

DEANERY OF ST EDMUND CAMPION ENGLISH MARTYRS—

VALE OF THE WHITE HORSE PASTORAL AREA

www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

www.hendredcatholicparish.org.uk

East Hendred Catholic Parish

Fifth Week of Lent

3rd – 9th April 2022



Passiontide

Reflection – Passiontide

THOUGH Passiontide has apparently disappeared from our Calendar, much of it remains in the liturgy. Crosses and statues are removed or veiled from the Fifth Sunday of Lent, and the texts of the Office, and the Preface and Propers at Mass are redolent of the Passion. The name for Palm Sunday is now 'Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord'. In short, Passiontide is still there to be observed, and we do well to make good use not only of Holy Week but of the fortnight of Passiontide. My rule of thumb has always been to try to make the first week a week for 'the head', a time for thinking about doctrine and theology, and the second week a week for 'the heart', a time for living through the emotions of the story.

Doctrine and theology present us with the chance to think about such ideas as atonement, beauty, evil, goodness, humility, love, obedience, sacrifice, satisfaction, service, sonship, suffering, ugliness. These are all matters on which the Christian Faith – and Catholic teaching in particular – has much distinctive to teach. They are also matters about which, from our vantage point, the world at large has no better explanations to offer. The secular view – that these are partly accidents of evolution and partly stratagems devised by natural selection and the survival of the fittest – barely skims the surface of our understanding. That is not to say that Faith provides all the answers. One of the meanings of 'mystery' is 'sacrament' or 'sign': we should not assume that anything which is not understandable makes no sense. The Christian sacraments are not understandable but they are pregnant with meaning. So it is with such questions as 'why did Christ die for our sins?'; 'did he have to die for our sins?'; 'in what way could/did the death of Christ bring about at-one-ment, make us right with God?'. We can go on and ask about the problem of evil and suffering and, moreover, the problem of good. These problems cannot be solved or explained but that does not render everything meaningless. Can beauty, goodness, or love ever be thought meaningless?

Passiontide gives us a week to think about such matters – as they press upon us – and a week to relive the story.

Fr Andrew

CONTACT DETAILS

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Fifth Week of Lent

3rd – 10th April 2022

All masses live-streamed www.churchservices.tv/easthended

Church open from 9am to late afternoon each day

Sunday 3rd April	FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT (Year B) [Purple] 9.30am Parish Mass 11.15am Holy Mass (St Patrick's, East Ilsley) 5pm Music for Passiontide 6pm Holy Mass
Monday 4th April	<i>Of the Fifth Week of Lent</i> [Purple] 9.15am Holy Mass FM Andrew Shanahan 1999
Tuesday 5th April	<i>Of the Fifth Week of Lent</i> [Purple] No Mass
Wednesday 6th April	<i>Of the Fifth Week of Lent</i> [Purple] 9am Morning Prayer 9.15am Holy Mass
Thursday 7th April	<i>Of the Fifth Week of Lent</i> [Purple] 9.15am School Mass School's Intentions 5.30pm Adoration 6pm Holy Mass
Friday 8th April	<i>Of the Fifth Week of Lent</i> [Purple] 8.30am Holy Mass (Hendred House) FM Canon Raab 1945 3pm-4pm Adoration (Hendred House) 5pm Ecumenical Evensong (St Augustine's)
Saturday 9th April	<i>Of the Fifth Week of Lent</i> No Mass
Sunday 10th April	PALM SUNDAY (Year C) [Red] 9.30am Ceremonies & Parish Mass beginning (weather permitting) at Champs Chapel 11.15am Holy Mass (St Patrick's, East Ilsley) 6pm Holy Mass
Confessions:	<i>after Mass on Weekdays or by arrangement</i>

