

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

First Week of Lent

21st – 28th February 2021



The Temptations of Christ

Reflection – *Lent Begins*

IN THIS Year of Mark, the story of Jesus' temptations in the desert is told very briefly, without much detail of what the temptations are. For that detail we need to look at Matthew and Luke. We know from Mark that Jesus is 'driven out' by the Spirit – 'compelled to go' rather than 'given a lift'! – and that the forty days mentioned remind us of the fast of Moses (Deut 9:18) and the fast of Elijah near Mount Horeb ((1 Kings 19:8). We shall be meeting these two Old Testament figures next Sunday – between them representing the Law and the Prophets, respectively – when the Gospel is from Mark 9, the second half of the Gospel. But this Sunday we are still at the beginning, the first chapter of the Gospel and Jesus' preparation for his three years of ministry.

We tend to think of 'temptation' in the sense of giving in to desire, large or small, and certainly Jesus was tempted to misuse his power. He was tempted to attend to his own needs, to attract admiration, or to make compromises with worldliness. Had he given in to any of these temptations, we should probably have heard no more from him. There have always been charlatans and magicians whose reputation fades fast. We hear from Matthew and Luke that the tempter was the devil. St Mark refers to him as 'Satan', introducing the idea that Jesus is tempted not just by evil personified – the devil – but also by one whom in Hebrew history has been allocated the task by God of being the adversary of good people. In the Book of Job Satan is given permission by God to test Job with extreme hardship.

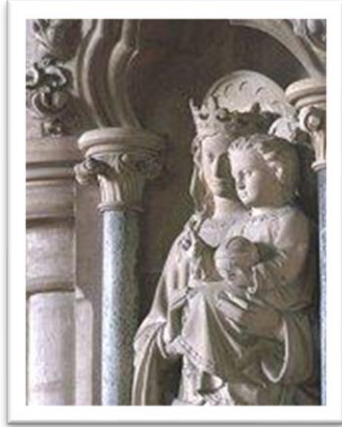
Lent for us should involve some hardship – abstinence on Fridays, fasting on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, supporting the CAFOD Family Fast Day, giving up something we are in danger of depending on too much. These mortifications test our mettle. Through Baptism we are reborn, much as, through Noah and his companions, fallen humanity was given a second chance by God. But 'Lent' itself signifies the lengthening of light we experience each day at this time of year and, with the light, grows the promise of Easter. It feels that humanity itself – as the plague comes and goes – has undergone a time of rigorous testing, many perishing in the Flood, and that we are called once more to place our faith and trust in the promises of God and at length come 'out of darkness into his marvellous light' (1 Peter 2:9)

Fr Andrew

21st – 28th February 2021

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

Sunday 21st February	FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT (<i>Year B</i>) 9.30am Mass Genesis 9:8-15 1 Peter 3:18-22	<i>[Purple]</i> <i>Pro populo</i> Mark 1:12-15
Monday 22nd February	The Chair of St Peter, Apostle 9.15am Mass 1 Peter 5:1-4	<i>[White]</i> Matthew 16:13-19
Tuesday 23rd February	<i>Of the First Week of Lent</i> 9.15am Mass Isaiah 55:10-11	<i>[Purple]</i> <i>RIP Michael Fogarty</i> Matthew 6:7-15
Wednesday 24th February	<i>Of the First Week of Lent</i> 9.15am Mass Jonah 3:1-10	<i>[Purple]</i> Luke 11:29-32
Thursday 25th February	<i>Of the First Week of Lent</i> 10am School Mass Esther 4:17	<i>[Purple]</i> Matthew 7:7-12
Friday 26th February	<i>Of the First Week of Lent</i> 9.15am Mass Ezekiel 18:21-28	<i>[Purple]</i> <i>Holy Souls</i> Matthew 5:20-26
Saturday 27th February	<i>Of the First Week of Lent</i> <i>No Mass</i> Deuteronomy 26:16-19	<i>[Purple]</i> Matthew 5:43-48
Sunday 28th February	SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT (<i>Year B</i>) 9.30am Mass Genesis 22:1-2, 9-13, 15-18 Romans 8:31-34	<i>[Purple]</i> <i>Pro populo</i> Mark 9:2-10



