

DEANERY OF ST EDMUND CAMPION

ENGLISH MARTYRS—VALE OF THE WHITE HORSE PASTORAL AREA

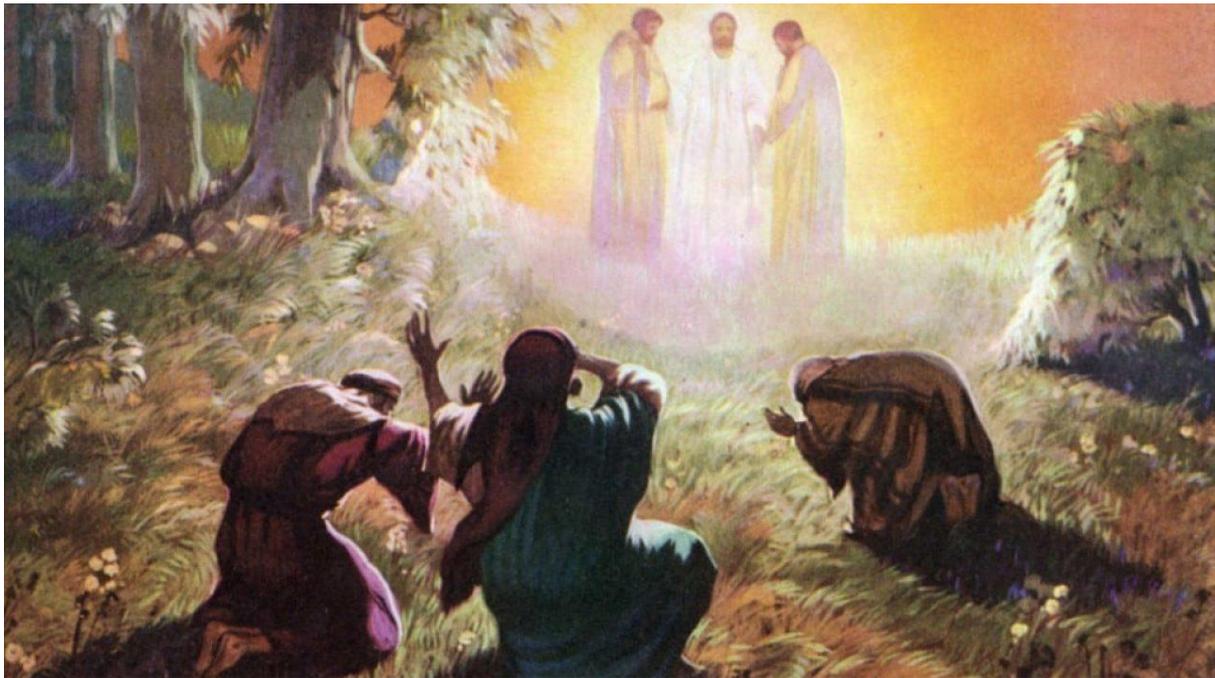
www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

www.hendredcatholicparish.org.uk

East Hendred Catholic Parish

Second Week of Lent

28th February – 7th March 2021



The Transfiguration of Christ

Reflection – *Transfiguration*

PETER recognizes Jesus as the Messiah, God's Saviour. As if to confirm this insight, Jesus takes him, along with John and James, up a mountain to pray. There the disciples see Christ in glory. Moses, the leader of Israel's pilgrimage to the Promised Land is there. So is Elijah, Israel's greatest prophet, the herald of salvation. The messenger of the covenant, says Malachi, is like fuller's soap and St Mark tells us that Jesus' 'clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them.'

Overshadowing everything is the cloud of God's glory and as at Jesus' baptism the voice from heaven calls him 'the beloved Son'. But this time there is a command added: 'Listen to him'. In faith the disciples have seen who Jesus is. God confirms this faith by granting a vision. So runs the story of the Transfiguration, as told by three of the evangelists, and, despite the supernatural language and imagery, it remains a very human story. In fact Peter, rather characteristically, combines insight with an ill-judged spontaneity. 'Let's make three booths', he says – as if the disciples could add meaning to what was a gift of meaning to them!