HOLY WEEK & EASTER

10th - 17th April 2021

All masses live-streamed www.churchservices.tv/easthended

Church open from 9am each day

Sunday 10th April	PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD (Year C) [Red] 9.30am Ceremonies & Parish Mass <i>beginning (weather permitting) at Champs Chapel</i> 11.15am Holy Mass (St Patrick's, East Ilsley) 6pm Holy Mass
Monday 11th April	<i>Monday in Holy Week</i> [Purple] 9.15am Holy Mass
Tuesday 12th April	<i>Tuesday in Holy Week</i> [White] 11am Chrism Mass (Portsmouth Cathedral) https://www.churchservices.tv/portsmouthcathedral/embed#tab-player
Wednesday 13th April	<i>Wednesday in Holy Week</i> [Purple] 9am Morning Prayer 9.15am Holy Mass
Thursday 14th April	<i>Thursday in Holy Week</i> [Purple] 9am Morning Prayer
EASTER TRIDUUM	
MAUNDY THURSDAY <i>14th April</i>	[White] 8pm Mass of the Lord's Supper
GOOD FRIDAY 15th April	<i>Day of Fasting and Abstinence</i> 9am Morning Prayer 12 noon Stations of the Cross 3pm Celebration of the Passion of the Lord
HOLY SATURDAY 16th April	9am Morning Prayer
EASTER EVE	8pm Easter Vigil in the Holy Night
EASTER SUNDAY 17th April	[Gold] 9.30am Solemn Mass 11.15am Holy Mass (St Patrick's, East Ilsley) Evening No Mass
Confessions:	Monday to Saturday: <i>after Mass or Morning Prayer</i>

FOR YOUR PRAYERS



HOLY FATHER'S APRIL PRAYER INTENTION

We pray for health care workers who serve the sick and the elderly, especially in the poorest countries; may they be adequately supported by governments and local communities.

DIOCESAN PRAYER INTENTION

Monday 4 th	Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child
Tuesday 5 th	Parish Finance Councils
Wednesday 6 th	Association for Latin Liturgy
Thursday 7 th	De la Salle Brothers in the Diocese
Friday 8 th	Handmaids of the Holy Child Jesus
Saturday 9 th	Diocesan Trustees and Finance Council

THE SICK AND THOSE IN NEED

Baby Martha, Sid Wallace, Diana France, John Castle, Petal Connell, Daniel Cuevas, John Stringer, Louise Woodhouse, Mary Wallace, Brenda Paddon, Karen Greig, Mary McNichol, Elizabeth Gunn, Des McNichol

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Week 3rd-9th April: Maurice Barret, Isobel Rivers, Ellen Champs, Florence Mary Eyston, Hilda Poyne, Lavinia Howard Biles, Isaac Castle, William Rivers, Lewis Northcote, Canon Raab, William Anns

East Hendred Catholic Parish

NOTICEBOARD

ST AMAND'S LENTEN CHARITIES

St Mary's people contributed £70 to the Cardinal Hume Centre and £50 to HCPT. Well done, Patrick, Cullen, and Niamh from St Amand's School.

CARMELITE WEEKEND RETREAT (8th-10th April)

This weekend retreat with Fr Liam Finnerty OCD will be a time to journey with the Prophet Isaiah in preparation for Holy Week. You can attend online, come daily to the Priory for the session talks or stay at the Priory for the weekend retreat. The talks will be made available for later viewing to all those who register.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

CHURCH SERVICES

On Sunday 27th March 2022, 226 people viewed, 89 machines looking only at St Mary's. 55 of these were in the UK and 34 from seven other countries. 111 probably stayed on-line long enough to take part in Mass.

SYCAMORE

The **SYCAMORE** course for adults interested in finding out more about the Faith or preparing for baptism and/or confirmation is now well underway coming to a conclusion on 12th April and next meets on Zoom at 8pm on Tuesday 5th April.

PARISH SECRETARY

Contact Ma Lluïsa Jarne on office@hendredcatholicparish.org.uk If you need to speak to her in person, she is available at one of the St Mary's Sunday masses and also on Mondays, 6pm-8pm, on 07983045824.

MISSIO BOXES

Margaret Maytham is asking those with red *Missio* boxes to hand them in for counting and re-supplying. Details at the back of the churches.

