

THE YEAR OF SAINT MARK
EATING WITH THE BRIDEGROOM
FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT – YEAR B
IS DARKNESS BETTER THAN LIGHT?

11 March 2018 – Mass Book Page 162, Psalter Week 4



When death bites, it hurts. The Beloved Son of God comes from above and becomes death, death on a cross. If, when we see Him and believe in Him, Eternal Life will flow into us. This is the wonder of it all. That Eternal Life appears at the exact moment when human life is failing and carries us through the loss of all that we know. Eternal Life suffuses and carries us to the other side of what we cannot yet see. This truth is grasped by looking on the crucified One, who transfigures death into the servant of life.

And there is more! In Christ there is no condemnation! This is the truth. It is, if you like, the highest truth, or the revelation of the One who is behind all that His Beloved Son does. Our lives are a mystery to us and we are sustained by what we cannot really understand. But we are led to the truth that the ground on which we stand sings of the self-giving love of the Father who is dedicated to human fulfilment. This is what Dante calls, 'the Love which moves the sun and the other stars'. (Paradiso, 33.145)

The Beloved Son is sent by this Love, who cannot bear to see His creation being unravelled by death. The Son brings life without end. He does not seek condemnation but Salvation. God's judgement is love and life. If we accept this gift, condemnation cannot touch us. But if we refuse the gift we are undone. Perhaps this is why, when we are drawing closer to God, and the light of Love begins to shine more brightly in us, there is a risk that when we see the full horror of sin we might want to cover ourselves in darkness again. But the Light of Mercy suggests another direction. A direction which begins with gratitude for the Grace of God which is, and always has been, the source of all the good we have done. A choice which keeps choosing to move more deeply into the light.



When we hear the Good News that in Christ there is no condemnation we might not believe it. We are so used to being judged - and condemned - by people. Are we not always being put on the scales, weighed in the balance and found wanting? We even do it to ourselves! Husbands, wives, parents and children do it. Bosses, work colleagues, neighbours and friends have mastered the look that lets us know we are not quite good enough. So when we hear that God has abandoned judgment and condemnation in favour of Love, we may have to work on ourselves to let this Truth come home. Having done that, there is no sense of being off the hook. We are, but we are now on another one. The light of Love will reveal to us how we ourselves might live in the twilight zone of sin and the judgement and condemnation of others.

In the beautiful Parable of St. John's Gospel 8.6, Jesus bends down to write in the sand, deliberately evoking a memory of undeserved forgiveness in Exodus 31.18 where God gives Moses a masterclass in Mercy. The Pharisees claim that their only motivation for stoning the woman is faithfulness to the teaching of Moses. But Jesus, the true interpreter of Moses, wants them to drop their cover story and be searingly honest with themselves about why they are really there. He gives them a chance to come into the light. But they will not take it. They have been casting the stones of judgement and condemnation for a long time and old habits are hardest to break. The invitation to come into the light is no match for the comfort of darkness. One by one, they move away from the Light. And this preference for darkness has become a free choice for self-condemnation.

It is a strange truth that preferring darkness is easier than we might think. We do not always recognise our habitual ways of relating as darkness, so first we have to see it for what it really is. Only with the arrival of the Light does the racist, sexist, classist and separatist character of our thinking become clear. It is easier to create a cover story for our bad behaviour than to engage in painful self-examination. Other people seem eager to buy into our cover story and join us in our self-deceit. They are happy to not look at what we will not look, at as long as we agree to return the favour. The light is not welcome. It calls for a decision to change. Perhaps this is why some prefer the darkness. In this fourth week of Lent, let's pray that this is not us!