And yet the suggestion about booths has its use. It gives us a clue as to what the story might mean. St Luke tells us that this episode was 'about eight days after' the discussions of Caesarea Philippi – where Peter recognises Jesus as the Messiah, the Christ, and the disciples learn that Jesus will be killed and raised from the dead. 'Booths' suggests the Feast of Tabernacles. The Feast of Tabernacles (or booths) is a colourful Jewish festival lasting eight days and its climax, on the eighth day, is a day of new wine, libations of water (symbolising the wells of salvation and the outpouring of the Spirit) and processions with branches. Originally a harvest festival, Tabernacles symbolised for Zechariah the in-gathering of all nations. The camping in booths symbolised the nomadic journeying in the desert and the festivities of the last day of the feast reflected the glory of the Promised Land. All these associations – new wine, washing, outpouring of the Spirit, processions with branches, the in-gathering of the nations, the Promised Land – are caught up in the glory of Christ. They are transfigured by his messiahship.

Peter's suggestions about the booths and the mention of 'about eight days' give us one clue to the meaning of the Transfiguration – the realisation of all that is foreshadowed in the Feast of Tabernacles. St Matthew and St Mark have a different lapse of time. 'After *six* days...' they begin their

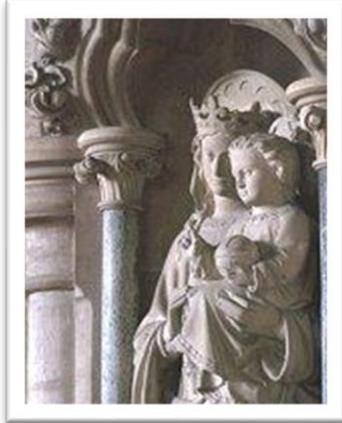
accounts. This is not, chronologically, a significant difference – there’s only a couple of days in it – yet it unlocks a whole new area of meaning.

In Exodus 24, Moses ascends Sinai with Aaron, Nadab and Abihu – names less easy to recall than Peter, John and James! – and, after six days, hears the voice of God from the cloud. This time it is not the giving of the commandments (Exodus 20) but instructions to build the ark, the tabernacle and the Altar, to bring into being the priesthood and to begin sacrifice. The worship of the Old Covenant was underway.

The people of Israel had been fed with quail and manna in the wilderness; they had received the commandments and ordinances. Now the whole liturgical expression of the covenant was beginning. It is surely not fanciful to see the same pattern in the gospels. The teacher from Nazareth had taught on the mountain (Matthew) and on the plain (Luke). He had fed the multitude with fishes and loaves. Now comes the focus of worship and the teacher is recognised as Lord by those who have the eyes to see and worshipped as the Transfigured Christ by those admitted to the vision. There is no mention of sanctuaries, priesthood and sacrifices: the One whom they worship is the New Temple, the High Priest and the Sacrifice.

Taking the two clues together – the clues about the Feast of Tabernacles and the story of Moses and his three companions – we see that the Transfiguration is a story about worship. Nothing should distract us from the vision of glory which we receive when we worship. Neither the teaching and proclamation which precede the experience on the holy mountain nor the work of ministry which awaits those who come down the mountain. It is that vision which gives depth to the proclamation and empowers us for the world of loving and healing to which we are called.

Fr Andrew



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>

from 7th March

6pm Holy Mass (CSTV)

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

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

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

ST MARY'S OPENING

We shall be open from 9am each day until late afternoon. Come along to Mass on weekdays. . Masks and social distancing required. Book for Mass on Sundays from 7th March. E-mail hendred@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk before 12 noon on Fridays. After that, contact Fr Andrew on 01235 835038 or aburnham@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk Space limited. Book early.

ST MARY'S ON LIVE-STREAM

Last Sunday (21st February) 326 people looked in from 161 addresses, with 122 staying long enough to take part in the Mass. Homes with more than one viewer and those browsing explain the largest figure. 127 were from the UK, 24 from Ireland, 10 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. 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 EMERGE FROM FURLOUGH

From 1st March Maria Brown and Ma Lluisa Jarne are no longer on furlough. The parish e-mail hendred@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk will once more be monitored by the Parish Administrators.

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:

- black,velcro-fastening school shoes, for a boy, child size 10
- A dark coloured coat for a boy of 7, suitable for school
- Girl's school shoes, black, adult size 2
- Clothes for a boy age 4-5 years

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

HOLY FATHER'S MARCH PRAYER INTENTION

Let us pray that we may experience the sacrament of reconciliation with renewed depth, to taste the infinite mercy of God.

