

CATHOLIC NEWS in England & Wales Please see the Bishop's [website: https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/news-and-media/news/](https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/news-and-media/news/)

FR CHRIS'S THOUGHTS ON THE READINGS:

This Sunday we enter the heart of Lent after a few days of mental adjustment in the days after Ash Wednesday. We could say that we go into the desert with Our Lord for 40 days. This symbolic number represents a blessed period of time, a graced time, but always a time of **preparation, formation and of course choice** for a special moment. For us it is the choice to renew our Christian lives at Easter through our Baptismal promises. Lent focus is here whether for those who will be baptised for the first time or those like us who are already Christians. As St Peter says in his letter, we aim to renew our conscience through the power of the resurrection.

The desert is naturally a dangerous place that tests us in the struggle of survival but a place where many have mastered themselves and sought and found God over the centuries. The desert has great meaning for Israel. The 40 years in the desert are seen both as a blessed time when Israel came to know and love God like a couple on honeymoon but also a time of testing when Israel was tempted to give up in face of the difficulties and return to the imagined luxuries and ease of Egypt. It was a long period of formation to make of choice of life or death in the promised land. Through its temptations and indeed failures the People of God came to know God and themselves. In our first readings on the Sundays of Lent we will reprise Israel's story. It is also ours.

In our 40 days of Lent we will also face trial, testing and temptation but, please God, come to know God and his love for us freshly again. As Hosea says he lures us to the desert to renew our marriage bond with him. This is the overarching theme and aim to come close to God through Christ our Lord in the Holy Spirit. To rediscover with joy God's love for us and then to proclaim that love as missionary disciples. That is the perspective we need to have. God is wooing or courting us this Lent.

But there are dangers and temptation. Firstly, the Devil does not want this for us. He will fight against this. He will try to draw us from our purpose. We need to be aware of this. The prayer for Ash Wednesday alludes to this, framing Lent as a spiritual campaign in which we arm ourselves with the Spiritual weapons of prayer fasting and almsgiving. We must be prepared to face opposition as indeed Christ did in the desert. Why should we be any different? The tempter uses different tactics to divert our attention not least very plausible excuses for not doing various things and taunting us with our failures to give up. We also have the wild animals that assail us unbidden. This is perhaps our concupiscence our disordered appetites with our excessive desires for food and drink, comfort and ease and our emotional ones too. We should remember we are not in this alone. We are with the Lord and the Lord is with us and we are all together as a community. Our Lord never shied away from the obstacles for a disciple: we will share his cross each day. The road is not an easy one but remember we share the cross in order to know the power of the resurrection. It is the only way to do so. We see him victorious in this long 40 days over coming the trials. His victory is ours. Amidst our efforts this Lent we must above all keep our eyes fixed on him, the perfecter of our faith. Adam failed under temptation but Christ conquered. Our forebear is no longer Adam but Christ. Our Lord is preparing and forming us this Lent so that with full heart mind and soul we can say our yes to him at easter as we renew our baptismal promises.



Our Lady of Victories

Market Harborough

21st February 2021
First Week of Lent
Psalter Week 1

Parish Priest: Fr. Chris O'Connor
Tel: House: 01858 462359
Email: parishpriest@olvic.com
Convent: Presentation Sisters 01858-462432
Parish Website: www.olvic.com

Schools:
Parish Primary: St. Joseph's Academy 01858-465359.
Deanery Comprehensive: St. Paul's 0116 241 4057
Parish Accountant: Angela Wade: 0777 322 9041
Parish Gift Aid Organiser: Catherine Parry 01858 434959

Parish Pastoral Council Members: see photos on notice board

Diocese of Nottingham: Company Number 7151646 Charity Number: 1134449

Registered Address: Wilson House, 25 Derby Road, Nottingham, NG1 5AW

Times of Services

Sunday: 1st of Lent

Sat 6.00pm: Mass - Richard and Gillian Clutterbuck

9.00am: Mass: People of the Parish

11.00am: Mass: Lizzie Hamer RIP {Williamson}

Monday: The Chair of St Peter, Apostle

Private Mass: Mary Cunningham RIP 1st anniv (Lowe)

Tuesday: Lenten Feria

10.00am Mass: Kitty O'Reilly RIP (Wallace)

Wednesday: Lenten Feria

Private Mass: Bernadette Spicknell RIP (Roberts)

Thursday: Lenten Feria

Private Mass: Penda Kenny RIP (Sisters)

Friday: Lenten Feria

9.30am: STATIONS OF THE CROSS followed by

Public Mass: John Darcy RIP Anniv.

