A Message from your Parish Priest

Last week I wrote a little about the two wonderful figures of St Peter and St Paul. I was inspired to do so by the feast day of the dedication of their two basilicas in Rome. I thought I might perhaps write about them more fully, as both men are giants of the birth of our religion.

This week, I want to speak about St Peter. Peter, who started life as Simon bar Jonah, a fisherman from the Sea of Galilee, is a fascinating character I always think. It has often occurred to me to wonder whether there is any other person of such a humble background, and from such a remote historical period, who we can know as well as we know St Peter.

There are many accounts of great kings and generals from the ancient world. They tend to be rather dry accounts of their impressive achievements. Occasionally, in the hands of a really great historian, a Tacitus or a Suetonius, we might manage to glimpse something of the inner workings of the minds of these men. Of the humble workman, we almost never get the faintest hint as to their personality or motivations. And then we come to St Peter. The gospels give us a picture of this extraordinary man which after all these centuries means that we can identify with him. We recognise in him aspects of people we ourselves have known, possibly of our own characters.

He is not portrayed as a hero. He is not depicted as a saint in the usually accepted sense of the word. The Peter we read about in the gospels is a real human being, described by those who must have known him very well, for those who knew him sufficiently well not to be fooled by a whitewashed version of a man whose foibles were familiar to them. The result of this is to make St Peter, of all ancient personalities, perhaps the most appealing and engaging.

One of his most attractive qualities is his enormous enthusiasm. He had left everything to follow Our Lord, and his commitment to his new friend and master shines forth again and again. Think of the wonder which must have filled the hearts of the disciples when they saw Jesus walking on the water of the Sea of Galilee. It was enough to astound anyone, but Peter is the one who goes a step further than mere astonishment. "Lord", he says, "tell me to come to you across the water." What great faith does it take for a fisherman to jump from the safety of his boat and attempt to walk on the waves? It hardly matters that his attempt ends in humiliation, as he finds himself sinking and forced to call for the helping hand of Jesus to save him from drowning. The faith-filled impulse was there nonetheless.

We see a familiar characteristic of St Peter in that story; an enthusiasm which does not always bear fruit in reality. Most famously, St Peter boasts of his willingness to die for Our Lord, and yet within a few hours denies he ever knew Him. The famous scene when Our Lord later asks Peter three times if he loves Him is a distressing one because it recalls so irresistibly the threefold denial which had caused Peter to weep so bitterly on the night of the arrest of Jesus. There is a beautiful nuance in the Greek of the original gospel account which is lost on us who read it in English. The Greeks had more words for love than we have. When Jesus asks Peter if he loves Him, he is using a particularly strong word for love. It is striking that St Peter, every time he responds, is unable to use the same word – he hedges, he waters it down. There is something akin to the painfulness which we feel when a young man plucks up the courage to tell a young woman that he loves her, only for her to respond that she is very fond of him too. Perhaps St Peter has learned by bitter experience not to make promises he cannot keep.

And yet, this is the Peter who, in the end, will fulfil the promise of his youthful exuberance by dying for Our Lord on the Vatican Hill. It may well be that throughout his life St Peter only managed a fraction of what he would have liked to do for Our Lord. He would, at least in his youth, have loved to cut a fine figure as a follower of Jesus. If that didn't happen for him, does it matter? If he could never honestly offer to Our Lord the love He deserved, how important is that? After a lifetime of being a rather lukewarm example, he is nevertheless revered as Prince of the Apostles. I find it enormously comforting to think that heaven is not only for heroes, but also for the middling sort, of whom St Peter is such a wonderful example. With every blessing, Monsignor Smith

THE PARISH OF St MARY'S, SELBY and CARLTON

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MASS SCHEDULE

CONFESSIONS
Saturday:
10.00am-10.30am (in Selby)
5.15pm-5.45pm (in Selby)
And on request in Carlton.