PORTSMOUTH DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES 2022

18th – 22nd July, flying from Bournemouth Airport.

lourdes@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

MUSIC FOR PASSIONTIDE

Sunday 3rd April is the beginning of what was traditionally called Passiontide, the two weeks leading up to Easter. To mark this, we are making special arrangements for this evening.

Missa, 3

P Opus le me- um, quid se- ci, aut quid me-
litas fa- ci- ti- bi? Re- spon- de mi-
hi. Quon- iam ego a- di- xi vos de ter- ra A-
gyp- ti et de do- mo ser- vi- tu- tis; quadra- gin-
ta annos in e- re- mo * Maria plu- i vo-
bis, et ob- li- ti es- tis me, di- cit Do- mi- nus.
V. Adde- si vos per de- sertum quadra- ginta annos in e-
re- mo, et go Do- mi- nus. * Maria plu- i
vo- bis, et ob- li- ti es- tis me, di- cit Do-
mi- nus. V. Glo- ri- a Pa- tris, et Fi- li- i, et Spi-
ri- tu- s Sanc- ti. * Maria plu- i vo-
bis, et ob- li- ti es- tis me, di- cit Do- mi- nus.

At 5pm there will be 'Music for Passiontide', sung beautifully by the *St Mary's Schola*, and including not only anthems and motets but hymns for congregational participation.

After a short break, the 6pm Mass will follow, with simple music sung by the *Schola*.

'What', you may ask, 'is a *Schola*?' In cathedrals and monasteries, more elaborate music, requiring musical skill, is sung by a '*Schola Cantorum*', literally a 'school of singers'. The last outing of the Schola was for the 9.30am Mass on the occasion of the Bishop's Visiting.

Admission to both the 5pm concert and the 6pm mass will be free and people may choose to attend either or both. There will be long enough between the two to leave or arrive.

ST AMAND'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

www.st-amands.oxon.sch.uk

WE HAVE the immense privilege of hosting in our parish a Catholic Primary School serving the local area.

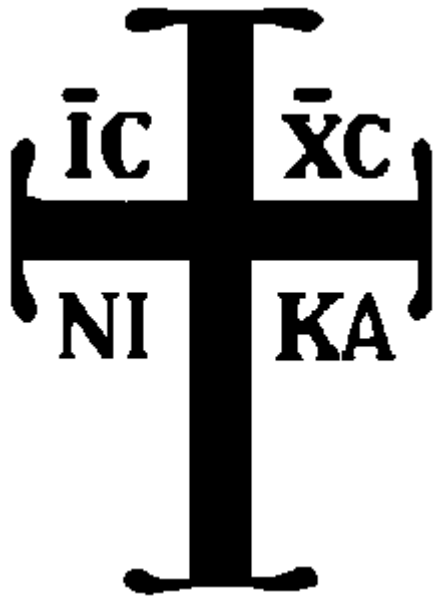
Ann-Marie Kershaw, a Foundation Governor, writes:

We are very keen to attract more Catholic families to our school. Please do encourage parents to make contact and visit the school to see what a Catholic school education looks like. We are able to take children into all Year groups and still have places for our Reception intake in September '22.

And she adds the following up-to-date news about the school.

St Amand's RC Primary School in East Hendred started Lent with a whole school Mass on Ash Wednesday in St Mary's Church, East Hendred with our chaplain Mgr Andrew Burnham. The children have chosen two Lenten projects. KS1 are raising £800 to send a child on the HCPT (Hosanna House and Children's Pilgrimage Trust) trip to Lourdes and KS2 are fundraising for the Cardinal Hume Centre for young homeless people in London. We are also praying for children in Ukraine and helping with a local village collection for refugees coming out of the Ukraine. Meanwhile our beautiful grounds are showing the first signs of spring with bright yellow daffodils everywhere and the Eco-Committee working hard to plant seeds and prepare an edible garden. We enjoyed dressing up for World Book Day and have just had a fantastic time taking part in British Science Week. Several parents came into school to tell us about their jobs and encourage enthusiasm for the many branches of Science. Like and follow us on Facebook or Twitter to get all our news! Visits to the school are always welcome and children who have transferred in year to our school have settled well and are happy and thriving.