EAST HENDRED CATHOLIC PARISH

Lent 2021

Sundays in Lent

9am Morning Prayer for Children

(CSTV)

9.30am Parish Mass

(CSTV)

<https://www.churchservices.tv/easthendred>

6pm Vespers

(Facebook)

<https://m.facebook.com/east.hendred.catholic.parish/>

Mondays in Lent

9.15am Holy Mass (CSTV)

*followed by Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary
I: The Agony in the Garden*

6pm Vespers

(Facebook)

7.30pm Lenten Retreat: 'Finding Hope in
Scripture' with Sr Hyacinthe OP

[The God Who Speaks](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk)

www.godwhospeaks.uk > [finding-hope-in-scripture](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/finding-hope-in-scripture)

Tuesdays in Lent

9.15am Holy Mass (CSTV)

*followed by Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary
II: The Scourging at the Pillar*

6pm Vespers

(Facebook)

7.30pm 'The God Who Speaks' (Zoom)

(2nd March 'Gathered Together in Christ')

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4315430307?pwd=cDloZzNnRzM4SUtUM2RsbFZmZ0FRdz09;>

Wednesdays in Lent (from 24th February)

- 9.15am** **Holy Mass** (CSTV)
*followed by Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary
III: The Crowning with Thorns*
- 1.30pm Bible Stories for School (Teams)
link provided to parents by St Amand's School
- 6pm Vespers (Facebook)

Thursdays in Lent (from 25th February)

- 9am Morning Prayer &
Exposition until:
- 9.55am Benediction (CSTV)
- 10am** **School Mass** (CSTV)
*followed by Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary
IV: The Carrying of the Cross*
- 6pm Vespers (Facebook)
- 7.30pm 'Verso L'Alto' with Bishop Philip

<https://www.portsmouthcatholiccathedral.org.uk/live-mass.php>

Fridays in Lent (from 26th February)

- CAFOD Family Fast Day (26th February):*
<https://cafod.org.uk/Fundraise/Family-Fast-Day>
- 9am Morning Prayer (CSTV)
- 9.15am** **Holy Mass** (CSTV)
followed by Rosary V: The Crucifixion
- 5pm Ecumenical Evensong at Holy
Trinity Parish Church, Ardington
(open to the public)

(Facebook: Benefice of Wantage Downs)

<https://m.facebook.com/pages/category/Church/Benefice-of-Wantage-Downs-109686177340271/>

Confessions: *after Mass (once church re-opens for public worship) or
by arrangement*

East Hendred Catholic Parish

NOTICEBOARD

OPENING FOR PRIVATE PRAYER

The Standing Committee meets on Wednesday (24th February) to discuss emerging from Lockdown. The first stage will be opening St Mary's for private prayer. We need another volunteer, to shut Church on Mondays. The 'fogging' takes less than 15 minutes – and full training is provided. If you are able to do that, contact harrisonchrisd@gmail.com

ST MARY'S ON LIVE-STREAM

Last Sunday (14th February) 252 people looked in from 95 addresses, with 123 staying long enough to take part in the Mass. Homes with more than one viewer and those browsing explain the largest figure. 68 were from the UK, 13 from Ireland, 6 from the USA, and 8 from elsewhere. Numbers on Ash Wednesday (17th February) were similar: 251 from 104 addresses, 110 for Mass, 81 from the UK, 10 from Ireland, and 12 from elsewhere.

THE GOD WHO SPEAKS

Two sessions in Lent in support of this year's theme: Monday's Lent Retreat (see below) and the Tuesday Bible Study (details on the Lent programme).

