



*St James – A shining light in Petts Wood*



# ST JAMES THE GREAT

## Briefly

Weekly Newsletter

13th July 2025

Fifteenth Sunday



### Fr Davis says...

There is a respectable lawyer in Albert Camus' novel, the Fall. He is walking in the streets of Amsterdam one night and hears a cry. A woman has fallen into the canal and is crying for help.

Then the thoughts come rushing through his mind. Of course, he must help, but a respected lawyer getting involved in this way? What would the implications be? What about the personal danger? After all, who knows what has been going on? By the time he has thought it through, it is too late. She has drowned. He moves on, making all kinds of excuses to justify his failure to act. Camus writes, "He did not answer the cry for help. That is the man he was". We would have done better, we tell ourselves and yet all around are people with needs. "Needs" are not just physical. Emotional needs can be more devastating than physical needs. The most serious disease in the west today, is loneliness. This was what Mother Teresa said when she visited the US. Many of us could hear cries for help right in our own neighbourhood, if we could listen – or in our own families. Why do we not listen?

Our gospel reading today invites us to reflect on what it means to be neighbourly and who we see as our neighbour. It recounts the familiar story of the Good Samaritan – a moving story about a striking act of kindness shown to an unfortunate victim of violent robbery. Jesus tells the story in the context of a conversation with a Jewish lawyer. The Lawyer is not interested in learning from Jesus. He just wants to test him. So he asks him a question What must I do to possess eternal life? The lawyer like all law abiding Jews, already knows the answer. So Jesus turns the question back to him. What does the law say? The Lawyer answers by simply citing the basic commandments of the Law: Love God and your neighbour as yourself. Jesus responds by telling him to do this and he will live. The Lawyer is still not happy. So to justify himself, he asks the further question: who is my neighbour? To which Jesus replies with the story of the Good Samaritan.

The philosophy of life of the Jewish priest and Levite – legalism. The priests were powerful upper class authorities governing the Temple Cult. The Levites were the priest's associates, who provided music, incense, sacred bread, Temple curtains and adornments. The duties included kosher meat packing and banking. In the parable, the representatives of these classes did not pay any attention to the wounded man because of their utter selfishness. Misplaced zeal for their religious duty gave them a couple of lame excuses. If the man is dead and we touch him we will be unclean for seven days. And disqualified from Temple service. Thus they saw the wounded man on the road, not as a person needing help but a possible source of ritual impurity. Or else this may be a trap set for us by the hiding bandits. The parable's priests and Levite however represent people who are always demanding their rights, but never talking about their responsibilities. These two men exercised their legal right to pass this man and forgot God in the process. These people don't say "I do what I want to do," but "I will only do what I have to do. I won't stick my neck out for anybody. When one does only do what one must do in life, one is not a good neighbour.

The philosophy of the Samaritan – Love. The Samaritan was generous enough to see the wounded Jew as neighbour. He ignored the long history of enmity between his people and the Jews. The Samaritans were a race who presumably originated from the Israelites who remained behind in their homeland when the Assyrians following their conquest in 722 BC, deported the leading families of the region. In the years that followed, the Israelites who remained intermarried with the foreign settlers brought in by the Assyrians. The new hybrid ethnic generation – Jewish Assyrians continued to regard the Torah as their Law but erected their own Temple on Mount Gerizim, just outside Shechem at a time when there was no Temple in Jerusalem. John Hyrcanus, a Maccabean Jewish Ruler, destroyed this Shechem during his reign and thus created lasting enmity between the Judeans and the Samaritans. Yet Jesus makes the Samaritan the hero of the story. The Good Samaritan was taking a real risk. Since the robbers who had assaulted the traveller could have been still nearby. Nevertheless he gave first aid to the wounded Jew, took him to a nearby inn and made arrangements for his food and accommodation by giving the innkeeper two denarii. Two denarii was a lot of money – enough to pay for more than three weeks board and lodging. The Samaritan also assured the innkeeper of further payment for any additional medical requirements of the wounded man. What made this Samaritan more special was not the colour of his skin, but the compassion in the Samaritan's heart. No law could make the priest or the Levite stop, but love could make the Samaritan stop. Who would we have been that day? The thief? The priest? The Levite, or the Good Samaritan? If a person has a need that we can meet, that person is our neighbour. Every time we see a person in need, we immediately become a neighbour. A columnist Ann Landers once wrote – "Be kind to people. The world needs kindness so much. You never know what kind of battle other people are fighting. Often just a soft word or a warm compliment can be immensely supportive. You can do a great deal of good by just being considerate, by extending a little friendship, going out of your way to do just one nice thing, or saying one good word".

