

ST DAVID'S RC CHURCH

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This parish is part of the Westminster Catholic
Diocese Trustee Charity No: 233699

Parish Priest: Fr. Sidon Sagar



6th Sunday in the OT

11th February 2024

"You can heal me."

The hospital movement began when Jesus welcomed lepers into his presence and said one word in Greek, which we translate as "I want to."

Medieval pilgrimages led to the development of hospitals. Since people often made pilgrimages because they were unwell, they needed places to stay. So, hospital meant, literally, a place for guests, a word derived from the Latin "*hospes*", meaning "*stranger*" or "*guest*". The guest-house owners gradually developed considerable medical knowledge and practical ways of helping sick people to recover.

Christianity and health care have long been closely associated. The World Day for the Sick, which is celebrated today, was instituted in 1992 by Pope St John Paul II. He intended it to be "a special time of prayer and sharing, of offering one's suffering for the good of the Church and of reminding everyone to see in his sick brother or sister the face of Christ".

Appropriately, the World Day for the Sick is celebrated on the Feast Day of Our Lady of Lourdes, although this year it is not observed, as it falls on a Sunday. Nevertheless, it makes today a very good day for thinking and praying about healing and health care, and our Bible readings provide us with a focus.

The contrast between the passages from the Old and New Testaments is striking.

The "lepers" of the Bible were clearly people with severe skin disfigurements. Whether or not they suffered from leprosy, sometimes known as "Hansen's disease", the Old Testament law about leprosy was a form of both exclusion and inclusion. At that time leprosy was thought to be highly contagious, so it was, in part, practical. If the skin condition was severe enough, according to the judgement of a priest, the leper was forced to live at the edge of the camp -- not completely excluded but travelling on the periphery.

By contrast, in Mark's Gospel Jesus is "moved with pity" for the leper who approaches him, even reaching out to touch him. Then he says a word that we translate as the phrase "I want."

Christianity didn't invent medicine, or even make great progress in finding cures, although inventive medieval monks and many Christians throughout history have contributed greatly to modern health care. Rather, Jesus brought sick people into the very heart of Christianity. The hospital is a work of Christ because it reverses the practice of excluding sick people and gathers them into a place of care.

Despite the very real risk of infection, the medieval hostellers kept caring for sick

pilgrims, believing that to die in their service assured their own place in heaven. Today, the many Christians working in modern health care - and those who don't — make caring their business. Perhaps we should all take the word "carer" more literally because we are all involved in the business of caring.

So, what is the meaning of caring in this sense? Ways in which we can help include encouraging and praying for medical staff. But "carer" is not just a term for someone who works in health care. It is wider and deeper than that. A carer is anyone whose care is visible in their actions, which is the goal of every Christian. Through caring, we make our faith visible and share it with others. For what is truly in our heart will be truly in our actions.

As carers in this sense, we share our faith, although this doesn't mean trying to press it on other people. Our Lord and his disciples learned to go where they were invited. Evangelisation is always a response, never an imposition. We should trust that our faith is visible through our caring actions. We might say that we need to have faith about faith itself. Faith will find a way.

Like the original medieval hospitals, many places of care are also places of pilgrimage. Whatever help we can offer each other, life will end one day. No one is outside the care of God because God wishes to work through us. This is the message of Lourdes. Sick people are not to be excluded, but through care and compassion for them, we can bring about the healing of humankind.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ash Wednesday, 14th Feb 2024. We begin the season of Lent with fasting, prayer and penance. Holy Mass, with distribution of ashes will be at **7.00pm**.

There will be a retiring collection for the Latin Patriarch in Jerusalem (to support people in Gaza) after Mass. **Please note cash donations only** – we cannot take card donations for this appeal.

Stations of the Cross on Fridays in Lent at 6.30pm, starting on Friday 16th February, followed by Holy Mass.

Mass on Fridays in Lent. Please note that Mass is at 7.00pm on Fridays in Lent, after Stations of the Cross.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament – Please note that there will be no Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament on Fridays before Mass during Lent as there will be Stations of the Cross. We will resume after Easter.

Easter Raffle. Tickets for the Easter Raffle will be on sale after weekend Masses from 11th February.

Crib offerings. Thank you for your donations of £239.90 for the Catholic Children's Society (Westminster).

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.*

Marian Year, 11th February to 20th 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.

The Divine Mercy Apostolate, London is holding a Divine Mercy Lenten Retreat on Saturday 24 February 2024 from 1:30 pm - 4:30 pm at St. Lawrence Church, 1 Hamilton Road, Sidcup Kent DA15 7HB.

The Retreat will include teachings on the Message of Mercy, Stations of the Cross, Holy Mass, Hour of Mercy with Adoration and Benediction and Veneration of the Image of Merciful Jesus. All Welcome. Please call Millie on 07957594646 for more information.

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, Fey Worley on stanwellsg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk.

You can also contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team on 020 7798 9356 or safeguarding@rcdow.org.uk

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

During Adoration on Friday evening and on Saturday evening from 5.30pm before Holy 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/stanwell>

PLEASE PRAY

for all the sick and housebound in our parish.

for Fr Sidon Sagar, Fr Carlo Mazzotta, 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.

Mass Intentions 11th - 18th Feb 2024

Sun	11 th	6 th Sunday in the Ordinary Time		
		(Sat Vigil)	06.00pm	Cecilio Sedenio RIP
			10.30am	Lucas Rodrigues RIP
Mon	12 th		06.00pm	Sina Marsh RIP
Tues	13 th		06.00pm	Nariah Cabral (good health)
Wed	14 th	Ash Wednesday	07.00pm	
Fri	16 th		07.00pm	
Sat	17 th		06.00pm	
Sun	18 th	1 st Sunday of Lent		
			10.30am	

This Sunday's readings, 11th February – Sixth Sunday in the OT

Leviticus 13:1-2,44-46; 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1; Mark 1:40-45.

Next Sunday's readings, 18th February – First Sunday of Lent

Genesis 9:8-15; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:12-15.

The Pope says, "Saint Bakhita encourages us to open our eyes and ears to see those who go unseen and to hear those who have no voice, to acknowledge dignity of each person and to fight trafficking and all forms of exploitation"

- 8th February 2024

February is dedicated to THE HOLY FAMILY

The special devotion which proposes **the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph as the model of virtue of all Christian households began in the 17th century.** It started almost simultaneously in Canada and France: the Association of the Holy Family was founded in Montreal in 1663, and by the Daughters of the Holy Family in Paris in 1674. **This devotion soon spread and in 1893 Pope Leo XIII expressed his approval of a feast under this title and himself composed part of the Office.** On account of the flight into Egypt this feast has been observed by the Copts from early times. The feast was welcomed by succeeding Pontiffs as an efficacious means for bringing home to the Christian people the example of the Holy Family at Nazareth, and by the restoration of the true spirit of family life, stemming, in some measure, the evils of present-day society. In the words of His Holiness Pope Leo XIII, "Nothing truly can be more salutary or efficacious for Christian families to meditate upon than the example of this Holy Family, which embraces the perfection and completeness of all domestic virtues."

