



Parish of Our Lady Help of Christians & St Lawrence

39-41 West Street, Olney MK46 5HH - 01234 711212

Parish Priest: Fr David B Barrett

frdavid.barrett@northamptondiocese.org

Fr Patrick Hutton - Retired

Deacon: Rev Peter Griffin – 07850 499414

deaconpeter.griffin@northamptondiocese.org

Parish Website: www.ourladysolney.co.uk

Parish Secretary: Denise Wallinger

parish.olney@northamptondiocese.org

St Joseph's Convent – Sr Eileen Gorman DHS - 01234 711267

Parish Safeguarding: Janet Goodland

safeguarding.olney@northamptondiocese.org

SVP Contact: 07469 717760

11th February 2024 <i>Psalter Week: 1</i>	<i>Sixth Sunday of the Year</i>	
First Reading	Leviticus 13:1-2. 44-46 <i>The leper must live apart: he must live outside the camp.</i>	
Responsorial Psalm	You are my refuge, O Lord; you fill me with the joy of salvation.	
Second Reading	1 St Paul to the Corinthians 10:31 – 11:1 <i>Take me for your model, as I take Christ.</i>	
Gospel Acclamation	Alleluia, Alleluia! May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ enlighten the eyes of our mind, so that we can see what hope his call holds for us. Alleluia!	
Gospel	Mark 1:40-45 <i>The leprosy left him at once and he was cured.</i>	
Saturday 10th February +	6.30pm	Vigil Mass - (For the Parish)
Sunday 11th February +	10.30am	Mass – (Sharonne van Reyk RIP)
Monday 12th February <i>Feria</i>		No Parish Mass today
Tuesday 13th February <i>Feria</i>	10.00am	Mass – (Eion Farrell RIP)
The Season of Lent		
Ash Wednesday 14th February Day of Fasting & Abstinence	10.00am 7.00pm	Mass – (Maryanne van Arkadie RIP) Mass – (Janet Whelan RIP)
Thursday 15th February <i>Lent Feria</i>		No Parish Mass today
Friday 16th February <i>Lent Feria</i>	10.00am 2.30pm	Mass – (Rena McGarry RIP) Stations of the Cross
Saturday 17th February Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order - Commemoration		No Parish Morning Mass
<i>First Sunday of Lent</i>		
Saturday – 17th February +	5.45pm 6.30pm	Confession Vigil Mass – (Shaunagh Harte RIP)
Sunday – 18th February +	10.30am	Mass – (Family & Friends of the Ayles families)

Last Sunday's Collection

Offertory: £334.50

DCP – £30.00

Average Standing Orders: £464.00

Total: £828.50

Second Collection: LEPR - £250.00

Pastoral Letter Sixth Sunday of Ordinary Time 'Journeying Towards a Jubilee Year'

A Pastoral Letter from Bishop David will be read out at both Masses this weekend. A copy of the letter can be viewed on the Parish website under the 'Pastoral Letters' tab.

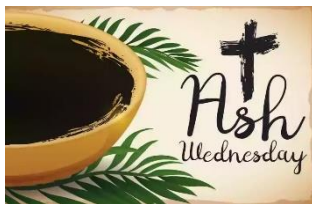
Thank You

to everyone who joined us for the 'Afternoon Tea' last Friday afternoon – it was a most joyous occasion. Special thanks to our parish SVP volunteers and all who helped to organise and prepare this event – our parish is truly blessed!



CATHOLIC GRANDPARENTS' ASSOCIATION *Passing on the Faith*

The first of our meetings of the Catholic Grandparents Association took place here at Olney on Wednesday 31st January. It was a good opportunity to pray, relax and chat about things that were important for all present. The next meeting will be on **Wednesday 28th February at 2.00pm. Everyone is welcome!**



ASH WEDNESDAY – will be on **Wednesday 14th February**. As is usual, Mass will be celebrated here at Our Lady's at **10am and 7pm** with the distribution of ashes at both Masses. Whilst not a Holy Day of Obligation it remains a most fitting way to begin our Lenten Journey.



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Stations of the Cross

Throughout Lent we will be praying the 'Stations of the Cross' each **Friday** afternoon at **2.30pm** here at Our Lady's – please do come if you can.

ROSARY GATHERING IN HONOUR OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES will be held outside Christ the Cornerstone church, 300 Saxon Gate West, Milton Keynes on **Monday 12th February at 6.00pm**. All will be welcome.

