

Sunday Message

SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

THE WORD

Year C • 23 February 2025 • Psalter Week 3

THE GOLDEN RULE

LUKE 6:27-38

Today's Gospel is from Jesus' Sermon on the Plain, Luke's version of Matthew's Sermon on the Mount. It is Jesus' vision for how his disciples are to live.

There are two major themes in the section we read today. The first is a teaching on love of enemies. The second is a call to imitate the compassion of God the Father.

Jesus gives four practical examples of love of enemy. The first is how to respond to verbal abuse. If someone curses a disciple of Jesus, they should not meet it with another curse but with a blessing, perhaps even with a word of praise. When they are treated badly, they should respond by praying for those who mistreat them. When it comes to physical ill-treatment, if struck on the cheek, they must not retaliate but turn the other cheek.

The third area has to do with property. Jesus begins with an example – the theft of one's clothes. Clothing in his time was relatively simple. Underwear consisted of a strip of cloth used as a loin-cloth. Over this was worn a light garment, like a long tunic or shirt, tied at the waist with a belt or sash so that the loose ends could be tucked up when at work. In cold weather or when travelling, a heavier

woollen cloak was worn that could double as a blanket when required. If a robber demanded the cloak, the disciple was not to fight to retain it but to offer even the tunic as well.

The fourth example concerns borrowing and lending. Disciples are to give to anyone who asks and not even to expect the return of stolen property.

Now Luke gives what has been called 'the Golden Rule' – treat others as you would like them to treat you. This teaching is not exclusive to Christianity. Rabbis, even before Jesus' time, taught a version of it. It was known to religious teachers in China and India, and to philosophers in Greece and elsewhere. It is probably the highest pinnacle of human wisdom and its common sense cannot be doubted.

But Jesus' teaching goes a step beyond it. The call is not so much to treat people in the way you expect to be treated but to reach into God's utter compassion for God's creation and to imitate that. Everything Jesus said and did was a living out, a repetition, of the Golden Rule. Imagine the kind of world we would have, and the relationship between peoples and nations that would exist, if we all lived according to the Golden Rule. ■

REFLECT

To live according to the Golden Rule is not easy, as we know. The vision of Jesus is at odds with how the world operates. It turns the standard way of behaving upside down. For all the progress humankind has made, for all our advances in technology and science, for all our development in human rights, we still have a lot of evolving to do if we are to live like Jesus.

Eight decades after the Holocaust, anti-semitism is increasing again, especially after the war in Gaza. In Ireland, more than half of immigrants say they experienced racism in the past year.

Today, there are more displaced people than at any time since the Second World War, while millions of women are trafficked into sex slavery annually. Bullying, domestic violence, homophobia all remain as rampant

as ever. Social media has facilitated an explosion of hate speech. To adopt Jesus' vision is to change how we behave. It is to treat everyone as we would like to be treated.

Second, Jesus asks us to keep returning to his vision, to never give up. Of course, we will fail. Of course, we will behave in shameful ways. Of course, we will rush to judge and to condemn and treat badly. We do these things because we are human, after all. We give into selfishness, anger and tribalism because we are frail, broken and imperfect. But Jesus knows this. The challenge is to brush ourselves clean every time we fail. To never give up trying to live his way.

In the 1980s, civil war raged in Nicaragua. The left-wing Sandinistas eventually claimed power. The Sandinistas had a lot of support in the Church from those who believed the Church should be actively on the side of the poor. One Sandinista

DO

Reflect on today's Gospel. If you were in court and this Gospel was a charge sheet assessing how successful you are at following Jesus, what would the verdict be?



PRAY

Pray for an increase of harmony between peoples and nations, for an end to violence and conflict.

SAY

"Lord, help me to live by your Golden Rule. When I fail, help me to pick up the pieces. Amen."

LEARN

The Christian must live by the Golden Rule: Treat others as you would like them to treat you.

government minister was a Catholic priest, Fr Ernesto Cardenal. The Vatican disapproved of his political activism, and when the Pope visited Nicaragua in 1984, a famous photograph shows him wagging his finger at Cardenal, who is kneeling before him for his blessing. Cardenal's faculties were removed, and he could no longer function as a priest.

Fast forward to 2019 and another photograph. This time, Cardenal, now 94, is in a hospital bed. He is dressed in priestly garments and is celebrating Mass. Pope Francis has restored his priestly faculties, treated him with compassion. In the photograph, the old man is at peace. Happy.