TIMES OF MASSES AND MASS INTENTIONS



FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT – YEAR B

Saturday	10 th	6.00pm	Mass	Vocations to the Priesthood
Sunday	11 th	8.30am	Mass	Parish Intentions
		10.30am	Mass	Peter & John Considine, RIP
Monday	12 th	No Mass		
Tuesday	13 th	11.00am	Exposition	
		12.10pm	Mass	Retired Clergy
Wednesday	14 th	11.00am	Exposition	
		12.10pm	Mass	Those Suffering Enforced Exile
Thursday	15 th	11.00am	Exposition	
		12.10pm	Communion Service	
		7.30pm	Penitential Service	
Friday	16 th	11.00am	Stations of the Cross	
		11.30am	Exposition	
		12.10pm	Mass	Sydney Macguire, RIP

ST PATRICK, Bishop, Feast

Saturday	17 th	10.00am	Mass	All our Irish Parishioners
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FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT – YEAR B

Saturday	17 th	6.00pm	Mass	Parish Intentions
Sunday	18 th	8.30am	Mass	White Helmet Rescuers in Syria
		10.30am	Mass	Doreen Read, RIP

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**Tuesday to Thursday During Lent:** 11.00am Exposition; **Thursday:** After Mass Novena to Mother of Perpetual Help, 10.15 am Mother's Prayers; **Saturday:** 9.30am Rosary, 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month 9.30am Pro-Life Rosary. **Confessions:** every Saturday at 10.45am or prior appointment.

# DID YOU KNOW...?

 **NEWSLETTER DEADLINE – NEW DEADLINE: Midday on Tuesdays**, please email your newsletter item(s) to the parish office [stjb@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:stjb@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)



**PLEASE PRAY FOR THE REPOSE OF THE SOUL OF: Maurice Timms, RIP** whose Requiem Mass will be celebrated at St Joseph and St Margaret Clitherow Church on **Tuesday 3 April 2018** at 10.00am, followed by a burial at 11.45am at All Saints Church, Stubbs Hill, Binfield, RG42 5NS. Please pray for his beloved wife Jo and all his family.

*May his soul and the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.*

**BISHOP PHILIP'S VISIT TO OUR PARISH** – Bishop Philip has written a glowing report about his visit to our parish last weekend, **“There is a real sense of energy and “can do” about the parish.”** in this week's Portsmouth E-News which can be viewed on: [www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/enews/issue174.php](http://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/enews/issue174.php). Take a look and take a bow. Thank you for your warm welcome to Bishop Philip and Fr Philip.



**LENT : Live Lent and let your light shine! “Give” rather than “Give Up”. Give the gift of your time by joining one of the below ministries which are so important for the life of our church and parishioners. We need YOU.**

**WELCOMING MINISTRY** – Warm and friendly greeting to our parishioners and visitors before the weekend Mass that you attend. A chance to meet other parishioners and help those in need with their visit to Mass.

**OFFERING COLLECTIONS** – During the Mass and 2<sup>nd</sup> offerings at the end of Mass, teams are needed for each of the weekend Masses.

**CONFIRMATION CATECHIST, MARRIAGE PREPARATION MINISTRIES** – Support and guiding those going forward to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation and engaged couples preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage.

**SOUP & ROLL FRIDAYS – YOUR HELP IS URGENTLY REQUIRED** – Can you spare a couple of hours on a Friday mid-morning, either setting up/ cooking/serving or clearing away. Great fun and camaraderie with our parishioners and the school children who join us after Mass. No experience needed other than a Level 2 Food Hygiene Certificate an easy online course, the cost reimbursed by the parish. Please contact the parish office for further details or to volunteer.

**FLOWER ARRANGING TEAMS** - We would love to welcome anyone who would like to join the team! No prior experience is necessary, just a desire to make our church look beautiful. If you think you would like to help with arranging flowers in church.

**Please contact the Parish Office with your details and which ministry you would like to join.**

**“SERVE THE LORD WITH GLADNESS”**

## RESERVATIONS

**BOOKING OF PARISH HALL AND PARISH ROOMS** – If you wish to use the church hall or parish rooms bookings must be made with the Parish Office at least 6-8 weeks before requested date. Please note the regular events below before booking.

**BEWARE: LIGHTING CANDLES** – Adults must accompany all children at the candle trays when lighting candles. Please ensure your children do not play around the candle trays, in the sand or with the lighted candles. Care must be taken reaching across lighted candles wearing loose clothing, etc. It is important to remember that they can be the cause of major fires and serious injury.



