



Parish of Our Lady Help of Christians & St Lawrence

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Parish Priest: Fr David B Barrett

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Fr Patrick Hutton - Retired

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Parish Website: [www.ourladyolney.co.uk](http://www.ourladyolney.co.uk)

Parish Secretary: Denise Wallinger

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

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18 <sup>th</sup> February 2024 Psalter Week: 1	First Sunday of Lent (Year B)		
First Reading	Genesis 9:8-15 <i>God's Covenant with Noh after he had saved him from the waters of the flood.</i>		
Responsorial Psalm	Your ways, Lord, are faithfulness and love for those who keep your covenant.		
Second Reading	1 St Peter 3:18-22 <i>That water is a type of the baptism which saves you now.</i>		
Gospel Acclamation	Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory! Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!		
Gospel	Mark 1:12-15 <i>Jesus was tempted by Satan, and the angels looked after him.</i>		
Saturday 17 <sup>th</sup> February +	6.30pm	Vigil Mass - (Shaunagh Harte RIP)	
Sunday 18 <sup>th</sup> February +	10.30am	Mass – (Family & Friends of the Ayles families)	
Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> February <i>Lent Feria</i>		No Parish Mass today	
Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup> February <i>Lent Feria</i>	10.00am	Mass – (Foundation Mass – Renne)	
Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> February St Peter Damian – Bishop & Doctor		No Parish Mass today	
Thursday 22 <sup>nd</sup> February The Chair of St Peter Apostle	10.00am	Service of Word & Holy Communion	
Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> February St Polycarp, Bishop & Martyr	9.15am 10.00am 2.30pm	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament Mass – (Francis & Hannah Hannon RIP) Stations of the Cross	
Saturday 24 <sup>th</sup> February <i>Lent Feria</i>	10.00am 10.30am	Mass – (Ludwik & Ruth Grabowiecki RIP) Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament With Rosary & Confessions	
Second Sunday of Lent			
Saturday – 24 <sup>th</sup> February +	5.45pm 6.30pm	Confession Vigil Mass – (For the Parish)	
Sunday – 25 <sup>th</sup> February +	10.30am	Mass – (Bridie Keenan RIP)	

## Last Sunday's Collection

Offertory: £331.70

DCP – £40.00

Average Standing Orders: £464.00

**Total: £835.70**



### CAFOD Family Fast Day Friday 23rd February

This Family Fast Day CAFOD encourages us to live simply and support hardworking fishing families living on the coast of Liberia West Africa. James is a skilled fisherman making journeys to sea in rough waters without the right tools and safety equipment, often coming home empty handed and no other way of earning an income to provide for his family. With your support CAFOD can provide families with a compass, life jacket, a GPS fish finder to track fish and find safety in a storm, and a cooler to stop fish rotting at sea thus bringing more fish ashore to sell. **Family Fast Day envelopes will be handed out this weekend 17/18 February and your donation collected the following weekend 24/25 February.** If you are a UK Taxpayer, please do consider completing the declaration on the flap of the envelope – if you wish you can detach this & slip it into the envelope. Thank you for your continued generosity.



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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.

**Helping Hands** – We need support with the cleaning of the church. At the moment there is only a small team doing this. We have a beautiful church but it needs a thorough clean once per month. If you are able help or require further information, please contact Julia Scott: [julia\\_scott22@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:julia_scott22@yahoo.co.uk) as they say, 'Many hands make light work.'



### Something special for Lent: 'Laudato Si' Study Group

Our parish study group on Pope Francis's encyclical letter 'Laudato Si', written to encourage care for God's creation, our environment, will meet this **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](mailto:graham-ryan@sky.com). Everyone is

welcome.

**TRAINING FOR EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION** To complete training for giving out Holy Communion at Mass and to the sick, we will have a final training session **on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> March at 11.30am**, aiming to end by 1.00pm.



## CATHOLIC GRANDPARENTS' ASSOCIATION

### Passing on the Faith

The first of our meetings of the Catholic Grandparents Association took place here at Olney on Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> 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 28<sup>th</sup> February at 2.00pm**. Everyone is welcome!