Helping Hands – Fr David & Deacon Peter continue to be very grateful to everyone who has put themselves forward to offer their help and support with a variety of activities within the parish – already their efforts are giving some very positive results. One area where we would like some further support please is with the cleaning of the church. It would be very good if we could aim at giving the church a thorough clean once per month. If you are able help or require further information, please contact Julia Scott julia_scott22@yahoo.co.uk as they say, ‘Many hands make light work.’



Something special for Lent: 'Laudato Si' Study Group

Pope Francis's ground-breaking encyclical letter 'Laudato Si', written in 2015 and addressed to the whole world, is subtitled 'Care for our Common Home' and explores what is happening to God's creation, our environment. If you would like to learn more about it and be part of a discussion group that will meet initially on **Tuesday**

20 February, the first Tuesday in Lent, at 7.30 pm in the parish hall, please add your name to the Sign-Up sheet in the church porch (narthex) or email graham-ryan@sky.com. Everyone is welcome.



Sacramental Preparation

Please do keep the young people of parish who are preparing themselves for the Sacraments of Reconciliation; Holy Communion and Confirmation very much in your daily prayers asking the Holy Spirit to guide and protect them.



Light up Lent! 29th February – 7th March

Light up Lent is a week of accompanied prayer, a retreat in everyday life. Begin or deepen your prayer life, get to know the Scriptures better and above all grow in faith and in love for the Lord who loves you. With one-one support each day for a week via Zoom from an experience's prayer guide. The first webinar is **Thursday 1st February 7.30pm until 8.30pm**. <https://pastoralministryoffice.org/event/lightuplent/>



PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES 24TH MAY TO 31ST MAY

Organised by the Society of Our Lady of Lourdes (SOLL), this pilgrimage is open to anyone who wishes to visit the shrine of Lourdes where Our Lady appeared to St Bernadette in 1858. It is a place of prayer and of healing. This is a well-organised retreat, with possibilities for those who need physical assistance to attend, with 24 hour medical care and support if needed. There is a full spiritual programme but also opportunities for fun and friendship. Financial support and grants are also available. If you would like to know more, please contact one of our parishioners who is very involved in organising these pilgrimages: **Danny Murphy** on **07715 336078**. You will find a poster in the church porch.

Reflection on Ash Wednesday

Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster
9th February 1976 – 17th June 1999



Lent begins on Ash Wednesday. The day before is known as ‘Shrove Tuesday’ or ‘Mardi Gras’, two important titles. The former comes from the Middle English word *shriven*, ‘confession’, and refers to the going to confession in preparation for Lent. ‘Mardi Gras,’ a French phrase literally meaning ‘Fat Tuesday,’ stems from the practice of celebrating the last day before the rigours of Lent set in. It was a day of carnival, from the Latin *carnevalarium*, ‘removal of meat,’ when many of the foods that could not be eaten during the Lenten fast were used up.

The name ‘Ash Wednesday’ refers to the practice of placing ashes on the forehead on this day as a sign of repentance. The sign of the cross is made with the ashes and one of two prayers is said: “Remember, you are dust and unto dust you will return” or “Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel.” In this spirit the Season of Lent begins.

In his Ash Wednesday homily at Westminster Cathedral in 1977, Cardinal Hume said, “I will admit to you that the Ash Wednesday ceremony, the blessing, and distribution of the ashes, is, of all the ceremonies in the year, the one that I do with the least enthusiasm. It is rather a chilling ceremony, but it shows the realism of the Church and reminds us very bluntly and very starkly that we are ashes and unto ashes we shall return. It is a chilling thought but a very salutary one. So, although I recognise that it is not my favourite ceremony, I recognise just how important that reminder is. So, during Lent there is always a process of turning more to God and therefore away from those things that separate us from God, or interrupt our service of Him – indeed our love of Him.

A turning to God. Therefore, how important it is in planning our Lent that there should be resolutions of a very positive nature. It was St Paul who said, ‘*God loves a cheerful giver*’ and cheerfulness is a characteristic of a real Christian. So let our Lent be not only cheerful, but deeply joyous, because we have determined to turn to God, and we know that to turn to God is to receive an outpouring of his love, then we are at peace and can be useful instruments in His service.

Grant, O Lord, that we may begin with holy fasting this campaign of Christian service, so that as we take up battle against spiritual evils, we may be armed with weapons of self-restraint.

Collect, Ash Wednesday, The Roman Missal

May Our Lady Help of Christians, Our Lady of Peace, Our Lady of Lourdes, St Lawrence, St Joseph, St Rita, St John Mary Vianney, St John Henry Newman, St Cyril & Methodius, Seven Fonders of the Servite Order pray for us.

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