



**Parish of Our Lady Help of Christians & St Lawrence**

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**Diocese of Northampton**

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19 <sup>th</sup> March 2023 Psalter Week 4	Fourth Sunday of Lent (Year A) Laetare Sunday	
<b>First Reading</b>	<b>Samuel 16:1 6-7. 10-13</b> <i>David is anointed king of Israel</i>	
<b>Responsorial Psalm</b>	<b>The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.</b>	
<b>Second Reading</b>	<b>St Paul to the Ephesians 5:8-14</b> <i>Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.</i>	
<b>Gospel Acclamation</b>	<b>Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God! I am the light of the world, says the Lord; anyone who follows me will have the light of life. Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God!</b>	
<b>Gospel</b>	<b>John 9:1-41</b> <i>He went off and washed himself and came away with his sight restored.</i>	
<b>Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March +</b>	<b>5.45pm</b> <b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Confession</b> <b>Vigil Mass (For the Parish)</b>
<b>Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> March +</b>	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Mass (McCarthy family Int.)</b>
<b>Monday 20<sup>th</sup> March</b> <b>ST JOSEPH – Spouse of the BVM</b> <i>Solemnity</i>		<b>No Parish Mass today</b>
<b>Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March</b> <i>Feria</i>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Mass – (Brian O'Connor RIP)</b>
<b>Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March</b> <i>Feria</i>	<b>9.15am</b> <b>10.00am</b>	<b>Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament</b> <b>Mass – (John Bugg RIP)</b>
<b>Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March</b> <b>St Thuribius of Mongrovejo - Comm</b>	<b>6.15pm</b> <b>7.00pm</b>	<b>Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament</b> <b>Mass – (Kathleen McCarthy RIP)</b>
<b>Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March</b> <i>Feria</i>	<b>9.15am</b> <b>10.00am</b> <b>3.00pm</b>	<b>Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament</b> <b>Mass – (Brian Barrett RIP)</b> <b>Stations of the Cross</b>
<b>Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> March</b> <b>THE ANNUCIATION OF THE LORD -</b> <i>Solemnity</i>	<b>10.00am</b> <b>10.30am-</b> <b>11.30am</b>	<b>Mass – (Eileen Harris RIP)</b> <b>Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament</b> <b>with Confession available</b>
<b>FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT</b>		
<b>Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> March +</b>	<b>5.45 pm</b> <b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Confession</b> <b>Vigil Mass (For the Parish)</b>
<b>Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> March +</b>	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Mass (Ann O'Connor RIP)</b>



**Bishop David** - The Solemnity of St Joseph, husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary, is transferred this year to **Monday 20th March**. Bishop David was ordained Bishop of Northampton on this solemnity in 2020 and this year we mark three years of his episcopal ministry. Mass for the Solemnity of St Joseph will be celebrated by Bishop David in the **Cathedral at 12 noon on Monday 20th March** followed by refreshments in the St Thomas Centre afterwards. All are welcome. Please continue to hold Bishop David in your prayers. **Ad multos annos**



**Sr Hannah Sullivan DHS – RIP** – we were all truly saddened to learn of the death of dear Sr Hannah. Her Requiem Mass will be celebrated here at Our Lady's at on **Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> April at 11am**. Please do continue to pray for the repose of her soul and for comfort for her family, friends and of course the Sisters here at St Joseph's & those at Burlington Hall.

**Stations of the Cross** - Throughout Lent, we will be praying the 'Stations of the Cross' here at Our Lady's each **Friday afternoon at 3pm** – everyone welcome.



**LORD, TEACH US HOW TO PRAY** – The final talk in our series of talks for Lent about prayer will be held on **Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March**. – what prayer is and some different kinds of prayer, how we can learn to pray, and what we can use to help us to pray. Fr David will lead the talks but there will be time for questions and discussion as well. The talk will begin at **7.30pm** after 7.00pm Mass. Everyone is welcome!

**MOVING ON** - Many of you will have heard the news that **Sr Delia Mullooly, Sr Mae Hanrahan** and **Sr Margaret Abbot** will be moving to Lucan near Dublin in Ireland on 27<sup>th</sup> March. We are very sad to see them leave our parish as they have been a blessed presence amongst us and we are all grateful for their friendship, support, and contribution to us here. We wish them every blessing on this new phase of their consecrated lives and pray that the Holy Spirit will guide them into paths of ever greater fruitfulness and joy.

**WE WELCOME Sr Eileen Gorman** who has arrived to take up the reins from Sr Delia and wish her all the best as she takes up her new role and moves into her new home.

**MK FOODBANK** – we continue to be very grateful for your generous donations to the MK Foodbank – particularly during these very difficult times for families & individuals.

**OFFERTORY ENVELOPES** - The new offertory envelopes are ready for collection. If anyone new to the parish would like a set, please contact Denise.

