

## Saints Days this Week... 8<sup>th</sup>- 16<sup>th</sup> February

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

**FRIDAY- *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.

**Morning Prayer** ~ Is prayed each weekday 9.05am, 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

### Web Sites ~

Parish: [www.stjohnnianney.co.uk](http://www.stjohnnianney.co.uk)

Catholic Church in England & Wales: [www.catholicnews.org.uk](http://www.catholicnews.org.uk)

Prayer Site: [www.pray-as-you-go.org](http://www.pray-as-you-go.org)

Scripture Reflection: [www.wednesdayword.org](http://www.wednesdayword.org)

In this year of 'The Word': [www.godwhospeaks.uk](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk)

# Preparing to hear God's word...

**Next Sunday's Readings:  
6<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time Yr. A  
16<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

*Jesus, Wisdom of God, Law of the Christian*



The theme running through today's readings is wisdom. Not wisdom in an earthly sense but wisdom that comes from Jesus by following his law and his commandments as he continues his teachings with the "Sermon on the Mount.

**Psalm 118** *They are happy who follow God's law*

We find true happiness when we do the will of the Lord and seek him with all our hearts.

**1 Corinthians 2: 6-10** At the time of Paul's writing, some Christians believed they possessed a "wisdom" that made them "mature" or "perfect" and gave them the right to look down on others as "children". He is reminding the readers that we have received a wisdom that has come from God himself and is far beyond human understanding. This wisdom is revealed to us through the Holy Spirit who lives in us and informs us as Christians.

### **Ecclesiasticus 15: 15-20**

If you wish you can keep the commandments, to behave faithfully is within your power. He has set fire and water before you; put out your hand to whichever you prefer. Man has life and death before him; whichever a man likes better will be given him. For vast is the wisdom of the Lord; he is almighty and all seeing. His eyes are on those who fear him, he notes every action of man. He never commanded anyone to be godless, he has given no one permission to sin.

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

The first reading from Ecclesiasticus was written by an experienced scribe in Jerusalem around 200 B.C. called Ben Sira. In today's passage he sets out the contrasting choices which face us, to which we can freely reach out our hands. It is one of the chief passages in the Bible stressing our own free will. It's up to us whether we choose good or ill, right or wrong. God calls for our love and response, but does not force us, for love must be a free act on our part.

***This is why we must ask the Lord to gift us the Holy Spirit and the gift of wisdom that teaches us to see with God's eyes, to feel with God's heart to speak with God's words. Pope Francis***

Heavenly Father, for those who love you, you promise to come with Jesus your Son and make your home within them. I now pray that you would come and make my heart a place where you can dwell. I ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **Matthew 5: 17-37 (shortened Version)**

Jesus said to his disciples: 'I tell you, if your virtue goes no deeper than that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never get into the kingdom of heaven. 'You have learnt how it was said to our ancestors: You must not kill; and if anyone does kill he must answer for it before the court. But I say this to you: anyone who is angry with his brother will answer for it before the court. So then, if you are bringing your offering to the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, go and be reconciled with your brother first, and then come back and present your offering. 'You have learnt how it was said: You must not commit adultery. But I say this to you: if a man looks at a woman lustfully, he has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 'Again, you have learnt how it was said to our ancestors: You must not break your oath, but must fulfil your oaths to the Lord. But I say this to you: do not swear at all. All you need say is "Yes" if you mean yes, "No" if you mean no; anything more than this comes from the evil one.'

In the Gospel today, Jesus continues with the "*Sermon on the Mount*" and tells the crowd that he has not come to abolish the Law or the Prophets, but that he has come to complete them! The law of Jesus is unlike any man-made law; it contains the hidden wisdom of God. It is a law given by love, and can only be fulfilled by genuine love and true concern for others. We hear Jesus teaching the people by saying, "You have learnt how it was said to our ancestors....." but then he follows it with, "But I say this to you....." Jesus is seeking to move us from simple obedience to the law, upwards to a higher level of spiritual awareness.

Let us open ourselves this week to receiving the law of Jesus into our hearts, let's allow him to transform us so that we too can be "salt of the earth" and "light of the world" and "be perfect just as our heavenly Father is perfect."

***"But if any of you lack wisdom, you should pray to God, who will give it to you; because God gives generously and graciously to all."***

James 1:5