



Parish of Our Lay Help of Christians &
St Lawrence

39-41 West Street, Olney MK46 5HH

Diocese of Northampton

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20 th March 2022 Psalter Week 3	Third Sunday of Lent THE PARABLE OF THE BARREN FIG TREE	
First Reading	Exodus 3:1-8. 13-15 <i>I Am has sent me to you.</i>	
Responsorial Psalm	The Lord is compassion and love	
Second Reading	1 St Paul to the Corinthians – 10:1-6. 10-12 <i>The life of the people under Moses in the desert was written down to be a lesson for us</i>	
Gospel Acclamation	Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God! Repent says the Lord, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand. Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God!	
Gospel	Luke 13:1-9 <i>Unless you repent you will all perish as they did</i>	
Saturday 19 th March +	6.30pm	Vigil Mass – (For the Parish)
Sunday 20 th March +	10.30am	Mass – (Brian O'Connor RIP)
Monday 21 st March <i>Feria</i>	10.00am	Mass – (Katheen Mullen RIP)
Tuesday 22 nd March <i>Feria</i>	10.00am	Mass - (John Bugg RIP)
Wednesday 23 rd March St Thuribius of Mongrovejo - Commemoration		No Parish Mass today
Thursday 24 th March <i>Feria</i>	11.00am	Requiem Mass – Sr Francis Mary RIP
Friday 25 th March THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD – <i>Solemnity</i>	9.15am 10.00am 2.30pm	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament Mass – (Eileen Hollis RIP) Stations of the Cross
Saturday 26 th March <i>Feria</i>	10.00am 10.30am	Mass (Ann O'Connor RIP) Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT		
Saturday 16 th March +	6.30pm	Vigil Mass – (Josephine East RIP)
Sunday 27 th March +	10.30am	Mass – (For the Parish)



Requiescant in Pace

The Requiem Mass for Sr Francis Mary will be held here at Our Lady's this coming **Thursday at 11.00am**. We continue to pray for the repose of her soul, for her family and friends and especially the dear Sisters her at St Joseph's and at Burlington Hall.

Sadly, during the past week, we learned that Bernie Wogan had been called home to the Lord. We pray for the repose of his soul, for his dear wife Liz, for his family & friends and all of those who are grieving. The Requiem Mass for Bernie will be held here at Our Lady's on **Thursday 31st March at 11.00am**



Stations of the Cross

Throughout Lent we will be praying the 'Stations of the Cross' each Friday afternoon at 2.30pm finishing with Exposition at 3pm for 15 minutes of quiet prayer and reflection.



PARISH LENTEN APPEAL 2022 CHANGE FOR FOOD - CAFOD AFGHANISTAN

As you are aware the people of Afghanistan have suffered terribly over the last year. In these difficult conditions CAFOD remains active, providing all round support for the Afghan people. Please take a bottle of water and a pot of seeds, **which will be given out after Mass this weekend**. Pray for those who do not have access to basic food or water. Use the water to nourish the seeds, then fill the empty bottle with loose change and return it to Church the week of 24th April. Thank you for your generosity - **CAFOD Parish Group**

CAN YOU HELP PLEASE?

With the continuing crisis in Ukraine, the world is witnessing huge numbers of families, mainly women and children, fleeing their homes and country to find sanctuary. We have received this plea from one of our parishioners:

"I have a Ukrainian friend, Valerie, who is trying to flee her hometown because it is becoming increasingly dangerous due to Russian air raids. She is a young and very talented painter, conservator and an orthodox icon painter. I am able to provide her with paid conservation work so she is financially independent, but I was wondering if someone from the parish who lives in Olney might consider becoming her sponsor and offer her accommodation under the new sponsorship scheme. The sponsor will receive £350 a month for hosting a Ukrainian refugee. It is likely to be for a few months. Valerie will be leaving her parents and elderly grandmother behind, and I know it is a scary and uncertain time for all of them. She was unsure about leaving her home but her family feel very worried and want to see her out of harm's way".

