

## 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

**First Reading** Leviticus 19:1-2. 17-18  
The book of Leviticus can seem rather dry. It begins with the command to be as holy as God. This is an impossible command, but the point is to allow God to live that holiness within us by making space for God in our lives.

**Responsorial Psalm** 102:1-4,8,10,12-13  
The Lord is compassion and love.

**Second Reading** 1 Corinthians 3:16-23  
Paul writes to the Corinthians, a community made up of common people with no pretensions to greatness. He reminds them that their dignity comes from being temples of God.

## Gospel Acclamation

### Alleluia, alleluia!

If anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him.

### Alleluia!

## Gospel

Matthew 5:38-48  
Jesus sets out the implications of living as his disciples. He reminds us that God gives the same grace to good and bad people alike. The choice is ours, on a daily basis, whether to respond to it or not.

## Parish of Corpus Christi

Sacred Heart (Goldthorpe), Sacred Heart & St Helen (Hoyland) and St Michael & All Angels (Wombwell)



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Sunday 19th February 2023

Sunday Year A

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

Weekday Cycle II

*"You must therefore be perfect just as your heavenly Father is perfect."*

In Nathaniel Hawthorne's tale *The Birth-Mark*, the brilliant scientist Aylmer falls in love with a beautiful young woman called Georgiana. She is beautiful but has a birthmark like a small hand on her cheek. It is attuned to her emotions, becoming almost invisible when she blushes, but standing out when she is pale. Other lovers have thought this a sign of beauty, telling her that a magical fairy must have touched her cheek, but Aylmer sees it as a blemish, an imperfection that challenges his scientific skills. He becomes unable to appreciate his wife's beauty clearly as he becomes obsessed with what he sees as her imperfection. He urges her to let him remove the mark.

Georgiana realises that Aylmer is disturbed by her blemish. He cannot see beyond the blemish to the beauty that is within her. She is deeply hurt but, out of love for him, agrees to submit to whatever experiment he devises to render her beautiful again in his eyes. She drinks a chemical potion destined to remove the birthmark but finds that the mark is linked to her life. As the mark disappears, her life drains from her. Aylmer has achieved his idealistic dream of a perfect wife, but in the process he has destroyed what he failed to love and accept.

The Gospel for today, from Matthew, may seem as harsh and burdensome as the urge to have the perfect image of oneself or another. How can sinful people like ourselves measure up to the exacting standard of perfection that Jesus seems to put before us? Is there any point in even trying to be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect? How could we ever hope to reach such a state of perfection in this life and not be destroyed in the attempt?

Luke's Gospel echoes the same teaching but makes a crucial change in the wording. We are told by Jesus to be *compassionate* as our heavenly Father is compassionate. That in itself is a tall enough order, but it avoids the tyranny of that word "perfection". Yet here Matthew faces us, without escape, with the challenge of Jesus. There must be a key to this, as Jesus does not place impossible burdens on our shoulders nor make demands that will lead to inevitable failure. The key lies in the promise of God's grace and in the very fact of the incarnation. God does not demand the impossible of us. Instead, we are offered a share in God's own life – a

## Service Times & Intentions

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|---|---------------|----------------|--|
| <b>Saturday Vigil</b><br>(St Michael's) | <b>18 Feb</b> | <b>5.30pm</b>  | People of the Parish                       |
| <b>Sunday</b><br>(Sacred Heart)         | <b>19 Feb</b> | <b>9.00am</b>  | NO MASS                                    |
| <b>Sunday</b><br>(St Helen's)           | <b>19 Feb</b> | <b>11.00am</b> | NO MASS                                    |
| Tuesday (St Helen's)                    | 21 Feb        | 10.00am        | NO MASS                                    |
| <b>Ash Wednesday</b><br>(St Michael's)  | 22 Feb        | 7.00pm         | People of the Parish                       |
| Thursday (St Helen's)                   | 23 Feb        | 10.00am        | NO MASS                                    |
| Friday (Sacred Heart)                   | 24 Feb        | 10.00am        | NO MASS                                    |
| Saturday (St Michael's)                 | 25 Feb        | 10.00am        | NO MASS                                    |
| <b>Saturday Vigil</b><br>(St Michael's) | <b>25 Feb</b> | <b>5.30pm</b>  | People of the Parish                       |
| <b>Sunday</b><br>(Sacred Heart)         | <b>26 Feb</b> | <b>9.00am</b>  | Angela Hays RIP                            |
| <b>Sunday</b><br>(St Helen's)           | <b>26 Feb</b> | <b>11.00am</b> | Thanksgiving for 80 <sup>th</sup> Birthday |

**Divine Mercy Chaplet** is at 3.00pm on Fridays at St. Michael's Church

**The Sacrament of Reconciliation** is always available upon request.

**Rosary** each Wednesday in Goldthorpe at 1.30pm

life that is lived in us by Jesus himself. His becoming human transforms our human nature from within, making it possible for us to be holy because Jesus himself is our holiness and our healing. When we make space for him in our lives and try our best to follow his teaching, his grace comes alive within us.

