

SUNDAY MASS

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:

Look to your covenant, O Lord, forget not the life of your poor ones forever. Arise, O God, and defend your cause, do not forget the cries of those who seek you.

FIRST READING: 1 Kings 19:4-8.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 34.

RESPONSE:

Taste and see that the Lord is good!

1. I will bless the Lord at all times, praise of him is always in my mouth. In the Lord my soul shall make its boast; the humble shall hear and be glad. **R**
2. Glorify the Lord with me; together let us praise his name. I sought the Lord, and he answered me; from all my terrors he set me free. **R**
3. Look towards him and be radiant; let your faces not be abashed. This lowly one called; the Lord heard, and rescued him from all his distress. **R**
4. The angel of the Lord is encamped around those who fear him, to rescue them. Taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed the man who seeks refuge in him. **R**

SECOND READING: Ephesians 4:30-5:2.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, alleluia! I am the living bread which came down from heaven, says the Lord; if any one eats of this bread, he will live for ever. Alleluia.

GOSPEL: John 6:41-51.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON:

O Jerusalem, glorify the Lord who gives you your fill of finest wheat.

THE WEEK AHEAD

Live the Word

Mon 9 Aug (St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, VM) Deut 10:12-22; Psalm 147; Matthew 17:22-27

The poor and the homeless are all around us, especially during this time of Covid 19. Let us find, or watch for ways to assist those in need, for it is from them that we learn who God is.

Tue 10 Aug ST LAWRENCE, DcnM

2 Corinthians 9:6-10; Psalm 112; John 12:24-26

Approach prayer in this way: first remember your many blessings; then ask for God's help; then acknowledge your role in carrying out God's will. Remembering all that God has given us impels us to give cheerfully in turn.

Wed 11 Aug St Clare, V

Deuteronomy 34:1-12; Psalm 66; Matthew 18:15-20

God wants to be central in your life. Call on God, and ask to be lifted up; show God the lots of little things in your life and discuss all the minute details... and like a grandparent, God will not want to put you down.

Thu 12 Aug (Bl. Isidore Bakanja, M)

Joshua 3:7-11.13-17; Psalm 114; Matthew 18:21-19:1

If we do not forgive others, then we are asking God not to forgive us. It stands to reason that we need to be a forgiving person before we pray the Lord's Prayer, for we are asking God to forgive us as we forgive others.

Fri 13 Aug (Ss Pontian, P & Hippolytus, Pr, Ms)

Joshua 24:1-13; Psalm 136; Matthew 19:3-12

True mercy should never be construed as approving of wrongdoing. In telling us to go and sin no more, Jesus is condemning the sin, not the person. Mercy is at the very heart of our faith.

Sat 14 Aug St Maximilian Kolbe, PrM

Joshua 24:14-29; Psalm 16; Matthew 19:13-15

St Maximilian Kolbe reminds us that real love takes flesh. Face to face with physical and emotional brutality at Auschwitz, he gave his life to save a fellow human. Does my life make love real for others?

Sun 15 Aug ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY

Revelation 11:19; 12:1-6.10; Psalm 45; Luke 1:39-56

Reflection on Scripture reveals that Mary shows us how to respond to Jesus. She teaches us how to welcome Jesus into our lives, how to be taught by him, how to say yes, how to live in hope.

(KEY: **SOLEMNITY**; **FEAST**; **Memorial**; (Optional **Memorial**)
V=Virgin; M=Martyr; Dcn=Deacon; P=Pope; Pr=Priest

Catholic Link

BROTHERS AND SISTERS ALL

19th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year B
Divine Office: Week III • 8 August 2021

Populist Politics

As human beings, whether we like it or not, we are political beings. We belong to the "polis", which means that we are social beings who must find ways to live together. Chapter Five of *Fratelli Tutti* deals with this complex reality in the way Pope Francis proposes "A Better Kind of Politics" – the chapter's title.

From his privileged global perspective, the pope discerns a shift away from true democracy towards populism. In other words, government is no longer "of the people, by the people, for the people", but is captured (to use our well-worn South African term) by "popular" leaders. This is worrying. It could be part of society's addiction to "celebrity" culture. We elect personalities rather than true leaders. This is a threat to democracy. Power struggles revolve around *personality cults*, i.e., whoever grabs the biggest popular following. Pope Francis hits the nail on the head:

The attempt to see populism as a key for interpreting social reality is problematic: it disregards the legitimate meaning of the word "people". It eliminates the very notion of democracy as government by the people. If we wish to maintain that society is more than a mere aggregate of individuals, the term "people" proves necessary.

Pope Francis affirms the rights of people in a democratic system. He believes that men and women "are capable of coming up with shared goals that transcend their differences and can thus engage in a common endeavour." Long-term projects must become part of a collective aspiration. This is the positive aspect to words like "people" and "popular". Says Pope Francis,

unless these words are given their proper meaning, we run the risk of popular (in the wrong sense of the word) leaders becoming demagogues. Worst case scenario is democracy

giving way to dictatorship. Just read George Orwell's "Animal Farm", where, said the pigs, "some are more equal than others."

As a reader of *Catholic Link*, you may be wondering, are we not dabbling in politics, something the Church should avoid? But Pope Francis is not interested in narrow party politics. His concern is the welfare and full flourishing of humans as political beings made in the image and likeness of God. *Fratelli Tutti*, together with the whole body of Catholic Social Teaching by the popes since 1891, falls into the category of the prophetic mission of the Church which continues the ministry of "preaching truth to power", as did figures like Moses, Elijah, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, and even Jesus himself.

South African readers of the *Link* can identify with Pope Francis' critique of popular leaders who are "only in it for themselves", to line their pockets. Some of our country's party politics seems to have degenerated into personality cults. Pope Francis urges a return to truly honest and upright "popular" leaders – in the best sense – who understand the feelings and needs of the population as a whole. He recognises the "service they provide by their efforts to unite and lead". But this presumes a leader with a vision of transformation and growth in the pursuit of the common good.

With Saint Paul, let us pray for our political leaders (1 Timothy 2:2) "that we may live together in peace."



Join Catholic Link

on Saturday 21 August at 4 pm

in a Zoom conversation
with Fr Sean Wales CSsR

who talks to us about his book
on the psalms entitled

**"The Prayer Book
of Jesus"**

For Zoom invitations
and details,
email janet@rpp.org.za

