

## Second Sunday of Lent, 25 February 2024

**"There in their presence he was transfigured."**

Have you ever spent ages trying to figure something out, only to have a flash of inspiration just when you have forgotten all about it? Some people call it "a lightbulb moment". Often it happens when we least expect because lightbulb moments come from the unconscious mind. We cannot bring them on, but we can welcome them all the same. Sudden clarity may lead to a burst of energy or renewed sense of purpose.

**The eighteenth-century British engineer James Brindley often had to rely upon inspiration. He was the first of the great canal-builders, pioneering techniques that had never been attempted before. Whenever Brindley met with a problem, he would take to his bed until a solution sprang to mind! One of his lightbulb moments was a simple but brilliant idea called "contouring". Building canals through hillsides involved earth-moving on a massive scale. It suddenly occurred to him... why cut through the hill when you can go round it?**

Lightbulb moments are not confined to engineering. It is possible to have a lightbulb moment about a person. We may suddenly see someone "in a new light", as they say. It is not that they have changed in any way. More likely, we have by spending more time with them, or listening more attentively to what they are saying.

Peter, James, and John saw Jesus in a new light, literally so, when they accompanied him onto the Mount of Transfiguration. Mountaintops in the Bible are places of revelation; of encounter with God. It was on a mountain that Elijah called down fire from heaven; on a mountain that Moses received the Commandments. Coming down from the mountaintop, the face of Moses shone.

**People had been speculating whether Jesus might be another Moses... or Elijah ... or even John the Baptist come back to life. The disciples were unsure. Their confidence in Jesus had been shaken recently. His earlier popularity seemed to be waning, and he kept talking about suffering and death. Then, suddenly, here on the mountain, they saw him speaking with Moses and Elijah. He was radiant with light. It was wonderful for their Master to be in such company. Peter even offered to build shelters, assuming the prophets to have come back to life.**

It was then that the realisation struck. Jesus' dazzling appearance was not reflected glory coming from Moses or Elijah: the light was coming out of him through the weave of his clothing! If they had had any doubts about whether Jesus ranked alongside these greatest of prophets, those doubts were now banished! Jesus was far greater: he was divine! Wonder turned to terror as the disciples found themselves enveloped in the bright cloud of God's presence and heard the Father's voice bestowing upon their Master a unique authority: "This is my beloved Son, listen to him!" By this time, Moses and Elijah had faded from view. It was hardly surprising... the disciples had eyes for no one but Jesus.

The mountaintop can be a metaphor for any transitional space where things... or people... are seen from a new perspective. We do not have to climb mountains for this to happen. A time of prayerful meditation can offer such a space. This Lent, we may like to spend time alone with Jesus, just as Peter, James and John did, listening to him as our heavenly Father bids us. The thought may not appeal to everyone. Some might even share the disciples' terror, for the voice of Jesus can be a challenging one, urging us to forgive and pray for our enemies. It commands us to love, and there may be something inside us that resists. Rather than build Jesus a shelter, some might prefer something more robust: to keep him safely contained!

**However, it is not possible to compartmentalise our lives. The bright cloud of God's glory reaches out to wherever we may be. Today's Gospel describes how heaven keeps spilling**

over into our world. In revealing Jesus in his divinity, it calls us, too, to be holy as well as human. We are all sons and daughters of God, all beloved, and though we may pass unnoticed in a crowd, there is in each one of us a little of the glory seen in Jesus. There will be moments when other people notice something different about us; moments, too, when we become suddenly aware that the person next to us is more special than we thought. It all depends how much we let them shine!

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**Welcome** and thank you to Fr Joseph Balaswamy for celebrating the Saturday evening and Sunday morning Masses this weekend.

**Fr Sidon Sagar.** Please keep Fr Sidon in your prayers as he enjoys a break with his family.

**CAFOD Family Fast Day, Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February.** We take up a retiring collection for CAFOD at all Masses this weekend. You will find the donation envelopes in the narthex.

This Lent, your donations will help hardworking people like James the fisherman in Liberia with resources, tools and training to feed their families for good. Make your donation using the envelope or online at [cafod.org.uk](http://cafod.org.uk) and please join us in praying with James that our sisters and brothers around the world have what they need to feed their families. Use the envelope in church or give online at [cafod.org.uk](http://cafod.org.uk). To find out about volunteering opportunities with CAFOD visit [Volunteer \(cafod.org.uk\)](http://Volunteer.cafod.org.uk)

**Lenten Service of Reconciliation here at St Michael's is on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March at 7.00 pm** and at **St David's Stanwell on Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at 7.00 pm.**

**Weekday Mass.** Mass this week on Monday (9.15am) and Wednesday (6.00pm) will be in St Joseph's Chapel.

**Stations of the Cross on Fridays in Lent at 7.00pm.**

**Eucharistic Holy Hour** – No Holy Hour on the first Fridays during Lent as there will be Stations of the Cross. Holy Hour will resume after Easter.

**Feast of St David, Friday 1st March.** St David's Parish, Stanwell celebrates their patronal feast at the 7.00pm Mass on Friday. All are welcome to attend.

**Collection for the Latin Patriarch** (for the people of Gaza). Thank you for your generosity in your donations of £437.27 for the people of Gaza.

**Marian Year, 11<sup>th</sup> February to 20<sup>th</sup> November, 2024.** We, the Sons of Divine Providence, are celebrating the Marian Year and invite you to join us to celebrate the year with devotion and veneration to Mary, Mother of God. *We will recite the Orionine Marian Year Prayer after Mass each day – you will find prayer cards in the narthex.*

**Repository.** On sale now Mother's Day cards and St Patrick's cards and badges. There are still a few calendars and diaries left.