East Hendred Catholic Parish



**Fifth Sunday in
Lent (C)
Antiphons,
Prayers and
Readings**

Lent Prose (see Mass booklet, no. 74)

Cantor (1st time) Full

Hear us, O Lord, have mer - cy up - on us:
for we have sinn'd___ a - gainst___ thee.

Entrance Antiphon

Iudica me, Deus

Give me justice, O God, and plead my cause against a nation that is faithless. From the deceitful and cunning rescue me, for you, O God, are my strength. *cf Ps 43:1-2*

Collect

By your help, we beseech you, Lord our God, may we walk eagerly in that same charity with which, out of love for the world, your Son handed himself over to death. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever

First Reading

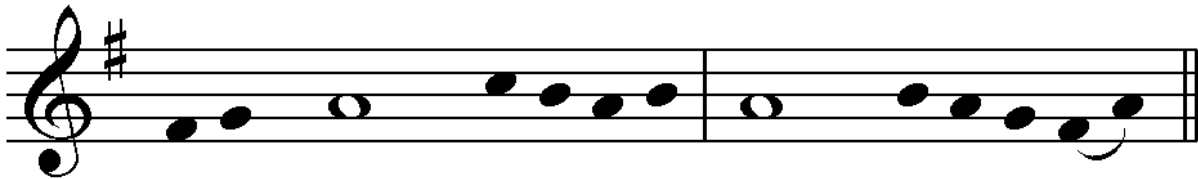
Isaiah 43:16-21 (RSV)

Thus says the Lord, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters, who brings forth chariot and horse, army and warrior; they lie

down, they cannot rise, they are extinguished, quenched like a wick: 'Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. The wild beasts will honour me, the jackals and the ostriches; for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, the people whom I formed for myself that they might declare my praise.

Psalm 126 R/ 3

Tone VII.4



R/ What great **deeds the Lord worked for us!** |
In-deed we were

glad.

When the Lord brought back the ex-iles of Zi-on,
 we thought we were drea-ming.
 Then was our mouth *filled* with laugh-ter;
 on our *tongues*, songs of joy. **R/**

Then the na-tions them-selves said,
 'What great deeds the *Lord* worked for them!'
 What great deeds the *Lord* worked for us!
 In-deed we were glad. **R/**

Bring back our ex-iles, O Lord,
 as *streams* in the south.
 Those who are sow-ing in tears
 will *sing* when they reap. **R/**

They go out, they go *out*, full of tears,
 bearing *seed* for the sow-ing; *
 they come back, they come *back* with a song,
 () *bea-ring* their sheaves. **R/**

Second Reading

Philippians 3:8-14 (RSV)

I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as refuse, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own, based on law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on

* the two syllables sow-ing are given the separate notes of the slur.

faith; that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that if possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brethren, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Gospel Acclamation



Praise to you, O Christ, King of e-ter-nal glo-ry.

R/ Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

Seek good and not evil so that you may live,
and that the Lord God of hosts may really be with you.

R/ Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

Gospel

John 8:1-11 (RSV)

Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. Early in the morning he came again to the temple; all the people came to him, and he sat down and taught them. The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst they said to him, 'Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such. What do you say about her?' This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, 'Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.' And once more he bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. But when they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the eldest, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus looked up and said to her, 'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?' She said, 'No one, Lord.' And Jesus said, 'Neither do I condemn you; go, and do not sin again.'

Apostles' Creed (see *Mass booklet, page 6*)

Prayer over the Offerings

Hear us, almighty God, and, having instilled in your servants the teachings of the Christian faith, graciously purify them by the working of this sacrifice. Through Christ our Lord.

Preface

(De spiritali pœnitentia)

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God. For you have given your children a sacred time for the renewing

and purifying of their hearts, that, freed from disordered affections, they may so deal with the things of this passing world as to hold rather to the things that eternally endure. And so, with all the Angels and Saints, we praise you, as without end we acclaim: Holy, holy, holy &c.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION *after St Alphonsus Liguori (18th cent.)*

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament. I love you above all things and I desire to receive you into my soul. Even though I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there, and unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

O come to my heart, Lord Jesus. There is room in my heart for you.