Christian life is never about trying to achieve some impossible state of perfection. It is always about intimacy with God. This means allowing God to become a familiar part of our lives. Most of us are only too conscious of our own sins and imperfections, and even more conscious of those of others. Being harsh and judgemental with ourselves or with others is never the answer, and when we hear that note in our own voice or that of others, we know it is not from God.

God's compassion is infinite, as is God's grace, which comes to us new every morning. Every day is a day for a new start, and no one is more willing to help us than God. Whatever temptations and difficulties we face, whatever defects of character we may think we have, God looks on us and finds us very good. God has faith in us, loves us and has hopes for us. It is that faith, hope and love that give us the strength we need to face each day with its challenges, knowing that God's grace is perfection enough for each one of us from our birth to our dying day. Addicts in recovery often encourage themselves with sayings such as "one day at a time". If we can take up this attitude and spend a little time with God each day, reviewing the choices we have made and seeing where we have been present to or absent from God's loving presence in our lives, we will begin to see where the path to goodness lies for us, and will find the grace to respond.

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### **Prayers for the Sick**

We pray for our sick and/or housebound parishioners. We remember especially Marie Bray (nee Walsh), Peter Gillott, Jan Dextor, Percy Winterton, Kath Hardy, Carole Dyson, Bernadette Houlton, Michael Bennett, Janette Barber, Claire Selby, Paddy McNicholas, David Hardy, Tess Lynch, Justin Phillip Collins, Hannah Prentiss, Pat Hermitage, Thomas Collins, Norma Marshall, Val Armstrong, Terry Mullins, Matthew Deakin, Margaret Booker, Michael Foy, Shirley Broadhead, Norah Preuss, Mavis Guilcher.

### **Requiescat in Pace**

We pray for the repose of the soul of Tony Walsh who died recently. Please keep his family and friends in your prayers

### **40th Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes, 30th June–6th July 2023**

Bishop Ralph invites you to join him on this special pilgrimage. The cost is £840.00 per person for 6 nights Full Board (excl. Insurance), flying from Leeds Bradford Airport direct to Lourdes. Booking forms available to download at [www.hallam-lourdes.com](http://www.hallam-lourdes.com) Enquiries 07724 650066 or 01302 247910.

Hallam Youth – Lourdes Young people travel with their school groups but this year places are available for young people aged 16+ in parishes, who do not attend Catholic schools, who wish to join Hallam Youth on the diocesan pilgrimage. Email [smcdonald@hallam-diocese.com](mailto:smcdonald@hallam-diocese.com) for details

### **Bonus Ball - Goldthorpe and Hoyland**

The Bonus Ball last Saturday was number 50. There was no winner in Goldthorpe so next weekend the rollover will be £75! In Hoyland there was a winner, A Callaghan, who won the rollover of £50.

### **Message from Lee Conway**

On April 15<sup>th</sup>, I shall be walking the Three Peaks Challenge to raise funds toward the cost of sending some of our young people to Portugal for World Youth Day in August. I have a crowdfunder and here is a link:

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/3-peaks-for-hallam-wyd>

*Thank you*

### **Catholic Association for Racial Justice 12<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

Thank you for your generous donations in last weekend's special collection. The parish raised £???

### **Masses for next Week.**

Fr Declan will be away next week. Please note there will be no Masses **except** on Ash Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> February, when Mass will be at 7.00pm at St Michael's.

### **Caritas Diocese of Hallam Second Collection 18/19<sup>th</sup> February**

This weekend there will be a second collection in support of Caritas, which promotes care and tackles social problems within the Diocese.

### **World Day of Prayer Friday 3 March**

There will be a service at Sacred Heart church Goldthorpe at 2.30pm. This year's theme is 'I have heard about your faith' and the service has been created by the women of Taiwan. All are welcome.

### **CAFOD Family Fast Day**

This year's Lenten Family Fast Day will be on Friday, 3rd March. Envelopes will soon be available from the back of church. Please consider using the Gift Aid slip if you are a UK Taxpayer, thus enabling CAFOD to benefit further from your generous donations.

### **Prayer for Vocations**

Loving and generous Father: it is you who call us by name and ask us to follow you. In particular, you call some to serve you as ministers in your church. Bless our Diocese of Hallam by raising up faith-filled and dedicated priests, deacons and religious. Bless our families and choose from our homes those who are needed for your mission.

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|----------------------------|-------------|
| Blessed John Anne          | Pray for us |
| Blessed Robert Ludlam      | Pray for us |
| Blessed Nicholas Garlick   | Pray for us |
| Blessed William Richardson | Pray for us |

|                                  |             |
|----------------------------------|-------------|
| 0 Mary, Mother of Perpetual Help | Pray for us |
|----------------------------------|-------------|