



St Joseph's Catholic Church
Arkell Avenue, Carterton, OXON OX18 3BS



www.stjosephscarterton.uk

Andrew Foster, PP Tel 01993-842463

andrewjamesfoster1956@ntlworld.com

RC Archdiocese of Birmingham charity
(No 234216)

Sixth Sunday (B) 14.02.2021

Sat 13 Feb No Mass

Sun 14 Feb **Live-streamed 10.00 Mass**

6th Sunday (B) Anne Reid Scott A

Mon 15 Feb Fr Michael Phillips OSB GE

Tue 16 Feb Sally Edward RIP

Wed 17 Feb **4.30pm service in car park**

Ash Wednesday (fasting and abstinence)

Thu 18 Feb Louise Clifford A

Fri 19 Feb Lyndsay Baker & family GE

Sat 20 Feb Barbara Elliott GE

Sun 21 Feb **Live-streamed 10.00 Mass**

1st Lent Sunday Barbara Jarrett LD

Live-streaming of Masses from St Joseph's continues on Sundays at **10.00am**. Details on the website: www.stjosephscarterton.uk

May I request that you **mute** yourselves to avoid your being heard?

Pastoral Ministry

Both Carterton and Burford churches remain closed. I will continue to offer Mass privately at both churches, and will be pleased to remember any Mass intentions. Please let me know. I do not intend to visit parishioners at home during lockdown but please contact me if you or anyone you know is in need of the sacraments. I will gladly come to you.

World Day of Prayer, Friday 5 March

St Joseph's is taking part and the service for Carterton and Brize Norton is being recorded. It can be seen from 7.00pm on 5 March onwards. You can access it via St John's Church Facebook page or the website:

www.stjohnschurchcarterton.org.uk

St Joseph's School is in dire need of governors. Please pray that suitable people be found.

Please pray for those who have died: Rodney Forder, Joe Lambe, Pauline Leverett, Olive Harcourt, Christopher Murphy, Joan Clements, Monica Owen, Kate Gargan, Anne Jennings, Angela Overton, Marie Drew, John Robinson, John Joseph O'Neill, Michael Jackson, Rose Lane, Mary Hannah, Robert Eszenyi, David Gotelier, Sue Hand, Graham Copping, Romy Sadler-Tomkins, Jim & Lily Rooney, Terry Curtin.

Anniversaries: Helen Rosario, John McGovern, Maria & Walter Winskowski, Mary Illingworth, Louise Clifford, **Please pray for the sick, housebound and those in the armed forces suffering mentally and physically from the effects of war:** Pat Hay, Anne Gillick, Wendy Murray, Catherine Robinson, Peter Garfoot, Peter Doran, Lukasz Konieczny, Brendan Reynolds, Marie Whelan, Brendan Farrow, Dominic Martin, Phil Rice, Natalia Romanek, John Middleton, Pat Haddock, Mario Bugeja, Justin Family, Dom Michael Phillips, Kathleen Fagan, Jen Thomas, Ann Heaton, Celia McCauley, Pat Hand, Elaine Barry, Rodrigo Bantug, John Pollock, Richard, Nkechi, Celia Fairbrother, Annette Steele, Pauline Allen, Stephen, Cynthia Brick, Fr Bernard Garratt.

Parish Bank details for Standing Orders

Natwest, 23 High Street, Witney, OX28 6HW
Account: St Joseph's Catholic Church
Account No: 43009530 Sort code: 60 24 60

Aluminium and metal cans / scrap metal
We can sell alu tins (and non-alu tins) if you collect them. **All** metal tins (and smaller pieces of scrap) can be turned to good use.

Ash Wednesday 4.30pm outside service.

(If any appreciable rain/snow it will be cancelled). Assemble in car park. Those in cars stay in your car if you wish with window rolled down. Service of prayer and blessing of ashes followed by imposition of ashes on forehead. Length of service about **twenty minutes maximum**. If you are vulnerable please stay at home. Please wear warm waterproof clothing. **PLEASE RESPECT SOCIAL DISTANCING AND WEAR A MASK.**

Readings

Leviticus 13:1-2.44-46. 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1. Mark 1:40-45

Sixth Sunday (B) 014.02.2021

The description of how lepers were to be treated in the first reading is terrifying and shocking. Not only are lepers declared unclean and must endure a painful and probably fatal disease, but they are to be ostracised, condemned to live as outsiders remote from the society of family, friends and neighbours. What is worse is the near certain knowledge that there is no escape from this life sentence. All that is to be expected is the outrage of relentless, cumulative and debilitating deformity. 'As long as the disease lasts, he must be unclean; and therefore, he must live apart; he must live outside the camp' (Lev 13:46). One can hardly imagine what desperation lepers must have endured. What extraordinary courage and hope must have inspired the leper in the Gospel passage to approach Jesus, not just in seeking for health to be restored but for being reincorporated into the community, however unlikely that must have seemed. But he hoped.