Communion Antiphon *Nemo te condemnavit, mulier?*
Has no one condemned you, woman? No one, Lord. Neither shall I condemn you. From now on, sin no more. *Jn 8:10-11*

Prayer after Communion

We pray, almighty God, that we may always be counted among the members of Christ, in whose Body and Blood we have communion. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Scripture Reading **(Lent Week 5)**

Monday	Daniel 13:1-9,15-17,19-30,33-62	John 8:12-20
Tuesday	Numbers 21:4-9	John 8:21-30
Wednesday	Daniel 3:14-20, 91-92, 95	John 8:31-42
Thursday	Genesis 17:3-9	John 8:51-59
Friday	Jeremiah 20:10-13	John 10:31-42
Saturday	Ezekiel 37:21-28	John 11:45-56

PALM SUNDAY (C)

Commemoration of the Entry into Jerusalem:

Luke 19:28-40

Mass: **Isaiah 50:4-7**

Philippians 2:6-11

Luke 22:14-23:56

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FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

4th-8th April 2022

Collect for the Fifth Sunday of Lent

By your help, we beseech you, Lord our God, may we walk eagerly in that same charity with which, out of love for the world, your Son handed himself over to death. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

Monday in the Fifth Week of Lent

4th April

Reading

John 8:1-11 (RSV)

The Woman Caught in Adultery

Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. ² Early in the morning he came again to the temple; all the people came to him, and he sat down and taught them. ³ The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst ⁴ they said to him, 'Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. ⁵ Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such. What do you say about her?' ⁶ This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. ⁷ And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, 'Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.' ⁸ And once more he bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. ⁹ But when they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the eldest, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. ¹⁰ Jesus looked up and said to her, 'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?' ¹¹ She said, 'No one, Lord.' And Jesus said, 'Neither do I condemn you; go, and do not sin again.'

Reflection

'**ONLY** two remain' at the end of this story, St Augustine remarked, 'the wretched woman and the incarnation of mercy'. It's a strange story not

least because it almost certainly doesn't belong in St John's Gospel. It is missing from several manuscripts and is sometimes found in St Luke's Gospel, after Luke 21:38, just before the Passion Narrative. It certainly feels more like a St Luke story than a St John story and, putting it in St Luke would harmonise with St Luke's theme of Jesus withdrawing to pray on the Mount of Olives which is where this story begins. The importance of the passage floating between different sites – now Luke, now John – is that, though it is not a good fit into the overall pattern of events, it is clearly a very beautiful and valuable story. If we had lost it, we would have lost a great deal. For one thing, and typical of St Luke, is Jesus' immense empathy with women. He – the Judge of All – sits alongside this poor woman non-judgmentally. He merely doodles in the dust until the woman's accusers have all sidled off. Jesus doesn't condone the woman's sin - he tells her 'go and do not sin again' – but he is offering loving acceptance of her. If we are to understand the depths of the divine compassion, we need this story. And, of course, the woman caught *in flagrante* is a symbol of Israel – God's people were for ever going off with other gods – and, more recently, of the Church, where, all too often, sin cries out for punishment. But it is not only the woman who is the Church. So are her accusers.

Tuesday in the Fifth Week of Lent

5th April

Reading

Numbers 21:4-9 (RSV)

Whoever looks at the Bronze Serpent on the Pole will live.

⁴From Mount Hor the Israelites set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the people became impatient on the way. ⁵And the people spoke against God and against Moses, 'Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this worthless food.' ⁶Then the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. ⁷And the people came to Moses, and said, 'We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us.' So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸And the LORD said to Moses, 'Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and every one who is bitten, when he sees

it, shall live.' ⁹ So Moses made a bronze serpent, and set it on a pole; and if a serpent bit any man, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.

