



### St Joseph's Catholic Church

Arkell Avenue, Carterton, OXON OX18 3BS

## Third Sunday of Lent (B) 07.03.2021

Sat 6 Mar

Sun 7 Mar **Live-streamed 10.00 Mass**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Lent Sunday** Isalina de Freitas / Phil Rice GE

Mon 8 Mar Thanksgiving

Tue 9 Mar Cynthia Brick / Sophie Kearns GE

Wed 10 Mar

Thu 11 Mar Justin Family / Eric Brown GE

Fri 12 Mar Mia Ertl GE

Sat 13 Mar

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

**4<sup>th</sup> Lent Sunday** Margot Hince BA / Tommy Osborne A

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

Please **mute** yourselves.

### Holy Week & Easter 2021

I will explain next weekend how I propose to observe some of the liturgies of Holy Week **safely** in church. Not all will be possible, for instance the Easter Vigil, but we will do our best to celebrate well what is feasible.

**Pastoral Ministry** Please contact me if you or anyone you know is in need of the sacraments. I will gladly come to you.

**Eric Brown**, Yvette's husband, has left Davis Close, Carterton to live with one of his sons. I visited him, removed my mask to allow him to recognise me and found him in good spirits. I promised our prayers and slipped him a miniature Famous Grouse.

[www.stjosephscarterton.uk](http://www.stjosephscarterton.uk)

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RC Archdiocese of Birmingham charity  
(No 234216)



**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, Frederick Shaw.

**Anniversaries:** Gladys Poynor, Gerald Smith, Fernando Gonçalves, Tommy Osborne, Lucas Jenkins, Teresa McCarthy.

**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, John Titcombe, Isalina de Freitas.

### 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

On a weekend when Pope Francis has been visiting Ur in Iraq, the birthplace of Abraham, recognised as father in faith by Jews, Christians and Muslims, I should like to dwell a little on the Decalogue, the Commandments, as recounted in the first reading. Pope Francis emphasised that because of what the three great monotheistic faiths have in common, adherents have the potential to practise interfaith unity, tolerance and peace and should do so. Some church officials believe the Christian faith is in danger of disappearing from Iraq. Numbers have been dwindling for years from 1.5 million who lived there during the final years of Saddam Hussein's rule to less than a third today.

Justice is a prerequisite for peace. It is at the heart of the Ten Commandments and enables those living together to manage their difficulties and disagreements in an equitable way. We may view the Commandments as a sort of electric fence to prevent or at least warn us from straying into forbidden territory, but while they are a useful aide memoire when it comes to recalling which we have broken, in preparation perhaps for receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation, that is an inadequate view. I see a key to understanding the commandments in the first sentence: *I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery*, since their primary aim is to help us to be free. God determined that Israel should be free of captivity in Egypt, and in the giving of the commandments determined that such freedom should extend to all interpersonal relationships.

God wants us to be free externally and internally and for that to be possible we must aim to live together in truth and integrity. Bowing down and serving other gods betrays the love of the one God. The second commandment at once specifies how misusing or representing God's name, particularly when invoking it falsely to demonstrate that one is telling the truth when one is not, is an offence against God. But it is also an offence against oneself. One is perjuring oneself, publicly telling lies, and pretending to be who one is not. Persevering in this course of action leads to the radical distortion of a person over time.

Part of being free is having the necessary leisure to recover from the demands of work. Without this, work risks becoming servitude. Even God chose to rest on the seventh day after six days of considerable creativity. One of the great contributions of the Judaeo-Christian faith to humanity is that human beings must be allowed to rest on the Sabbath. Rest is not only good and necessary for us, it is holy. It corresponds with our very nature, since we imitate God's nature in whose image and likeness we are created.

The commandments save us from tendencies present in us all: the tendency to take advantage of others, fail to respect them, to seek selfishly to profit from situations where possible.

Some believe the Christian faith is in danger of disappearing from Iraq. Numbers have dwindled from 1.5 million during the final years of Saddam Hussein's rule to less than a third of that number today. Pope Francis accepted the invitation to go to Iraq despite the dangers involved because of what the country has suffered. He did not want to disappoint the Iraqi people, especially the country's suffering Christian population, one of the most ancient Christian communities in the world. Abraham broke with all that he knew when he resolved to follow God's call and leave Ur for the new country he would be shown. God acted with faithful love towards him: we pray that we may imitate Abraham and like Christ be temples of God's presence to his people in the way we live the truth and justice of the commandments.