**BRITISH SUMMER TIME** - although the weather outside may not be very 'spring-like' a reminder that the clocks will go **forward next Sunday, 26<sup>th</sup> March at 1am**.

**MASS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER – 7pm Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> April** – we are looking for six volunteers – 3 Male + 3 Female – for the Washing of the Feet during the Mass. If you would like to assist, please contact Denise.

**MK CHORALE – SPRING CONCERT** – The MK Chorale will be performing Bach's St John's Passion at Christ the Cornerstone, Central Milton Keynes MK9 2ES on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> March starting at 6.30pm. Further information and tickets: [www.ticketsource.co.uk/mkchorale](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/mkchorale)

**Ben Everitt MP** representing Milton Keynes North – a recent amendment to the Buffer Zone Bill was laid before Parliament. This would have permitted silent prayer and consensual conversations within the buffer zones. Although many MPs voted in favour of this amendment, sadly Mr Everitt did not.



### **ST JOSEPH – Spouse of the BVM**

A comparison can be made between Joseph and the whole Church of Christ. Joseph was the specially chosen man through whom and under whom Christ entered the world fittingly and in an appropriate way. So, if the whole Church is in the debt of the Virgin Mary, since, through her, it was able to receive the Christ, surely after her, it also owes to Joseph special thanks and veneration.

*Extract from the sermons of St Bernardine of Siena*



*Thought for the Week:* Our Father! Let us repeat this prayer often during Lent; let us repeat it with deep emotion. By calling God "Our Father," we will better realise that we are his children and feel that we are brothers and sisters of one another. **Pope St John Paul II**



**Gospel Reflection** - In our Gospel today we hear the familiar story of how Jesus gives sight to the blind man. Unless you happen to be blind, we might think that this Gospel story has no relevance for us. It is precisely because we can see that it has relevance for us – the question is how well do we see.

For us to see well good eyesight alone is not sufficient – we must not think that blindness affects only the eyes. There are many forms of blindness besides physical blindness; in many ways these are just as crippling: SELFISHNESS blinds us to the needs of others – INSENSITIVITY blinds us to the hurt we cause to others; SNOBBERY blinds us to the equal dignity of



others; PRIDE can blind us to the truth; THE PACE of our lives can blind us to the beauty of the earth around us; MATERIALISM blinds us to spiritual values. It is not only with our eyes that we see – we also ‘see’ with our minds.

Just a few weeks ago we heard the Gospel story of The Transfiguration when Jesus took Peter, James, and John to the top of Mount Tabor and there saw a brief glimpse of God and Peter telling Jesus “*Lord, it is wonderful for us to be here.*” Peter knew what it was that he had seen and recognised that it was God. Compare this with our own lives – how often do we get a ‘glimpse of God’? How often do we recognise what it is we are seeing or do we simply turn our backs on God.

We are constantly being reminded that we were born sinners and indeed will remain sinners all our life – this can often affect the way we live our lives – we can become despondent and disillusioned. We are not sinners trying to become holy – it is not that way round – we were created holy but have become sinners – there remains holiness within us. Our task in life is to ensure that our holiness becomes ever greater each day and we can achieve this by ‘opening our eyes’ – by seeing God as He really is – by being drawn ever closer to him.

The Church teaches us to spend some time at the end of each day reflecting on the sins we have committed that day but we must also reflect on the many graces that we have received during each day - those glimpses of God – it is only when we do this that we see the hope of our salvation. But what of those times when we see God but fail to recognise Him? Those times when we go our own way thinking that we know best. Those times when we find it too easy to give up. How do we deal with those who are unjust with us? Are we always prepared to shoulder a particular heavy weight or burden of our own or someone else’s?

A Mother Superior once said to a member of her community who was grumbling about the cross that she had to carry – “*Don’t drag your cross – carry it.*”

Our heavenly Father knows each one of us inside and out – He knows the difficulties that face us each day – He knows that we will stop loving Him again and again but that He will never stop loving us – it is for this reason that He has given us the Sacrament of Confession for us to use time and time again – to restore our holiness our closeness to Him.

Lent is a special time of grace and preparation – preparation for the great joy of Easter when we celebrate the risen Christ – our Saviour. Have no fear of Confession – there is no sin; no sin whatsoever that cannot be laid before God seeking His forgiveness – come to Confession and restore your vision in God.

Ponder the closing paragraph in today’s Gospel – Jesus’ words to the Pharisees are chilling: They claim not to be blind but Jesus simply says to them, “*Blind? If you were, you would not be guilty, but since you say, ‘We see,’ your guilt remains.*”

May Our Lady Help of Christians, Our Lady of Peace, St Lawrence, St Joseph, St Rita, St John Henry Newman, St Thurribius pray for us all.

*With our love and prayers to you all - Fr David, Fr Patrick & Deacon Peter*