Reflection

AT FIRST sight, today's reading from Numbers offends our religious sensibilities. For one thing, how does setting up a bronze serpent survive the prohibition of graven images? The golden calf at Horeb (Exodus 32 and Psalm 106:19) caused great offence and disaster, whereas the bronze serpent, a later episode in Israel's journey, was the way of averting disaster. And can we really go along with the idea of looking at something and being healed and restored? Well, Jesus does! In John 3:14 we hear that the bronze serpent is a type of the saving Cross. There are important differences between the golden calf and the bronze serpent: the calf was manufactured by a rebellious people, pooling their gold, and forsaking the God with whom their leader, Moses, was communing. It was an act of disobedience. The bronze serpent, possibly the standard or symbol of the tribe of Levi, to which Moses and Aaron belonged, was God's instrument, rescuing a wounded and frightened people. Just like the Cross! Both bronze serpent and Cross are symbols of obedience. In our own troubled times, into which the psalm, used in full, speaks so eloquently, we shall find peace only in the Cross. Colossians 1:20 tells us that Christ reconciles 'to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his Cross'.

Wednesday in the Fifth Week of Lent

6th April

Reading

Daniel 3 (RSV)

The Burning, Fiery Furnace

Nebuchadnezzar said to them, 'Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image which I have set up? ¹⁵ Now if you are ready when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, to fall down and worship the image which I have made, well and good; but if you do not worship, you shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace; and who is the god that will deliver you out of my hands?'

¹⁶ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed'nego answered the king, 'O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. ¹⁷ If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. ¹⁸ But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image which you have set up.'

¹⁹ Then Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury, and the expression of his face was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed'nego. He ordered the furnace heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated. ²⁰ And he ordered certain mighty men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed'nego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.....

²⁴ Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up in haste. He said to his counselors, 'Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?' They answered the king, 'True, O king.' ²⁵ He answered, 'But I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods.'...²⁸ Nebuchadnezzar said, 'Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed'nego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants, who trusted in him, and set at nought the king's command, and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God.'

Reflection

TODAY'S reading from the Book of Daniel is a tale of derring-do – that wonderful phrase from Chaucer. Our three heroes defy the King of Babylon, during the Exile in Babylon, and follow their leader, Daniel, in refusing to bow down to idols. They are cast into a 'burning, fiery furnace', heated to seven times its normal heat, and, unscathed, they are joined by a fourth in the flames – one 'like a son of the gods'. The Story of the Three Young Men is one of the Old Testament incidents which -, story-telling rather than historical record, show God's love and protection for his Holy Ones and thus prefigure Christ. We are reminded of that psalm verse (16:10) - 'thou didst not suffer thy holy one to see corruption' - which in Handel's Messiah speaks of God the Father's preservation of his Son.

There is particular relevance of the burning, fiery furnace to our present difficulties, as we have lived through what feels like a disaster movie. God cares for, and ultimately preserves, those who place their trust in him, but, in our present circumstances, many face illness and death. In

other parts of the world, many also face grave deprivation, disease, and starvation. The New Testament scholar, Tom Wright, in *Time* magazine, reminded us that Christianity has nothing to say to help us understand plague and pestilence. All we can do, as God's people, as history teaches us, is join in lamentation. The Holy Father said something similar in *Urbi et Orbi* in St Peter's Square last year, when he stood alone, like Moses or Elijah, and argued with God.

Thursday in the Fifth Week of Lent

7th April

Reading

John 8:51-59 (RSV)

Abraham rejoiced that he would see Jesus' Day

Jesus said to the Jews: ⁵¹ 'Truly, truly, I say to you, if any one keeps my word, he will never see death.' ⁵² The Jews said to him, 'Now we know that you have a demon. Abraham died, as did the prophets; and you say, 'If any one keeps my word, he will never taste death.' ⁵³ Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? And the prophets died! Who do you claim to be?' ⁵⁴ Jesus answered, 'If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing; it is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you say that he is your God. ⁵⁵ But you have not known him; I know him. If I said, I do not know him, I should be a liar like you; but I do know him and I keep his word. ⁵⁶ Your father Abraham rejoiced that he was to see my day; he saw it and was glad.' ⁵⁷ The Jews then said to him, 'You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?' ⁵⁸ Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.' ⁵⁹ So they took up stones to throw at him; but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple.

