

## Thought for the week

### Eleventh Sunday of the Year, Year B

Now in mid-June the exams are coming to an end and students are winding down to enjoy the summer holidays. Work for many will be replaced by time spent relaxing in the UK or abroad. Others will be unable to go far because of illness, old age or commitments. But even while staying at home— a change (in routine) can be as good as a rest.

For me a film that captures not only the essence of the freedom of a summer holiday but also gives many insights to the absurdities of the human condition is: *Le Vacances de M Hulot* (Mr Hulot's holiday).

I saw this film as a boy, but only remembered it when Bill, a resident of Abbeycrest nursing home, told me during a recent visit that it was his favourite film. I've got to know Bill quite well over the past year since it was suggested by a fellow St Michael's parishioner that he would appreciate some more visitors.

I got hold of a DVD of the film, which was shot in 1952 at the small Breton seaside resort of San-Marc-sur-mer. As well as enjoying the gentle slapstick of the well-meaning, but accident prone Msr Hulot, I also really enjoyed seeing the lift in Bill's spirits as we laughed together at the visual gags. Bill anticipated many of these despite not having seen the film for 50 years or more!

In one memorable scene M. Hulot gives a fellow guest a lift to a picnic organised by the hotel. Hulot's car gets a puncture and he pulls into the grounds of a house where a funeral is taking place. He approaches the funeral party with his punctured vintage car tyre tube, which has become coated in moss. An usher takes it and hangs it up with the other wreathes where it crumples with a loud hissing noise. M Hulot remains unflapped at these and other misfortunes. We could all take heed of the way he 'goes with the flow' when a carefully planned holiday itinerary goes awry.

Lord, as most of us eagerly anticipate and plan for restorative breaks from our usual routine, help us learn and grow from the opportunity to spend more time with family and friends. And let us have the grace and charm of Jaque Tati's wonderful character Hulot, in making the most of the unplanned and unexpected changes in our holiday plans.

A Parishioner