



ST. BONIFACE



Bringing Christ to the people and people to Christ

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October 1, 2023 –TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

The Humble Path: Scott Hahn Reflects on the Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time: Echoing the complaint heard in last week’s readings, today’s First Reading again presents protests that God isn’t fair. Why does He punish with death one who begins in virtue but falls into iniquity, while granting life to the wicked one who turns from sin? This is the question that Jesus takes up in the parable in today’s Gospel. The first son represents the most heinous sinners of Jesus’ day—tax collectors and prostitutes—who by their sin at first refused to serve in the Lord’s vineyard, the kingdom. At the preaching of John the Baptist, they repented and did what was right and just. The second son represents Israel’s leaders—who said they would serve God in the vineyard but refused to believe John when he told them they must produce good fruits as evidence of their repentance (see [Matthew 3:8](#)). Once again, this week’s readings invite us to ponder the unfathomable ways of God’s justice and mercy. He teaches His ways only to the humble, as we sing in today’s Psalm. And in the Epistle today, Paul presents Jesus as the model of that humility by which we come to know life’s true path. Paul sings a beautiful hymn to the Incarnation. Unlike Adam, the first man, who in his pride grasped at being God, the New Adam, Jesus, humbled himself to become a slave, obedient even unto death on the Cross (see [Romans 5:12–17](#)). In this He has shown sinners—each one of us—the way back to the Father. We can only come to God to serve in His vineyard, the Church, by having that same attitude as Christ. This is what Israel’s leaders lacked. In their vainglory, they presumed their superiority—that they had no further need to hear God’s Word or listen to God’s servants. But this is the way to death, as God tells Ezekiel today. We are always to be emptying ourselves, seeking forgiveness for our sins and frailties, confessing on bended knee that He is Lord, to the glory of the Father.

Becoming Intentional Disciples – In the last two newsletters we spoke of the first two thresholds of conversion – initial trust and curiosity. The third threshold is **Openness**. Sherry Weddell writes that curiosity is a God-given part of being human that is naturally ordered to ultimate fulfilment in God. Under the influence of grace, it is intended to lead on to the next threshold: openness. But moving into that threshold is one of the most difficult journeys for 21st c. people to make because it demands that we declare ourselves open to the possibility of personal and spiritual change. The one on the verge of openness can feel as if he or she is teetering on the edge of an abyss. It involves making the choice to lower such defences as cynicism and antagonism, and to acknowledge to God and to oneself that you are open to change. It can feel dangerous, crazy, frightening and out of control. There are many internal and external pressures, fears and blocks that must be overcome to reach openness. Because of this, many who are curious never make this transition. Pope Benedict XVI touched upon this dynamic in his inaugural homily: “If we let Christ enter fully into our lives, if we open ourselves totally to him, are we not afraid that He might take something away from us? Are we not perhaps afraid to give up something significant and unique, something that makes life so beautiful? Do we not risk ending up diminished and deprived of our freedom?”. Many go back and forth between wanting change and being opposed to change. Since the journey to openness may well be a slow process, patience is vital. It helps to talk about our own struggles of faith, how we look to God to enable us to change and our experience of his helping us change. It also helps to ask well-timed questions that raise the issue of personal change: “What do you do when life gets hard?” or “Where is God in all this for you?” We can also encourage others to ask God for a sign. We can also ask others if we can pray for them to be open to God. Ask them if they would be willing to pray themselves and acknowledge their openness to God. One very simple and non-threatening way to help foster trust, curiosity and openness is Eucharistic Adoration. Adoration appeals to post-moderns because it is experiential, mysterious and accessible to everyone. One person calls this “Spiritual Radiation Therapy” because it places a person in the direct presence of Jesus in the trust that He will act if we leave the door open the merest crack. All it requires is the ability to sit down. Eucharistic Adoration gives people an experience of encountering God. As a human heart opens to Jesus, it becomes increasingly difficult to remain neutral. The person growing closer to discipleship must cross the next great frontier, from being open to change as a mere possibility to engaging in an active spiritual quest. He or she must cross into the threshold of spiritual seeking, which we will talk about next week.