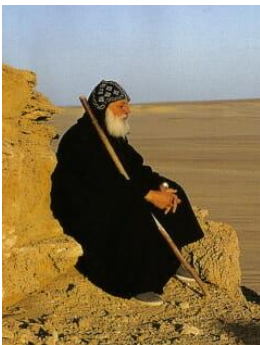


**Society for the Protection of Unborn Children** **Thank you from SPUC** - to everyone who responded to our last call to action on Diana Johnson and Stella Creasy's amendments to the Criminal Justice Bill, with the aim of decriminalising abortion. On 25 January 2024, these amendments were debated at Committee stage and withdrawn. **But the danger is not over.** Diana Johnson has now tabled a very similar amendment (New Clause 1), in the hope that it will be debated by MPs at Report stage. This amendment seeks to change criminal law so that "no offence is committed by a woman acting in relation to her own pregnancy" at any gestation. A woman who induced her abortion at home using pills (or any other method) at any stage of pregnancy, including just before natural birth, would not commit a crime. There is still time to defeat this amendment. **The earliest it could be debated is 4<sup>th</sup> March**, which means there is time to lobby MPs and rally public opinion. Please contact your MP, asking them to oppose and vote against Diana Johnson's New Clause 1 to the Criminal Justice Bill. If you can, write a handwritten letter to your MP. **Writing a personal, physical letter to your MP is one of the most effective ways to be a pro-life influence on him or her.**



**RIGHT TO LIFE UK** Ask your MP to support the abortion time limit reduction amendment to reduce our abortion time limit from 24 weeks to 22 weeks. Research indicates that a significant number of babies born at 22 or 23 weeks can now survive outside the womb, leaving a contradiction in our abortion law. Please collect a **postcard today from the back of the church** and post it to your MP urgently in support of this amendment!

**WELCOME TO THE SEMINARIANS OF THE NEO-CATECHUMENAL WAY** These seminarians and students will be visiting our parish this coming Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February and will join us for Mass at 10.00am. They reside at Redemptoris Mater House in London and study at Allen Hall Seminary where Fr David works. They are coming to enjoy a day out in our beautiful parish.



*Thought for the week - Our soul is like a garden in which the weeds are ever ready to choke the good plants and flowers that have been sown in it. If the gardener who has charge of this garden neglects it, if he is not continually using the spade and the hoe, the flowers and plants will soon disappear."*

St John Mary Vianney – Curé d' Ars

## LENT REFLECTION WEEK ONE



Throughout our time in the desert this Lent, Bishop David will accompany us each week with a short reflection on the Sunday's Gospel. You can access these reflections vis the diocesan website:

<https://northamptondiocese.org/>

**From Bishop David's Desk...** This year, we hear a very short account of Jesus' time in the wilderness. In fact, unlike the Gospels of Matthew and Luke,

Mark does not give us any detail of the temptations Jesus faced during this time in the desert. Maybe there is something very helpful to us in this. We do not have the power to change stones into bread. We would be very foolish to try throwing ourselves off high places, in the hope we would be caught by angels. And then, isn't every sin a bowing down to worship our enemy? We are simply told that our Lord was 'tempted by Satan.' I love these encouraging words from the Letter to the Hebrews, '*For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*' - (Hebrews: 4.15-16)

We are not disciples of a Lord who stands apart from our weakness and temptations. But Jesus has overcome these temptations. And this means a powerful grace for ourselves. It means we can drink deeply from the mercy he has won for us on the throne of his glorious Cross. What we hear in today's Gospel is very much part of our heavenly Father's loving plan of salvation. Because of the Fall, humanity fell from the life of grace. We lost our relationship of intimacy with God. And let us be honest here, we struggle to get along with each other most of the time. And so, God found a way to bring us back home. The Holy Spirit drove Jesus out into the wilderness. This sounds a bit more than just a suggestion or a hint. Jesus is compelled to go out into the desert with the loving obedience of a Heart that is totally focused on the Father's will. And this becomes our vision for the Season of Lent. This is a time of great blessing. What a gift is offered us over the coming days.

Jesus was with the wild beasts. It is relatively safe to be a Christian in our part of the world. Sadly, this is not so for every disciple of the Lord. And it wasn't for those first Christians who read this Gospel. They were being persecuted and martyred for their faith by the Roman authorities. They were keeping company with wild beasts in the circuses of the Empire. But then we hear something else. We hear what happens when Jesus' forty days in the wilderness were over. Jesus began his Galilean ministry. He proclaimed the good news of the Kingdom. The work of bringing home the lost and suffering begins. And this work continues today. And this mission is our task today. I truly hope and pray, we all have a blessed and grace-filled Lent this year.

+Bishop David

May Our Lady Help of Christians, Our Lady of Peace, St Lawrence, St Joseph, St Peter (Apostle), St Rita, St John Mary Vianney, St John Henry Newman, St Peter Damian, pray for us.

*With our Love & prayers to you all, Fr David, Fr Patrick & Deacon Peter*