The Readings for the Sunday Mass are on page 158
Preface VIII of Christ, King of the Universe: Page 68



Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament:
Saturday:
10.00am-10.30am
5.15pm-5.45pm
(in Selby during confessions)

Marriages and Baptisms

By appointment. Please see the priest after Mass to make arrangements

SATURDAY NOVEMBER	21st	6:00pm	Selby	Eliza Mary Bolster & Thomas Chesham	**Vigil Mass**
SUNDAY NOVEMBER	22nd	9.30am 11:15am	Selby Carlton	Mary & Thomas Huddlestone & The Snee Family Pro Populo	**CHRIST THE KING**
MONDAY	23rd			No Mass To-day	Feria
TUESDAY	24th			No Mass To-day	Vietnamese Martyrs
WEDNESDAY	25th			No Mass To-day	Feria
THURSDAY	26th			No Mass To-day	Feria
FRIDAY	27th			No Mass To-day	Feria
SATURDAY	28th	9.30am 6:00pm	Selby Selby	Yorkshire Brethren Sr. Catherine Labouré CP	Mass of Our Lady **Vigil Mass**
SUNDAY NOVEMBER	29th	9.30am 11:15am	Selby Carlton	Mary Watson's Intentions Pro Populo	**FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

OUR CATHOLIC SCHOOL

St Mary's Catholic Primary Academy, Baffam Lane, Selby YO8 9AX
Tel: 01757 706616 Email: admin@sm.bkcat.uk Headmistress: Mrs L. Bird

YOUR OFFERINGS THIS WEEK

Sunday 15th November: £939.88 (Including Standing Orders) ***Many Thanks for your Generosity.***
Roof Donations: £50 & £10. Many thanks also for a most generous anonymous donation of £10,000 towards our roof fund.
There will be a Retiring Collection next weekend for Youth Sunday and Catholic Care.

PLEASE PRAY

For the repose of the souls of those whose anniversaries occur around this time, especially: Pte James McTiernan, Fr Patrick Duane (Carlton 1921-1933 and Selby 1953-1960), Patricia Ann Allitt, Henry Francis Camille, Robert Wybrant, Fr Henry Vos (Carlton 1933-1937), Muriel Rosemary Johnson, Catherine Barker, Fr John Brendan Murphy (Carlton 1969-1974), Lesley Welburn, Fr David Bulmer, Anastasia Cahill, Danny Flannery, Christine Cook.

Please remember also in your prayers Ann Rowe and Elizabeth McCormack who have sadly died. May they Rest in Peace. Amen. The Requiem Mass for Mrs Rowe will take place on Friday, 4th December at 10.00am

CHRISTMAS RAFFLE

Tickets now on sale at £1each. Full list of wonderful prizes on the notice boards. The raffle will be drawn after the 11.15 Mass on Sunday 13th December, when Christmas refreshments will also be available. Further details: Margaret Kilner (01405 862986)
All proceeds to the parish roof fund.
Christmas Cards and gifts are also on sale at the back of church.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

To help with the cost of church flowers at Christmas there is a box at the back of church for donations. Thank you for your support.

SCRIPTURE COURSE

The short scripture course on St Mark's Gospel continues this week: Tuesday 24th November at 6.30pm, repeated the following morning, 25th November at 10.30am.

SICK AND HOUSEBOUND

Please remember very specially in your prayers those who are sick:
Maureen McDonnell, Gerry McCrossan, Shirley Harrison and Jean Wilson, Zita Birchwood, Breda Gallagher, Irene Bradshaw, Pat Lynch, André Joseph Gudgeon, Lesley Stripe and Eileen Cooke.

MASSES RECEIVED DURING THE WEEK

John Huddlestone (x2), Sheila Ansdell, Zita Birchwood (Sick Person), Intentions of Ross Flynn, Tessie and Fred Horn, Theresa and Stella McDonagh, Terry Gath, The Watson Family.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

The First Confessions for our year four children: **– Preparation continues this week-end (Saturday 4.45pm and Sunday 10.30am)**
First Confessions for year three children will take place in the spring, and First Holy Communions on the week-end of 19th/20th June.
The Sacrament of Confirmation will take place in St Mary's on Friday 5th March 2027. Anyone in year six or older if not yet confirmed should receive the sacrament on that day. Preparation will continue on Friday at 5.30pm.

Mass Offerings, Notices and News Items for the Parish Bulletin should be given to Monsignor Smith by Wednesday evening.

Leeds Diocese Charity Registration No. 249404