

# Our Faith on Sunday

## LITURGY

### 24th Sunday in OT (A)

#### ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:

Give peace, O Lord, to those who wait for you,  
that your prophets be found true.  
hear the prayers of your servant,  
and of your people Israel.

#### FIRST READING:

Ecclesiasticus 27:30-28:7

*Forgive your neighbour the hurt he does you, and when you pray, your sins will be forgiven.*

#### PSALM:

102:1-4,9-12 R.v8

**R) The Lord is compassion and love, slow to anger and rich in mercy.**

My soul, give thanks to the Lord  
all my being, bless his holy name.  
My soul, give thanks to the Lord  
and never forget all his blessings. **(R)**

It is he who forgives all your guilt,  
who heals every one of your ills,  
who redeems your life from the grave,  
who crowns you with love and  
compassion. **(R)**

His wrath will come to an end;  
he will not be angry for ever.  
He does not treat us according to our sins  
nor repay us according to our faults. **(R)**

For as the heavens are high above the earth  
so strong is his love for those who fear him.  
As far as the east is from the west  
so far does he remove our sins. **(R)**

**SECOND READING:** Romans 14:7-9

*Alive or dead we belong to the Lord.*

#### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

**Alleluia, alleluia!** Jn13:34

I give you a new commandment:  
love one another just as I have loved you,  
says the Lord.  
**Alleluia!**

#### GOSPEL:

Matthew 18:21-35

*I do not tell you to forgive seven times, but seventy-seven times.*

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON:** Cf. Ps 35:8

**How precious is your mercy, O God!  
The children of men seek shelter in the  
shadow of your wings.**



## GOSPEL REFLECTION



The Gospels are full of examples of God's mercy towards sinners: the prodigal son, the woman taken in adultery, Zacchaeus the tax collector and many more. We learn from today's Gospel that that forgiveness has a condition: as God forgives us, so we must forgive anyone who has offended us. The hypocrisy shown by the servant in today's story is obvious to all who read it, but there is a great danger that we fall into the same trap ourselves. Usually it is pride which makes us behave in such a way. Deep down we think that we are better than others and while we tend to overlook our own sins, we

judge our neighbour very harshly. The fact is that we all have in us that tendency to do wrong, the fruit of original sin, and we can only overcome that tendency, that ability to resist temptation, through the grace of God. If we think the merit is all ours we are seriously mistaken. In the Our Father we say "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us". It would be helpful whenever we say this that we examine ourselves to see if we actually do that.

### EVANGELII GAUDIUM (JOY OF THE GOSPEL)



#### IV. SOCIAL DIALOGUE AS A CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE

##### RELATIONS WITH JUDAISM

248. Dialogue and friendship with the children of Israel are part of the life of Jesus' disciples. The friendship which has grown between us makes us bitterly and sincerely regret the terrible persecutions which they have endured, and continue to endure, especially those that have involved Christians.



### St Teresa's Way of Perfection\*

#### GOD IS NEVER FAR AWAY



Now, coming back to those poor people I mentioned who find it hard to concentrate when they pray. The first thing to do is to learn to say your prayers well. Don't try and enter into all kinds of convoluted reasoning which tires you out. It isn't your fault if you don't seem able to get close to God. And don't suppose that just because we cannot hear God speaking to us God is actually silent. He speaks clearly to our heart when from our heart we beg him to do so. He is never far away. Just try and stay with him in whatever way you can. Some

impatient people don't like taking any trouble, and it certainly does take time and patience to get into the habit of prayer.

I have found the most helpful thing is to try and companion Jesus so as to pray more attentively. In fact, by speaking to him, even if only by saying prayers, we can reach the heights of contemplation and be filled with joy and peace. Of course we can't reach that state just by our own efforts, but we must do whatever we can do and trust God to make up the shortfall.