VERSO L'ALTO-REACH THE HEIGHTS! An Hour of Prayer and Praise

Bishop Philip invites you to join him and the Cathedral clergy online every Thursday 7.30 to 8.30 pm during lockdown to pray for safety, for the sick and for key workers, for the Diocese and for a speedy end to the pandemic. <https://www.portsmouthcatholiccathedral.org.uk/live-mass.php>

LENTEN RETREAT: 'FINDING HOPE IN SCRIPTURE'

Sr Hyacinthe Defos du Rau, OP, Formation for Mission Team Leader
Department for Evangelisation, Tel: 0150681874, writes:

Every Monday evening during Lent, for six weeks, at 7.30pm we will discover aspects of the virtue of hope from six different Bible passages, so that we may grow in hope in these difficult times, and find ways to share our hope with others. Our reflection will be followed by a time of live-streamed adoration and Compline with the Dominican Sisters of St Joseph. Register here to participate:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEtc-2grjkiGtU8vPFJea2ktvR5U0MZ1mrL>

PARISH ADMINISTRATORS ON FURLOUGH

During February Maria Brown and Ma Lluisa Jarne are on furlough once more, so that the parish can benefit from government help. The parish e-mail hendred@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk is being monitored by Fr Andrew so no one in the parish should be affected by the furlough.

CAFOD Lent Appeal. Abdella lives in an extremely remote and mountainous part of Ethiopia. It takes him ten hours a day to collect water. He says his life is being wasted as he has no time for anything else. Give today to reach vulnerable communities around the world with water and to provide other vital support. Donate online at cafod.org.uk/lent or phone 0303 303 3030 or by using a CAFOD envelope. You can also give via text. Text LENT 5 to 70460 to donate £5 or Text LENT 10 to 70460 to donate £10* or LENT 20 to 70460 to donate £20 .Many thanks for your support.

*Texts cost £10 plus one standard rate message you'll be opting in to hear more about CAFOD's work and fundraising via telephone and SMS. If you'd like to give £10 but do not wish to receive marketing communications, text LENTNOINFO to 70460.

Here is the link to a short film about Abdella that could be shown at livestream masses and on face book. Abdella film 2minutes 32 seconds [Lent Appeal 2021: Abdella's walk for water | CAFOD on Vimeo](#)

LOCAL CHARITY

To help with supplying the Didcot Foodbank, contact Veronica Paget: veronicapaget@hotmail.com or leave suitable food outside her front door.

Jackymattam@btinternet.com helps with the poor locally and items for her may be left outside the door of Cozens Farm inside plastic bags. She is looking for a bunk bed in the Grove/Wantage area. Contact her directly if you can help.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

HOLY FATHER'S FEBRUARY PRAYER INTENTION

We pray for women who are victims of violence, that they may be protected by society and have their suffering considered and heeded.

THE SICK AND THOSE IN NEED

Kristina, Baby Martha, John Castle, Petal Connell, Daniel Cuevas, John Stringer, Louise Woodhouse, Sr Catherine, Mary Wallace, Brenda Paddon, Angus Clark, Karen Greig, Kitty Teasdale, Mary McNichol, Andrew Gunn, Elizabeth Gunn, Des McNichol, Christine Robinson, Rose

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Week 21st-27th February: Joseph Purcell, Fanny Shanks, Anna Howard, Charles Eyston, Donato Giacoma, Arthur Robert Langley, Agnes Winifred Yardley.

VOTIVE CANDLES

If you would like a candle lighting, e-mail aburnham@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
A donation to the parish may be made on www.hendredcatholicparish.org.uk

GIVING: THE PARISH BY REGULAR STANDING ORDER OR GIFT

BANK DETAILS: PRC DTR East Hendred, St Mary

Sort Code: 309304 Account Number: 00877183

To arrange Gift Aid, contact : hendred@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

CONTACT DETAILS

Fr Andrew: 01235 835038 or 07976 437979
aburnham@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

