

## **Twenty fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time, 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2019**

### **“How much do you owe my master?”**

Two boys found a purse in a parking lot It probably belonged to the elderly lady who had just driven out of the lot. The purse contained the lady's name her address, and a ten-dollar bill. One of the boys said, “It's not right to keep the purse and the money. But before we return it, let's change the ten-dollar bill into ten ones.”

The stories of the boys and the crooked manager remind me of what Franklin Field said: “Poor eyes limit your sight; poor vision limits your deeds”. Why am I perhaps shrewder in handling worldly affairs than I am in handling heavenly affairs?

In today's Gospel parable is, perhaps, on to something, because one solution to the problem of debt is to let people off with their own debt. But the steward does it for unjust reasons, seeking his own benefit. However, remember that all Jesus' parables are about God. To the question, “How much do you owe my master?” - if the master is, in fact, God - the answer is, quite simply, “Everything”.

We owe everything to God; not just our life, our existence, but the redemption we are offered in Christ and the promise of eternal happiness. If it were a matter of justice, there could be no possibility of us ever being able to pay off our debts. The saints and the angels joyously live in eternal debt to God, because God is the giver and we - all of us who are part of God's creation - are the receivers. Only pride would make us resent this undeniable truth. It was through pride, and pride alone, that the bad angels fell. Yet it is also true that, because God became incarnate in Jesus Christ, we can share in the redemption of the world. This is not because God needs us to do it, nor is it because we need to do it. We could perfectly well be redeemed by a simple act of God's mercy. Yet God has decided to give us the greater gift of allowing us to act as givers ourselves. It is a bit like parents giving their children money so that the children can buy them presents.

The unjust steward abuses his master's money, driven by his own self- interest. Yet it is mercy that is the wealth of God that we are to share with others; God is “generous with his mercy”, or, in some translations, “rich in mercy”, as St Paul tells the Ephesians. The Lord's Prayer speaks of debts as well as sin because sin is a kind of debt. Yet it is a debt we have no claim on. We forgive the debt of other people's sins against us because we are in such an enormous debt to God ourselves.

It is not the function of the Church to solve financial problems. Often there are complex reasons behind a financial crisis, which require a great deal of thought and discussion to resolve. Yet at the same time, there are also, often enough, simple reasons behind the economic turmoil: greed, dishonesty, pride. Such qualities are very much the concern of the Church. They are sins of the heart.

### **Food for thought:**

**Worldly vs. Spiritual:** Worldly people do whatever it takes for self-preservation. To ensure their security, they do what their master the Devil does, they steal, kill and destroy. The “people of the light” would be even more concerned about their eternal destination than the people of the world. However, that was not the case; those Jews were angry –foreseeing their positions of honour coming to an end.

**Serving:** Dual citizenship is not an option. We are either citizens of heaven, living here as foreign ambassadors for Jesus –or we are securely attached as citizens of this world and all that it represents.

**Feast of St Michael. We will keep the Feast of St Michael the Archangel and our Parish Patron at all Masses next weekend.**

**Commissioning and re-commissioning of readers.** I will be commissioning and re-commissioning all readers next weekend.

**Fr Jim's Farewell Reception** (wine and canapés) is on **Friday 27<sup>th</sup> September**, 7.00 – 9.00pm in the parish hall. Children are, of course, welcome. If you wish to still make a donation towards his retirement collection, please place in an envelope in the offertory bag or post through the presbytery letterbox.

The Parish would like to present a Book of Appreciation to Fr Jim at the Farewell Reception. It is available for signing in the narthex after all Masses this weekend or in the parish office next week.

**First Holy Communion 2020.** The First Holy Communion Mass will take place on **Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2020.**

Application forms for children in Year 3 and above are now available on the parish website and **should be made online ONLY**. Please go to the parish website - <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/ashford/> to download the application form. On the parish website you will need to select the Sacramental Preparation page and then select First Holy Communion.

Please return the completed application form to **ashfordcomm@rcdow.org.uk by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019** (DO NOT SEND TO THE PARISH EMAIL ADDRESS).

**Signing Secondary School forms.** I will be available to sign Certificates of Catholic Practice on **Monday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2019 in Michael's School from 2.30pm – 3.30pm;** and also **in the presbytery from 6.15pm to 6.45pm.** It would be a great help to me if you would come only at these times and not seek individual appointments.

**Home Mission Sunday.** Thank you for your donations of £61.31 last weekend.

*Fr Sidon Sagar FDP*

<p><b>Offertory Collection.</b> Last week's collection was £1,670.27 - Envelopes £541.05; Bankers Orders £600.00 (weekly average); Loose Plate £529.22</p>
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## **The Bucket Collection in September is for The Passage.**

**Sunday Friends** will be making a poster for Fr Jim this Sunday. During the session they will be taking a photograph of all the children which will then be included in the next edition of St Michael's News. If you do not wish for your child to be included in the photograph, then please do not send them through to Sunday Friends this week.