\*St Teresa's Way of Perfection for Everyone by Elizabeth Ruth Obbard. ISBN: 978-0-904287-78-3 [www.newcity.co.uk](http://www.newcity.co.uk)



# PARISH COMMUNITIES OF

## ST GEORGE



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## ST WILFRID

South Road  
Hailsham



The Arundel & Brighton Diocesan Trust is a Registered Charity No. 252878

### WEEKLY SERVICES

Sat	12th		St Wilfrid's -	
		<b>Twenty Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time</b>		
Sun	13th	9.00am	St George's -	Rosina & Michael Wilson's Intention
		10.30am	St Wilfrid's -	Parish Communities' Intention
Mon	14th		St George's -	
Tue	15th	10.00am	St George's -	Angela & Michael Archers Intention
Wed	16th	10.00am	St Wilfrid's -	Family Intention
Thur	17th	10.00am	St George's -	In Thanksgiving (St Anthony)
Fri	18th	10.00am	St Wilfrid's -	Holy Souls' Intention
Sat	19th		St Wilfrid's -	
		<b>Twenty Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time</b>		
Sun	20th	9.00am	St George's -	Parish Communities' Intention
		10.30am	St Wilfrid's -	Ade Mary Garma RIP

**Booking for St George's Church:** Please ring 07808 175455 for Sunday, 870990 for Tuesday & 504753 for Thursday.

**Booking for St Wilfrid's Church:** Go to our website [www.saintsgeorgeandwilfrid.co.uk](http://www.saintsgeorgeandwilfrid.co.uk), click the link "Book a Mass" on the righthand side of the front page, select your Mass and follow the instructions, or contact the office on 841504.

**IMPORTANT:** Going into hospital? Would like a visit from the Catholic Chaplaincy? Ring 417400, ext. 4145 and leave a message for the Catholic Chaplain. Please also let Fr Rory know. Catholic Mass in the hospital Chapel every Friday at 3pm.

**St Thomas a Becket Nursery School:** Tel 01323 725977 **St Thomas a Becket Primary School:** Tel 01323 737221  
**St Richard's Catholic College, Bexhill:** Tel 01424 731070

**New to the Parish or would like to get back in touch but not sure how?** Please complete the welcome form available in the porch and/or make yourself known to Fr. Rory. *It would be great to get to know you and offer any help.*

### USEFUL PARISH INFORMATION

St Wilfrid's Planned Giving Contact (01323) 832577  
St George's Planned Giving Contact (01323) 487212  
St George's & St Wilfrid's Finance Committee Treasurers Charles Piegrome & Monika Beaver  
Chairperson of the Finance Committee Stephen Murray  
**ALL CORRESPONDENCE FOR THE ABOVE VIA THE PRIEST'S HOUSE PLEASE**  
Polegate Hall Hire.....Tel: (01323) 504753  
Hailsham Hall Hire ..... Tel: (01323) 841504 - Mon, Wed, Fri Morning or email at above address  
Prayer Line .....Jean Barham-Wyatt Tel: (01323) 842824

#### CROSSLINK CHURCHES TOGETHER, HAILSHAM

#### POLEGATE CHURCHES TOGETHER

Contact: Margaret Piegrome 01323 870990  
Contact Care: 07900 823138

**PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS** those who are unwell: Lily May, Edna Andrews, Juliette Lusted, Jennifer Piskac, Margaret Gearing, Joshua Hardy, Peter & Teresa Zurenkas, Anne Holt, Margaret, Lilian Summers, Tom Woodrow-Spencer, Dorothy Hanlon, Angela & Michael Archer, Chris Neyenhuizen, Letty Booth and Michael Copper.

