

NEWSLETTER

1st SUNDAY
LENT**Beginning Our Lenten Journey**

On this day, marked by the austere symbol of ashes, we enter the season of Lent, beginning a spiritual journey that prepares us for celebrating worthily the Easter Mysteries. The blessed ashes imposed upon our forehead are a sign that reminds us of our condition as creatures, that invites us to repent, and to intensify our commitment to convert, to follow the Lord ever more closely. Lent is a journey, it means accompanying Jesus who goes up to Jerusalem, the place of fulfilment of his mystery of Passion, Death, and Resurrection; it reminds us that Christian life is a 'way' to take, not so much consistent with a law to observe as with the very Person of Christ, to encounter, to welcome, to follow.

It is above all in the liturgy, by participating in the holy mysteries, that we are led to make this journey with the Lord; it means learning at the school of Jesus, reviewing the events that brought salvation to us but not as a mere commemoration, a remembrance of past events. In the liturgical actions, Christ makes himself present through the power of the Holy Spirit and these saving events become real. There is a keyword that recurs frequently in the liturgy to indicate this; the word 'today'; and it should be understood in its original and practical, rather than metaphorical, sense. *Today* God reveals his law and we are granted to choose today between good and evil, between life and death (Dt 30:19). *'The time has come' he said 'and the kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent, and believe the Good News'*(Mk 1: 15). *Today* Christ died on Calvary and rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father; *today* the Holy Spirit is given us; *today* is a favourable time.

Dear friends, on this Lenten journey, let us be careful to accept Christ's invitation to follow him more decisively and consistently, renewing the grace and commitments of our Baptism, to cast off the former person within us and put on Christ, in order to arrive at Easter renewed and able to say, with St Paul: *I live now not with my own life but with the life of Christ who lives in me* (Ga 2: 20). I wish you all a good Lenten Journey!

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI

LENT

Lent can be daunting at times. Having to give up something, attending the weekly Stations of the Cross or words such as 'sacrifice', 'self-denial' are used which might suggest that Lent is something to endure rather than seeing it as a time of grace and growth.

Lent could be seen as a second chance each year. The Church gives us these six weeks of Lent to look at ourselves to see if our values and priorities are in line with God's desire for us. Since we have wandered off from God, Lent becomes that second opportunity to change and 'return to God'.

For several years I had lapsed as a Catholic Lent was something to forget about and could get on doing my own thing. It was a chance encounter with Sr. Louise (one might say providential) who re-introduced me back into the Church. Now Lent became important; I could join in the weekly Stations of the Cross. But to give up something was difficult I would succeed for about a week and then revert back to type.

Now I am determined to make a go at it by making the effort to be focused on my spiritual journey and prepare well for Easter and so allow the grace of God to work in me. I wish you all a Happy Lent!

Fr. Christopher

MASS INTENTIONS**February 29, 2020**

6pm - Thanksgiving for
Sonny Anthony

March 1, 2020

9am - People of the Parish
11am— Deceased Clergy of
the Diocese

For weekday mass intentions
please, see the notice board on
the left hand side of the main
door of the church.

Confessions on
Saturday at 5.15-5.45pm
or by appointment

HOLY HOUR

Every Saturday from 5pm

Stations of the Cross

Every Friday and during
Lent, we will have here at
St Edmund's the Stations
of the Cross at 7.30 pm. If
you would like to volunteer to
lead, please give your name
and details to the parish of-
fice.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**PENITENTIAL
SERVICE**

10th March at 8pm

Readings for this & next Sunday

1st Reading; Genesis 2:7-9, 3:1-7
Psalm 50: 3-6, 12-14, 17 response v 3
2nd Reading - Romans; 5:12-19
Gospel – Mathew 4; 1-11

1st Reading; Genesis 12:1-4
Psalm 32: 4-5, 18-20, 22 response v 22
2nd Reading - Timothy; 1:8-10
Gospel – Mathew 17; 1-19

1st Lent

We are faced with temptations, ordeals, and hardships of one kind or another as part of our daily life. Confronted with such situations, we can choose to follow our Lord or not. As St Paul tells us none of us is tempted beyond our strength. Why? because our Lord has conquered every sin, temptations, and ordeals through His Passion, Death, and Resurrection. In sharing in our Lord's triumph, we can be confident we will be victorious.