Saturday: Lenten Feria

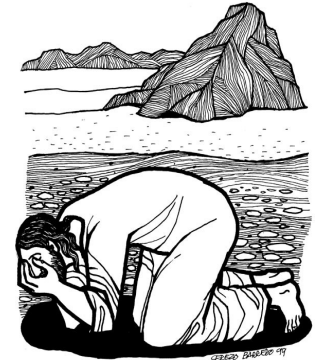
11.00am - Sacrament of Reconciliation - CONFESSION

6.00pm: First Mass of Sunday 7th March: Bokar & Nowakowski Families

Sunday: 2nd Sunday of Lent

9.00am: Mass: Sr Jenny Coyne OLC RIP (Reed)

11.00am: Mass: People of the Parish



*The kingdom
of God is close
at hand.*

BOOK NOW

PLEASE NOTE: YOU MUST PRE BOOK FOR OUR WEEKEND MASSES:

TO PRE BOOK TO COME TO MASS:

You can only make your booking on Thursday or Friday evenings between 5pm and 7pm.

(Please note just Thursday and Friday Now)

TO BOOK TO COME TO THE 6PM MASS, please ring Angela Wade on 01858 462293.

TO BOOK TO COME TO THE 9AM MASS, please ring Jo Shellard on 01858 440983.

TO BOOK TO COME TO THE 11AM MASS, please ring Stephen McGlone on 01858 465939.

FR CHRIS WRITES:

I hope your Lenten is going well if not it is never too late to begin. Simplicity and faithfulness are the key. To have a clear plan or aim and not to overdo things. For the monks moderation is the key and an abbot will often cut back penances monks are proposing to do. It is better to do something well rather than a lot badly. But I wish you many graces.

I gather that many have now received their vaccine shots for the Coronavirus and we pray that will make a difference and that our schools can begin to reopen and the businesses and shops of many begin to function again.

As a Parish we will be doing Stations of the cross before Friday Mass at 9.30am and also some zoom sessions on the Pope's letter on Holiness: see below:

FR. OWEN writes: I am now back in Harborough again for a few weeks convalescing at Peaker Park. Obviously I cannot see anybody whilst there because of COVID restrictions. I am taking FAMILY phone calls only. Thank you all for your prayers and love. Fr Owen is settling in well and is pleased to be out of hospital.



LENTEN SESSIONS ON DISCIPLESHIP AND HOLINESS: One of our ongoing themes as a diocese is that of deepening our **Discipleship** of Christ. Indeed missionary discipleship. I thought a good help for that would be the wonderful letter of our Holy Father Pope Francis on **"the Call to Holiness in today's world"** ([Gaudete et Exultate](#)) which is down to earth. I propose some prayerful sessions on Zoom to study the document or better put be inspired by it to discover how Our Lord is calling us to holiness as a disciple in our everyday life.

I propose **each Wednesday at 7.00pm to about 8.00pm or so. First session on the 1st Chapter) on Wednesday 24 February** : each one will be based around a Chapter of the Popes exhortation. There will be a prayerful reflection and Discussion on each Chapter. The Document can be down loaded from <http://w2.vatican.va> under Pope Francis and Apostolic exhortations or [click here](#). Google will find it.

There is an ebook too. If any need a printout I can do that too. Zoom link for the first session is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/77788110569?pwd=aDIKRxc0WG11MFFlaWZabXlZc2lRUT09>. Password olvic . I can email it to anyone who requests which is the easiest & safest way of doing it.



THE WORLD DAY OF PRAYER Service (formerly known as Women's world day of prayer) on the 5th March in this town has been postponed until a later date. For those who would still like to pray on the day of the World Day of Prayer or would like to follow a pre-recorded service on YouTube on the 5th March @1pm please contact Maureen Douglas 07966 515115 for a copy of the Order of Service in Standard, large print or braille. Thank you.

