

## Saints Days this Week... 11<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> February

**MONDAY- *Our Lady of Lourdes*** In 1858 Mary appeared to Bernadette Soubirous, a poor and sickly child born in Lourdes in 1844 who died as an enclosed nun in Nevers in 1875. Our Lady revealed to her that she was the Immaculate Conception and that she wished a chapel built; for people to process and to drink the water from the spring that she had instructed Bernadette to scratch from the earth; and to do penance. To this day millions visit the shrine each year.

**THURSDAY- *SS Cyril & Methodius*** Cyril (826-869) & Methodius (815-885) were brothers from Greece. With Papal approval they preached the gospel in Moravia using their own translation of the scriptures & the liturgy in the local language. These Translations into Slavonic were based on an alphabet they invented now called Cyrillic. The success of their preaching aroused jealous Frankish opposition. Cyril & Methodius are honoured as apostles of the Slavic peoples. Since 1980 they have been recognised alongside Saint Benedict as patrons of Europe.

### PARISH PRAYER GROUPS AND PRAYER TIMES

**Monday Exposition & Rosary** ~ St Wilfrid's, 7.30–8.30pm

**St Bede's Prayer Group** ~ Meets in church, Tuesday 7.30–9.00pm

**Mother's Prayers** ~ Coming together in each other's homes to pray for families. Further details from the Parish 01606 42440

**Divine Mercy Prayer Group** ~ Praying for the sick & dying. Further details from the Parish 01606 42440

**Rosary** ~ Is prayed after weekday Masses at St Bede's

**Morning Prayer** ~ Is prayed each weekday 9.10am, prior to 9.30am Mass.

**Eucharistic Adoration** ~ Sunday at St Wilfrid's 4.15 – 5.15pm

**Exposition & Reconciliation** ~ Saturday at St Wilfrid's 11.00-11.50am & on request

**St Wilfrid's Church** ~ Is open all day for private prayer.

**Mass Times** ~ See Newsletter - [www.stjohnvianney.co.uk](http://www.stjohnvianney.co.uk)

# Preparing to hear God's word...

**6<sup>th</sup> Sunday**

**in Ordinary Time Yr. C**

**17<sup>th</sup> February 2019**

*Trust in the Lord only – not on human resources*



This Sunday, we have the idea of “The Two Ways” - one good, one evil – a concept which figured prominently in the moral teaching of the early Church. It appears in the gospel with its four beatitudes and four woes, and in the **First Reading from Jeremiah**, where the prophet links it symbolically with the extremes of nature found in Israel.

**Psalm 145:** *Happy the man who has placed his trust in the Lord.* If you open the Book of Psalms, you will find the same idea of the “two ways,” almost word for word in the first Psalm, which forms today’s Responsorial, and which is like a preface to the Book of Psalms, and indeed summarizes the whole moral teaching there.

The **Second Reading.** St. Paul remonstrates with the disciples in the early church at Corinth for not trusting in Christ’s message of hope of resurrection for all believers. He tells them that if our hope in Christ is only for life in this world, *‘we are the most unfortunate of all people.’*

### Jeremiah 17:5-8

The Lord says this: A curse on the man who puts his trust in man, who relies on things of flesh, whose heart turns from the Lord. He is like dry scrub in the wastelands: if good comes he has no eyes for it, he settles in the parched places of the wilderness, a salt land, uninhabited. A blessing on the man who puts his trust in the Lord, with the Lord for his hope. He is like a tree by the waterside that thrusts its roots to the stream: when the heat comes it feels no alarm, its foliage stays green; it has no worries in a year of drought, and never ceases to bear fruit.

*The word of the Lord.*

As I settle to pray, I ask the Lord to be open to his word today.

In today's passage from Jeremiah, note the active role of the roots that thrust or stretch out to the stream. *What are we stretching out toward?* And note the reality and honesty of the heat and drought which inevitably comes. Life is like that. Ups and downs. Challenges. Crisis. Tragedy. Nevertheless, when one remains plugged into God, who is the source of all love, mercy, and goodness, one will still bear fruit and green leaves. When we plant ourselves elsewhere, we stand in desolation. If we find ourselves in a desolate place we can still place our trust in God and trust that God, for whom nothing is impossible, can spring a river of life up beside us at our conversion and by his grace.

It is difficult – but not impossible – to hold on to a sense of utter dependence upon God when life is tough. Dependence upon God is not a sign of weakness; rather it keeps us in contact with a never-ending source of strength.

***If doubt can be banished from the heart and unbelief is made a stranger there, what we ask from God will surely come to pass. Prayer throws faith on God and God on the world. Only God can move mountains, but faith and prayer move God.***

(E M Bounds)

### Luke 6: 17,20-26

Jesus came down with the twelve and stopped at a piece of level ground where there was a large gathering of his disciples with a great crowd of people from Judaea and from Jerusalem and from the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon who had come to hear him and to be cured of their diseases. Then fixing his eyes on his disciples he said: "How happy are you who are poor: yours is the kingdom of God. Happy you who are hungry now: you shall be satisfied. Happy you who weep now: you shall laugh. Happy are you when people hate you, drive you out, abuse you, denounce your name as criminal, on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice when that day comes and dance for joy, for then your reward will be great in heaven. This was the way their ancestors treated the prophets. But alas for you who are rich: you are having your consolation now. Alas for you who have your fill now: you shall go hungry. Alas for you who laugh now: you shall mourn and weep. Alas for you for you when the speaks well of you! This was the way their ancestors treated the false prophets."

*The Gospel of the Lord*

I come to my place of prayer. I gently become aware of God's presence.

When I am ready, I slowly read and re-read the Gospel.

The strange thing about today's gospel sermon by Jesus is that it is addressed, not to the crowds, but to the disciples – "Then, fixing his eyes on the disciples, he said," – implying that the sermon is meant for those who have already decided to follow Christ. Jesus warns them not to allow themselves to be harnessed to the things of the world. The same warning was issued many times by the prophets. Human nature does not change. All these are just as relevant today as when the prophets first proclaimed them. Here Christ has turned upside down accepted worldly standards. If you set out with all your energy to acquire the things which the world regards as valuable, you will in all probability get them. But that will be your sole reward, he says. Whereas, if you set out to be loyal to God and true to the message of Christ, you may be mocked and insulted by the world, but your reward is still to come. And that reward will be joy eternal, and nobody will take it from you.