himself for you when you were a sinful rebel. It will give you compassion and hope for the lost, who can be saved by looking in faith to Jesus as the substitute for their sins. Seeing Jesus' glory in the cross will transform you so that others will see Him through you

Fr. George Ngwa

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HOLY MASS BOOKING ON LINE DURING CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

As we are still in Lock Down it will be necessary to continue restricting the number of parishioners in Church for each Mass to approximately 45 + (depending on bubbles), which means that you will need to book your place in advance. We now have an "on-line" booking system in place, which you can find by going onto our website at <https://www.nfwp.org.uk> - (scroll down left-hand column to CORONAVIRUS: Welcome to Our Lady of Lourdes, New Milton and click on CORONAVIRUS: How to book a seat for Mass). Alternatively the Link for the last Sunday in March is as follows:- 28th March - <https://forms.gle/XRb7xtUwMyfCc5Gc9>

FINANCIAL SUPPORT during the COVID PANDEMIC. Whether or not you are a Gift Aider and you would like to continue supporting your Church through this difficult time, you may wish to organise a Standing Order arrangement with your bank to pay your collection directly into our Church bank account. Details as follows: - Lloyds Bank - Sort Code 30-93-04, Account No: 00883116, Account Name – PRC DTR New Milton Our Lady. Or you may prefer to give your donation directly to the Office. Thank you! If you do decide to pay money directly into our Bank Account, it would be very helpful for our Treasurer if you could write what it is for in the Reference Box when paying on line, i.e. Church donation, Intention, Cafod etc.

EASTER SUNDAY COLLECTION The Easter Sunday Collection traditionally supports our Parish Priests, in recognition for all the dedication, guidance and care they give across our Diocese and in each Parish. If you would like to give a gift to support Fr. George in his vocation and mission this Easter, please visit: <https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/fundraising/new-milton-easter-sunday-collection> Details can also be found on our Website.

GIFT AID ENVELOPES

Would the Parishioner using Gift Aid Box Number 56 please contact Lizzie in the Parish Office to confirm their details.

CAFOD LENT APPEAL

Give today to reach vulnerable communities around the world with water and to provide other vital support.

Donate online at cafod.org.uk/give or

Text LENT 5 to 70460 to give £5 LENT 10 to 70460 to give £10 LENT 20 to 70460 to give £20

Jill Parsons is challenging herself to walk 10,000 steps every day for 40 days. You can sponsor her at:

<https://walk.cafod.org.uk/fundraising/walk-for-water1041>

MASS INTENTIONS As we are running out of Mass intentions - If you would like a Mass Intention said in memory of a loved one or to celebrate a special occasion, please complete a Mass Intention Envelope and hand it to Lizzie in the Parish Office or post through the Presbytery letterbox. We will try to accommodate your preferred date.

SAFEGUARDING MINISTER

Sadly Tony Harwood, has stepped down from his role as Safeguarding Minister. We extend our deepest thanks to him for all the hard work and dedication that he has put into the role over the past couple of years. Of course, this now means that we have a vacancy for this very important role. Is there anyone who feels that they are able to volunteer? Once a volunteer has come forward, I will pass their name on to Vanessa Eastwood, the Diocesan Safeguarding Parish Support Officer, who will commence the recruitment process. She can also offer further information about the role on Tel: 02394 216490 or via Email: veastwood@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk Many thanks! Lizzie

LIVE-IN CARER/COMPANION – If you know of anyone who needs live-in care or companionship, please contact Helen on 07867 978 558. Helen can offer excellent references, has DBS clearance and her own vehicle.

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT YEAR B 21ST MARCH 2021

Sunday Vigil	20	2021 Mar.	Vigil Mass of the 5 th Sunday of Lent Year B	18:00 Holy Mass - <i>David Holmes & Jean Peltier (for continuing good health)</i>	
Sunday	21	Mar.	FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT Year B	08:00 Holy Mass – <i>Marta Kaminska (Birthday Blessings)</i> 10:00 Holy Mass – <i>For All the Souls in Purgatory (RIP)</i>	
Monday	22	Mar.	Monday of the 5 th Week of Lent Year B		
Tuesday	23	Mar.	Tuesday of the 5 th Week of Lent Year B	18:00 Exposition 18:30 Rosary 18:50 Benediction 19:00 Holy Mass –	6:00-7:00 p.m. Rosary, Benediction
Wednesday	24	Mar.	Wednesday of the 5 th Week of Lent Year B	09:25 Stations of the Cross 10:00 a.m. Holy Mass – <i>Virginia Maynard (Birthday Blessings)</i>	No Rosary and Benediction today. (Board of governors' zoom meeting 6:00 p.m.)
Thursday	25	Mar.	THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD Year B	10:00 a.m. Holy Mass - <i>Mary Kallar (Birthday Anniversary RIP)</i>	
Friday	26	Mar.	Friday of the 5 th Week of Lent Year B	09:25 Stations of the Cross 10:00 Holy Mass – <i>Derrick Hobbs (RIP)</i>	6:00 – 7:00 p.m. Rosary and Benediction
Saturday	27	Mar.	Saturday of the 5 th Week of Lent Year B	09:30 Divine Mercy Devotion 10:00 Holy Mass -	
Saturday Vigil			Vigil Mass of Palm Sunday Year B	18:00 Holy Mass –	
Sunday	28	Mar.	PALM SUNDAY of the Passion of the Lord YEAR B	08:00 - Holy Mass – <i>Philip Holyoak (RIP)</i> 10:00 – Holy Mass - <i>Mary Conway (RIP)</i>	

Good Friday – 2nd April – 2nd Collection (Obligatory) for the Holy Places

Your continued financial support during these very challenging times would be very much appreciated

Parish priest: Father George Ngwa

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Parish office: 01425 614968 ololnewmilton@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Hall Bookings suspended during the Pandemic.

Secretary: Lizzie Davies– Office Hours 12.00h to 15.00h Wednesdays & Fridays

Our Parish Live Streaming: <http://churchservices.tv/newmilton> Website: www.nfwp.org.uk

Safeguarding Minister: *There is a vacancy for this position. If you are interested please tell Fr. George!*

PRAYER FOR THE RENEWAL OF OUR DIOCESE – (to be said at home even with Church closure).
O Sacred Heart of Jesus, we beg you to change us, to convert us and to make us holy. Fill us with a deeper faith, hope and love for you. Send into our hearts the cleansing fire of the Holy Spirit and powerfully renew all the clergy, religious and laity of our Diocese. Unite us in love and respect for one another and unify us as your one, holy people. Grant us a new passion and zeal for the Catholic Faith, for Mission, Outreach and Service. Help us to proclaim your Gospel generously to the poor and needy that many more souls may be saved by finding their way to you in your Church. May Mary Immaculate help us. May St. Edmund of Abingdon and Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati pray for us. Amen

Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel - 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