CHILDREN'S PAGES

- (1) Watch out for '**Morning Prayer for Children**', 9am on Sundays, for ten minutes on Church Services TV. Nobody will mind if you're still eating your cornflakes or wearing your jim-jams. The theme is from today's First Reading at Mass (Noah: see below) and we shall listen to <https://youtu.be/RojAjXi64Fs>
- (2) How about writing your **Lent prayer or promise** on a third of an A4 sheet? You could then send the image in to us at hendred@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk? We should then send it on to Libby Holderness who will print it out and make a paper chain of the promises to display at church. There it will be (cue: fanfare) when we open up again in three or four weeks' time.
- (3) We are also getting some small **wooden craft crosses** which we shall leave in St Mary's porch for children to collect and decorate. We shall let you know when we've got them (probably in time for what we call 'Passiontide', the second half of Lent, when our thoughts move towards the events of Holy Week.
- (4) **Special stuff for Sunday** 21st February, the First Sunday in Lent follows on the next couple of pages.

Enjoy

Fr Andrew

First Sunday of Lent
Sunday 21st February 2021

God Saves Noah

Genesis 6:5-9:17

God looked down on the world and was filled with sadness when he saw the wickedness of the people. God decided to destroy all the wicked people, except for Noah, who was a good and just man. God told Noah "Build an ark and fill it with pairs of every sort of animal so that they will multiply again. Take plenty of food for them and your family, because I will send enough rain to flood the world." Noah did as God had commanded.

The rain began and carried on until all the land had disappeared. Everything was destroyed apart from Noah and the animals safe in the ark.

After many days Noah sent out a dove, and it returned carrying a shoot from a young olive tree in its beak.

Noah gave thanks and praise to God as the flood waters began to disappear.

Then God promised never to send such a flood to destroy the world again and put a rainbow in the sky as a sign of that promise.

Reflection

God destroyed the world because of wickedness of humankind, who had chosen to turn away from God.

God is fair and just, and as they had done nothing wrong God choose to rescue Noah and the creatures. Noah had faith and trust in God, so listened and followed his instructions.

The dove came back with an olive branch. The dove and olive branches are symbols of peace today.

God's symbol of the rainbow reminds us of his joy and hope.

Closing Prayer

Lord, when we look at a rainbow, we are reminded of your promise to the world.

Help us to keep promises we have made because of our love for you.

Amen



Genesis 9:8-15
Psalm 24
1 Peter 3:18-22
Mark 1:12-15

Speak, Lord



SUNDAY LITURGY FOR CHILDREN

Year B — 1st Sunday of Lent



TODAY is the
FIRST
SUNDAY
of **LENT**



- A time to be more like **J** _____.
- A time to prepare for **E** _____.



How many days did Jesus spend in the wilderness?

(Circle the right answer.)

50 10
15 25
32 40

Colour in the letters with an * to find out what Jesus said to the people.

H	R	E	P	E	N	T	V	G	A	N	D	E
S	R	B	E	L	I	E	V	E	K	A	T	H
U	L	E	E	T	H	E	G	N	U	O	V	Y
I	V	B	G	O	O	D	O	N	E	W	S	Q

East Hendred Catholic Parish



**First Sunday in
Lent (B)
21st February 2021
Antiphons,
Prayers and Readings**

Entrance Antiphon

When he calls on me, I will answer him; I will deliver him and give him glory, I will grant him length of days.

Invocabit me

cf Ps 91:15-16

Collect

Grant, almighty God, through the yearly observance of holy Lent, that we may grow in understanding of the riches hidden in Christ and by worthy conduct pursue their effects. 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

Genesis 9:8-15 (RSV)

God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your descendants after you, ¹⁰and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. ¹¹I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.' ¹²And God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³I set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵I will remember my covenant which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹'Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your descendants after you, ¹⁰and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. ¹¹I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off

by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.' ¹² And God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³ I set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴ When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵ I will remember my covenant which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh.

Psalm 25:4-9

**R/ Your ways, O Lord, are mercy and faithfulness,
for those who keep your covenant.**

O Lord, make me know your ways.
teach me your paths.
Guide me in your truth, and teach me;
for you are the God of my salvation.

I have hoped in you all day long.
Remember your compassion, O Lord,
and your merciful love,
for they are from of old.

Do not remember the sins of my youth.
nor my transgressions.
In your merciful love remember me.
because of your goodness, O Lord.

