

Wednesday 13th October 2021

Dear Parishioners,

On this day in 1917 Our Lady appeared for the last time at Fatima and performed the miracle of the sun for all the crowd to see.

Our Lady's appearances to Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta remind us that we are part of a greater narrative seen from the true perspective of heaven. It's a reminder to keep seeing our lives and our times from that broader view, with the eyes of faith, from God's perspective. We are part of the narrative of the story of salvation that began with Adam and Eve and will end with the Second Coming of Christ. Each of us has a role to accomplish in this great story given to us by God. It might seem a small part to play, but the smallest part done at the service of God is most important. I recall someone giving the analogy that a friend's job was opening mail. Not an important job it would seem, except they were opening mail for the President of the USA. Since it was done at the service of the President that job gained great importance. Brothers and sisters, each of us is at the service of the King of Kings, Christ Himself. So each of us has a significant role to fulfil in the history of salvation. We pray we might faithfully carry out our task.

Ss Francisco and Jacinta both died of the Spanish flu, and met their illness and death with great faith and courage. These children were happy to offer up their sufferings for the conversion of sinners and all the intentions of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. They knew full well that the time of their deaths was in the loving providence of God and Mother Mary never left them. May we live and die by their example, full of faith, hope and charity.

On Friday is the feast day of St Teresa of Avila, who along with fellow Carmelites Ss John of the Cross and Therese of Liseaux, is one of the great spiritual guides of the Church. I encourage you to read her autobiography, "The Life of Saint Teresa of Avila by Herself." Ps one of the great sculptural masterpieces is 'The Ecstasy of St Teresa' by Bernini.

Next week there is the feast day of Ss John de Brebeuf and Isaac Jogues. If you want to know what courage is, look no further! These brave Jesuits went as missionaries to North America to convert the native Huron and Iroquois. That's guts! No surprise that they died as martyrs.

In Sunday's Gospel, Our Lord says, "the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Our Lord still loves each of us with the same burning love that drove Him to the cross. Perhaps we can be one of the few in this world that loves Him with the same singular devotion that He loves us. No doubt as St Francisco says, that would console His Sacred Heart.