

Saint Charles Swinton

Parish Newsletter

1 November 2015

Solemnity of All Saints.

Page 186 in Mass Book.



Seeing God Face to Face....

Imagine being born blind and living into adulthood without ever having seen light and color. Then, through some miraculous operation, doctors are able to give you sight. What would you feel immediately upon opening your eyes? Wonder? Bewilderment? Ecstasy? Pain? Some combination of all of these?

We now know the answer to that question. This kind of sight-restoring operation has been done and is being done and we now have some indication of how a person reacts upon opening his or her eyes and seeing light and color for the first time. What happens might surprise us. Here is how J.Z. Young, an authority on brain function, describes what happens: *"The patient on opening his eyes gets little or no enjoyment; indeed, he finds the experience painful. He reports only a spinning mass of light and colors. He proves to be quite unable to pick up objects by sight, to recognize what they are, or to name them. He has no conception of space with objects in it, although he knows all about objects and their names by touch. 'Of course,' you will say, 'he must take a little time to learn to recognize them by sight.' Not a little time, but a very long time, in fact, years. His brain has not been trained in the rules of seeing. We are not conscious that there are any such rules; we think we see, as we say naturally. But we have in fact learned a whole set of rules during childhood."*

Might this be a helpful analogy for what happens to us in what Roman Catholics call purgatory? Could the purification we experience after death be understood in this very way, namely, as an opening of our vision and heart to a light and a love that are so full so as to force upon us the same kind of painful relearning and reconceptualization that have just been described? continued over.....



The Coming Week.....

Sunday 1 November All Saints

Mass 6.00pm (Saturday)
8.45am. 11.00am

November is the month of the Holy Souls, when we remember our deceased loved one in our prayers and Masses.

As always, you can do this in a very explicit way by listing their names on one of the lists you can find at the back of church and placing them in the basket on the altar where they will stay during the month.

Monday 2 November



Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed ("All Souls")
8.30am Mass in church.

11.00am Mass in Saint Mary's Wardley and Saint Joseph's Moston.

7.30pm Mass in church.

Tuesday 3 November 8.30am Mass

7.00pm Sacramental Programme, Unit 2, "We are People who Pray". meeting for parents in church.

Wednesday 4 November Saint Charles Borromeo. Bishop. Parish Patron.

Charles was born in 1583 and was created a cardinal by his uncle Pope Pius IV who also appointed him as archbishop of Milan. He made many reforms in the diocese and implemented the decrees of the recent council of Trent, taking special interest in the formation of clergy. When in Milan he would greet and bless the priests returning from their formation in Rome to the Mission in England where many of them would become martyrs.

9.15am School/parish Mass in church.

7.30pm Annual Mass for the deceased priests and people of the deanery in Christ the King church, Walkden.

Thursday 5 November 8.30am Mass

**Friday 6 November
8.30am Mass**

**Saturday 7 November
9.00am Mass in Cemetery.**

10.00am Sacramental Programme, Unit 2, "We are People who Pray", session for children

11.30am – 12noon
Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Sunday 8 November Thirty Second Sunday of Ordinary Time.

Remembrance Sunday.

Further ahead

Tuesday 10 November.
Concert fundraiser for Francis House in Moorside Club featuring Jimmy Cricket. *More details overleaf.*

Friday 27 November.
Annual Mass for deceased of the parish.

Might purgatory be understood precisely as being embraced by God in such a way that this warmth and light so dwarf our earthly concepts of love and knowledge that, like a person born blind who is given sight, we have to struggle painfully in the very ecstasy of that light to unlearn and relearn virtually our entire way of thinking and loving? Might purgatory be understood not as God's absence or some kind of punishment or retribution for sin, but as what happens to us when we are fully embraced, in ecstasy, by God?

Indeed isn't this what faith, hope, and charity, the three theological virtues, are already trying to move us towards in this life? Isn't faith a knowing beyond what we can conceptualize? Isn't hope an anchoring of ourselves in something beyond what we can control and guarantee for ourselves? And isn't charity a reaching out beyond what affectively feeds us? St. Paul, in describing our condition on earth, tells us that here, in this life, we see only as "through a mirror, reflecting dimly" but that, after death, we will see "face to face". Clearly in describing our present condition here on earth he is highlighting a certain blindness, an embryonic darkness, an inability to actually see things as they really are. It is significant to note too that he says this in a context within which he is pointing out that, already now in this life, faith, hope, and charity help lift that blindness.