In the original Greek text the word translated as *feeling sorry* describes an intense emotional reaction on the part of Jesus. He replies to the leper's request, *if you want to you can cure me, with of course I want to! Be cured!* We can be sure that Jesus wants to cure us. It is the whole point of his incarnation. He shares the suffering of everyone. But do we want him to? Do we want to ask for help ourselves and do we want to serve the suffering Christ in others? The beginning of Lent is a good time to do so and to enjoy Jesus' healing in Reconciliation. I am reminded of something I said last Sunday: 'The story of Jesus is not that of a successful man who dedicated his life to empowering the world's "failures" to become "successes" like him... The common denominator linking many people is that they have been through a 'rock-bottom' experience which has left them feeling weak and powerless, their helplessness exposed to themselves and others.' Well there is no doubt about the leper having been through a rock-bottom experience. The social reintegration of the leper goes hand in hand with an increasing social exclusion of Jesus. The leper spoke freely of his cure and it resulted, as Jesus obviously feared, in the impossibility of Jesus openly entering towns from then on. In his own way then, Jesus came to experience what social exclusion meant. This was the key experience of his public ministry: practically no one including those closest to him really understood him. He was compelled to think of himself as an outsider and social outcast. If we would trust and love Jesus, then we must love the outcast that he was in all its manifestations: those with too little to eat and drink or to wear, the sick and those in prison, the poorly-educated, under-paid and exploited, those suffering addiction. 'So, Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. Therefore, let us go forth to him outside the camp' (Heb 13:12-13).

Even so people from all around would come to him. Who are these people? Perhaps Mark is implying that it is the outcasts, who, understanding that Jesus shares a lot in common with them, also choose to associate with him. May we associate ourselves with him too and stand proudly and indomitably at his standard.

Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for Lent 2021

“Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem” (Mt 20:18)

Lent: a Time for Renewing Faith, Hope and Love

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Jesus revealed to his disciples the deepest meaning of his mission when he told them of his passion, death and resurrection, in fulfilment of the Father’s will. He then called the disciples to share in this mission for the salvation of the world. In our Lenten journey towards Easter, let us remember the One who “humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross” (Phil 2:8). During this season of conversion, let us renew our faith, draw from the “living water” of hope, and receive with open hearts the love of God, who makes us brothers and sisters in Christ. At the Easter vigil, we will renew our baptismal promises and experience rebirth as new men and women by the working of the Holy Spirit. This Lenten journey, like the entire pilgrimage of the Christian life, is even now illumined by the light of the resurrection, which inspires the thoughts, attitudes and decisions of the followers of Christ. Fasting, prayer and almsgiving, as preached by Jesus (cf. Mt 6:1-18), enable and express our conversion. The path of poverty and self-denial (fasting), concern and loving care for the poor (almsgiving), and childlike dialogue with the Father (prayer) make it possible for us to live lives of sincere faith, living hope and effective charity.

1. Faith calls us to accept the truth and testify to it before God and all our brothers and sisters. In this Lenten season, accepting and living the truth revealed in Christ means, first of all, opening our hearts to God’s word, which the Church passes on from generation to generation. This truth is not an abstract concept reserved for a chosen intelligent few. Instead, it is a message that all of us can receive and understand thanks to the wisdom of a heart open to the grandeur of God, who loves us even before we are aware of it. Christ himself is this truth. By taking on our humanity, even to its very limits, he has made himself the way – demanding, yet open to all – that leads to the fullness of life. Fasting, experienced as a form of self-denial, helps those who undertake it in simplicity of heart to rediscover God’s gift and to recognize that, created in his image and likeness, we find our fulfilment in him. In embracing the experience of poverty, those who fast make themselves poor with the poor and accumulate the treasure of a love both received and shared. In this way, fasting helps us to love God and our neighbour, inasmuch as love, as Saint Thomas Aquinas teaches, is a movement outwards what focuses our attention on others and considers them as one with ourselves (cf. Fratelli Tutti, 93). Lent is a time for believing, for welcoming God into our lives and allowing him to “make his dwelling” among us (cf. Jn 14:23). Fasting involves being freed from all that weighs us down – like consumerism or an excess of information, whether true or false – in order to open the doors of our hearts to the One who comes to us, poor in all things, yet “full of grace and truth” (Jn 1:14): the Son of God our Saviour.