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

28th Feb – 6th March Mary Rush, Matthew Castle, Thomas Regan, Patrick Barnes, Elizabeth Hunt, Ammy Stibbs, George Dunn, Fr Michael Sexton, Ellen Cuddihy, Alice Couling, Alica Pilcher.

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: PRCDTR 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 (Abraham and Isaac: see below) and we shall listen to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k1UPk5RUjxc>
- (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 have got some small **wooden craft crosses** which we shall leave in St Mary's porch, once church is open, for children to collect and decorate. They will help us celebrate what we call 'Passiontide', the second half of Lent, when our thoughts move towards the events of Holy Week.
- (4) **Special stuff for Sunday** 28th February, the Second Sunday in Lent follows on the next couple of pages.

Enjoy

Fr Andrew

YEAR B
Second Sunday of Lent
Sunday 28th February 2021

Trust Me

Genesis 22:1-13

God said to Abraham "Take your son, Isaac, to the top of the mountain and offer him as a sacrifice to me."

Abraham loved Isaac very much, but he trusted God completely and was ready to obey. He loaded his donkey with wood and set off for the mountain God had shown him. On the way, Isaac asked "where is the lamb you will sacrifice?". Abraham answered, "God will provide a lamb." When they arrived, they built an altar and piled it high with wood. Then Abraham tied Isaac's hand and feet and took out a knife ready to kill his only son.

Suddenly a voice from heaven said "Abraham, Abraham, do not kill the so you love so much. Your trust and love for me was so great, that you were ready to sacrifice your only son for my sake."

Looking up Abraham noticed a ram whose horns had become tangled in the bushes. He offered the ram instead of his son as a sacrifice to God.

Reflection

The word 'sacrifice' means to offer something for the sake of someone else. In Old Testament times, people would sacrifice animals by killing them and offering them to God. Life is the most precious gift of all, and these offerings showed how much they loved God. Abraham would have felt incredibly sad indeed, but his faith and trust in God was so great he was ready to do anything God asked.

In the New Testament God sent his only son Jesus, to be sacrificed by dying on the cross. Jesus had faith and trust in his father and believed that God's power would raise him from the dead.

Closing Prayer

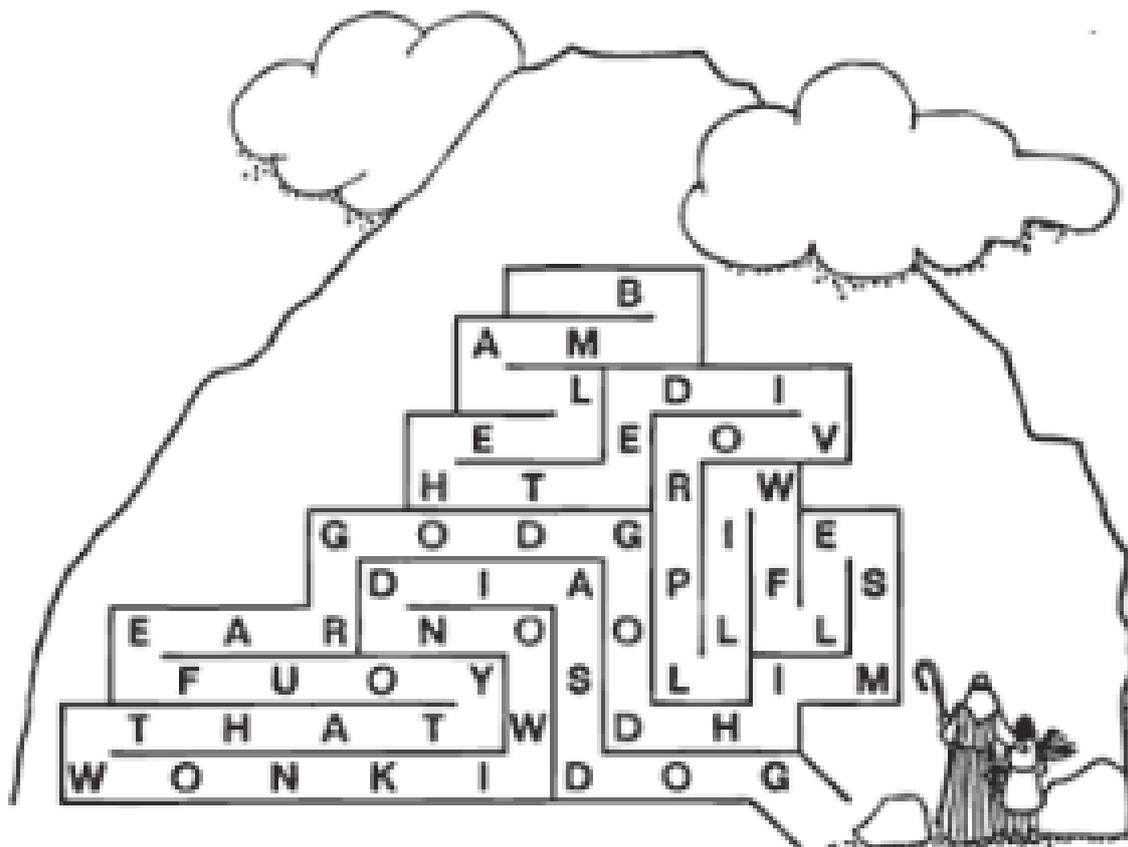
Lord, give us the faith and courage of Abraham to do whatever you might ask of us. Make our trust and love for you grow stronger each day. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen

