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St Bon's eNewsletter

6th October 2017

Welcome to our new newsletter bringing you Sunday's news on Friday!

A Message from Fr Tom

I have just started my training with the Mentor Me prisoner mentoring programme. I do not think I am naturally someone who would want to work with ex-offenders but I have had a feeling for a long time that my life as a Christian and specifically, as a priest, lacks a certain apostolic dimension. At university, I was really involved with a soup kitchen run by the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul but as the years have ticked by I have never really renewed that commitment to serve the poor. It is easy as a priest to say you are busy and yes I am. I am busy with good and worthy things too but none of what I do or have done has put me in real contact with those struggling or vulnerable in our society. On the feast of Christ the King in November, we often hear where Jesus says, "I was hungry and you fed me, thirsty and you gave me to drink...what you do to the least of my brethren you do unto me". As these words have niggled away at me over the last few years, I have felt they contain an unavoidable call to apostolic service of the poor. As one of Christ's representatives, how could I ignore that call? Jesus tells us that we will be judged on our service, I have a growing feeling that when the time comes I will have nowhere to hide!

So, when I learnt about Mentor Me, I was really interested. It has been a slow burn but I am here now doing the training. The more I learn about the 'system' set up for those who leave prison the more angry I become. I am not defending prisoners, most people in prison are there for a reason: they have committed a crime. But a number of those people have entered a life of crime because they are vulnerable. A number

are illiterate and innumerate, maybe they have lived a life in the care system. Some are easily coerced. Some are afflicted with being substance abusers. Prison is not full of life's high achievers and they are not high achievers for serious reasons. When they are released from prison they are still not high achievers but the 'system' expects them to go from a life in prison where everything is done for them or to them to suddenly being independent freedom loving achievers. That is just not reasonable with the way things work. If I left prison tomorrow, I would struggle to make things work with what is given to me.

Most of us would think that when you leave prison there might be a system to support you. This would be logical and compassionate and, even if you were not compassionate, you could argue that having a system which reduced the chance of reoffending would be economically prudent. But there is no compassion and apparently no common sense approach to tilt the system to discourage re-offending. How much money do you think a prisoner is given on leaving prison? They have to find accommodation (they cannot do this before they leave), they have to sign on for benefits as they are not automatically signed on when leaving. They have to register with a doctor and, of course, this is very difficult without an address. This is important because some may be on methadone or medication for mental illness. How much? On release they are given £47. This is to cover food and accommodation until their benefits kick in. It just sounds horrific. I am not some impassioned social justice activist but I can see how you might become one. Mentor Me just tries in a small way to accompany someone in the early days and weeks after release, to listen to them and assist them in making good decisions for their life. If I am accepted as a mentor, I hope to be able to journey with an ex-offender and make some small contribution to them putting their life on the right track and maybe to atone in some small way for the neglect of the system our society offers for those who have served their time.

Fr Tom

Saint of the Week



St John XXIII

(1881-1963) Born near Bergamo, Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli was ordained in 1904 and named a cardinal and appointed patriarch of Venice in 1953. Aged 77, he was elected pope. He convened the Second Vatican Council and said, 'The Church has always opposed... errors. Nowadays, however, the Spouse of Christ prefers to make use of the medicine of mercy rather than that of severity.' He died on June 3, 1963, was beatified in 2000, and canonized in 2014.

Upcoming Events

Saturday 14th October 2-4pm

St Bon's Car Boot & Wheelbarrow Sale, St Bon's Car Park

Friday 17th November 7pm

St Bon's Community Quiz Night, Venue TBC

Sunday 26th November 12pm

New Parishioners Lunch, Parish Hall

Sunday 3rd December after 9.30am Mass

Volunteers Thank You Party, Parish Hall

Sunday 10th December 12pm

Senior Citizens Anointing the Sick Mass and Christmas Party, Church & Presbytery

News and Events

Baptisms: Our congratulations go to Molly Furby, Patrick Phillpotts, Vivien Phillpotts and Poppy Turner who were all baptised and brought into God's family last weekend at St Bon's.

October Month of our Lady: The Rosary will be said every week day after Mass in October.

Second Collection: The Second Collection this weekend will be for CAFOD Harvest Fast Day Collection.

Parish Visits: If you know of someone who lives alone or may be housebound and would welcome a visit from a Parish Visitor, please contact Linda Spong via the Parish Office. If you know of someone who suffers with a mental health condition who would welcome a visit please speak to Fr. Tom.

Welfare Group Meeting—Wednesday 11th October 11am Parish Dining Room: Prayers are said for those who have died since our last meeting and for their bereaved relatives and friends as well as for the sick and housebound. If you are new to St. Bon's you might like to know that in addition to arranging Home Visits to those people who welcome the chance to catch up on "Parish News" we also co-ordinate a team of Extraordinary Ministers of Communion to take Holy Communion to the sick.

Car Boot & Wheelbarrow Sale: The next sale will be on Saturday 14th October 2-4pm in St Bon's car park. It costs just £5 for cars £3 for wheelbarrows to have a pitch - you keep all the takings! We will be serving tea, coffee and cakes. Helpers will be needed and donations of cakes. Please contact Mary Moore [mcmooore@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:mcmoore@blueyonder.co.uk), 07929 399907, Hilary Farey hilary@farey.org or Veronica Swann veronica.swann@hotmail.co.uk for a car/barrow pitch or to offer help.