The message of Jesus in today's Gospel is clear: let love be our guiding motive; let mercy dictate all we do; treat others as we would like to be treated. Seek, like Jesus, to turn our broken world upside down. ■



HASLEMERE
HINDHEAD
CHIDDINGFOLD

Parish Bulletin

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time – 23rd February 2025

Be merciful as your heavenly Father is merciful

Jesus taught his disciples: "Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful". It is a responsibility that challenges the conscience and actions of every Christian. In fact, it is not enough to experience God's mercy in one's life; whoever receives it must also become a sign and instrument for others. Mercy, therefore, is not only reserved for particular moments, but it embraces our entire daily existence.

How can we, therefore, be witnesses of mercy? We do not think that it is done with great efforts or superhuman actions. No, it is not so. The Lord shows us a very simple path, made by small actions which, nonetheless, have great value in his eyes, to the extent to which he has told us that it is by these actions we will be judged. In fact, one of the most beautiful pages from Matthew's Gospel brings us the lesson which we can, in every way, hold to be true as the "testament of Jesus" by the Evangelist, who had experienced the action of Mercy directly on himself. Jesus says that every time we give food to the hungry and drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked and welcome the foreigner, visit the sick or imprisoned, we do the same to him. The Church calls these actions "corporal works of mercy", because they assist people with their material necessities.

There are also, however, seven other works of mercy called "spiritual", which pertain to other equally important needs, especially today, because they touch the person's soul, and often create the greatest suffering. We certainly remember a phrase which has entered into the common language: "Bear wrongs patiently". And there are; there are troublesome people! It might seem like a minor thing which makes us smile, but instead contains a feeling of profound charity; it is the same for the other six [spiritual works of mercy], which are good to remember: counsel the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, admonish sinners, console the afflicted, pardon offences, pray to God for the living and the dead. These are daily things! "But I am afflicted..." — "But God will help you, I don't have time...". No! I stop myself, I listen, I give my time and console him; that is an act of mercy, and it is done not only to him, it is done to Jesus!...

I am convinced that, through these simple, daily actions, we can achieve a true cultural revolution, like there was in the past. If every one of us, every day, does one of these, this will be a revolution in the world! Everyone, each and every one of us. How many Saints are remembered even today, not for the great works which they accomplished, but for the charity which they knew how to impart!... These works of mercy are the features of the face of Jesus Christ, who takes care of his littlest brethren in order to bring the tenderness and closeness of God to each of them. May the Holy Spirit help us; may the Holy Spirit kindle within us the desire to live this way of life: at least once a day, at least! Let us again learn the corporal and spiritual works of mercy by heart, and ask the Lord to help us put them into practice every day, and in those moments where we see Jesus in a person who is in need.

(Pope Francis – October 2016)

The Holy Season of Lent

Ash Wednesday is on **5th March** and is a day of fasting and abstinence. Mass and Distribution of Ashes: 6.30pm Our Lady of Lourdes; 10am at St Joseph's Milford

Lent Small Groups – 'We Dare to Hope' - Meeting in small groups in Lent is an opportunity for some faith sharing and fellowship which strengthens and refreshes us spiritually. This year we are following 'We Dare to Hope', featuring five sessions on the theme of Christian Hope. Each session includes scripture, prayers and a reflection exploring the relationship between the virtue of hope, our lives and the source of all hope, Jesus.

St Teresa of Avila, Chiddingfold: Sunday 9th March (after 9am Mass)

St Anselms, Hindhead: Monday 10th March 2-3.30pm

Our Lady of Lourdes (Garden Room), Haslemere Tuesday 11th March 7-8.30pm

Ladywell, Godalming on Friday Afternoons starting 7 March.

Tea and coffee from 1.30pm. godalming@abdiocese.org.uk

Groups are open to all; please sign up if you can.

Stations of the Cross Starting **Friday 7th March** and will be every Friday 6.30pm at Our Lady of Lourdes during Lent. Please do come along and join us. There will be a variety of versions of the Stations led by various parishioners. If you would like to volunteer to read please contact the Parish Office or Carl Tantum.

Monday is the third anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine. You may wish to give this a special place in your prayer and consider some other spiritual work, such as fasting or abstinence, and offer this up for an end to the war and a just and lasting peace.

The 2025 World Day of Prayer Service will be held on **Fri 7th March** at 10.30 am at the Haslemere Methodist Church, Haslemere GU27 1LD.

The service this year has been prepared by the Christian women of the Cook Islands, and will last for about an hour, with Refreshments before and afterwards. There is limited parking at the church, but parking for 3 hours at nearby Tescos. Everyone will be very welcome!

Springs event for women on **Friday 7th March**, 7.45pm with guest speaker Bridget Callaghan speaking on 'Jesus said I am the way'. Springs is a group of women from across Haslemere churches and they would love women from local churches to attend. 3CV, Linchmere Road, Hammer GU27 3QW. Refreshments served.