A Day with Mary: Saturday 7 October in Immaculate Conception Church, Portswood. Celebrate a Marian festivity through the eyes of the Filipinos. A day dedicated to Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary. The day begins promptly at 2pm with a Marian talk, a Living Rosary at 4:30pm with the procession of all Marian statues and icons. Concluding with Mass at 6pm. There will be an opportunity to try some Filipino cuisine during and after the event. Bring your Marian images, and any old rosaries you wish to donate. **If you would like to pledge towards flowers, please contact 023 8033 3589.**

List of November Names 2023! The parish office is now open to accept submission for the names of the deceased. Please email names directly to the office: office@st-boniface.org.uk. Or give names to any Priests to pass on to the office if you attend weekend Masses. Or hand in the names to the office if you only attend weekday Masses. If the submissions are handwritten ones, please make sure that the names are written in CAPITAL LETTERS for maximum clarity. **The deadline to submit these names is 31st October.**

Shoebbox Appeal: Please return the box to the church hall before the 6.30pm Saturday vigil Mass on 14 October; or before the 9am, 11am and 5.30pm Mass on Sunday 15 October.

St Boniface Parish Toddler Group off to a great start! 8 mums and 11 children came to the first meeting. They enjoyed games and homemade cake and ended with songs and prayers. The group is meeting in St Boniface Parish Hall 9:30am - 11am on alternate Tuesdays of school term times only. The next meeting is on 10 October. For more details contact catholicmotherssoton@gmail.com Non-St Boniface parishioner families welcome!

The Diocese, in Partnership with the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales is hosting an online seminar on Tuesday 21 November, at 6 pm, led by Evangelist Sherry Weddell, for Catholics wishing to bring people closer to Christ. Tickets are £10 per person from [Engaging the Disengaged \(How to Accompany Non-religious persons\) Tickets, Tue 21 Nov 2023 at 18:00 | Eventbrite](#)

St Boniface Parishioner Database Needs Updating!!! "Hello, if you're new, or *newish* to us, it will be most helpful if you can pick up a parishioner registration form from the church porch, fill it in and hand it to any Priests, or hand it to the Parish Office; or you can do so via our website: www.st-boniface.org.uk. It is very important that you're formally & accurately accounted for. It also means that you will get a lower hire rate when you book our venues for your functions. Thank you".

CAFOD Soup Lunch, Friday 6 Oct in the St Boniface Hall from Midday.

Important Message from Springhill Catholic Primary School: the closing date for applications for Year Reception is 15 January 2024 at 23:59. Please note that any applications received after this deadline will be placed on a late application pile and may miss out on their preferred choice. Prospective parents' tours are on 5 & 19 October; 14 & 28 November; and 12 December, all starting at 9:30am. Contact school office: **023 8033 3954** for more details.

We have received news that **Mr. David John** died in Gloucestershire in August 2023, in his late 90s. Please pray for the soul of this man whose work beautifies our great church. May he rest in peace. Although you may not have met him, David sculpted the beautiful statue of St Boniface which is mounted at the front of St Boniface Church and has been there since 1954. Further information about the life and work of David John can be found on the parish website.

We Welcome Enquiries for Baptism here at St Boniface Church: just complete the form on the Parish website www.st-boniface.org.uk. Please note that we're no longer using paper application forms. If this is a problem, visit the Parish Office.

Mass Intention Offering - Please be advised that offerings can be made by cash (in an envelope clearly marked "Mass Intention"), or by cheque payable to **CDP Oblates of the Virgin Mary**; or via a bank transfer using the details given here: Payee Name: **CDP Oblates of the Virgin Mary**; Branch Sort Code: **30-80-27**; Account Number: **36062268**; Reference: **Mass Intention**. Or simply give it to the Priest on the day of your Mass requested/attended.

The *Optional* Second Collection for this Sunday 8 October is for CAFOD Harvest.

Presbytery: St. Boniface House, 413 Shirley Road,
Southampton SO15 3JD Tel: 023 8077 0277
Parish website: www.st-boniface.org.uk

Parish Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/stbonifacesouthampton>
Parish Office opening hours: Mon to Fri - 9:30am to 12:30pm

Parish Secretary: Margaretta Livingstone
office@st-boniface.org.uk Tel: 023 8077 3640

Safeguarding Officers: Sarah Studzinski/
Angela Braga

safeguarding@st-boniface.org.uk

Parish Pastoral Council: ppc@st-boniface.org.uk