



# OUR LADY OF LOURDES CATHOLIC CHURCH

A LIVESIMPLY and FAIRTRADE PARISH

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## SUNDAY, 21 NOVEMBER 2021 – CHRIST THE KING PSALTER WEEK 2, Lectionary Cycle B

### CHRIST OUR BROKEN KING

Once upon a time calling someone 'otherworldly' could have been a compliment, implying holiness, detachment, being on a higher moral plane, untainted by the grubby realities of life. Now it often implies that they are impractical, naïve, a bit wet behind the ears and probably poor company to boot; no fire in the belly. A Church which preaches an 'otherworldly' Gospel may not get much of a hearing in our day – or only at life's end, when even those not formally religious find comfort in vague talk of loved ones looking down upon us from above.

But is the Gospel really 'otherworldly'? And is Christ to be found only 'up above', beyond what we call life? Sure, Jesus says to Pilate, in this year's Gospel for the Feast of Christ the King (*Jn 18.33-37*), that his Kingdom is not of this world. But that doesn't mean it's of the airy-fairy kind. Rather, his answer is a rebuke to the Roman Empire and its violent methods. Jesus' followers did not fight to prevent his arrest, says Jesus, because they are not playing the same game as his oppressors. "*My Kingdom is not of this system,*" might be a better translation of his words. He rejects Pilate's cruel cynicism ("*Truth: What is that?!*") and the cruelty that this entails. He proposes another way, based on universal neighbourliness, a love without limits.

The response of 'the system' to his alternative way is his execution on the cross – and there is certainly nothing otherworldly about that. It is literally a matter of blood, sweat and tears, a torture devised to break both the body of the condemned and the spirit of the bystander. Easter is Christ's vindication, but it is not an escape capsule that lifts him clear of Creation. Rather it is the raising up of our humanity and, with it, of the whole material world.

Where is Christ to be met now? On *our* knees, of course, as always, in private prayer and our gatherings as Church; but also on *his* knees in the outcast and the stranger, the sick and the imprisoned, the naked and the shamed. "*Whatsoever you do to the least of these you do to me,*" he said. Christ makes himself present also in the poorest things, in broken bread and poured out wine. Faith, then, need not make us 'otherworldly', people scared of pitching into life. Christian faith is the assurance that Jesus waits for me in you and you and you and you – and the assurance that none of us will recognise him in those everyday encounters (*cf. Mt 25.40*). Pilate presented to the baying crowd on Good Friday morning beaten, stricken humanity. "*Behold your King!*" he said. Ne'er was a truer word spoken in jest. If you would encounter Christ your King, look no further than your broken neighbour and yourself.

- **Fr. Rob**

### MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS

**Streamed Masses can be viewed at:** <https://bit.ly/2Lu1sN4>

Sat	6pm	Thomas & Ann Boardman RIP
Sun	9am	William Wells RIP
	10.45am	People of the Parish
Mon	<b>9.15am</b>	Leo Morgan RIP
Tue	9.30am	Deceased Members of the Sorti & Rossi Family
Wed	<b>9.30-10am</b>	<b>Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament &amp; Rosary</b>
Thu	9.30am	Ana Treves RIP
	<b>11.45am</b>	<b>Funeral Service for John Brookes RIP</b>
Fri	9.30am	Deceased Members of the Klaus Family
Sat	6pm	<i>Sophia &amp; Sebastian Pillai RIP</i>
Sun	9am	<i>Deceased Members of the Collini Family</i>
	10.45am	<i>Deceased Members of the Donnelly Family</i>

**We commend to the Lord** John Smith and John Brookes, who have died recently; and Graeme Comlay and Ana Treves, whose anniversaries of death fall at this time.

**The month of the Holy Souls:** Throughout **November** there will be a basket placed in front of the altar in which to place the names of all those deceased loved ones we commend to God's mercy. They will be remembered at every mass throughout the month of November. Mass envelopes are in the narthex if you'd like a mass said for a deceased relative or friend during that month.

**Parish Prayer Intentions For November:** For our parish community as we renew our encounter with the joy of Christ and our mission as his disciples; for all our loved ones who have died and for all who mourn; for all the dead of war and for an end to the easy resort to violence when there is conflict between nations or ethnic groups; for the fruitfulness of the COP26 climate conference in Glasgow this month; for Pope Francis' prayer intention for November: "*that people who suffer from depression or burn-out will find support and a light that opens them up to life.*"

**This Sunday is the Solemnity of Christ The King** – a feast established by Pope Pius XI in 1925 in response to the rise of the totalitarian regimes that led the world to war.

**Congratulations** to all the children who made their **First Holy Communion** this Saturday morning. What matters is not First Communion itself but the fact that this is the beginning of a lifetime of letting Jesus feed us with his Word and with his Body. We are so grateful to our team of catechists – Mary, Maeve, Louise and Lisa – for their dedication, especially during such a prolonged period of preparation. The children receive their certificates during their **last session** together on **Wednesday at 5pm**.

**Welcome** to Cillian, baptised this Sunday, and to Michael, who will be baptised on Friday. We ask God's blessing on their parents as they begin the task of teaching their children the ways of faith and sharing with them the joy of the Gospel.