'WALK WITH ME ' PRAYER BOOKLETS have been produced for our Diocese by *Alive Publishing*. The cover *Lent and Eastertide* and help us to live these seasons of grace in a special way. They are a gift to all the Parishes to help us encounter Christ and live as his disciples more deeply this Lent.

Various online resources for lent and other times:

Knowing Jesus Online Retreat — Daily Prayer and reflection led by the Ignatian Spirituality Centre, option for group discussion: [Retreat Information: https://www.onlineprayer.net/](https://www.onlineprayer.net/)

Christian Heritage Centre — The Christian Heritage Centre, based in Stonyhurst, have a range of courses, talks and conferences aimed at: young adults, healthcare professionals, parishioners and more: [CHC Events. https://christianheritagecentre.com/events/](https://christianheritagecentre.com/events/)

Lenten Retreat on Hope — The Dominican Sisters of St Joseph will lead a weekly 45min talk on how we can find hope by looking at a different biblical character every week in Lent. Register here: [Finding Hope: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZetc-2grjkiGtU8vPFJea2ktvR5U0MZ1mrl](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZetc-2grjkiGtU8vPFJea2ktvR5U0MZ1mrl) ;

RECENT DEATHS IN THE PARISH: Alison Smith(nee Pratt) died last week. He funeral will be on Wednesday 3rd March at 10.00am.

THE DIOCESE OF NOTTINGHAM are proud to be supporting the Government's Kickstart scheme and are currently advertising the following opportunities within the Curial Team: ✓Office Junior (2 positions); ✓Finance Assistant (Office) (1 position) ; ✓Finance Assistant (OPAS) (1 position) . If you're aged 16-24, claiming Universal Credit and are interested in any of the above listed Kickstart roles, please speak to your work coach at the Jobcentre or apply on your Universal Credit Platform/App. Applications close 26th February 2021.

NOTTINGHAM 40 DAYS FOR LIFE 2021 is a peaceful and prayerful way to work for an end to abortion. In Nottingham Diocese, with the support of Bishop Patrick, we have prayed outside the abortion facility at the QMC during Lent for several years. Routine abortions no longer take place there so last year we prayed at the Stapleford Care Centre, which contains a BPAS abortion clinic, until the Covid lockdown meant that we could no longer pray outside the clinic. We completed the prayer campaign by praying at home.

During Lent from **17th February to 28th March**, people in our Diocese are invited to pray and fast for an end to abortion. We planned to return to Stapleford but are currently prevented from doing so by lockdown (although the abortion clinic continues to see women). So, we plan to start our 2021 campaign online.

You are invited to peacefully pray for an hour or more during a 40-day vigil running for 12 hours daily during Lent. Please **sign up now** to pray with us at 40daysforlife.com/nottingham, or you can contact us at 40daysforlifennots@gmail.com. Bishop Patrick will celebrate Mass for us on **Thursday 11th February** at the Cathedral at 7.00pm - if you live near Nottingham (and are not in a high-risk category) please do come. You can also follow the Mass online through the cathedral website.

CAFOD LENT FAST DAY, Friday 26th February: This year's appeal, entitled **WALK FOR WATER**, tells us about Abdella who lives in an extremely remote and mountainous, dry 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, and he is just one of many millions in the same situation. We urge everyone to go to www.cafod.org.uk/lent and play the video. It says more than words ever can.

During the weekend of 20/21 February, at all masses, we shall be telling the story of Abdella and his daily 10 hour walk in more detail and giving out CAFOD collection envelopes. Please make sure this week's parish newsletter is distributed as widely as possible, either by taking extra copies from church or printing them from the website and delivering to anyone you know who is not currently able to come to church and does not use the internet. Please, also, next week, take CAFOD envelopes to those same people.

Other ways to donate are: Text LENT 10 to **70460** to give £10 (enough for sturdy water containers to store clean water safely). To give a different amount change the number, e.g to give £20 text LENT 20, and so on.

Donate online at www.cafod.org.uk/lent or by phone, 0303 303 3030. By post, send a cheque to Freepost Plus RSSA-CLBY-TAAE, CAFOD, Romero House, 55 Westminster Bridge Road, LONDON, SE1 7JB. And don't forget, as always, if you are a taxpayer, please Gift Aid your donation to increase it by 25% with no extra cost to you. Any queries or to request an envelope please call Margaret Atkins, 01858 446369 or email margaretatkins52@gmail.com.