Good and upright is the Lord;
he shows the way to sinners.
He guides the humble in right judgment;
to the humble he teaches his way.

Second Reading

1 Peter 3:18-22 (RSV)

Beloved: Christ also died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit; ¹⁹ in which he went and preached to the spirits in prison, ²⁰ who formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water. ²¹ Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a clear conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers subject to him.

Gospel

Mark 1:12-15 (RSV)

At that time: The Spirit immediately drove Jesus out into the wilderness. ¹³ And he was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to him. ¹⁴ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, ¹⁵ and

saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel.'

Prayer over the Offerings

Give us the right dispositions, O Lord, we pray, to make these offerings, for with them we celebrate the beginning of this venerable and sacred time. Through Christ our Lord.

Preface

(De tentatione Domini)

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, through Christ our Lord. By abstaining forty long days from earthly food, he consecrated through his fast the pattern of our Lenten observance and, by overturning all the snares of the ancient serpent, taught us to cast out the leaven of malice, so that, celebrating worthily the Paschal Mystery, we might pass over at last to the eternal Paschal feast. And so, with the company of Angels and Saints, we sing the hymn of your praise, as without end we acclaim: Holy, holy, holy &c.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

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

Scapulis suis

The Lord will conceal you with his pinions, and under his wings you will trust.

cf Ps 91:4

Prayer after Communion

Renewed now with heavenly bread, by which faith is nourished, hope increased, and charity strengthened, we pray, O Lord, that we may learn to hunger for Christ, the true and living Bread, and strive to live by every word which proceeds from your mouth. Through Christ our Lord.

Ave Regina Cælorum

HAIL, Queen of Heaven, beyond compare,
to whom the angels homage pay;
hail, Root of Jesse, Gate of Light,
that opened for the world's new Day.

Rejoice, O Virgin unsurpassed,
in whom our ransom was begun,
for all thy loving children pray
to Christ, our Saviour, and thy Son.

Scripture Reading (Lent Week 1)

Monday (Chair of St Peter)

	1 Peter 5:1-4	Matthew 16:13-19
Tuesday	Isaiah 55:10-11	Matthew 6:7-15
Wednesday	Jonah 3:1-10	Luke 11:29-32
Thursday	Esther 4:17	Matthew 7:7-12
Friday	Ezekiel 18:21-28	Matthew 5:20-26
Saturday	Deuteronomy 26:16-19	Matthew 5:43-48

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT (B)

Genesis 22:1-2, 9-13, 15-18

Romans 8:31-34

Mark 9:2-10

FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

22nd – 27th February 2021

The Chair of St Peter, the Apostle

Monday 22nd February

Collect

GRANT, we pray, almighty God, that no tempests may disturb us, for you have set us fast on the rock of the Apostle Peter's confession of faith. 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.

Reading

1 Peter 5:1-4

I am an elder myself and a witness to the suffering of Christ

So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ as well as a partaker in the glory that is to be revealed. ²Tend the flock of God that is your charge, not by constraint but willingly, not for shameful gain but eagerly, ³not as domineering over those in your charge but being examples to the flock. ⁴And when the chief Shepherd is manifested you will obtain the unfading crown of glory.

Reflection

THE CHAIR of St Peter marks the establishing of the See of Rome, of which Peter was first bishop or, as we should now say, first pope. It was not his first charge. He took part in the Council of Jerusalem (AD 50), as mentioned in Acts 15. He went on to be Bishop of Antioch and then to look after Christian communities in Asia Minor. The First Letter of St Peter is clearly addressed to an established Christian community, a Church which earlier in the letter is known to experience hardship and persecution, but one which people join and are nurtured and in which they grow, their membership springing from their sharing in the Easter sacraments, in particular Baptism. In the first few verses of chapter five – today's First Reading – we hear St Peter, the apostle having the oversight of that community, addressing his fellow presbyters, bidding them to be shepherds of the flock under Christ the Chief Shepherd. The pastoral task is clearly one from which they derive a modest living – they are not to seek 'shameful gain' – but which is essentially a setting of an example of humility and godly life. Beyond immediate sight is a 'glory that is to be revealed', an 'unfading crown of glory'.