These are of course only questions, perhaps equally upsetting to Protestants and Roman Catholics alike. Many Protestants and Evangelicals reject the very concept of purgatory on the grounds that, biblically, there are only two eternal places, heaven and hell. Many Roman Catholics, on the other hand, get anxious whenever purgatory seems to get stripped of its popular conception as a place or state apart from heaven. But purgatory conceived of in this way, as the full opening of our eyes and hearts so as to cause a painful reconceptualization of things, might help make the concept more palatable to Protestants and Evangelicals and help strip the concept of some of its false popular connotations within Roman Catholic piety. (Father Ronald Rolheiser column archives)

Jimmy Cricket comes to Swinton...

Parish social evening/concert featuring Jimmy Cricket to take place at **Moorside Social Club** on **Tuesday 10 November**, tickets **£8.00**.

The proceeds will be for Francis House children's hospice.



This is in collaboration with promoter Jim Nicholas who many of you know is a long time fundraiser. Tickets are now on sale and I am sure you will want to support this cause that is very much part of the work of the diocese for children and their families in need of care during a critical time of their lives.

Further ahead....

An Invitation.....

**Friday/Saturday
6/7 November.**

To a retreat at Saint Peter and Paul parish, Pendleton, organised by the local Catholic Indian community of the Syro-Malabar Rite.

**Friday/Saturday
21/22 November**

The Fraternas community are leading a **Silent Retreat** ~ for single women aged 18 - 30yrs at Pantasaph Retreat Centre, North Wales. Cost £50 (meals included). For further details see their website: www.fraternasuk.org or 0161 224 2589.

14&15/ 21&22 November

The UCM will be holding their Christmas Sale at the back of church.

**Saturday 28 November
Christmas Fair** at United Reformed church, Worley Road.
10.30am - 3.00pm

Poppies are now available at the back of church, courtesy of our uniformed organisations. Please leave money in box provided.



**Wednesday evening
Growing in Faith**

Session 4:

Wednesday 11 November.
"We are people who Celebrate God's Word"

In this session we will explore how God's Word in the Scriptures is so central to our lives as Christians, both in our worship and in our personal lives

Session 5.

Wednesday 25 November.
"We are People who Follow Jesus"
In this session we will explore the meaning of the Commandments and the Beatitudes.

Session 6:

Wednesday 9 December.
"We are people who Live our Faith"
In this session we will explore some of the practical ways in which we can live our faith by using the gifts that God has given us both in our life of community and as individuals.

Session 7:

Wednesday 16 December
"We are People who Celebrate Life".
In this session we will explore the meaning of Christmas and our faith in Jesus being both God and Human.



Thank You -

from the **Beavers and Cubs** for your generous donations for the annual **shoebox appeal**. With your help they were able to send 48 boxes this year. Thanks also to those helpers who came on the night to organise them.

A member of Churches Together in Swinton and Pendlebury

Parish Priest: Rev Mgr Paul F Smith STL • ☎ 0161 794 1089 • ✉ paulsmith@saintcharles.freecserve.co.uk website: www.stcharlesswinton.co.uk

MASS TIMES

Saturday: 6.00 pm (First Mass of Sunday)

Sunday

- **8.45 am** (Church Parade every second Sunday of the month)
- **11.00 am** (with children's Liturgy of the Word)

Monday to Friday: usually 8.30 am

Holy Days

7.30 pm (eve), 8.30 am

Registered Charity No. 250037

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturdays: 11.30 am to 12.00 noon
and after evening Mass

BAPTISMS

By appointment. Parents are expected to attend a course of preparation.

WEDDINGS

Six months notice is normally required.

Saint Vincent de Paul Society
Monthly as announced

Union of Catholic Mothers
First and third Tuesdays at 7.15pm

Beaver Scouts

Mondays in school at 6.00pm

Cub Scouts

Tuesdays in school at 6.00 pm

Brownies

Wednesdays in school at 6.00 pm

Rainbows

Thursdays in school at 6.00 pm

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