**Sunday Friends Helpers Appeal.** Sunday Friends meets during the 9.15am Mass every Sunday for children aged 4 – 8 years old. The helpers are assigned on a rota and your turn will come up every four weeks on average. We have recently lost a number of helpers and so are making an appeal for new ones. Without your help Sunday Friends will not be able to continue. If you are able to help or would like more information, please call Rob Andrews on 07905 249266.

**Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.** The new rota is now ready for collection from the Sacristy and is also available online at <http://parish.rcdow.org.uk/ashford/>

**The Sons of the Divine Providence Rosary Rally on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2019** at 2.00pm. Assemble at Sacred Heart Church, Kingston Road, Teddington at 1.45pm. Please see the poster in the narthex for more information.

**St Mark's Catholic School Hounslow.** We invite parents and Year 6 students to attend our Open Mornings and Open Evening on **Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2019**, 9.00 – 10.30am (morning only), and **Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2019**, 9.00 – 10.30am and 5.00 – 9.00pm

**The Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School – Open days for admission for September 2020.** *Year 7 Admissions: Thursday 26 September 2019.* The Headmaster will speak at 4.30pm and 6.00pm. Guided tours of the school will follow each speech; *Year 12 (Sixth Form) Admissions: Thursday 3 October and on Tuesday 15 October 2019*

The Headmaster will speak at 5.00pm. Guided tours of the school will follow his speech. The last tour will be held at 6.00 pm.

**Gunnersbury Catholic School Open Days on Wednesday, 2 October 2019** 2.00-3.30pm (Head's talk 2.45pm) and 6.00-8.00pm (Head's talk: 6.30pm and 7.30pm) and **Wednesday, 9 October 2019** 2-3.30pm (Head's talk 2.45pm).

**Readings for 29<sup>th</sup> September, 26<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*Amos 6: 1, 4-7; 1 Timothy 6: 11-16; Luke 16: 19-31*

<p><b>Emergency Exits:</b> In the event of an emergency, please note that the three fire exits from the church are the main church entrance, the side door to the left of St Joseph's Chapel, and the main entrance to the hall.</p>
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## PLEASE PRAY

for all the sick and housebound in our parish.

For anniversaries in September since 2012. Eric Borg, Jim Boyle, Tina Dunning, John Field, Theresa Gaffney, Margaret Gillespie, Richard Griffiths, Carmelina Mausolle, Tom McNulty, Catherine McQuillan, Sheila Nolan, Brynley Williams, Catherine Wood.

for Fr Michael Tuck and parishioners of St Ignatius, Sunbury-on-Thames; and for staff and pupils of St Paul's College.

for the Holy Father's Prayer Intention that politicians, scientists and economists work together to protect the world's seas and oceans.

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### Mass Intentions 22<sup>nd</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> September

<b>Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Vigil Mass Saturday, 6.00pm</b>	Gabriel Mencil RIP
	9.15am	Teresa Wick RIP
	11.00am	Frank van Gramberg RIP
	6.00pm	The people of the parish
<b>Mon 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	9.15am	Adelaide Aryeetey RIP
<b>Tues 24<sup>th</sup></b>	9.15am	Holy Souls
<b>Wed 25<sup>th</sup></b>	9.15am	A special intention (TJ)
<b>Fri 27<sup>th</sup></b>	9.15am	Gerald Fox RIP
<b>Sat 28<sup>th</sup></b>	9.15am	A special intention (AL & SC)
<b>Sunday 29<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Vigil Mass Saturday, 6.00pm</b>	Tom McNulty RIP
	9.15am	The people of the parish
	11.00am	Ruby and Arthur James Edwards RIP
	6.00pm	Catherine Mead RIP

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### Sunday Mass

(Vigil) Saturday, 6.00pm

9.15am Family (Folk Group, Children's Liturgy of the Word)

11.00am Sung (First Sunday, Ordinary of the Mass sung in Latin)

6.00pm

### Holy Days of Obligation Mass

9.15am and 7.00pm

### Weekday Mass

9.15am Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday

### Eucharistic Adoration

Saturday 9.45 – 10.15am

### Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday 10.15 – 10.45am (*and at any time by appointment*)

### Sacrament of Baptism

Normally celebrated on a Saturday once a month. To arrange a Baptism contact Baptism Catechist Lee Gibson on 07713 760281 or [lee.gibson.2na@btinternet.com](mailto:lee.gibson.2na@btinternet.com)

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### St Michael's Catholic Church

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Telephone: 01784 252230; Email: [ashford@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:ashford@rcdow.org.uk)

Website: <http://parish.rcdow.org.uk/ashford>

*This parish is part of the Westminster Catholic Diocese Trustee Charity no. 233699*

**Parish Priest: Fr Sidon Sagar FDP; Assistant Priest: Fr Carlo Mazzotta**

**Parish Secretary: Mrs Shenda Holmes**

*Parish Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 10.00am - 1.00pm*

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