**Mass Intentions.** If you wish to book a Mass, please drop your intention envelope in the box at the back of the church in the offertory collection or through the presbytery letterbox. *Please use the new blue donation envelopes if you are able to make your Mass offering under Gift Aid.*

**Bucket Collection.** The Bucket Collection is for TALK Surrey – *supporting people with Aphasia after a stroke or brain injury.* You will find the donations box in the wall at the back of the church.

**Annual Mass of Thanksgiving for the Sacrament of Matrimony at Westminster Cathedral on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 2:30pm.** The Cardinal is inviting to this Mass all couples in the Diocese, who are celebrating their **5<sup>th</sup> 10<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>, 40<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup> and 60<sup>th</sup> (and every year over 60)** wedding anniversary of Catholic marriage in 2024. If you are celebrating an anniversary, please give Shenda in the parish office the following details: husband and wife's names, wedding date, full postal address and email (or telephone number, if no email) by **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2024.**

**A Day With Mary Pilgrimages** to Fatima (7-14 June) and Italy (4-12 September). For more information please visit [www adaywithmary.org](http://www adaywithmary.org) or email [adwmary.uk@gmail.com](mailto:adwmary.uk@gmail.com)

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**This Sunday's readings, Second Sunday of Lent, 25<sup>th</sup> February 2024**

*Genesis 22: 1-2, 9-13, 15-18; Romans 8: 31-34; Mark 9: 2-10*

**Next Sunday's readings, Third Sunday of Lent, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2024**

*Exodus 20: 1-17; 1 Corinthians 1: 22-25; John 2: 13-25*

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**Offertory Collection.**

Thank you for your offertories last week:

Loose Plate £630.69; Envelopes £257.70; Standing Orders £900.00

Contactless £124.00 (*The Dona contactless PayPoint is in the narthex*)

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**MANNA Foodbank.** This week's shortages: Tinned Hot Meat Meals - Chilli, Curry, Bolognese, Chicken, etc - We are very short; Tinned Carrots, Green Beans, Mixed Vegetables; Tea Bags in 40 packs; Fruit Squash; Tinned Fruit; Tinned Mixed Bean Salad, Butter Beans and Kidney Beans; Cereal and Breakfast Bars; Tomato Ketchup; Chocolate Spread; Large and Small bags of Sugar - We are very short; Blocks of Jelly; Family packs Adult Toothbrushes - We are very short; Shaving Foam/Gel; Sanitary Towels/Tampons; Toilet Rolls; Shampoo; Liquid Handwash; Washing-up-Liquid.

Please leave your donations on the Presbytery doorstep or in the Narthex.

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**Safeguarding** If you've any concerns or require advice regarding the safety or well-being of a child or vulnerable adult, please contact our parish safeguarding rep, Tiziana Demurtas on 07778 533932 or [ashfordsg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk](mailto:ashfordsg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk)

You can also contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team on 020 7798 9356 or [safeguarding@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@rcdow.org.uk)

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## SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

*During Adoration after Saturday morning Mass (and by appointment)*

## SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

*To arrange a baptism please refer to the parish website*

*For the parish Mass timetable, please refer to the parish website:*

**<http://parish.rcdow.org.uk/ashford>**

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### PLEASE PRAY

**for all the sick and housebound in our parish.**

**for anniversaries in February since 2017:** Anastasia Alexander, John Curran, Marie Day, Maria Ibbett, Patricia Manners, Dermod Murphy, Philip Richards, Richard Richardson, Anne Shenton, ETTY Smale, Eileen Fox, Petra Towns, Jean Walker, Shirley Worley.

**for Fr Sidon Sagar, Fr Carlo Mazzotta and the parishioners of St Michael's and for the staff and patients of Ashford Hospital in the Upper Thames Deanery.**

**for the Holy Father's Prayer Intention that those who are in the final stages of life, and their families, may receive the necessary medical and human care and accompaniment.**

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## Mass Intentions 25<sup>th</sup> February – 3<sup>rd</sup> March

Sun 25<sup>th</sup>      **Second Sunday of Lent**

(Saturday Vigil Mass)	06.00pm	Magdalene Silva RIP
	09.15am	The people of the parish
	11.30am	Michael O'Shea RIP
	06.00pm	Amancio Macale RIP
Mon 26 <sup>th</sup>	09.15am	Janet Mascarenhas RIP
Tues 27 <sup>th</sup>	09.15am	
Wed 28 <sup>th</sup>	06.00pm	Joyce Shelley RIP

Fri 1<sup>st</sup>      **St David, Bishop, Patron of Wales**

	09.15am	Raoul Tambyapin RIP
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Sat 2<sup>nd</sup>      09.15am

Sun 3<sup>rd</sup>      **Third Sunday of Lent**

(Saturday Vigil Mass)	06.00pm	The people of the parish
	09.15am	Steril Stephens intentions
	11.30am	Richard O'Neill RIP
	06.00pm	Brian McGloin RIP

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## St Michael's Catholic Church

112 Clarendon Road, Ashford, Middlesex TW15 2QD

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Email: [ashford@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:ashford@rcdow.org.uk)

Website: <http://parish.rcdow.org.uk/ashford>

*This parish is part of the Westminster Catholic Diocese Trustee Charity no. 233699*

**Fr Sidon Sagar FDP: Parish Priest, Fr Carlo Mazzotta FDP: Assistant Priest**

**Parish Secretary: Mrs Shenda Holmes**

Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 9.00 am – 1.00 pm