**LITURGICAL CALENDAR - MARCH** – 17<sup>th</sup> St Patrick; 19<sup>th</sup> St Joseph; 25<sup>th</sup> Palm Sunday; 29<sup>th</sup> Maundy Thursday; 30<sup>th</sup> Good Friday; 31<sup>st</sup> Holy Saturday.



**LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR – CORPUS CHRISTI, WOKINGHAM** - Please join us at Corpus Christi, Wokingham, RG40 2HE for the **Life in the Spirit Seminars, every Wednesday from 7 February to 21 March 2018, 8.00pm to 9.30pm**

**GOSPEL CHALLENGE** – Every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays 7.45pm to 9.30pm in the Church Hall. All are welcome.

**TODDLER GROUP** – Every Tuesday 9.30am to 11.30am in the hall during term time.

**KEEP FIT** – Every Tuesday 2.00pm – 3.00pm in the hall.

**DIVINE MERCY CHAPLET** – Sunday 8 April 2018 2.30pm at St Joseph's

**PRAYER GROUPS** – Evening Group: 1<sup>st</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays 7.45pm – 9.30pm Hall. Day Group: 1<sup>st</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays 10.30am – 11.30am Hall.

**CHOIR PRACTICE** – Every Thursday, 7.30pm-8.30pm, in the Church, all welcome.

**SOUP & ROLL** – Every Friday after Mass during term time in the hall.

**FRANCISCAN FRATERNITY** - Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday 2pm in the Hall.

**MASS OFFERINGS: £2111.33 THANK YOU FOR YOUR KINDNESS AND GENEROSITY.**

Please make cheques payable to (full name) “PRCDTR Bracknell St Joseph”. **Gift Aid envelopes and banker's/standing order forms available in the porch.**

**CAFOD FAMILY FAST DAY** – Thank you for generously donating £1,291.00 towards this very important cause.

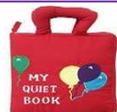
**SECOND OFFERINGS - MARCH: 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> Clergy Assistance Fund; 30<sup>th</sup> (Good Friday) For the Holy Places**



**We pray for those in our parish community who are sick, housebound or in hospital and for those who care for them.**

Brenda Theobald, Olga Maguire, Betty Winn, Peter Dossett, Johanna Lenz, Ena Stanton, Inge Walker, Jadwiga Butcher, Lilijan Rodenburg, Robert Mulcahy, Eddie Moore, Peggy Pendergast, Ann Newton, Bridie Maughan, Emma Flavelle, Angelina Ediale, Josephine Timms, Una Gilligan, Freda Edgington, Anne Hardy, Patricia Holmwood, Fr Vincent Convery, Evie & Ruby Shallom, Blanche Shap, Mike Garnham, Ethna Sweeney, Mary Carpenter, Mary King, Anna Tighe, Mary Phelan, Mary Sol Faulkner, Tony Andrews, Adrian Sweeney, Derek Alexander, Brenda Lynch, Margaret Clark, Shaun Howard, Denise Rinzivillo, Sally Tarode, Babs White, Tim Roberts, Tess Johnson, Dorcas Innes-Grant.

# LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING.....



**Pew Packs** - We hope you and your children enjoy the pew packs we so lovingly provide. We need your help to return pew packs complete with **ALL** their items to the box in the porch so that another family can use them after you. Disappointingly, many items have disappeared and cannot easily be replaced, please help us to keep providing these wonderful packs for our children at Mass. Thank you.

**DEATH CAFÉ** – Comes to Crowthorne at Beatons Tearooms & Bookshop on **Wednesday 14 March 2018, at 7.00pm.** A group of people relaxing and discussing awareness of death, dying and making the most of life. For more details please see the poster on the porch noticeboard.



**ENGAGED COUPLE'S BREAKFAST** - Are you getting married 2018 - either a church in our diocese or a church elsewhere or abroad? If you are: **CONGRATULATIONS!** Bishop Philip invites all engaged couples to an Engaged Couples Breakfast on **Saturday 17 March 2018 at 9.15 am (prompt) to 11.45am** in the Cathedral Centre, Catholic Cathedral, Bishop Crispian Way, PO1 3HG. After breakfast, a chance to meet Bishop Philip. Please contact the Parish Office if you wish to attend this very special event.