Abraham and Isaac Worship on the Mountain



God told Abraham to go to a mountain and offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice. Abraham obeyed, but God stopped him from hurting Isaac. Follow the maze up the mountain to find out why Isaac wasn't sacrificed.



East Hendred Catholic Parish



**Second Sunday in
Lent (B)
28th February 2021
Antiphons,
Prayers and Readings**

Entrance Antiphon

Of you my heart has spoken: Seek his face. It is your face, O Lord, that I seek; hide not your face from me.

Tibi dixit

Cf Ps 27:8-9

Collect

O God, who have commanded us to listen to your beloved Son, be pleased, we pray, to nourish us inwardly by your word, that, with spiritual sight made pure, we may rejoice to behold your glory. 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 22:1-2, 9-13, 15-18 (RSV)

In those days God tested Abraham, and said to him, 'Abraham!' And he said, 'Here am I.' ² He said, 'Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Mori'ah, and offer him there as a burnt offering upon one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.' ... ⁹ When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. ¹⁰ Then Abraham put forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. ¹¹ But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, and said, 'Abraham, Abraham!' And he said, 'Here am I.' ¹² He said, 'Do not lay your hand on the lad or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.' ¹³ And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son... ¹⁵ And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven, ¹⁶ and said, 'By myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this,

and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷ I will indeed bless you, and I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore. And your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies, ¹⁸ and by your descendants shall all the nations of the earth bless themselves, because you have obeyed my voice.'

Psalm 116:10, 15-19 R/ 9

**R/ I will walk in the presence of the Lord
in the land of the living.**

I trusted, even when I said:
'I am sorely afflicted,'
How precious in the eyes of the Lord
is the death of his faithful.

Your servant, Lord, your servant am I,
you have loosened my bonds.
A thanksgiving sacrifice I make;
I will call on the Lord's name.

My vows to the Lord I will fulfil
before all his people,
in the courts of the house of the Lord,
in your midst, O Jerusalem.

Second Reading

Romans 8:31-34 (RSV)

Brethren: If God is for us, who is against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, will he not also give us all things with him? ³³ Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies; ³⁴ who is to condemn? Is it Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us?

Gospel

Mark 9:2-10 (RSV)

At that time: Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart by themselves; and he was transfigured before them, ³ and his garments became glistening, intensely white, as no fuller on earth could bleach them. ⁴ And there appeared to them Eli'jah with Moses; and they were talking to Jesus. ⁵ And Peter said to Jesus, 'Master, it is well that we are here; let us make three booths, one for you and one for Moses and one for Eli'jah.' ⁶ For he did not know what to say, for they were exceedingly afraid. ⁷ And a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud, 'This is my beloved Son; listen to him.' ⁸ And suddenly looking around they no longer saw any one with them but Jesus only. ⁹ And as they were coming down the mountain, he charged them to tell no one what they had seen, until the Son of man should have risen from