2. Hope as “living water” enabling us to continue our journey.

The Samaritan woman at the well, whom Jesus asks for a drink, does not understand what he means when he says that he can offer her “living water” (Jn 4:10). Naturally, she thinks that he is referring to material water, but Jesus is speaking of the Holy Spirit whom he will give in abundance through the paschal mystery, bestowing a hope that does not disappoint. Jesus had already spoken of this hope when, in telling of his passion and death, he said that he would “be raised on the third day” (Mt 20:19). Jesus was speaking of the future opened up by the Father’s mercy. Hoping with him and because of him means believing that history does not end with our mistakes, our violence and injustice, or the sin that crucifies Love. It means receiving from his open heart the Father’s forgiveness. In these times of trouble, when everything seems fragile and uncertain, it may appear challenging to speak of hope. Yet Lent is precisely the season of

hope, when we turn back to God who patiently continues to care for his creation which we have often mistreated (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 32-33; 43-44). Saint Paul urges us to place our hope in reconciliation: “Be reconciled to God” (2 Cor 5:20). By receiving forgiveness in the sacrament that lies at the heart of our process of conversion, we in turn can spread forgiveness to others. Having received forgiveness ourselves, we can offer it through our willingness to enter into attentive dialogue with others and to give comfort to those experiencing sorrow and pain. God’s forgiveness, offered also through our words and actions, enables us to experience an Easter of fraternity. In Lent, may we be increasingly concerned with “speaking words of comfort, strength, consolation and encouragement, and not words that demean, sadden, anger or show scorn” (Fratelli Tutti, 223). In order to give hope to others, it is sometimes enough simply to be kind, to be “willing to set everything else aside in order to show interest, to give the gift of a smile, to speak a word of encouragement, to listen amid general indifference” (ibid., 224). Through recollection and silent prayer, hope is given to us as inspiration and interior light, illuminating the challenges and choices we face in our mission. Hence the need to pray (cf. Mt 6:6) and, in secret, to encounter the Father of tender love. To experience Lent in hope entails growing in the realization that, in Jesus Christ, we are witnesses of new times, in which God is “making all things new” (cf. Rev 21:1-6). It means receiving the hope of Christ, who gave his life on the cross and was raised by God on the third day, and always being “prepared to make a defense to anyone who calls [us] to account for the hope that is in [us]” (1 Pet 3:15).

3. Love, following in the footsteps of Christ, in concern and compassion for all, is the highest expression of our faith and hope. Love rejoices in seeing others grow. Hence it suffers when others are anguished, lonely, sick, homeless, despised or in need. Love is a leap of the heart; it brings us out of ourselves and creates bonds of sharing and communion. “‘Social love’ makes it possible to advance towards a civilization of love, to which all of us can feel called. With its impulse to universality, love is capable of building a new world. No mere sentiment, it is the best means of discovering effective paths of development for everyone” (Fratelli Tutti, 183). Love is a gift that gives meaning to our lives. It enables us to view those in need as members of our own family, as friends, brothers or sisters. A small amount, if given with love, never ends, but becomes a source of life and happiness. Such was the case with the jar of meal and jug of oil of the widow of Zarephath, who offered a cake of bread to the prophet Elijah (cf. 1 Kings 17:7-16); it was also the case with the loaves blessed, broken and given by Jesus to the disciples to distribute to the crowd (cf. Mk 6:30-44). Such is the case too with our almsgiving, whether small or large, when offered with joy and simplicity. To experience Lent with love means caring for those who suffer or feel abandoned and fearful because of the Covid-19 pandemic. In these days of deep uncertainty about the future, let us keep in mind the Lord’s word to his Servant, “Fear not, for I have redeemed you” (Is 43:1). In our charity, may we speak words of reassurance and help others to realize that God loves them as sons and daughters. “Only a gaze transformed by charity can enable the dignity of others to be recognized and, as a consequence, the poor to be acknowledged and valued in their dignity, respected in their identity and culture, and thus truly integrated into society” (Fratelli Tutti, 187). Dear brothers and sisters, every moment of our lives is a time for believing, hoping and loving. The call to experience Lent as a journey of conversion, prayer and sharing of our goods, helps us – as communities and as individuals – to revive the faith that comes from the living Christ, the hope inspired by the breath of the Holy Spirit and the love flowing from the merciful heart of the Father. May Mary, Mother of the Saviour, ever faithful at the foot of the cross and in the heart of the Church, sustain us with her loving presence.

May the blessing of the risen Lord accompany all of us on our journey towards the light of Easter. Rome, Saint John Lateran, 11 November 2020, the Memorial of Saint Martin of Tours.

FRANCISCUS