Angel came to minister to our Lord at the moment of his trials. Aren't we surrounded by family, friends, and people we might know who are going through trials be at their place of work, serious health issues? Consider for a moment how we could be angels to them and to support them in coming through their situation.

Fr Javier

Refuting the Tempter

Suppose the tempter makes us feel the pinch of poverty, as he did even to Christ and taking advantage of our hunger talks of turning stones into bread; we must not be taken in by him, but let him learn what he has still not grasped. Refute him with the word of life, with the word that is the bread sent down from heaven and that gives life to the world. He may try to ensnare us through our vanity, as he tried to ensnare Christ when he set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said, 'Prove your divinity: throw yourself down'. Let us beware of succumbing to pride, for the tempter will by no means stop at one success. He is never satisfied and is always pursuing us. Often he beguiles us with something good and useful, but its end is always evil. That is simply his method of waging war.

We also know how well-versed the devil is in Scripture. When Christ answered the temptation to turn stones into bread with a rebuke from Scripture beginning: *Scripture says*, the devil countered with the same words, tempting Christ to throw himself down from the pinnacle of the temple. *For Scripture says*, he quoted, *He will put you in his angels' charge, and they will support you on their hands*. O past master of all evil, why suppress the verse that follows? You did not finish the quotation, but I know full well what it means: that we shall tread on you as on an adder or a cobra; protected by the Trinity, we shall trample on you as on serpents or scorpions.

If the tempter tries to overthrow us through our greed, showing us at one glance all the kingdoms of the world as if they belonged to him-and demanding that we fall down and worship him, we should despise him, we know him to be a penniless impostor. Strong in our baptism, each of us can say: 'I too am made in the image of God, but unlike you, I have not yet become an outcast from heaven through my pride. I have put on Christ, by my baptism I have become one with him. It is you that should fall prostrate before me. By these words, he can only surrender and retire in shame; as he retreated before Christ, the light of the world, so will he depart from those illumined by that light. Such are the gifts conferred by baptism on those who understand its power; such the rich banquet it lays before those who hunger for the things of the Spirit.

St Gregory Nazianzen

Cardinal's Lenten Appeal

Dear Friends,

The season of Lent is a time of reflection for us, a time to draw closer to our Lord. We take the traditional steps during Lent, prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

This year, St Edmund's is supporting the Cardinal's Lenten Appeal through the Lenten Alms collections. The Cardinal's Lenten Appeal was set up to fund initiatives in parishes and charities within the Diocese, contributing to three mission areas of the Church.

Marriage and Family Life: supporting and enriching marriages, the building block of society and the Church.

Youth and Evangelisation: Supporting our young people, who are the future of the Church, their relationship with God and deepen their Catholic Faith.

The Church's Service in Society: putting our faith into action by serving the poor, the lonely and the marginalised.

In the Diocese, there is deepening poverty. People have to overcome the shame of having to go to food banks. Some even though they are at work they find it difficult to make ends meet. The Diocese, through Caritas Westminster, contribute to food banks and other projects to help relieve poverty. Here, permit me to thank you for contributing food to the local food bank which is much appreciated. Last year, Diocese started a new project to open schools during holidays, as children depend on free school meals, holidays can be a time of hunger. With your generous support, children can take part in activities, prepare a healthy meal for them, and they can take food home with them. Please consider The Cardinal's Lenten Appeal as part of your almsgiving, this Lent. Donation leaflets are available on the table as you leave and Gift Aid envelopes are available attached to the leaflet. I thank you on behalf of Cardinal Vincent Nichols, for helping to put hope into action across the Diocese.