Tuesday 23rd February

Collect for the First Sunday of Lent

GRANT, almighty God, through the yearly observance of holy Lent, that we may grow in understanding of the riches hidden in Christ and by worthy conduct pursue their effects. 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.

Reading

Matthew 6:7-15

You should pray like this

Jesus said to his disciples: ⁷ 'And in praying do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their many words. ⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. ⁹ Pray then like this:

Our Father who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
¹⁰ Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread;
¹² And forgive us our debts,
As we also have forgiven our debtors;
¹³ And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.

¹⁴ For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; ¹⁵ but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Reflection

ON ASH Wednesday we listened to the Sermon on the Mount and Jesus teaching his disciples the duties of Almsgiving, Praying, and Fasting. We were reading Matthew 6 but omitted – and set aside for further consideration – the Lord's Prayer, verses 7-15 of the chapter. That further consideration happens now, when the verses form today's Gospel. Given as a model for all prayer, the Our Father has been treated line by line by quite a few theologians, most famously by St Cyril of Jerusalem, St Augustine of Hippo, and St Cyril of Alexandria. Though there is not time or space here for a line-by-line reflection, Let's look briefly at the basis structure. I am always fascinated by the fact that the Lord's Prayer is for Christians what the *Shema* is for Jews. The *Shema* draws on three texts (Deuteronomy 6:4–9, 11:13–21 and Numbers 15:37–41) and is prescribed for recitation evening and morning. From early times, Christians similarly have recited the Lord's Prayer at Morning and Evening Prayer and at the daily Mass. When Jesus quotes the *Shema*, Mark 12:28-34, he puts alongside the duty to love God the duty to love one's neighbour. Thus he

brings alongside the *Shema* commandment the no less ancient commandment of love of one's neighbour, found in Leviticus 19:18. The importance of this – putting love of God and love of neighbour together, though preserving the primacy of the first – is that it is also the organising principle of the Lord's Prayer. In St Matthew's account, Jesus bids his disciples to pray to God as a Father, praying for the coming of the Kingdom, the fulfilment on earth of the divine will. It is in the light of this that petitioners ask for their 'daily bread' – all that they need – and for forgiveness, a forgiveness which is contingent upon learning to forgive others. The culmination of the prayer is a prayer for delivery from the terrible trials which can face Christians and will face the Church before the end of time. We pray to be delivered from evil itself.

Wednesday 24th February

Reading

Jonah 3:1-10

The people of Nineveh repent

Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, ² 'Arise, go to Nin'evah, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you.' ³ So Jonah arose and went to Nin'evah, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nin'evah was an exceedingly great city, three days' journey in breadth. ⁴ Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's journey. And he cried, 'Yet forty days, and Nin'evah shall be overthrown!' ⁵ And the people of Nin'evah believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them.

⁶ Then tidings reached the king of Nin'evah, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, and covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. ⁷ And he made proclamation and published through Nin'evah, 'By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; let them not feed, or drink water, ⁸ but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them cry mightily to God; yea, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence which is in his hands. ⁹ Who knows, God may yet repent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we perish not?'

¹⁰ When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God repented of the evil which he had said he would do to them; and he did not do it.

Reflection

THE BOOK of Jonah relates to the activities of a prophet in the eighth century BC, from the time of King Jeroboam II of Israel. Some scholars, old and new, are convinced that here is a historical account, notwithstanding such fanciful features as being swallowed by a great fish – and surviving to tell the tale. There is also the quick-growing vine to protect Jonah from the scorching sun, and its equally quick withering. Finally, the fulsome repentance of the people of the city of Nineveh seems like a tall story. After all it was not long after Jonah's time that the Northern Kingdom was conquered by Assyria. Whether the book of Jonah is based on history or is a morality tale matters little. What is important for us is that it the background to references made by Jesus. In Matthew 12:38-40 Jesus mentions 'the sign of Jonah' and in today's Gospel, Luke 11:29-32, Jesus refers to Jonah as a sign to the Ninevites. In a similar fashion, the Son of Man is a sign to the generation to whom he was speaking. The particular relevance of the sign of Jonah was that, just as Jonah spent three days in the belly of the great fish, so Jesus was to spend three days in the tomb. We should notice, in both cases, that, though there was much activity during the three days – Jonah praying and praising, Jesus harrowing hell and setting free those locked in death – in both cases, Jonah and Jesus, there was actual death and, in figure and then in reality, resurrection and new life. Such was the new life experienced by Jonah that he was able to preach repentance fruitfully to a great pagan city.