Livesimply at **St Edmund's** in Godalming are inviting us to join with them in supporting CAFOD's Big Lent Walk 2025 and commit to walking 5k each day for the 40 days of Lent. They are aiming to walk 9000 kms which is the distance between Godalming and Marsabit in Kenya (which is the focus of this year's CAFOD Lent fast day story) We can donate online at [St Edmunds JustGiving page](#).

Outreach Update The Outreach Committee met last Friday. Decisions were made to pass over to the Haslemere FoodBank the amount on the digital plate of £780. In addition a £500 quarterly donation will be made to the parish in Uganda, where we educate eight young girls, this will be on the 1st of April. There was enough funds to make a donation of £600 to CAFOD Sudan appeal + £600 the Haslemere Youth Hub. The Parish Lunch last Sunday was a very enjoyable occasion. Grateful thanks to those that sponsored and those that did all the work! As a result some £345 was raised thank you so much.

Discover the Story Behind Winter-shall's Biblical Plays Saturday 1st March 2.30pm-3.45pm at St Dunstan's Church, Woking, GU22 7DT. To book: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/guildford-district-knights-of-st-columba>

Youth Discipleship Group We gather every other Friday from 7pm-9pm and all young people turning 16+ who are serious about developing their faith are most welcome to come. Our next session is on **Friday 28th February**, 7pm. Parents/Carers are welcome to stay at the centre and have a cup of tea and a chat with others and Fr Michael.

Any questions, please do ask and please spread the word to ensure that the young people who would benefit from this group hear a bout it.

DavidBeresford@franciscancentre.org.uk

Evangelisation & Culture Conference, London – The Bible with Bishop Robert Barron, **21-22 February**. Word on Fire's first-ever conference on the Bible. For all seeking to gain a deeper love of Sacred Scriptures and the beauty of the Catholic faith and to be ready to share it with others [here](#)

Week of Guided Prayer (23-28 March) A great opportunity to "put out into the deep" in the adventure of faith and life. Half an hour of prayer each day and a meeting with a gentle spiritual guide in the lovely setting of Ladywell. Do give it a go. All are welcome, all that is needed is a desire to grow in prayer. If you're interested please register asap via the link below or contact the parish office.

<https://stedsgod.churchsuite.com/events/9qmvqy6d>

Full-time A&B IT Technician Desktop/First Line Support:

<https://www.abdiocese.org.uk/careers>

Exploring the vocation to teaching in our diocesan schools Dave Legrand, Diocesan Secondary RE Advisor, is running an online information session on Wednesday 12th February, 5.30-6pm, so if you're considering a career change or want to find out more about the role of teachers in our Catholic schools for any age group/subject specialism, sign up at: [Exploring the vocation to teaching in our diocesan schools \(12-Feb-2025\)](#) · [ChurchSuite Events](#)

Explore the virtue of hope—Lent begins in just over a month on **Wednesday 5 March**, with Lenten resource "We Dare to Hope" offering an important opportunity to prepare for the celebration of Easter, as part of a small faith-sharing group, or as an individual meditation.

We will be running an evening and an afternoon group. More information to follow.

Young Adult Jubilee Pilgrimage to Rome Join our pilgrimage for young adults aged 18-30 to celebrate the special Jubilee year. Celebrate with other like-minded people, as we travel to the beautiful city of Rome for opportunities to hear from, and pray with, Pope Francis on the theme of Hope.

lizzie.wakeling@abdiocese.org.uk for information. CLOSING DATE 31 MARCH

St Anselms New heaters have now been installed in the Parish Room.

Holy Year Celebrations

Saturday 5th April Jubilee of Sick and of Healthcare Workers. We are blessed by a large number of people who dedicate themselves to the care of the sick. There will be a Jubilee celebration with Mass at 10am in Guildford. More details to follow.

Holy Year Penitential Service with Bishop Richard – Friday 11th April There will be opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the parish, but we are encouraged to join our bishop and our brothers and sisters from our deanery on this evening to celebrate the gift of the Lord's mercy. Later in the year: 4th May – Jubilee of Workers & Entrepreneurs; 11th October – Jubilee of Marian Spirituality; 22nd November – Jubilee of Choirs

Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes (24 July to 1 August), is led by Bishop Richard, and if you're thinking of going there's more info and forms at:

<https://www.abdiocese.org.uk/lourdes/home>.

Holy Year Pilgrimage to Rome Fr Jonathan will lead a pilgrimage to Rome from 17th to 21st November, organised by JC Journeys. To book see <https://www.jcjourneys.com/irj> or ask the parish office for a paper form. Cost £975.

Parish Annual Report Thank you for all those who attended the recent Parish Meeting. It was good to see so many and a big thank you to those who provided the delicious cakes. The Parish Annual Report is now available so please take a copy.

Live Simply Tips

UN World Water Day – fix that dripping tap, don't rinse before using the dishwasher, only use the washing machine when you have a full load

Please Pray For

Please pray for Mary Jibin who will be baptised next Sunday.

