

+ S T . J O S E P H ' S N E W S L E T T E no 34/35 24 July, 2022 17th Sunday (C)

The R.C. Diocese of Shrewsbury is registered charity No 234025

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SACRED HEART FATHERS

Fr. Jim Matthews, scj - Fr Blaise Nsangou, scj - Deacon Terry Simms

Genesis 18:20-32 The Lord said, 'How great an outcry there is against Sodom and Gomorrah! How grievous is their sin! I propose to go down and see whether or not they have done all that is alleged in the outcry against them that has come up to me. I am determined to know.' The men left there and went to Sodom while Abraham remained standing before the Lord. Approaching him he said, 'Are you really going to destroy the just man with the sinner? Perhaps there are fifty just men in the town. Will you really overwhelm them, will you not spare the place for the fifty just men in it? Do not think of doing such a thing: to kill the just man with the sinner, treating just and sinner alike! Do not think of it! Will the judge of the whole earth not administer justice?' the Lord replied, 'If at Sodom I find fifty just men in the town, I will spare the whole place because of them.' Abraham replied, 'I am bold indeed to speak like this to my Lord, I who am dust and ashes. But perhaps the fifty just men lack five: will you destroy the whole city for five?' 'No,' he replied 'I will not destroy it if I find forty-five just men there.' Again, Abraham said to him, 'Perhaps there will only be forty there.' 'I will not do it' he replied 'for the sake of the forty.' Abraham said, 'I trust my Lord will not be angry, but give me leave to speak: perhaps there will only be thirty there.' 'I will not do it' he replied 'if I find thirty there.' He said, 'I am bold indeed to speak like this, but perhaps there will only be twenty there.' 'I will not destroy it' he replied 'for the sake of the twenty.' He said, 'I trust my Lord will not be angry if I speak once more: perhaps there will only be ten.' 'I will not destroy it' he replied, 'for the sake of the ten.'

Psalm 137 *R/ On the day I called, you answered me, O Lord.*

Colossians 2:12-14 You have been buried with Christ, when you were baptised; and by baptism, too, you have been raised up with him through your belief in the power of God who raised him from the dead. You were dead, because you were sinners and had not been circumcised: he has brought you to life with him, he has forgiven us all our sins. He has overridden the Law, and cancelled every record of the debt that we had to pay; he has done away with it by nailing it to the cross.

Alleluia, alleluia! The Word was made flesh and lived among us: to all who did accept him he gave power to become children of God. Alleluia! Jn1:14,12

Luke 11:1-13 Once Jesus was in a certain place praying, and when he had finished one of his disciples said, 'Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.' He said to them, 'Say this when you pray: "Father, may your name be held holy, your kingdom come; give us each day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive each one who is in debt to us. And do not put us to the test."' He also said to them: 'Suppose one of you has a friend and goes to him in the middle of the night to say, "My friend, lend me three loaves, because a friend of mine on his travels has just arrived at my house and I have nothing to offer him"; and the man answers from inside the house, "Do not bother me. The door is bolted now, and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up to give it you." I tell you, if the man does not get up and give it him for friendship's sake, persistence will be enough to make him get up and give his friend all he wants. 'So, I say to you: Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. For the one who asks always receives; the one who searches always finds; the one who knocks will always have the door opened to him. What father among you would hand his son a stone when he asked for bread? Or hand him a snake instead of a fish? Or hand him a scorpion if he asked for an egg? If you then, who are evil, know how to give your children what is good, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!'

Sunday 24 July 2022.

Dear Friends,

I would like to begin by thanking you for all the support and friendship you have given to the Sacred Heart Fathers at St. Joseph's over the past forty years. Together we have shared a long story of ministry and community in Stockport. On behalf of the Sacred Heart Fathers I would like to express our sincere gratitude to each person who has given of time and talent to build up the faith community. You have also worked with us to live out the spirituality of the Sacred Heart Fathers in St. Joseph's. Many SCJ's have ministered at St Joseph's over the years. Since there are too many to mention, I would like to remember just a few. Fr Seamus Jones arrived with great energy and vision to begin our ministry. Fr Des Geraerts did so much to promote spirituality. Fr Con Botter established the Wellspring Centre. Done with the help of the people at St Joseph's the Wellspring was a great sign of the love and mercy of God reaching out to those in need. It was a brilliant example of the spirituality of the Sacred Heart Fathers in action. And finally, I would like to remember Br Joseph Tormey who was devoted to St. Joseph's. I would ask you to pray for all the SCJ's who have served at St Joseph's – and in thankfulness we commend all those who have died to the love and mercy of God. Our spirituality as Sacred Heart Fathers asks us to be Prophets of Love and Servants of Reconciliation; I hope that at St Joseph's you have experienced this from us.

Although it is sad and parting is always difficult, it is time for the Sacred Heart Fathers to leave St Joseph's. A Religious Order always comes into a parish with the task of building up a community of faith and then ultimately handing the care of the parish back to the Bishop and priests of the Diocese. We hope what we shared together over the years will continue to bear fruit at St Joseph's. In the hands of the Lord Jesus nothing done well is lost and new ways open up as situations and circumstances change. With that in mind, we were happy to hand the care of the parish back to the Diocese of Shrewsbury especially as Bishop Mark has a vision for St Joseph's.

Central to our life as Sacred Heart Fathers is time spent in Eucharistic Adoration - a cornerstone of our daily life and ministry at St Joseph's – through which we experience the loving, merciful healing presence of the Lord Jesus. Consequently, we are very glad that Bishop Mark intends to make St Joseph's a central place for Eucharistic devotion for the Diocese. Although the priests will change aspects of our SCJ spirituality will remain and continue to bear fruit. Like all Religious Orders, the SCJ's have fewer members than before, and when we took everything into account, now seemed the right time to be open to a new way at St Joseph's. We see this as a collaborative transfer of pastoral care that allows for new possibilities. We will only be down the road at St John's on Wellington Road where Fr Hugh Hanley SCJ will be the Superior. I am sure that those bonds built up between us over the years will endure. In a different way, we can continue together along the way of the Lord.

I would like to conclude by once again offering our heartfelt thanks to you. Please pray for us as we will always pray for you. I would like to express my sincere thanks to Fr Jim Matthews SCJ for all that he has done at St Joseph's and also to Fr Blaise Nsangou SCJ for his work in the parish and to Fr David Marsden SCJ who was a member of our SCJ community. I am sure you will give Fr Sean Davidson the great support that you have always given us and we wish him well in the years ahead.

In the Heart of Jesus,

Fr John Kelly SCJ
Provincial

FUNDRAISING: There will be a **Sale of Cakes** in Aid of Fr Tim Greenway's Mission in India this Sunday, 24h July after the 11.30 Mass in the Parish Hall