What God wants more than anything is for us to show our love to others, in our own home and school, in the workplace and in the neighbourhood, as the Good Samaritan did. Jesus is inviting us to have hearts of mercy for those who are being left hurt or mistreated on any of the Jericho Roads of life.

As Pope Francis reminded us in his great Encyclical on Fraternity and Social Friendship (Tutti Fratelli) "We are all called, just like the Good Samaritan, to become neighbours to others, overcoming prejudices, personal interests, historic and cultural barriers. We are all co-responsible creators of a society that I am able to include, integrate and uplift those who have fallen by the wayside or are suffering. So let us strive to be the kind of neighbours Jesus wants us to be.

Have a blessed week – God bless you.



All the Masses being said at St James' will be live streamed  
<https://www.churchservices.tv/pettswood>  
**For the protection of all attend St James we request that you do not video live Masses using your phone during services.**  
 You can also take part in Adoration and Benediction by live stream.  
 All events for live streaming are listed on the streaming site.

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Confessions will be heard in the church on Saturdays, 5.00-5.45pm,  
 or by appointment.

<b>Fifteenth Sunday</b> <b>Saturday 12th July</b>	<b>06:00pm</b> Alfredo Cotta RIP - 35th Death Anniversary (S Cotta)
<b>Sunday 13th July</b>	<b>09:15am</b> Blake Family Intention <b>11:00am</b> James Dordoy RIP (K & A Dordoy)
<b>Feria</b> <b>Monday 14th July</b>	<b>10:00am</b> Organ Donors & Recipients (A Parker)
<b>Saint Bonaventure</b> <b>Tuesday 15th July</b>	<b>10:00am</b> James Dordoy RIP - 1st Anniversary (L Henderson)
<b>Our Lady of Mount Carmel</b> <b>Wednesday 16th July</b>	<b>10:00am</b> Fr David Camilleri (M Ferretti) Clodagh Bloch RIP (K&A Evans) <b>10:45am</b> Eucharistic Adoration
<b>Feria</b> <b>Thursday 17th July</b>	<b>10:00am</b> Seamus O'Mahony RIP (Foundation Mass)
<b>Feria</b> <b>Friday 18th July</b>	<u>No Mass from St James'</u> <u>Please note that St Edmund of Canterbury, Beckenham will be live streaming their Mass at 10:00am. <a href="https://www.churchservices.tv/beckenham">https://www.churchservices.tv/beckenham</a></u>
<b>Sixteenth Sunday</b> <b>Saturday 19th July</b>	<b>06:00pm</b> Thanksgiving of Lobo Family (H Lobo)
<b>Sunday 20th July</b>	<b>09:15am</b> Tom & Margarita Rudds (M Rudds) <b>11:00am</b> Sheila Simon RIP (Foundation Mass)

This weeks second collection is for Apostleship of the Sea (Stella Maris)



The current needs for this week are for:

- Fruit Juice Long Life
- Honey/ Confectionary
- Tinned Potatoes
- Carrier Bags
- Washing Up Liquid
- Shaving Gel/Foam
- UHT / Powdered Milk

For more information go to: <https://bromleyborough.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/>