Scripture Reading (Lent Week 2)

St David	Philippians 3:8-14	Matthew 5:13-16
Tuesday	Isaiah 1:10, 16-20	Matthew 23:1-12
Wednesday	Jeremiah 18:18-20	Matthew 20:17-28
Thursday[†]	Jeremiah 17:5-10	Luke 16:19-31
Friday	Genesis 37:3-4,12-13,17-28	Matthew 21:33-43, 45-46
Saturday	Micah 7:14-15, 18-20	Luke 15:1-3, 11-32
Next Sunday		

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT (B)

Exodus 20:1-17

1 Corinthians 1:22-25

John 2:13-25

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.

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[†] Different readings are normally used for the School Mass.

FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

1st – 6th March 2021

St David, Religious, Bishop

Monday 1st March

Collect

O GOD, who graciously bestowed on your Bishop Saint David of Wales the virtue of wisdom and the gift of eloquence and made him an example of prayer and pastoral zeal: grant that, through his intercession your Church may ever prosper and render you joyful praise. 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 5:13-16

Salt and Light

Jesus said to his disciples: ¹³You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trodden under foot by men.

¹⁴You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. ¹⁵Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

Reflection

SCIENCE tells us that in fact salt does not lose its taste but, as the Roman first century naturalist and philosopher, Pliny the Elder, remarked in his *Natural History*, it can become adulterated and weakened. Pliny's views would be known at the time and the importance of salt was talked about in the Old Testament, giving taste (Job 6:6), and for preserving and as a part of sacrifice (Lev 2:13; Ezek 43:24). We perhaps forget how, until modern times, salt was a rarity and a luxury, hence the highly ornate salt cellars

which used to be the centre piece of the tables of the rich. It does not require very much thought for us to reflect on what Jesus is asking of us when he tells his disciples that they should be 'the salt of the earth'. As for the 'light of the world', again there is more to this than the obvious meaning of the image. Israel is invited to 'walk in the light of the Lord' (Is 2:5) and be a 'light to the nations' (Is 42:6; 49:6). It is a theme to which St Luke brings emphasis (Lk 2:32; Acts 13:47; 26:23) and which is emphasised by St Paul (Rom 2:19). It perhaps goes without saying that, being called to be 'salt and light', we Christians are being invited to live in an attractive way which leads others to 'see [our] good works and give glory to [our] Father who is in heaven.'

Tuesday 2nd March

Collect for the Second Sunday of Lent

O GOD, who have commanded us to listen to your beloved Son, be pleased, we pray, to nourish us inwardly by your word, that, with spiritual sight made pure, we may rejoice to behold your glory. 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

Isaiah 1:10,16-20

Learn to do good, search for justice

10 Hear the word of the LORD,
you rulers of Sodom!
Give ear to the teaching of our God,
you people of Gomor'rah!....

16 Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean;
remove the evil of your doings
from before my eyes;
cease to do evil,

17 learn to do good;
seek justice,

correct oppression;
defend the fatherless,
plead for the widow.
18 'Come now, let us reason together,
says the LORD:
though your sins are like scarlet,
they shall be as white as snow;
though they are red like crimson,
they shall become like wool.
19 If you are willing and obedient,
you shall eat the good of the land;
20 but if you refuse and rebel,
you shall be devoured by the sword;
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.'

Reflection

THIS passage, from the beginning of the Book of Isaiah, relates to Isaiah, son of Amoz, a prophet in Jerusalem in the eighth century BC, working at much the same time as Hosea and Amos but in the Southern Kingdom rather than the North. Jerusalem, says the prophet, is experiencing a disaster as a punishment for unfaithfulness to the covenant. Temple worship is futile because the people are not living moral lives and are committing great injustices. But, says the Lord through his prophet, turning away from sin is still possible, and the sins of the people, though they are like scarlet, can be white as snow, if only the people turn to the Lord. This 'turning' is the essence of the Greek word *metanoia*, the word in the New Testament for repentance, and Lent is very much a time for examining the direction which we are facing and making the necessary adjustments, whether slight or drastic. Jerusalem needed a drastic re-orientation. So, it would seem, does our Western society, and this time is for the world a kind of secular Lent. We play our part most by examining and refocusing our own lives.

