**Weekly Bulletin**

**Saturday 24th September 2022**

**Twenty-sixth Sunday of the Year**

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| St. Mary Catholic Church, Birch Road, Barnard Castle | St. Aidan Catholic Church, Middleton-in-Teesdale |
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| Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/smccbarnardcastle>  | Twitter: @SMCCBarnardC |

**Clergy**

Fr. Thomas Mason (Parish Priest)

Email: barnardcastle.stmary@rcdhn.org.uk

01833 631457

07876 308657

**Services this week:**

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| **Day** | **Time** | **Location** | **Celebration** |
| Saturday 24th | 6.30pm | Barnard Castle | 26th Sunday of the Year |
| Sunday 25th | 9.30am | Gainford | 26th Sunday of the Year |
| Sunday 25th  | 11.30am | Gainford (Ord.) | Harvest Thanksgiving |
| Tuesday 27th  | 10am | Gainford | S. Vincent de Paul |
| Thursday 29th  | 10am | Barnard Castle | **DEDICATION OF THE CHURCH** |
| Friday 30th  | 12noon | Gainford (Ord.) | S. Jerome |
| Friday 30th | 6-7pm | Barnard Castle | Holy Hour |
| Saturday 1st | 4pm | Middleton | 27th Sunday of the Year |
| Saturday 1st  | 6.30pm | Barnard Castle | 27th Sunday of the Year |
| Sunday 2nd | 9.30am | Gainford | 27th Sunday of the Year |
| Sunday 2nd | 11.30am | Gainford (Ord.) | 16th Sunday after Trinity |

**This Sunday’s Mass**

First reading: *Amos 6:1, 4-7*

Responsorial psalm: **My soul, give praise to the Lord.** *Psalm 145:7-10 v1*

Second reading: *Timothy 6:11-16*

Gospel acclamation: **Alleluia, alleluia! The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice, says the Lord. I know them and they follow me. Alleluia!** *John 10:27*

Gospel: *Luke 16:19-31*

**CONFESSIONS:** after most Masses, by appointment, or: Monday and Thursday 5.30-6pm

Dear friends,

From her very earliest days, the Church has taken Christ’s command to care for the poor to heart; however, in some cases this work has been undertaken with a greater degree of fervency. Many of you will have heard of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul (S.V.P.) as an organisation which works with the poor, and as this Tuesday is S. Vincent’s day, it’s worth reflecting a little on his life and the society which he inspired.

Born at the end of the sixteenth century in south west France, he was noted for his literacy and so despite his peasant back-ground was sent to seminary. He was ordained at the early age of 19, and continued to study at the University of Toulouse. According to some biographies he was captured by Barbary pirates and enslaved for three years, though the details are unclear and disputed by some historians.

He began to have a particular care for the poor, organising aristocratic women who wanted to nurse the sick and care for neglected children. During this work he met with S. Louise de Marillac, and together founded the Daughters of Charity, an order of religious sisters to carry out that work. He also founded the Congregation of the Mission (commonly known as the Vincentians), an order of Priests whose particular focus is religious instruction of the poor. He died in 1660, and was canonised a mere 80 years later.

The work of the organisations which he founded continued, and in 1833 the complementary orders for men and women had a new lay-led society added to them. A professor at the Sorbonne worked to revive a student organisation, after contact with one of the daughters of charity he placed it under the patronage of S. Vincent. It took the work of the sisters as its model and began working in the slums of Paris. From there is spread, first across France and then internationally.

The Society arrived in England in 1844, Ven. Ignatius Spencer (a convert priest and member of the Passionists) acting as a supporter. It rapidly started to work to provide practical assistance to those in need. The Society continues to operate across the world, including here in England. Last year they made well over 300,000 visits to vulnerable or isolated people. Their work includes visiting those who are otherwise alone, giving them genuine contact with a person who cares. End of life companionship, to ensure that the dying are given comfort and human love at the last moments. Their work continues to have a focus on the young, both helping children and young people in need – those who have suffered bereavement, family problems &c.; but also working to inspire a new generation with the ethos of reaching out to those in need.

It is easy for charity to be placed at a certain remove, to make a donation to a good cause and leave it there; and when this is all that’s possible, it can do incredible work. But at the heart of the wok of the Society of S. Vincent de Paul is reaching out in person, and giving those in need the experience of love and human friendship – something which is greatly needed. May S. Vincent’s prayers support and uphold all of those who continue this good work in his name.

Fr. Thomas.

**Q.R. Code for donations:** As you arrived today you may have noticed a number of Q.R. codes on display. These take you to a donations page for the church, which you may find more convenient than bringing cash or a cheque.

**Food Bank:** The foodbank writes:Thank for your donations. This week we are looking for (tinned or packets) Potatoes & Vegetables, Long Life Milk and Toilet Rolls.

**S. Bernadette Relic Tour:** As noted last week, the relics of S. Bernadette will be touring the country they will be at Newcastle Cathedral on 1-2 October, and Middlesbrough Cathedral 2-3 October. To visit the relics during the tour booking is needed (but is free), please go to <https://stbernadette.org.uk>

We are looking into the possibility of organising transport to visit as a parish – if you are interested, please add your name to the list by the side door.

**First Holy Communion:** We are looking to gather details of those children who are due to receive first Holy Communion this academic year so that plans for their preparation can be made. Application forms are available at the back of church, please return to Fr. Thomas.

**Prayer List:** Among the sick of the parish, please keep Pat G. in your prayers.

If you know of others who would like to be added to the parish prayer list, please let Fr. Thomas know.

You may find the following prayer useful as a way of drawing our parish ever closer together round Our Lord. It is through his grace that we are turned from a gathering of people in the same place, into a parish, into a genuine community.

Loving Father, we the people of St Mary's Parish offer ourselves to you, to be your people in this place, to be your Church in our community, and to be instruments of peace, forgiveness and love. Help us grow in gratitude so that we can recognise and thank you for all our blessings.

Instil in us a deep sense of generosity so that we are willing to share our gifts, our talents, our time and our resources. Help us face whatever the future holds and to make new beginnings in your name.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Son our Lord. Amen.

**Shrine Lamps:** We are all familiar with the practice of lighting a votive candle as a means of praying for our various intentions. An old tradition is for people to sponsor a sanctuary lamp which burns for a week. We have six locations where such lamps can burn – in each case the lamp will burn for a week, with a sign by it indicating the intention for which it burns. The main sanctuary lamp is the one in the centre, which indicates the presence of the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle; we also have the Lady Chapel, the Martyrs’ Altar; along with the statues of the Sacred Heart, Our Lady, and S. Joseph. If you would like such a lamp to burn, please complete one of the forms at the back or by the side door – indicate where you would like the lamp to burn, which week, and the intention for which you would like it to burn – and then return to Fr. Thomas or stick it through the presbytery letterbox. Each lamp costs £5.

**Macmillan Coffee Morning:** Our school is holding a coffee morning in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support, Friday 30 September, 9-11am. If you are able to pop in for a chat, coffee, and support this worthy charity, please do so.

**October Devotions:** October is traditionally the month dedicated to the holy Rosary, many Saints and Popes have encouraged the faithful to pray this powerful devotion. During October, on Sunday evenings (5.30pm) we will be having the traditional October devotion of the rosary and benediction. All are most welcome.