Thursday 25th February

Reading

Matthew 7:7-12

Ask, Seek, Knock

Jesus said to his disciples, ⁷ Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸ For every one who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. ⁹ Or what man of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? ¹¹ If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him! ¹² So whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.

Reflection

AN EXTRACT from the Catechism of the Catholic Church will help us make sense of Jesus' teaching about the Prayer of Petition, Ask, Seek, and Knock.

2629 The vocabulary of supplication in the New Testament is rich in shades of meaning: ask, beseech, plead, invoke, entreat, cry out, even 'struggle in prayer.' Its most usual form, because the most spontaneous, is petition: by prayer of petition we express awareness of our relationship with God. We are creatures who are not our own beginning, not the masters of adversity, not our own last end. We are sinners who as Christians know that we have turned away from our Father. Our petition is already a turning back to him.

2630 The New Testament contains scarcely any prayers of lamentation, so frequent in the Old Testament. In the risen Christ the Church's petition is buoyed by hope, even if we still wait in a state of expectation and must be converted anew every day. Christian petition, what St. Paul calls 'groaning,' arises from another depth, that of creation 'in labour pains' and that of our selves 'as we wait for the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved.' In the end, however, 'with sighs too deep for words' the Holy Spirit 'helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words.'

2631 The first movement of the prayer of petition is asking forgiveness, like the tax collector in the parable: 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' It is a prerequisite for righteous and pure prayer. A trusting humility brings us back into the light of communion between the Father and his Son Jesus Christ and with one another, so that 'we receive from him whatever we ask.' Asking forgiveness is the prerequisite for both the Eucharistic liturgy and personal prayer.

2632 Christian petition is centred on the desire and search for the Kingdom to come, in keeping with the teaching of Christ. There is a hierarchy in these petitions: we pray first for the Kingdom, then for what is necessary to welcome it and cooperate with its coming. This collaboration with the mission of Christ and the Holy Spirit, which is now that of the Church, is the object of the prayer of the apostolic community. It is the prayer of Paul, the apostle par excellence, which

reveals to us how the divine solicitude for all the churches ought to inspire Christian prayer. By prayer every baptized person works for the coming of the Kingdom.

2633 When we share in God's saving love, we understand that every need can become the object of petition. Christ, who assumed all things in order to redeem all things, is glorified by what we ask the Father in his name. It is with this confidence that St. James and St. Paul exhort us to pray at all times.

Friday 26th February

Reading

Matthew 5:20-26

Go and be reconciled to your brother

Jesus said to his disciples: ²⁰For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

²¹ You have heard that it was said to the men of old, 'You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment.; ²² But I say to you that every one who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother shall be liable to the council, and whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be liable to the hell of fire. ²³ So if you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. ²⁵ Make friends quickly with your accuser, while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison; ²⁶ truly, I say to you, you will never get out till you have paid the last penny.

Reflection

IN THE Sermon on the Mount, chapter five of St Matthew's Gospel, Jesus presents his listeners with a set of six antitheses. There's this and there's that. Today we heard the first of these antitheses:

²¹ You have heard that it was said to the men of old, ‘You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment.’ ²² But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment.