Wednesday 3rd March

Reading

Matthew 20:17-28

A Third Time Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection

17 And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside, and on the way he said to them, **18** 'Behold, we are going up to

Jerusalem; and the Son of man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death, ¹⁹ and deliver him to the Gentiles to be mocked and scourged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day.'

The Request of the Mother of James and John

²⁰ Then the mother of the sons of Zeb'edee came up to him, with her sons, and kneeling before him she asked him for something. ²¹ And he said to her, 'What do you want?' She said to him, 'Command that these two sons of mine may sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom.' ²² But Jesus answered, 'You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?' They said to him, 'We are able.' ²³ He said to them, 'You will drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father.' ²⁴ And when the ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers. ²⁵ But Jesus called them to him and said, 'You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. ²⁶ It shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever would be first among you must be your slave; ²⁸ even as the Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.'

Reflection

THIS, THE third of the predictions of the Passion in St Matthew, gives us a perspective different from the similar passage in St Mark. In St Matthew's account, Jesus is clearly deciding to head towards Jerusalem. This is the final journey, a journey which began at Caesarea Philippi with Peter's confession of faith and will end with the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem. We have more detail than we had in the first two predictions of the Passion (Mt 16:21; 17:22-23). Now, the handing over to the chief priests is foretold (Mt 26:57), as is their condemnation (Mt 26:66), the handing over to the Romans (Mt 27:2), the mocking, scourging, and crucifixion (Mt 27:26-30; 27:32-44) and the Resurrection (Mt 28:1-10). The amazement and fear of the disciples which we encounter in St Mark's version of the story (Mk 10:32) is omitted.

The request of the Mother of James and John corresponds to a similar passage in St Mark (Mk 10:35ff) but in St Mark it is the disciples

themselves, rather than their mother, who make the outrageous request. It is outrageous not just because it is jockeying for position – which is the very thing which runs counter to the teaching of Jesus – but because it completely misunderstands how things will be in the Kingdom of Heaven. In both accounts – Matthew and Mark – Jesus confronts James and John with what faces them – the cup of suffering. So we not only discover how the way ahead is likely to work out, consonant with the vocation of Israel to be God’s suffering servant, but we also find emphasised the underlying Kingdom values ‘whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave’ (Mt 20:26-27).

Thursday 4th March

Reading

Luke 16:19-31[‡]

The Rich Man and Lazarus

Jesus said to the Pharisees: ¹⁹ ‘There was a rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. ²⁰ And at his gate lay a poor man named Laz’arus, full of sores, ²¹ who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man’s table; moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. ²² The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried; ²³ and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes, and saw Abraham far off and Laz’arus in his bosom. ²⁴ And he called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy upon me, and send Laz’arus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame.’ ²⁵ But Abraham said, ‘Son, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Laz’arus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. ²⁶ And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.’ ²⁷ And he said, ‘Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father’s house, ²⁸ for I have five brothers, so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.’ ²⁹ But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.’ ³⁰ And he said, ‘No, father Abraham; but if some one goes to them from the dead, they will

[‡] **Different readings are normally used for the School Mass.**

repent.’³¹ He said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if some one should rise from the dead.’”

