

## ***Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time, 2 March 2025***

**“Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?”**

**In his best-selling book, *Blink*, Malcolm Gladwell develops the theory that our snap judgements are often as effective, perhaps even more effective, than our considered decisions. Gladwell identifies the ability to think on the spot as the adaptive unconscious: that part of the brain that makes hundreds of daily decisions in situations where we need to react instantly. To use a computer analogy, our brains are programmed, and when we act, we access all the knowledge and experience we have accumulated. Of course, other decisions benefit from further reflection, advice, and research, but we usually recall what we already know. Once we become aware of the adaptive unconscious, we see it all around us - in why we have an instant attraction to another person, or an immediate dislike, for example. The advertising industry depends as much on the instant judgement of us, the consumer, as it does on painstakingly building brands. Often, we find it hard to explain our snap judgement, describing our choice as a feeling or instinct when we can't explain it entirely rationally. The central point here is that, just as physically we are what we eat, so our moral and spiritual senses are equally formed by what we consume, and when we speak and react to the world around us, we reveal what is within.**

In today's Gospel reading, Jesus begins by saying that we cannot give others what we do not have and cannot guide others when we lack direction. This would seem to be self-evident but is a necessary message for his listeners — he points to the common human tendency to attempt to correct the shortcomings of others, whilst overlooking our own. We must firstly pay attention to our own self-improvement before imagining we can improve our neighbour. More than any other vice, Jesus robustly criticises hypocrisy as an insidious form of self-delusion which blocks true spiritual growth — and challenges hypocrites to live more honestly, humbly and, perhaps, self-critically. It can be challenging to realise that we reveal ourselves for who we really are by the fruit we bear and in the words we utter. In using vivid visual imagery, Jesus is driving home his point. He both warns and inspires, criticises and praises — what is not good is to be avoided, what is helpful is to be nurtured. In today's Gospel Acclamation we pray to God the Father, “Open our heart, O Lord, to the words of your Son”. A good prayer indeed!

**Disciples are to model themselves on their teacher, listening to him and let his words find a home in their heart. In this way their heart will be full of goodness, which can then be shared as a gift to all. Even though we do not physically sit at the feet of the Master, hearing his voice, seeing his face and watching his gestures, we can ponder the meaning of what we hear; we have his Holy Spirit to guide us individually and together into a deeper understanding of what he teaches and then, in acting together, we strengthen each other in goodness as the Body of Christ alive in our world. This Gospel passage is good material for examining conscience and taking a gentle look at our daily life - how do we conduct ourselves? What kind of things do we say to others? Do we try to be Christ-like? Do we bear fruit for God? We can perform this exercise on our own, or with someone of faith whom we trust. The object of the exercise here is not to wallow in our wretchedness where we feel we've failed, but to stand honestly before the Lord, ask his forgiveness where we need it, and give thanks for his grace.**

**Returning to the language of adaptive unconscious, our response to situations in life will be instinctive, intuitive, informed, and increasingly second nature: We won't have to concentrate to be good, to bear fruit, to be Christ-like. Practice, combined with grace, will make perfect!**

---

**Parish Census Forms.** We are conducting a parish census for the first time in ten years, and **we kindly request everyone to participate, whether you are currently registered with the parish or not. The old Parish Register will be deleted as its data storage does not comply with GDPR norms.** A new Parish Register will be created, so it is mandatory that you complete the census if you wish to be registered with the parish. Your input is invaluable to us. Please complete the census form by scanning this QR code (which is also available in the Narthex) or by using the provided online link.



<https://forms.office.com/e/GTfhzBCTBx?origin=lpLink>

*You can also find the information on the parish website - Select the 'About' tab, then 'Parish Registration.'*

**Your cooperation and participation are greatly appreciated.**

---

**Saturday, March 1<sup>st</sup> is the Feast of St David's. Please note that there will be no 6.00 pm Mass here at St Michael's this Saturday, March 1<sup>st</sup>,** as Fr Sidon and Fr Carlo will be celebrating the Feast of St David's at Stanwell. All are welcome to go and join!

**Sunday Monthly Coffees** in the parish hall after the 9.15 am Mass **this Sunday, 2<sup>nd</sup> March.**

**Ash Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> March 2025.** Masses, with Distribution of Ashes, at **7.00 am and 9.15 am here at St Michael's** and **6.30 pm at St David's Stanwell.** *Please note there will be NO 6.00 pm Mass at St Michael's.*

**Stations of the Cross are on Fridays in Lent at 7.00 pm, starting this Friday 7<sup>th</sup> March.**

**Morning Teas and Coffees.** Teas and Coffees will be in the Presbytery Meeting room **after 9.15 am Mass on Tuesdays and Fridays.** All are welcome.