**Our Altar Servers** are recommissioned at the masses at which they serve this weekend – and many of them 'promoted' to Junior Server, Senior Server or MC as they learn more about their ministry. This is a wonderful way of involving young people actively in our worship, deepening their understanding of the Eucharist. It is also a great contribution to the life of our parish. **Thank you** to our great servers, to the parents who support and encourage them in this and to Bernard and Tony, who teach them both by word and example. If any others would like to train as altar servers contact [servers@olchurch.org.uk](mailto:servers@olchurch.org.uk)

There is a **retiring collection for the maintenance of Arundel Cathedral** at masses this weekend. You can also give online via our website. Please help to maintain the Mother Church of our diocese which is a magnificent (but costly!) example of North French Gothic architecture, designed by Joseph Hansom (of Hansom Cab fame).

**Junior Church:** Children's Liturgy is going from strength to strength each Sunday at 10.45am for children who have not yet begun preparing for First Communion.

**Coffee After Mass:** Please stay for a cuppa after 9am and 10.45am masses as a really easy way of creating community and offering hospitality (and come to admire the newly redecorated Stevenson Room!). We still need **willing volunteers** to take responsibility week by week, setting up beforehand and clearing away afterwards. Easy sign-up after mass or e-mail the office.

**Mary's Mantle Consecration:** Those who have been following this journey of prayer finish this Sunday. Well done if you've stayed the course! If you wish to pray the Prayer of Consecration, please do so privately in the Lady Chapel. The fact of setting aside time each day to pray is actually the important aspect, rather than this final prayer (which may not seem accessible to all).

**Next Sunday** is the First Sunday of Advent. There will be **5 minutes of silent prayer** before each mass. After masses there will be **plants, hand-made cards and cakes** on sale in the hall, with proceeds going to **ElmbridgeCAN** to support Afghan and Syrian child refugees this Christmas. We are also raffling a **beautiful doll's house** from *Le Toy Van* to raise funds for the Wake family. The doll's house is on display this weekend, and tickets for the raffle will be on sale next weekend.

**Also Next Sunday** the Friends of Arundel Cathedral invite you to **Pontifical Sung Vespers** for the First Sunday of Advent with Bishop Richard in the cathedral at 6.30pm (followed by refreshments)

**Celebrating Reconciliation:** We shall have a parish Reconciliation Service at 7.30pm on Monday 29 November. Fr. Rob is also available on Saturday mornings in church from 9.30-10am or by appointment during the week.

**Taketime meditations** are a calm, compassionate space to meet God. Our Taketime group also offers the opportunity to explore your faith with others. 8-8.45pm **every Wednesday** via zoom. Please email [meditations@olchurch.org.uk](mailto:meditations@olchurch.org.uk) for the zoom link. Go to <https://taketime.org.uk/> to try the meditations at home.

**Red Wednesday** is the annual focus of Aid To The Church In Need's campaigning work for Christians who suffer persecution and it is **this Wednesday**. There is a gathering outside Westminster Cathedral at 5pm, ahead of 5.30pm mass, followed by talks in Westminster Cathedral Hall at 7pm for which it is necessary to register in advance. See <https://acnuk.org/event/redwednesday-london-event-2/>. ACN is promoting a petition to the UN demanding action on the use of sexual violence against Christian girls – sadly a feature of life in some countries. Sign this at <https://acnuk.org/petition-2021/>

**Bereavement Ministry:** If you would like to learn more about becoming involved with this ministry (either now or later), please email [bereavement@olchurch.org.uk](mailto:bereavement@olchurch.org.uk) or contact the parish office.

**The return of the soups!** Come along for a festive soup on **15th December** in the hall at 12.30pm. Our monthly soups are a friendly and delicious way to get to know more people in our community. If you or anyone you know needs transport, please contact [soups@olchurch.org.uk](mailto:soups@olchurch.org.uk). To help us stay safer with covid, we won't be involving the children from St Paul's at this stage. And if you are a secret soup maker and would like to join the soup-making rota for 2022, please let us know!

**Love Christmas - Bags of Kindness:** Volunteers needed to deliver our 'Bags of Kindness' to local people on Sunday **5th December** from 2pm. **Can you spare an hour** or so of your time to help make someone's Christmas a little better? Please contact: Katie Cooper - [curlykatie66@gmail.com](mailto:curlykatie66@gmail.com). Thank you!

**Living Simply:** COP26 has finished but the urgency hasn't gone away. As a parish, we want to continue to pray, think and take action to change our corner of the world for the better. Please join the Living Simply Group to help plan the actions we can take locally. **No specific skills or knowledge are needed, only a love of the planet!** We meet every couple of months. Next meeting - **January 13th 2022** at 8pm.

**Exploring Faith:** Do you know anyone who is asking questions about life and faith or maybe just struggling to make sense of their world? Do you sometimes find it difficult to talk about faith? We are starting a new **Alpha course** on Monday evenings from **January 17th**. It is an open and friendly space to ask questions, explore the meaning of life and connect with others. And it is for everyone and anyone, so, come along and bring a friend! Email [alpha@olchurch.org.uk](mailto:alpha@olchurch.org.uk) to find out more.