

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



Palm Sunday,

24th March 2024

"She has done what she could."

It's Palm Sunday. People knew that Jesus understood the hardship and injustice they experienced from their Roman overlords and from the rigid legalism and contempt of the Temple authorities. As he entered Jerusalem, the city of David, they called him the "son of David" who was "blessed in the name of the Lord".

The scribes and Pharisees were unhappy to see Jesus. Scared lest his popularity spark an uprising against the Romans, they worried that people might reject their own authority. They also resented his condemnation of their behaviour: The scribes and Pharisees saw Jesus on Palm Sunday and plotted his death.

Simon invited Jesus to his home as a topic of conversation between himself and his guests. He didn't care that Jesus was hot, tired, dusty, and deserved respect. The unnamed woman, seeing their bad manners, grabbed her best perfume with which to anoint Jesus. She hadn't expected to burst into tears, hadn't thought to carry a towel, and so she dried his feet with her hair. She didn't care what others might say. Jesus understood and accepted her: that was all that mattered.

Today's Gospel readings show two sides of the same story. As Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem, the ordinary people celebrated his presence among them whilst, in the background, the authorities criticised and plotted. True, within a few days, because the scribes and Pharisees were experts at manipulating crowds, some would call for Jesus' crucifixion.

In Simon's house, an unnamed woman anointed Jesus' feet with expensive perfume, washing them with her tears and drying them with her hair. Meanwhile, the "more important" people condemned both her lifestyle and her behaviour.

Both stories describe "them and us" situations. When Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem, the scribes and Pharisees condemned the actions of those who welcomed him. When the woman washed Jesus' feet with her tears, she was scorned because of her extravagance and because of the spectacle she had made in "polite society". Jesus was criticised for ignoring convention and letting the woman touch him. He hadn't stopped her actions which had also highlighted Simon's disrespect in not washing the feet of a guest. The fragrance of her perfume would linger inside the house for several days, reminding Simon of his social sin of neglecting a visitor.

A customer in a jewellery shop looked at a crucifix. "Other people might reject him," she said, "but I wouldn't. If I'd seen Jesus, I would have followed him." She sounded like Peter, who declared, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you" - and then

denied Jesus three times. Yet Peter eventually walked his own Way of the Cross. Was the woman truly Jesus' unswervingly faithful, lifelong disciple? Only she and God know the answer.

Steve's daily prayer had become that of the Good Thief: "Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Serving out his life sentence, Steve declared, "If I'd known God, I wouldn't have committed my crimes. I'm so sorry for what happened."

Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus initially stayed hidden, scared of other people's reactions. Yet when they recognised the truth of Jesus, they were unafraid and remained faithful to their deaths. Did other Jewish leaders imitate their example?

The crowd who welcomed Jesus on Palm Sunday included some people who, several days later, would call for his death, but there were also faithful followers to whom Jesus meant everything and would later prove it by paying the ultimate price. Did those who called "Crucify him!" later bitterly regret their words?

When the unnamed woman anointed Jesus, she ignored the wagging tongues. Her heart was his forever, regardless of the consequences.

It takes courage to make new beginnings and to move beyond the letter of the law to embrace its God-given spirit. Jesus showed us the possibilities. Where do I stand?

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EASTER MASS TIMES

Palm Sunday, 24th March 10.30am Mass with Procession

Holy Thursday, 28th March Mass of the Lord's Supper, **7.00pm to midnight**

Good Friday, 29th March Celebration of the Lord's Passion, **3.00pm**

Easter Vigil Saturday 31st March, 7.00pm

For details, please check the Parish website

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Christopher Worley RIP . The funeral will take place at St Michael's, Ashford on **Monday, 15th April** at 11.00am.

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. *We will recite the Orionine Marian Year Prayer after Mass each day – you will find prayer cards at the back of church.*

Stations of the Cross on Fridays in Lent at 6.30pm, followed by Holy Mass.

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.