Reflection

The bitterness of the conflict between Jesus and those whom St John refers to as 'the Jews' is best reframed as a conflict between Jesus and first century Jewish leaders. The claims of this rabbi, who is being seen by many to be 'the Messiah', God's Anointed One, don't match up to what the religious authorities expect or recognise. More than that, this new-fangled rabbi is using language about himself which can be explained only by himself being God. He talks of himself as being present at the time of Abraham and existing before Abraham – 'before Abraham was I am'. The

conflict, as we know, would lead to Jesus being handed over to the Roman authorities, who crucified him as a political troublemaker. Some scholars think that what the conflict describes is more than the disagreement that happened between Jesus and a hostile audience. They think that what is being described is a bitter row in first century Judaism between the community which accepted Jesus and became known in due course (at Antioch) as 'Christians' and those who remained traditional Jews, even after the sack of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple in AD70.

Friday in the Fifth Week of Lent

8th April

Reading

Jeremiah 20:10-13 (RSV)

The Lord is at my side, a mighty hero

For I hear many whispering.

Terror is on every side!

"Denounce him! Let us denounce him!"

say all my familiar friends,
watching for my fall.

"Perhaps he will be deceived,

then we can overcome him,
and take our revenge on him."

¹¹But the LORD is with me as a dread warrior;

therefore my persecutors will stumble,
they will not overcome me.

They will be greatly shamed,

for they will not succeed.

Their eternal dishonour

will never be forgotten.

¹²O LORD of hosts, who try the righteous,

who see the heart and the mind,

let me see your vengeance upon them,

for to you have I committed my cause.

¹³Sing to the LORD;

praise the LORD!

For he has delivered the life of the needy
from the hand of evildoers.

Reflection

The prophecy of Jeremiah comes immediately before the downfall of Jerusalem in 597BC and his constant warnings about imminent destruction at the hands of the Babylonians fall on deaf ears. People want to hear a prophet but only one who reassures them that all will be well. In today's passage, Jeremiah is alone and at the end of his tether but nonetheless places his trust in God. We can imagine justifiably some such passage – perhaps one learnt by memory – being said by Jesus during his Passion. He would not have said 'let me see your vengeance upon them', but he would have said 'for to you have I committed my cause.' In this passage, as we read it, we are not only looking at the Way of the Cross, which we shall follow next week, but entrusting our lives to God.

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Reflection – *Spiritual Warfare*



St Sophia's Cathedral. Kyiv

THE BISHOP'S Pastoral Letter this Lent has asked us to take part in spiritual warfare, combatting the evil that is besetting Europe:

¹² For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. *Ephesians 6:12*

The weapons in our armoury are prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, and here are some ways in which we can do these things.

I Prayer

Adoration and Mass

We have introduced periods of Adoration before Sunday evening Mass and certain midweek Mass.

Confession

Lent is the time to prepare for Easter. Confessions take place at 8.45am on Sundays and after Mass any weekday or on demand.

Rosary

We are encouraged to make good use of the Rosary, especially during Lent the Sorrowful Mysteries. There will usually be a public decade on each of the Sorrowful Mysteries after Mass on Mondays to Fridays but the Rosary is mainly a private devotion.

The Prayer to St Michael the Archangel

Though its public use was discontinued after Vatican II, Pope St John Paul II, in his battle against communism, recommended its use and Bishop Philip is now making a similar recommendation.

The prayer draws heavily on imagery from the Apocalypse which some find particularly helpful in a time of war.

Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil; May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; And do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan and all evil spirits who wander through the world for the ruin of souls. Amen.

Psalm 31

Rabbi Yaakov Bleich, the Chief Rabbi for Ukraine, has asked Jews and Christians around the world to pray Psalm 31 in solidarity with those in Ukraine who are under attack. Apparently millions of people are saying this psalm daily. Verses 2-6 are a convenient abbreviation, printed here. The full psalm is given at the end of the Bulletin (see pages 23-24 below).