Reflection

TODAY’S Gospel is the Parable of Dives and Lazarus, a parable found only in St Luke’s Gospel. Though popularly known as ‘Dives’, the Latin for ‘rich man’, the parable does not name him. He is ‘a certain rich man’ and it is the ‘certain poor man’ who is dignified with a name. ‘Lazarus’ - in Greek *Elieker* - meaning ‘My God helps’ – is the name of the poor man. Echoing in our ears as we hear this parable is the first of the Beatitudes in St Luke’s version: ‘Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God’ (Lk 6:20b). Purple dye was available only to the wealthy and so, of course, was fine linen. We find similar descriptions of the well-to-do in Judg 8:26; Sir 45:10; Esth 2:6; 8:15). ‘Abraham’s bosom’ is the normal English phrase, though ‘bosom’ does not quite do the trick. The word is literally ‘lap’ but the sense is of being gathered to, enfolded with, one’s ancestors. Though it is found only in Luke, a similar idea is common in the Old Testament (Gen 49:33; Num 27:13; Deut 32:50; Judg 2:10). Abraham of course is the original ancestor. Whereas Lazarus ends up in the bosom of Abraham, Dives finds himself in Hades, a place of torment, roughly equivalent to the Hebrew idea of *sheol*. The tables are well and truly turned in that Dives – the one who showed no mercy – is now the one who cries out for mercy. He tries a formal address – ‘Father Abraham’ – but St Luke has already warned us in the preaching of St John the Baptist ‘do not begin to say to yourselves, “We have Abraham as our father”; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham.’ (Lk 3:8). The reversal of fortunes should not surprise us: such was foretold in Our Lady’s *Magnificat* (Lk 1:46-55). Dives does not respond well. First, he asks for Lazarus to be sent to cool him down – rather misunderstanding that there is no longer master-servant relationship possible with the one whose needs he had ignored when he was ‘at his gate’. Second, he asks for urgent messages to be sent to his five brothers. The stern reply is that if the brothers do not heed Moses and the Prophets – the Scriptures – then they will not believe the word of someone who comes to them from the dead. This is very much the sting in the tail: Jesus is addressing the Pharisees and the clear implication is that they fall short in their righteousness and that, if they cannot spot the

importance and significance of the ministry and preaching of Jesus, they are showing themselves unable to understand and grasp the significance of the whole Hebrew tradition.

Friday 5th March

Reading

Matthew 21:33-43, 45-46

The Parable of the Vineyard

Jesus said to the chief priests and elders of the people: ³³ 'Hear another parable. There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it, and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to tenants, and went into another country. ³⁴ When the season of fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants, to get his fruit; ³⁵ and the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶ Again he sent other servants, more than the first; and they did the same to them. ³⁷ Afterward he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' ³⁸ But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.' ³⁹ And they took him and cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. ⁴⁰ When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?' ⁴¹ They said to him, 'He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons.'

⁴² Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in the scriptures:

**The very stone which the builders rejected
has become the head of the corner;
this was the Lord's doing,
and it is marvellous in our eyes?**

⁴³ Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation producing the fruits of it. ...'

⁴⁵ When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that he was speaking about them. ⁴⁶ But when they tried to arrest him, they feared the multitudes, because they held him to be a prophet.

Reflection

THE PARABLE of the Vineyard, today's Gospel, is found in Mark's Gospel (12:1-12) where it is clearly about the harsh treatment given to a series of messengers, culminating in the killing of the Son and Heir. It is highly allegorical: the householder is God, the vineyard is Israel, the tenants are the leaders of Israel, the messengers are the prophets, and the Son and Heir is Jesus. Matthew makes small additions to the story, such as the notion of bearing fruit (first found at Mt 3:8) and the handing on of the vineyard to those whose work will yield fruit (Mt 21:43). Our Gospel reading omits verse 44 because arguably it should be after verse 42 and in any case is omitted from many manuscripts.[§] It is hard to hear this parable without the echoes of the Jewish-Christian argument in the Early Church, an argument which has led to tragic consequences throughout the ages, into modern times. Equally it is impossible to avoid echoes of the simplistic supersessionist argument that God dumped the Jews, with their covenant, and replaced them with the Christians and our covenant. We need to be careful how we interpret the word *ethnos*, people. We are talking about a dispute not between Jews and Christians but between the Jewish leaders at that time and the followers of Jesus. It is possible that the whole passage needs to be seen as shaped by the generation after the first disciples, a generation that knew about the Greek version of the Old Testament (used in Mt 21:34, 36), the death of Jesus (Mt 21:38), and the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 (Mt 21:41). Finally, as we hop around the Bible in the readings during Lent, it is worth remembering that the Parable of the Vineyard occurs late in the Gospel. By this time the Passion and Death of Christ are casting a shadow and the tension between Jesus and those who oppose him is increasing.

[§] 'And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but when it falls on any one, it will crush him.'

THE GOD WHO SPEAKS

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST MARK,

Chapter by Chapter

Mark 6 *Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition*

The Rejection of Jesus at Nazareth

6 He went away from there and came to his own country; and his disciples followed him. ² And on the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue; and many who heard him were astonished, saying, 'Where did this man get all this? What is the wisdom given to him? What mighty works are wrought by his hands! ³ Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?' And they took offence at him. ⁴ And Jesus said to them, 'A prophet is not without honour, except in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.' ⁵ And he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands upon a few sick people and healed them. ⁶ And he marvelled because of their unbelief.