Cardinal's Lenten Appeal 2024. You will find the donations box is at the back of the church or you may use the QR code to make your donation online. Please do take a donation envelope, which you will find at the back of the church.

Annual Mass of Thanksgiving for the Sacrament of Matrimony at Westminster Cathedral on Saturday 25th May 2024 at 2:30pm. The Cardinal is 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 60) wedding anniversary of Catholic marriage in 2024. If you are celebrating an anniversary, please give Shenda in St Michael's parish office (01785 252230 or ashford@rcdow.org.uk) the following details: husband and wife's names, wedding date, full postal address and email (or telephone number, if no email) by **Monday 15th April 2024**.

Certificates of Catholic Practice (CCP) for admission to St Michael's Nursery at St Michael's , Ashford Presbytery on Wednesday 10th April , 11.00am – 12 noon and 6.45 - 7.30 pm. Please try to come at this time, rather than seeking an individual appointment.

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.*

Pilgrimage to Lourdes and Nevers, 28th March to 1st April 2024 organised by St Peter's Pilgrimages Package price from £490.00 Please visit www.stpeterspilgrimages.com or contact office@stpeterspilgrimages.com for more details.

Easter Light – a parish fundraising event, an evening of music and dancing, at St Michael's Ashford **on Sunday 31st March** in the parish hall. For ticket information please call 07944 152024

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, Fay 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

Before Stations of the Cross on Friday evening from 6.00pm 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
(see: Parish Life → Sacramental Preparation → Baptism)*

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 the Religious men and women living and working 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 24th - 31st March 2024

Sun	24 th	Palm Sunday (Sat Vigil)	06.00pm 10.30am	Christopher Worley RIP Juliana Lewis RIP
Mon	25 th		06.00pm	Lourenco Sequeira RIP
Tues	26 th		06.00pm	Avelino and Ira Toscano RIP
Wed	27 th		09.30am	
Thurs	28 th		07.00pm	
Fri	29 th		03.00pm	
Sat	30 th		07.00pm	
Sun	31 st	Easter Sunday	10.30am	

This Sunday's readings, 24th March 2024 - Palm Sunday

Jeremiah 31: 31-34; Hebrews 5: 7-9; John 12: 20-30

Next Sunday's readings, 31st March - Easter Sunday

Acts 10: 34, 37-43; Colossians 3: 1-4; John 20: 1-9

The Pope says, "Let us ask the Lord to help us grow in the virtue of prudence so that, amid the storms and winds that buffet our lives, we may remain anchored in Christ, our cornerstone. [#GeneralAudience](#)."

20th March 2024

March is dedicated to **SAINT JOSEPH**

The month of March is dedicated to St. Joseph. We don't know much about him except what is mentioned in the Gospels. Joseph was the husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the foster-father of Jesus. Holy Scripture proclaims him as a "just man," and the Church has turned to Joseph for his patronage and protection. Pope Leo XIII in his encyclical "**Quamquam Pluries**" (On the Devotion to St. Joseph) in 1889 explains why we place so much trust in this saint: "[...] And Joseph shines among all mankind by the most august dignity, since by divine will, he was the guardian of the Son of God and reputed as His father among men. Hence it came about that the Word of God was humbly subject to Joseph, that He obeyed him, and that He rendered to him all those offices that children are bound to render to their parents. From this two-fold dignity flowed the obligation which nature lays upon the head of families, so that Joseph became the guardian, the administrator, and the legal defender of the divine house whose chief he was. And during the whole course of his life he fulfilled those charges and those duties. ...It is, then, natural and worthy that as the Blessed Joseph ministered to all the needs of the family at Nazareth and girt it about with his protection, he should now cover with the cloak of his heavenly patronage and defend the Church of Jesus Christ." **One hundred years later John Paul II** echoes his predecessor in his 1989 Apostolic Exhortation *Redemptoris Custos* (Guardian of the Redeemer), hoping "that all may grow in devotion to the Patron of the Universal Church and in love for the Saviour whom he served in such an exemplary manner ...