1 A Psalm of David

- 2 In you, LORD, I take refuge;
let me never be put to shame.
In your righteousness deliver me;
- 3 incline your ear to me;
make haste to rescue me!
Be my rock of refuge,
a stronghold to save me.
- 4 For you are my rock and my fortress;
for your name's sake lead me and guide me.
- 5 Free me from the net they have set for me,
for you are my refuge.
- 6 Into your hands I commend my spirit;
you will redeem me, LORD, God of truth.

II Fasting and Abstinence

The formal fasts are Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, when healthy adults under 60 years old are asked to make do with one main meal and a couple of snacks. The elderly and those with certain medical conditions are under no such obligation but all of us are asked to take whatever part we can in the spirit of fasting.

On Fridays throughout the year, except solemnities, and whatever our age, we are asked to do without meat, a small contribution to the care of the planet. Fasting and abstinence, like physical exercise, are ways of training the body but, as with any discipline, also impact on our spiritual life and can be 'offered up'.

III Almsgiving

Caritas-Spes had been working in Eastern Ukraine with the displaced families from the ongoing conflict in the disputed territories.

If you would like to support Caritas work in the emergency in Ukraine, please donate by visiting their website <https://www.caritas.org/where-caritas-work/europe/ukraine-spes/>

Second Collection Those in our parishes who would like to contribute can use the CAFOD Lent Appeal envelopes: if you intend your donations specifically to benefit those in need in Ukraine, **please use envelopes marked 'Ukraine'**. Envelopes not so marked contain donations for the CAFOD's African cause.

APPENDIX *Lament for Ukraine in Time of War*

Psalm 31 (*Revised Grail*)

1 A Psalm of David

- 2 In you, LORD, I take refuge;
let me never be put to shame.
In your righteousness deliver me;
- 3 incline your ear to me;
make haste to rescue me!
Be my rock of refuge,
a stronghold to save me.
- 4 For you are my rock and my fortress;
for your name's sake lead me and guide me.
- 5 Free me from the net they have set for me,
for you are my refuge.
- 6 Into your hands I commend my spirit;
you will redeem me, LORD, God of truth.
- 7 You hate those who serve worthless idols,
but I trust in the LORD.
- 8 I will rejoice and be glad in your mercy,
once you have seen my misery,
[and] got to know the distress of my soul.
- 9 You will not abandon me into enemy hands,
but will set my feet in a free and open space.

II

- 10 Be gracious to me, LORD, for I am in distress;
affliction is wearing down my eyes,
my throat and my insides.
- 11 My life is worn out by sorrow,
and my years by sighing.
My strength fails in my affliction;
my bones are wearing down.
- 12 To all my foes I am a thing of scorn,
and especially to my neighbours
a horror to my friends.
When they see me in public,
they quickly shy away.
- 13 I am forgotten, out of mind like the dead;
I am like a worn-out tool.

- 14 I hear the whispers of the crowd;
terrors are all around me.
They conspire together against me;
they plot to take my life.
- 15 But I trust in you, LORD;
I say, 'You are my God.'
- 16 My destiny is in your hands;
rescue me from my enemies,
from the hands of my pursuers.
- 17 Let your face shine on your servant;
save me in your mercy.
- 18 Do not let me be put to shame,
for I have called to you, LORD.
Put the wicked to shame;
reduce them to silence in Sheol.
- 19 Strike dumb their lying lips,
which speak arrogantly against the righteous
in contempt and scorn.

III

- 20 How great is your goodness, Lord,
stored up for those who fear you.
You display it for those who trust you,
in the sight of the children of Adam.
- 21 You hide them in the shelter of your presence,
safe from scheming enemies.
You conceal them in your tent,
away from the strife of tongues.
- 22 Blessed be the LORD,
marvellously he showed to me
his mercy in a fortified city.
- 23 Though I had said in my alarm,
'I am cut off from your eyes.'
Yet you heard my voice, my cry for mercy,
when I pleaded with you for help.
- 24 Love the LORD, all you who are faithful to him.
The LORD protects the loyal,
but repays the arrogant in full.
- 25 Be strong and take heart,
all who hope in the LORD.