The sick: David Craddock, Charlotte Lindsay, Malinda Gabuya, Derek Blades, Martin Parker, Henrietta Lenahan (Holt), Veronica Slocock, Arul Salathian, Diana Molyneux, Louise Milford, Hazel O'Flynn, Abigail Stafford Johnson, Livy Miller, Louise Reeve, Patricia Reidy, Jo Allen, Jane Adolph, Carmel & Roland Murray, Teresa Marshall, Alberto Costantini, Sebastian Codlin, and Betty Harding.

The Deceased: Rosie Bolton, Brenda White, Geoffrey McCooe, George House, Laura Lucas, Joseph Martin, Olga Wojcik, Frances Posius, John Parkes, Finola Murray and John Clayton

Mass Schedule & Intentions

Saturday 22 Feb	6pm Mass (St Anselm)
Sunday 23 Feb 7TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	9.00am Mass (St Teresa) - 9.30am Mass (Holy Cross) 11am Mass (Our Lady of Lourdes)
Monday 24 Feb	11.30am Mass (Holy Cross)
Tuesday 25 Feb	11.30am Mass (Holy Cross)
Wednesday 26 Feb	9.30am Mass (Holy Cross)
Thursday 27 Feb St Gregory of Narek	9.30am Mass (Holy Cross)
Friday 28 Feb St Robert Southwell	9.30am Mass (Holy Cross) 10am Mass (Our Lady of Lourdes)
Saturday 1 Mar St David	6pm Mass (St Anselm)
Sunday 2 Mar 8TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	9.00am Mass (St Teresa) - 9.30am Mass (Holy Cross) 11am Mass (Our Lady of Lourdes) - Ernest Gabuya RIP Baptism: Mary Jibin

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*O Lord, I trust in your merciful love.
My heart will rejoice in your salvation.
I will sing to the Lord who has been bountiful with me.*

COLLECT

Grant, we pray, almighty God,
that, always pondering spiritual things,
we may carry out in both word and deed
that which is pleasing to you.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING 1 Samuel 26:2. 7-9. 12-13. 22-23

A reading from the First Book of Samuel.

In those days: Saul arose and went down to the wilderness of Ziph with three thousand chosen men of Israel to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph.

David and Abishai went to the army by night. And there lay Saul sleeping within the encampment, with his spear stuck in the ground at his head, and Abner and the army lay round him. Then Abishai said to David, 'God has given your enemy into your hand this day. Now please let me pin him to the earth with one stroke of the spear, and I will not strike him twice.' But David said to Abishai, 'Do not destroy him, for who can put out his hand against the LORD's anointed and be guiltless?' So David took the spear and the jar of water from Saul's head, and they went away. No man saw it or knew it, nor did any awake, for they were all asleep, because a deep sleep from the LORD had fallen upon them.

Then David went over to the other side and stood far off on the top of the hill, with a great space between them. David said, 'Here is the spear, O king! Let one of the young men come over and take it. The LORD rewards every man for his righteousness and his faithfulness, for the LORD gave you into my hand today, and I would not put out my hand against the LORD's anointed.'

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 103(102):1-2. 3-4. 8. 10.
12-13. R. 8a**R: The LORD is compassionate and gracious.**

1. Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all within me, his holy name.
Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and never forget all his benefits. **R.**
2. It is the Lord who forgives all your sins,
who heals every one of your ills,
who redeems your life from the grave,
who crowns you with mercy and compassion. **R.**
3. The LORD is compassionate and gracious,
slow to anger and rich in mercy.
He does not treat us according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our faults. **R.**
4. As far as the east is from the west,
so far from us does he remove our transgressions.
As a father has compassion on his children,
the LORD's compassion is on those who fear him. **R.**

SECOND READING 1 Corinthians 15:45-49

A reading from the First Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians.

Brothers and sisters: 'The first man Adam became a living being'; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL John 13:34

R: Alleluia, alleluia.

A new commandment I give to you, says the Lord,
that you love one another, just as I have loved you.

R: Alleluia.

GOSPEL Luke 6:27-38

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples, 'I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either. Give to everyone who begs from you; and from one who takes away your goods, do not demand them back. And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.

'If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.

'Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful. Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.'

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

As we celebrate your mysteries, O Lord,
with the observance that is your due,
we humbly ask you,
that what we offer to the honour of your majesty
may profit us for salvation.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

*I will recount all your wonders,
I will rejoice in you and be glad,
and sing psalms to your name, O Most High.*

Or

*Lord, I have come to believe that you are the Christ,
the Son of the living God, who is coming into this world.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Grant, we pray, almighty God,
that we may experience the effects of the salvation
which is pledged to us by these mysteries.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.