**PLEASE ALSO REMEMBER THOSE NAMED IN THE BOOKS IN OUR CHURCHES**

**Newsletter items:** Please send to Jackie at [ssgeorge.wilfrid@btinternet.com](mailto:ssgeorge.wilfrid@btinternet.com), tel.841504 or by hand marked **NEWSLETTER**, to Fr. Rory's House by **9am Wednesday**.  
**Office Hours** Monday 9am-1pm, Wednesday 8.45am-12.45pm & Friday 9am-12.30pm

Providence provided me with this prayer for it:-

Heavenly Father, give us the bravery of St George, to stand up for the truth and the glory of God  
that we have seen in the face of Jesus Christ.  
Give us the strength to overcome, in our lives and in the world,  
all that is contrary to your rule of justice and love.  
Help us to be good news to the poor, proclaim release to the captives  
and recovery of sight to the blind; Let the oppressed go free, and proclaim the good news of God's favour and Jubilee  
Amen

The RCIA: Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. Many years ago there was some initiative to place this at the heart of Catholic Life in our parishes. Professor Fr Seamus Ryan was a great proponent of this when we were in our seminary, and in my early years as a priest this was a key focus for me; something very worthwhile to bring to the parish.

After my early years as a curate I was happy to be appointed to a parish team ministry in St Pauls Parish, Haywards Heath. But within a couple of years of that appointment, the diocese introduced the Renew Programme, which also clashed with a newly introduced endeavour to have a structured process in place to develop ecumenical dialogue, and to improve working relationships between the churches. Unfortunately the Renew Programme and process was very patchy at best. After a number of years it became very clear that we did not have the support of our Bishop, and so the team ministry sadly came to an end.

Please God, the coronavirus will come to an end and the situation that we will be left with will be very challenging indeed. In the wider context there is reason for real anxiety about how many will return to church, and at this time, there is an expectation that it will not be in the same numbers. I also believe in other situations the numbers will be larger..

Our way ahead is now what we might call "the new normal". Our children are back at school and many are very pleased to be back. The next horizon I would normally highlight is the Feast of Christ our King; the end of the church's year. In time I believe this will become a great Feast Day, but certainly not this year. So our next highlight will be Christmas. I do not expect that things will have recovered enough by then so that we will be able to gather together to celebrate Christmas. But I do think it presents us with an important opportunity to develop our liturgies so that they will become a greater blessing and help us to grow as communities of faith. In fact, please God, a real bonus, a fresh life line that may bring us great blessings in the future. The reality of the coronavirus guidelines has given great emphasis to being over seventy. This calls for a true sense of discernment and this must get mature positive consideration. The fruits of this discernment process, like all others is in the outcome. So with gratitude for all that the over seventies have contributed, which calls for a new generation, let us all bear great fruits; fruits that will last.

Returning to the sadness of the end of our priests' team ministry, which I had hoped would lead to great development in the life of our parish then, through a focus being placed upon eucharistic communities. As priests we had particular responsibilities. One of my responsibilities was for baptism. I visited the families who requested to have their child baptised. It soon became clear that for some their motive was to get their child into catholic schools. I tried to make clear the true nature of baptism with its need to nurture the life of the spirit, the life of faith, explaining that this was parallel with the natural daily nourishment that is needed for our physical bodies to develop and grow. This always raised the question of belief and the challenge that it brings. This remains at the heart of our life of faith.

I recently visited a lady who has just celebrated her 90th Birthday. Still with some lockdown limitations, it was the best birthday celebration of her life. Her more immediate family were able to gather, and one niece had made special arrangements so that family members from all over the world were able to greet her. They could all join together in singing Happy Birthday and sharing great greetings with one another. This is indicative of just a moment of inspiration that can be shared together for the future. Forty year ago; when I was a curate, I was given the responsibility for an outside church. We had developed preparation for the weekend Mass. We were especially blessed with a young mum who had a great gift to be a cantor. This helped greatly, and also the use of the new ministries of the eucharist and the word was very fruitful. Unfortunately I had to move on as a curate and the priests brought this preparation to an end. Four years after this, my next experience was the team ministry, so options and choices were getting scarce. Providence provided that I spent the next 10 years on an ecumenical project. Please God, we may all share a new project, that is very fit for purpose. For our time each Parish needs to become a "Community of faith".

Now we will pause with the question "How?"