If you can help or would like further information, please contact Fr David or Deacon Peter



Carlton Ukraine

The Trustees of Emmaus Village, Carlton have registered as an interested provider of accommodation for Ukrainian refugees. They have accommodation available and very much want to welcome refugees to our community. The Trustees are working with Caritas here in our Diocese, as well as the Local Authority, Carlton Parish Council, the local Church of England parish at Chellington and Fr David is very keen that our parish is involved in this initiative and we have 'signed up' to give whatever assistance we can. In the short time that Carlton Ukraine has been formed, a great deal of preparatory work has been done and work is going on at pace. We will of course keep you fully informed of the progress – **please watch this space!**

News from NYMO Northampton Youth Ministry Office

On **Saturday 9th April** - NYMO host a young adult brunch at the NYMO offices in Luton – no cost! If you are aged 18- 30yrs you are invited to join the team for a brunch and some incredible teaching. The brunch will start with food at 11.30am with prayer at 12.15pm and then teaching and discussion from 12.30 until 1.30pm, as we focus on the upcoming celebrations of Holy Week. You are welcome to just turn up but it will help with catering if you can let them know that you will be joining in – please contact them at info@nymo.org



Are you new to our Parish?

If you are new to our parish and haven't already done so, can you please contact our Parish Secretary, Denise Wallinger, in order that she can register you in the parish. You can contact Denise either by telephone: 01234 711212 or email: parish.olney@northamptondiocese.org



Bishop David Oakley

On Saturday 19th March, Bishop David celebrated the second anniversary of his ordination as the 13th Bishop of Northampton. We send our congratulations and offer up our prayers for Bishop David on this joyful occasion. We pray also for the repose of the soul of Bishop Leo McCartie, who on this same date in 1990 was installed as the 10th Bishop of Northampton. May he rest in peace.

"Have patience with all things, but first of all with yourself."

St Francis De Sales

Gospel Reflection – Luke 13: 1-9



In our Gospel reading today, Luke is developing the theme of repentance and its importance in our lives. We hear that familiar parable of the Fig Tree – a simple story of a man who noticed that his fig tree was not producing any fruit and as a result, he wanted to cut it down and burn it. However, the man in charge of the vineyard persuaded him to give the tree one more year – one more chance to nurture and encourage the tree to bear fruit. This parable should remind us all of Christ's mission here on earth – the reason that God sent His Son amongst us. It was to give us all another chance. Jesus came in search of the fruit of repentance to God but had found little response. And today, Jesus is seeking in each one of us our repentance to God – but what is our response? Does He find the fruit of repentance in our lives?

Lent, as we know, is a time of special grace from God – a time when we can, if we choose, take a long hard look at ourselves and the lives that we lead; a time when we can realise our relationship with God. If this Lenten season is to be truly meaningful for us, it must also be a time when, having realised the frailty of that relationship, we bring our sins before God seeking His forgiveness with a sincere heart – taking up God's offer of another chance.

Lent is also a time when we ponder the cross on which Christ died and it is important for us to reflect on the way in which we ourselves face up to the many crosses that we face in our daily lives. We can go some way in achieving this by offering some form of self-denial or some other form of sacrifice during Lent but this in itself is only worthwhile if whatever our Lenten observance may be, it must be done in order to help us turn to God in prayer; to focus our minds on God and to raise our hearts in a sincere desire for Him. For that is the one thing that God wants of us – that we should be close to Him as He is close to us.

Throughout this Lent, there is a real and urgent need for us to identify our weaknesses – those times when we choose to separate ourselves from God through sin. And if we do this with sincerity, then through our weakness will come strength – strength because we will most surely be closer to God – we can see this in Christ's passion, death and resurrection.

Whenever I meditate on the Stations of the Cross, I am often drawn to the soldier who, immediately after Jesus had died on the cross, looked up at the body of Christ and said, *"Truly, this man was the Son of God"*. When only moments before, this very same soldier had been heavily involved in flogging, beating, humiliating Christ and may even have been responsible for hammering the nails into Christ's hands and feet. But now we see a repentant man, a man stricken with grief – but what has changed him? Maybe that one more chance God has given us all – it is never too late for us to repent and seek God's forgiveness.

On Good Friday we too will gaze up at that cross on which Christ died – as a result of our Lenten observance and that one more chance God gives us all, will we be able to say, *"Truly, this man was the Son of God"*.

May Our Lady, Help of Christians, Our Lady of Zarvaniza, St Joseph, St Lawrence, St John Henry Newman, St Rita, St Edmund, St Thuribius, pray for us all.

With our love and prayers,

Fr David and Deacon Peter