And he went about among the villages teaching.

The Mission of the Twelve

⁷ And he called to him the twelve, and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. ⁸ He charged them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; ⁹ but to wear sandals and not put on two tunics. ¹⁰ And he said to them, 'Where you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. ¹¹ And if any place will not receive you and they refuse to hear you, when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet for a testimony against them.' ¹² So they went out and preached that men should repent. ¹³ And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many that were sick and healed them.

The Death of John the Baptist

¹⁴ King Herod heard of it; for Jesus' name had become known. Some said, 'John the baptizer has been raised from the dead; that is why these powers are at work in him.' ¹⁵ But others said, 'It is Eli'jah.' And others said, 'It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old.' ¹⁶ But when Herod heard of it he

said, 'John, whom I beheaded, has been raised.' ¹⁷ For Herod had sent and seized John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Hero'di-as, his brother Philip's wife; because he had married her. ¹⁸ For John said to Herod, 'It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife.' ¹⁹ And Hero'di-as had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not, ²⁰ for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and kept him safe. When he heard him, he was much perplexed; and yet he heard him gladly. ²¹ But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and the leading men of Galilee. ²² For when Hero'di-as' daughter came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests; and the king said to the girl, 'Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will grant it.' ²³ And he vowed to her, 'Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom.' ²⁴ And she went out, and said to her mother, 'What shall I ask?' And she said, 'The head of John the baptizer.' ²⁵ And she came in immediately with haste to the king, and asked, saying, 'I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.' ²⁶ And the king was exceedingly sorry; but because of his oaths and his guests he did not want to break his word to her. ²⁷ And immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard and gave orders to bring his head. He went and beheaded him in the prison, ²⁸ and brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl; and the girl gave it to her mother. ²⁹ When his disciples heard of it, they came and took his body, and laid it in a tomb.

Feeding the Five Thousand

³⁰ The apostles returned to Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. ³¹ And he said to them, 'Come away by yourselves to a lonely place, and rest a while.' For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. ³² And they went away in the boat to a lonely place by themselves. ³³ Now many saw them going, and knew them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns, and got there ahead of them. ³⁴ As he landed he saw a great throng, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things. ³⁵ And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, 'This is a lonely place, and the hour is now late; ³⁶ send them away, to go into the country and villages round about and buy themselves something to eat.' ³⁷ But he answered them, 'You give them something to eat.' And they said to him, 'Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii^[d] worth of bread, and give it to them to eat?' ³⁸ And he said to them, 'How many loaves have you? Go and see.' And when they had found out, they said, 'Five, and two fish.' ³⁹ Then he commanded them all to sit down by companies upon the green grass. ⁴⁰ So they sat down in groups, by hundreds and by

fifties. ⁴¹ And taking the five loaves and the two fish he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples to set before the people; and he divided the two fish among them all. ⁴² And they all ate and were satisfied. ⁴³ And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. ⁴⁴ And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men.

Jesus Walks on the Water

⁴⁵ Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, to Beth-sa'ida, while he dismissed the crowd. ⁴⁶ And after he had taken leave of them, he went up into the hills to pray. ⁴⁷ And when evening came, the boat was out on the sea, and he was alone on the land. ⁴⁸ And he saw that they were distressed in rowing, for the wind was against them. And about the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. He meant to pass by them, ⁴⁹ but when they saw him walking on the sea they thought it was a ghost, and cried out; ⁵⁰ for they all saw him, and were terrified. But immediately he spoke to them and said, 'Take heart, it is I; have no fear.' ⁵¹ And he got into the boat with them and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded, ⁵² for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.

Healing the Sick in Gennesaret

⁵³ And when they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennes'aret, and moored to the shore. ⁵⁴ And when they got out of the boat, immediately the people recognized him, ⁵⁵ and ran about the whole neighbourhood and began to bring sick people on their pallets to any place where they heard he was. ⁵⁶ And wherever he came, in villages, cities, or country, they laid the sick in the market places, and besought him that they might touch even the fringe of his garment; and as many as touched it were made well.

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