As a teacher – a new Rabbi – Jesus is well-within the Rabbinic tradition of explaining and extrapolating from the Jewish Law. Oh, and that word ‘Law’. What is referred to is not a rigid set of offences and punishments – like our ‘criminal law’ – but the *Torah*, effectively an instruction manual. How to live within the Love of God. Following the antithesis as stated, Jesus continues with practical suggestions on reconciliation. First, if you are about to make a gift offering and are estranged from another, put the gift aside and go and be reconciled. Second, if you find yourself in a legal challenge, make friends on the way to court. Reconciliation before making an offering is highlighted by the exchange of the Sign of Peace at Mass. The suggestion is that if one cannot exchange the Peace – not just with those around you but with anyone in the community – then one should not proceed to Holy Communion but instead effect the necessary reconciliation. In the Ambrosian Rite and in the modern Church of England Communion Order, the Peace takes place before the Offertory. More than that, the Anglicans often use the text about leaving the gift in front of the altar as a sentence at the Peace.

THE GOD WHO SPEAKS

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST MARK,

Chapter by Chapter

Mark 5 *Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition*

Jesus Heals the Gerasene Demoniac

5 They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Ger’asenes. **2** And when he had come out of the boat, there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, **3** who lived among the tombs; and no one could bind him any more, even with a chain; **4** for he had often been bound with fetters and chains, but the chains he wrenched apart, and the fetters he broke in pieces; and no one had the strength to subdue

him. ⁵ Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out, and bruising himself with stones. ⁶ And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshiped him; ⁷ and crying out with a loud voice, he said, 'What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me.' ⁸ For he had said to him, 'Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!' ⁹ And Jesus asked him, 'What is your name?' He replied, 'My name is Legion; for we are many.' ¹⁰ And he begged him eagerly not to send them out of the country. ¹¹ Now a great herd of swine was feeding there on the hillside; ¹² and they begged him, 'Send us to the swine, let us enter them.' ¹³ So he gave them leave. And the unclean spirits came out, and entered the swine; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea, and were drowned in the sea.

¹⁴ The herdsmen fled, and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened. ¹⁵ And they came to Jesus, and saw the demoniac sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the man who had had the legion; and they were afraid. ¹⁶ And those who had seen it told what had happened to the demoniac and to the swine. ¹⁷ And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their neighbourhood. ¹⁸ And as he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him. ¹⁹ But he refused, and said to him, 'Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.' ²⁰ And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decap'olis how much Jesus had done for him; and all men marvelled.

A Girl Restored to Life and a Woman Healed

²¹ And when Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered about him; and he was beside the sea. ²² Then came one of the rulers of the synagogue, Ja'irus by name; and seeing him, he fell at his feet, ²³ and besought him, saying, 'My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live.' ²⁴ And he went with him.

And a great crowd followed him and thronged about him. ²⁵ And there was a woman who had had a flow of blood for twelve years, ²⁶ and who had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was no better but rather grew worse. ²⁷ She had heard the reports about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment. ²⁸ For she said, 'If I touch even his garments, I shall be made

well.' ²⁹ And immediately the haemorrhage ceased; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. ³⁰ And Jesus, perceiving in himself that power had gone forth from him, immediately turned about in the crowd, and said, 'Who touched my garments?' ³¹ And his disciples said to him, 'You see the crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, 'Who touched me?'' ³² And he looked around to see who had done it. ³³ But the woman, knowing what had been done to her, came in fear and trembling and fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. ³⁴ And he said to her, 'Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease.'

³⁵ While he was still speaking, there came from the ruler's house some who said, 'Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?' ³⁶ But ignoring what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, 'Do not fear, only believe.' ³⁷ And he allowed no one to follow him except Peter and James and John the brother of James. ³⁸ When they came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, he saw a tumult, and people weeping and wailing loudly. ³⁹ And when he had entered, he said to them, 'Why do you make a tumult and weep? The child is not dead but sleeping.' ⁴⁰ And they laughed at him. But he put them all outside, and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him, and went in where the child was. ⁴¹ Taking her by the hand he said to her, 'Tal'itha cu'mi'; which means, 'Little girl, I say to you, arise.' ⁴² And immediately the girl got up and walked; for she was twelve years old. And immediately they were overcome with amazement. ⁴³ And he strictly charged them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat. **FINE**

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