

## Saints Days this Week... 18<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> February

**THURSDAY – St Peter Damian** Born in Italy. After a career as a professor, he became a hermit monk. Ardent, energetic, and strict he was an outspoken reformer of church life and discipline. He was appointed cardinal-bishop of Ostia and became a diplomat and ecclesiastical statesman. He is remembered as a scholarly reformer possessing a deeply ascetical spirituality.

**FRIDAY – Chair of St Peter** The chair (cathedra) of a bishop is a pre-eminent sign of his teaching authority and pastoral oversight of a local church. This feast, which was first observed in 4<sup>th</sup> century Rome, celebrates Peter, first among the apostles, as founder of the see of Rome and the focus of unity in the communion of one faith.

**SATURDAY – St Polycarp** Died on this day at Smyrna (Turkey), where he had been the beloved and respected bishop. He was a disciple of Saint John the apostle and wrote to the Philippians to strengthen their faith and to defend the church against heresy. Because of the account of his martyrdom he is remembered for his fearless acknowledgement of Christ. Polycarp is honoured as one of the apostolic fathers of the church.

### 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. Ring 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...

**Next Sunday's Readings:  
7th Sunday in Ordinary Time Yr. C  
24<sup>th</sup> February 2019**

*To Love Without Measure – Even One's Enemies*



Today we continue listening to Jesus' "Sermon on the Plain", similar to Matthew's "Sermon on the Mount", laying out the attitudes of following Christ. For Luke, the beatitudes are about the poor and suffering, those who have no option, but to look to God for life. Today's passage expands this, to include those who make themselves poor; those who imitate God's love and mercy, those who give themselves to others.

In our **First Reading** from the Book of Samuel, we hear how David reflects the love and forgiveness of God, by showing mercy to King Saul, who had sought to kill him out of jealousy.

God's forgiveness and mercy is the basis of today's **Psalms** 103:  
*'The Lord is compassion and love'*

St Paul in our **Second Reading** 1 Corinthians 15: 45-49 continues reflecting on the Risen Lord, the 'New Adam', who imparts his Spirit to us, granting us a share in his heavenly life.

## 1 Samuel 26

Saul set off and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, accompanied by three thousand men chosen from Israel to search for David in the wilderness of Ziph. So in the dark David and Abishai made their way towards the force, where they found Saul asleep inside the camp, his spear stuck in the ground near his head, with Abner and the troops lying around him.

The Abishai said to David, 'Today God has put your enemy in your power; so now let me pin him to the ground with his own spear. Just one stroke! I will not need to strike him twice.' David answered Abishai, 'Do not kill him, for who can lift his hand against the Lord's anointed and without guilt?' David took the spear and the pitcher of water from beside Saul's head, and they made off. No one knew, no one woke up; they were all asleep, for a deep sleep from the Lord has fallen on them. David crossed to the other side and halted on the top of the mountain a long way off; there was a wide space between them. David then called out, 'Here is the king's spear. Let one of the soldiers come across and take it. The Lord repays everyone for his uprightness and loyalty. Today the Lord put you in my power, but I would not raise my hand against the Lord's anointed.'

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

To avenge oneself on an evil doer, at least to exact an equal punishment, is a fairly spontaneous reaction. For many, vengeance is legitimate, or even necessary, part of the law and yet as Christians, we are called to a new way of living. We are called to forgive, as we have been forgiven.

Let us be open to the Father's forgiveness and pray for the grace and strength to forgive those who hurt us and those dear to us.

***Oh, Master, grant that I may never seek so much to be consoled  
as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved,  
as to love with all my soul... It is in pardoning that we are  
pardoned, in giving of ourselves that we receive, and  
in dying that we're born to eternal life.***

Make me a Channel of your Peace

## Luke 6: 27-38

Jesus said to his disciples: 'I say this to you who are listening: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, pray for those who treat you badly. To the man who slaps you on one cheek, present the other cheek too; to the man who takes your cloak from you, do not refuse your tunic. Give to everyone who asks you, and do not ask your property back from the man who robs you. Treat others as you would like them to treat you. If you love those who love you, what thanks can you expect? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what thanks can you expect? For even sinners do that much. And if you lend to those whom you hope to revive, what thanks can you expect? Even sinners lend to sinners to get back the same amount. Instead, love your enemies and do good, and lend without any hope of return. You will have a great reward, and you will be the sons of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. 'Be compassionate as your father is compassionate. Do not judge, and you will not be judged yourselves; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned yourselves; grant pardon, and you will be pardoned. Give, and there will be gifts for you: a full measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap; because the amount you measure out is the amount you will be given back.'

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.

Jesus is teaching his disciples how to live and follow him, in order to make the Father present in our world. The words we speak, must be those of the Father; our actions, seen and unseen, must make the Kingdom of God present. Therefore, love without measure, without reckoning, even our enemies, for that is how God acts.

**Mercy is the image of God, and the merciful are, in fact, a God dwelling on earth. As God is merciful to all, without distinction, so the merciful must share benefits equally...the merciful person is another God on earth**

Rabban Youssef Bousnaya