**Lenten My Day By Day booklets** are available in the narthex for £ 1.00 each. Please deposit your money in the Publications Box on the wall in the narthex.

**Ladies Circle.** We will meet on Thursday, March 6<sup>th</sup>, at 8:00 p.m. in the parish hall for a Book Swap evening. Please bring any books to share.

**Annual Mass of Thanksgiving for Matrimony at Westminster Cathedral on Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> May 2025, at 2:30 pm.** The Cardinal invites couples in the Diocese to celebrate in 2025 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 any year over 60) wedding anniversary of Catholic marriage. If you would like to attend, please give the following details to Shenda in the parish office **by Monday, 31<sup>st</sup> March:** husband and wife's names, wedding date, number of years married, postal address, email (or phone number, if no email).

**Repository.** On sale are Calendars and Diaries at reduced prices; St Patrick's Day badges and Cards; and a selection of cards for many occasions including Baptism, First Holy Communion, Confirmation, Mass Intentions, Birthdays – all at very reasonable prices. Why not take a look and support your parish?

**Caritas Vouchers and Assistance Scheme.** This parish is part of the scheme run by Caritas Westminster. If you or anyone you know needs support, please contact Lee Gibson, Caritas Representative, on 07713 760281 or [lee.gibson.2na@btinternet.com](mailto:lee.gibson.2na@btinternet.com). All requests will be dealt with confidentially.

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

**Bucket Collection.** The Bucket Collection is for Shooting Star Children's Hospices. The donations box is in the wall at the back of the church.

**The Ecumenical World Day of Prayer Service will be held on Friday, 7th March, at 10.30 am at The Salvation Army, Woodthorpe Road, Ashford.** All are welcome!

---

**This Sunday's readings, Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time, 2 March 2025**

*Sirach 27: 4-7; 1 Corinthians 15: 54-58; Luke 6: 39-45*

**Next Sunday's readings, First Sunday of Lent, 9 March 2025**

*Deuteronomy 26: 4-10; Romans 10; 8-13; Luke 4: 1-13*

---

**Offertory Collection.** Thank you for your offertories last week:

Loose Plate £480.49; Envelopes £236.00; Standing Orders £900.00

Contactless £234.00

---

**MANNA Foodbank.** This week's shortages: Instant Mashed Potato (Smash type); Crackers; Fruit Squash; Small Tins of Potatoes; Tinned Corned Beef; Small Jars of Coffee; Small Packs of Sugar; Tinned Spaghetti in Tomato Sauce; Tinned Custard; Tinned Butter Beans; Crisps; Noodles for 1; Shaving Foam/Gel; Kitchen Roll (small rolls preferably); Toilet Paper; Men's warm gloves (new only) for our Homeless clients; Easter Eggs. *Please leave your donations in the box in the narthex.*

---

**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)

---

**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*

*(see: Parish Life → Sacramental Preparation → Baptism)*

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

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

---

## PLEASE PRAY

For all the sick and housebound in our parish.

For anniversaries in March since 2018: Winifred Atkinson, Ben Boone, Kevin Carroll, Lena Chapman, Peggy Collins, Tina Edwards, Elizabeth Floyd, Christina Hunt, Jennifer Langan, Jeremiah McMullen, Lorraine Munro, Noel O'Neill, William O'Rourke, Barbara Parker, Joan Peters, Christopher Worley.

For Fr Philip Baptiste and the parishioners of St Theodore of Canterbury, Hampton in the Upper Thames Deanery.

For the Holy Father's Prayer Intention that broken families might discover the cure for their wounds through forgiveness and rediscovering each other's gifts, even in their differences.

---

### Mass Intentions 2<sup>nd</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> March

Sun 2<sup>nd</sup> **Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

(Saturday Vigil Mass)

06.00pm

**NO MASS**

09.15am

The people of the parish

11.30am

Intentions of Fran & Anne Austin & family

06.00pm

Kath Rowe RIP

Mon 3<sup>rd</sup>

09.15am

Alfonso De Leon RIP

Tues 4<sup>th</sup>

09.15am

Angela Horsey intentions

Wed 5<sup>th</sup>

**ASH WEDNESDAY**

07.00am

The people of the parish

09.15am

Dr Sheila Santamaria RIP

Fri 7<sup>th</sup>

09.15am

Bernadette Rosborough RIP

Sat 8<sup>th</sup>

09.15am

Tommy McCormack RIP

Sun 9<sup>th</sup>

**First Sunday of Lent**

(Saturday Vigil Mass)

06.00pm

Munidasa Saparamadu RIP

09.15am

Rejimon Thomas RIP

11.30am

Pat McNulty RIP

06.00pm

The people of the parish

---

## St Michael's Catholic Church

112 Clarendon Road, Ashford, Middlesex TW15 2QD

Telephone: 01784 252230

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