**NEW THEATRE ROYAL, PORTSMOUTH – Saturday 5 May 2018, 9.30am to 5.00pm,** Diocesan Day in Preparation for Eucharistic Congress! Workshops with Keynote speakers. This will be a **day for all to come and Adore!** Free event, booking essential via congress@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk or 07780 221686



**YOUTH PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES** – Bishop Philip invites our young people to join him and 20 students and FOCUS missionaries from the USA on a pilgrimage retreat to Lourdes from **12 to 16 July 2018.** Costs £550; full-board and flights from Southampton. For more information please contact Father P J Smith at [youth@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:youth@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)



## BEGINNING OF THE SEASON OF LENT, HOLY WEEK AND EASTER TRIDUUM

**REFRAME - CATHOLIC VOICES.** Lenten Talks every **Wednesday** during Lent in the hall **7pm-8pm.**

**Talk 4: 'How the Church works for a fairer world'** – Georgia Clarke, a young Catholic studying Theology at Oxford University.



**JOURNEY INTO A CONTEMPLATIVE HEART – “FALLING INTO SILENCE” A MASTER CLASS BY DR JAMES FINLEY** A series of 6 beautiful contemplative reflections by Dr James Finley, every **Thursday** in the hall, **7.30pm to 8.30pm.** Dr James Finley is a brilliant master of the contemplative life, a wonderful opportunity to 'rest and reflect in God and the Holy Spirit', preparing for the holy season of Easter. **No session on Thursday 15 March 2018.**

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS** – Every Friday in Lent (not Good Friday) at **11.00am**, with Fr Danny and inspiration from Pax Christi, William Vanstone, Taize and Bishop Philip. Exposition **11.30am, Mass 12.10pm.**



**PENITENTIAL SERVICES** – For the South Berkshire Pastoral Area are:

**Wednesday 14 March 2018 at 7.30pm** : The Immaculate Conception, Sandhurst, GU47 9BS

**Thursday 15 March 2018 at 7.30pm** : St Joseph & St Margaret Clitherow Church, Bracknell

**Wednesday 21 March 2018 at 7.30pm** : Corpus Christi, Wokingham RG40 2HE

**Thursday 22 March 2018 at 7.30pm** : St Francis of Assisi, Ascot SL5 9HG



**PALM SUNDAY of the PASSION OF THE LORD** – Masses:

**Saturday 24 March 2018** - Vigil 6.00pm

**Sunday 25 March 2018** – 8.30am and 10.30am

**Please note: Clocks go forward 1 hour this weekend**



**CHRISM MASS, CATHEDRAL PORTSMOUTH** – **Tuesday 27 March 2018** at 11.00am at the Cathedral. We have a “mobility impaired” accessible coach (better than the bus) for able-bodied and mobility impaired parishioners who wish to attend this most beautiful Mass. Please be at the church by **7.45am** as the coach will depart from St Joseph's Church at **8.00am**, returning approx **4.00pm**, please contact the parish office to be included on the coach list. **The coach is expensive this year, we would really appreciate a donation towards the cost of the coach.** Please note, the Parish Office will be closed on **27 March 2018**, no Exposition or 12.10pm Mass that day.

**MAUNDY THURSDAY : THE EASTER TRIDUUM** – Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper – **Thursday 29 March 2018 at 7.30pm.** All Ministers of the Eucharist and Ministers of the Word are to be formerly Commissioned during this Mass and will receive their Faculty, please contact the parish office to confirm your attendance at this Mass so we can prepare your Faculty in advance.



**GOOD FRIDAY:** Celebration of the Lord's Passion – **Friday 30 March 2018, 3.00pm.** Day of fasting and abstinence.



**HOLY SATURDAY** : This beautiful Easter Vigil Service is on **Saturday 31 March 2018 at 7.30pm**



**EASTER SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD**  
**Sunday 1 April 2018**

Mass at 8.30am and 10.30am