



St. David's Parish
Monastery Road, Pantasaph,
Holywell. CH8 8PE



November 5, 2023

THIRTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.
May the souls of all the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace. *Amen*

Mass Timings

Saturday Vigil Mass 4.00 Pm

Sunday Mass 10.00am

Weekdays 9.00 am In Denbigh House

READINGS

1st Reading Mal 1:14b-2:2b, 8-10

Reading 2 1 Thes 2:7b-9, 13

GOSPEL Mt 23:1-12

INTRODUCTION: A strong invitation to render humble, committed and loving service to others in the community is the main theme of all three of today's readings. **The first reading, Malachi 1:14b-2:2b, 8-10:** In today's Gospel, Jesus criticizes the hypocrisy of many religious leaders of his day. The first reading prepares us for the full force of Jesus' warning by showing Malachi pouring out God's curses on the unfaithful priests of his time -- around 450 BC, after Judah's return from exile in Babylon and the rebuilding of the Temple. The priests of this period were indifferent to their rituals and their teaching responsibilities, and were often unfair in the judgments they made about people. Through

Malachi, the Lord God thunders, *"You have turned aside from the way and have caused many to falter by your instruction... You do not keep my ways."* Further, the Lord God emphatically condemns the Temple priests for not teaching His messages and not carrying out His commands; He says to them, *"I, therefore have made you contemptible and base before all the people."* Sad to say, many modern clerics of all denominations have a lot in common with the clerics of Malachi's day.

No wonder so many of our faithful go "outside the system" we've created in order to discover Who God really is, and what He really wants of them. **The second Reading, 1 Thessalonians 2:7b-9, 13:** The itinerant teachers of religions in those days had a reputation for avarice and pride. That is why Paul frequently emphasizes his unique leadership style. He tries to convince the Thessalonians that the message they received was not just human teaching, but rather the word of God. He reminds them that when he was among them, he was careful not to "sponge" on them and not even to ask them for his own livelihood. Unlike the Pharisees and Jewish teachers, Paul wanted to be a burden to no one, so the Thessalonians and the rest of Paul's communities, experienced Jesus' love through Paul's love. Today, many priests, deacons and lectors are faithfully, humbly, and generously carrying on Jesus' mission to the world as Paul did, sharing the word of God with those who believe.

To do this, each prays and strives for the zeal and integrity of a life lived for Jesus, like Paul's, and for Paul's kind of leadership (like that of a shepherd for sheep, of or a father for his children), which nurtures mutual love between him and those to whom he speaks and freely offers loving service to all of them. **In today's Gospel, Mt 23:1-12** Jesus offers a word of judgment against those religious leaders of his day who have been more concerned with self-promotion than with giving loving service to others. Christ-like leadership calls for integrity and honesty from all those in authority, whether priests, parents, teachers or politicians. There should be in leaders no double standards. Rather, there should grow a deep sense of equality with, and mutual respect between, leaders and those they rule. Each should seek to serve the other. Service,

not status, is the mark of this new community, and true humility is the only position its members should seek. **Exegesis: The context:** For Jesus in Jerusalem, it was the third day of what we have come to call "Holy Week." It was a day of controversy and personal attacks. Jesus was under fire and challenged the religious leaders of Israel for rejecting him as Messiah. Luke's account records three woes Jesus called down upon the Pharisees and four He called down upon the scribes.

Matthew's account arranges these (23:13-36) into a series of seven woes against the "scribes and Pharisees," whom Jesus calls hypocrites and publicly humbles by telling them God's truth about their lives. The passage in Matthew consists of the seven prophetic woes and a prophetic lament over the fate of Jerusalem. In Mark's Gospel, Jesus denounces the "scribes" for their pious pretensions, their hunger for status, and their exploitation of widows. This confrontation looks forward to the bitter conflict which would arise between Pharisaic Judaism and the Early Church where many of the faults found in Jesus' opponents were present. To some extent, these faults are still present in the Church. In this Gospel incident, then, we are all warned of the danger and advised strongly to consider our own conduct and attitudes carefully, lest we, too, suffer these "woes."

Warning to First Century Church and to future Christians:

The scribes in the time of Jesus were like today's religious intellectuals, theologians, and professional lawyers who are adept in applying the Law to everyday life. The Pharisees formed a fraternity of highly religious laymen who joined together to observe the Mosaic Law meticulously. Matthew's description of Jesus' criticism of the scribes and the Pharisees was mainly directed toward elements within the Judeo-Christian community which sought to impose an extremely narrow and burdensome interpretation of the Torah on the Gentile converts. Jesus' condemnations were meant also as a warning to future Christian leaders about possible abuses of authority in their own ministry. They were never to say one thing and do another. Instead, they should faithfully follow their Master's teaching and avoid titles and practices which would

imply arrogant superiority which can lead to hypocrisy. The Holy Spirit, through Matthew's account, emphatically reminds us that Jesus never intended His followers to divide themselves into "clergy and laity," into "superior and inferior, " but rather intended a community of mutual love and service in which the leaders and teachers were to be servants of those they led and taught.

SUNDAY COLLECTIONS- OCTOBER 28-29

Loose cash	143.70
Gift Aid	186.00
<u>Total</u>	<u>329.70</u>

Let us Remember the Sick in Prayer

Ann Parry, Patrick Ngale, Philip McGreavy, Antony Parry

ANNIVERSARIES (November 4-10)

Sheila Brunton: E. Toomey: John Cahill:, Marjorie Netta Kordal '92:, Elizabeth Hill '77: Joseph Fleming, Janet Jones '80: Br. Crispin Jones '88: Sr. Immaculata Coullaut '91:, Arthur Husion '73: Catharine Bellma '68: Paul Logue '82:, Thomas Desmond Neale '91: Trevor Shackleton:, Mary Adams, 2021, Philip Thomas Baines, 2021

SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION

**Sacrament of Confession at 11.30 am on Saturday
ON EMERGENCY ANY TIME 0741-749-4277**

DONATIONS TO THE PARISH

Account Name: Wrexham Diocesan Trust

Account Number: 08190771, Sort Code: 55-81-42

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Email: pantasaphstdavids@gmail.com

Phone: 0741-749-4277, 01352 711053,

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