Fr. Christopher

During Lent and Easter tide at the end of the Bidding Prayers, we shall be saying the Hail Holy Queen (it can be found on the front cover of your mass book)

During Lent, our Profession of Faith is the Apostles Creed (on page 12)

33 Days to Morning Glory

Copies of this Booklet is available for you to take, for each member of your family. As a family, say the daily prayers, as part of your preparation for the Day Of Consecration 29th March 20 when on page 33 we here at St Edmund's will Consecrate ourselves to Mary

Beginning Experience Weekend

A healing weekend for men and women who are separated, divorced or widowed will be held from **3rd to 5th April 2020 at the Domus Mariae Centre, Chigwell, Essex.**

For details please contact Fredda 01322-838415 or Maura 01322-551503 or email johna-brotherton@hotmail.co.uk.

IS GOD CALLING?

The Diocesan Vocations Promotion Team is coming to the Parish of OUR LADY REFUGE OF SINNERS AND ST CATHERINE OF SIENA, 177 Bow Road E3 2SG on SUNDAY 8TH MARCH 2020. They will be present at the 6pm Mass.

If you want to know more about the work of Vocations, then maybe you could join them at the Mass.

If you feel God might be doing something in your life, then you are sure to find someone there who can talk to you about it.

After the Mass there will be a time to chat and share experiences with the Team. All are welcome.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter

For the past 50 years Worldwide Marriage Encounter has been offering marriage enrichment retreats all around the world. Focused on couples who want to enrich their relationship and gain a deeper understanding of the Sacrament of Marriage, the retreat offers a unique experience. It's a chance to explore your relationship at a deeper, more intimate level, regardless of how long you have been together. Thousands of couples in the UK have benefited from a Marriage Encounter weekend retreat, the next retreat is **6th - 8th March in Swindon, why not find out more at wwme.org.uk**

LENTEN WORKS OF MERCY

The Helpers of God's Precious Infants reach out in love and compassion to mothers who are in crisis pregnancies and to those who have suffered the effects of abortion. Why not come and join us and help to hold out God's Hand of Love and Mercy? The next Rosary Procession Vigil, will be held on Saturday 14th March at St. Francis of Assisi Church, Grove Crescent Road, Stratford E15 1NS. We begin with 10.00am Mass and we begin our Rosary Procession at 10.35am, following an Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, to BPAS abortion centre, 32-36 Romford Road, Stratford E15 4BZ, where we pray 15 decades of the Rosary and sing hymns, returning at approx.12.00pm to the church for refreshments. Full details on poster in church porch or contact tel. 01727 763832 or e-mail marg@helpersuk.org

PARISH PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND—MARCH 2021

We are planning a second parish Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 2021 (15th –22nd March) with Pilgrimage People again. To make it happen we need to gather a group of around 20 people. We want to encourage you to take part in this event. If you think you can make it—please, drop an email to millwall@rcdow.org.uk or give your details to Fr Chris or our Sacristans. We already got an itinerary that is available from the office. The cost will be £1680. We are planning to organise a meeting shortly to show you how we spend our time there last year. We look forward to hearing from you. Fr Christopher, Katherine, Stella & Julia

ANNUAL MASS OF THANKSGIVING FOR THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL, SATURDAY, 30th MAY 2020 at 3pm

The Cardinal will be inviting to this Mass all couples in the Diocese who are celebrating their 5th, 10th, 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th and 60th (and every year over 60th) wedding anniversary of Catholic marriage in 2020. If you are celebrating an anniversary, and you wish to attend this mass, please, give your parish clergy the following details: husband and wife's names, wedding date, full postal address and email (or telephone number if no email).



The Rosary Group's Monthly Prayer Meeting **Sunday 01st March** Meet by the statue of Mary after 11am Mass

The theme of our prayers will be:

Easter Preparation: The Need For Confession

Beginners Welcome

Meetings held 1st Sunday of every month
Please bring your Rosary. Booklets Provided
Pray With Us † Pray The Rosary