Volunteers Thank You Party: There will be a bring & share brunch after Mass on Sunday 3rd December for all who volunteer at St Bon's and their families. Please do come along and if you can help please contact Neta Roylance-Smith: email: neta_pourhosseini@hotmail.com or call 07980175565.

Year of Mission: Bishop Declan invites you all on Wednesday 29th November 7pm to gather in the Cathedral for a celebration of Evening Prayer, launching our Diocese into a Year of Mission.

200 Club: Congratulations to the winners of the October draw: £60 Josie Wilmer 12, £25 Mary Miskella 106 and £15 Bob and Ann James 147. Thank you to all parishioners who have supported the 200 Club this year. Profits raised from the Club go to HCPT - The Children's Pilgrimage Trust, enabling children with special needs to visit Lourdes at Easter. Membership now needs to be renewed. Representatives from the Club will be at all Masses this weekend to collect subscriptions. Its £24 per year. Cheques should be made payable to "St Bonaventures 200 Club" please. Alternatively, please leave your cheque in an envelope in the Presbytery, clearly marked FAO Angela Parry - 200 Club. New members welcome!

Collection Box Holders: The old £1 coin is only legal tender until 15th October so please hand in your collection boxes or anything else you may have with old £1 coins before then please.

Starting School: Parents of children born between 1st September 2013 and 31st August 2014 must apply now for a

school place for September 2018 onwards. Application forms are available from Bristol City Council or you can apply online. You must apply by 15th January 2018. For St Bonaventure's Primary School Catholic children you must also provide a copy of the baptism certificate to the School.

St Brendan's Open Events: The College welcomes any prospective pupils and their families to their open events on: 10am-2.30pm on Saturday 7th October and from 5-8pm on Thursday 19th October, Wednesday 15th November and Thursday 8th February.

Mentor Me Training: Mentor Me supports ex-offenders and is looking for volunteers who, driven by their faith, can help offer the unique services of friendship, hospitality, encouragement, support, care and a patient listening ear to those leaving prison or who have already done so and who wish to make positive changes to their lives. Are you interested? Training with a view to becoming a mentor is now taking place Contact alison@mentormeuk.org or on 0117 403 7905 for more information.

CAFOD school volunteers needed: Could you spare some time to volunteer with CAFOD and help children and young people learn about global poverty, and motivate them to take action? We are looking for volunteers to cover the Gloucester/Cheltenham and Salisbury/Yeovil areas to visit Catholic schools and parish groups. For further information please contact Liz Baldwin at CAFOD Clifton on 01179 428 328 or email clifton@cafod.org.uk

Little Hearts Toddler Group: Little Hearts runs every Wednesday morning during term time from 10am - 11.45am in the Newman Hall, Westbury on Trym. We are a very friendly group with lots of toys to keep young and old amused and provide home-made cake as well as tea, coffee, biscuits and fruit for the little ones. Just £1 per family - please come along and say hello!

Catholic Youth Group: A new youth group for Catholic children aged 7-12 meets weekly during term time at Sacred Heart, Westbury-on-Trym. All welcome. Sundays from 4pm to 5.30pm. In the parish rooms on the ground floor of the Presbytery.

Parish e-Newsletter & Website: If you're reading the paper version of our newsletter, have you considered subscribing to our e-Newsletter? For every new subscriber, we can print one less copy of the paper Newsletter and do a little bit towards helping our environment. Don't forget to confirm your subscription when you get the email prompt. If you're reading the e-Newsletter, thank you—we hope you're enjoying it! Please do also check out our new website www.stbonsbristol.co.uk -all feedback is greatly welcomed!

Newsletter Items: Please can any items be emailed to the Parish Office by Wednesday 10am to ensure that they are included in that weekend's newsletter.

Church Porch: It is lovely that people leave flyers and posters in the porch but this seems to get out of hand from time to time; this is one of those moments. If you do put literature in the porch, please also be responsible for removing it when it is no longer relevant so that we can keep this area clean and inviting for all that come to our Church.

Mass Times

Sunday 8th October - 27th Sunday in O.T

9.30am Mass *Fatima & Family Intentions*

7.00am Mass *Pro Pop*

Monday 9th October - Weekday in Ordinary Time

9.00am Morning Prayer

9.15am Mass

Tuesday 10th October - Weekday in Ordinary Time

9.00am Morning Prayer

9.15am Mass

Wednesday 11th October - Weekday in Ordinary Time

9.00am Morning Prayer

9.15am Mass
9.45am Holy Hour

Thursday 12th October - Weekday in Ordinary Time

No Morning prayer or Mass

Friday 13th October - Weekday in Ordinary Time

7.00pm Mass
7.30pm - 8.30pm Holy Hour

Saturday 14th October - Weekday in Ordinary Time

7.00pm Mass (Vigil) *Pro Pop*

Confession

Saturday 6.00pm - 6.40pm

Eucharistic Exposition

Monday 10.00am - Wednesday 12.00am

Wednesday 9.45am - 10.45am

Friday 7.30pm - 8.30pm

Saturday 6.00pm - 6.40pm

Please Pray For: Anita Bridges, Una Cunniffe, Celia Dolan, Monica Fletcher, Sheelagh Gaines, June Krysta, Pat Parry, Nedra Paynter, Roger Paynter, Margaret Rogers, Zygmunt Sawko, Bernard Seward, Ivy Sewell, Martin Sewell, Peter Sewell and Maria Wysocka.

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