

**SICK & HOUSEBOUND:** Michael Fahey, Anne Hull, Gillian Gibbs, Catherine Kevill, Margaret O'Shea, Lionel Stonehouse, Edith Geissler, Marie Rego, Eileen Kidd, Christopher Browne, John and Angela McCarthy, Germaine Duffner, Patrick McDonagh, Paul Turnbull, Tom Fernandes.

**RECENTLY BAPTISED:**

Patrick O'Conor, Bridie Murphy, Pat Maney

**INTENTION OF POPE FRANCIS FOR March Catholics in China:** We pray that the Church in China may persevere in its faithfulness to the Gospel and grow in unity.

**Laetare Sunday**



The Fourth Sunday of Lent is called **Laetare Sunday**, from the first words of the Introit at Mass, "Laetare Jerusalem" ("Rejoice, O Jerusalem").

Like Gaudete Sunday midway through Advent, Laetare reminds us of the event we look forward to at the end of the penitential season and the joy in anticipation of the Resurrection. The vestments for this day will be rose, as they are on Gaudete Sunday in Advent.

 Catholic Fortress

**ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION**

I wish, my Lord, to receive  
you with the purity, humility,  
and devotion with which your  
most holy mother received  
you, with the spirit and fervor  
of the saints.

**SANCTUARY LAMP**  
has been sponsored this week  
In Memory of  
FABIAN MAINGOT RIP

**LAMP AT THE ALTAR OF  
OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM**  
has been sponsored this week  
in Memory of  
KATHLEEN EGAN RIP

**ROSARY AT HOME:**  
This week the statue of Our Lady of Fatima  
will be at the home of  
JAYA DAVID



**Switch mobile phones  
off or to silent**

**MAKING CONTACT AT ST. GEORGE'S**

Parish Priest:	Mgr. Jeremy Fairhead	jeremyfairhead@rcdow.org.uk
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Sunday cycle  
Readings Year A

Weekday Readings  
Lent week 4

Divine Office  
Psalms Week 4  
Lent week 4

**The Catholic Parish  
of St George, Sudbury**



**Sunday 22nd March 2020**  
**FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT**

Welcome to all at Mass today, especially to any visitors and particularly those who are here for the first time. Please take this sheet home with you which will tell you about this week's celebration and the activities during the week and also to remind you of our Liturgy today.

**TODAY'S MASS**



In today's Gospel, the healing of the man born blind invites us to focus on the physical and spiritual aspects of sight and light. In the first part of today's Gospel, we hear Jesus' response to a prevalent belief of his time: that misfortune and disability were the result of sin. That belief is why Jesus is asked the question of whose sin caused the man's blindness—his own or his parents'. Jesus does not answer directly, but instead gives the question an entirely different dimension—through this

man's disability, God's power will be made manifest. Jesus then heals the man.

**First Reading:** 1 Samuel 16:1b,6-7,10-13a  
Samuel is sent to anoint David as king.

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 23:1-6  
The Lord is our shepherd.

**Second Reading:** Ephesians 5:8-14  
The Ephesians are told to live as children of light.

**Gospel Reading:** John 9:1-41  
Jesus heals the man born blind and reveals himself to him as the Son of Man.

**SPIRITUAL QUOTE OF THE WEEK**

*Jesus reveals to the blind man whom he had healed that he had come into the world for judgement, to separate the blind who can be healed from those who do not allow themselves to be healed because they consider themselves healthy. (Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI)*

# SUNDAY REFLECTION

Do you recognize the light of God's truth and power in your life? God wants to remove every obstacle that might hinder us from recognising the light of his truth and wisdom for our lives. Saul, the first king of Israel, failed to recognize God's light and power to save him from his enemies. God replaced Saul with David, the youngest of Jesse's eight sons (1 Samuel 16). God saw something in David which Jesse and his other sons did not recognize - a man after God's own heart who delighted in doing what was pleasing to the Lord (1 Samuel 13:14). David was a man of courage and vision who defeated his enemies and united his people. His strength and success came not from himself but from God who anointed him with the power and wisdom of his own Spirit.

What can keep us from the light of God's truth, wisdom, and strength for our lives? Sin blinds us and causes us to stumble and fall - unable to rise on our own or to walk in the freedom of God's love and truth. Sin clouds the mind in moral confusion, and it grows in darkness and resists the light of God's truth. Only God's light can uncover the darkness of sin and free us to walk in the path of holiness and peace with God.

When the disciples saw a man who had been blind from birth, they asked Jesus what kind of sin had caused this blindness. The Jews had understood that many infirmities were the result of human folly and sin. While sin can lead to physical, mental, and spiritual infirmities, not all sickness is the direct result of sin. Sickness can befall us for a variety of reasons. Jesus answered that God had allowed this infirmity for a greater purpose which God wanted to demonstrate as a sign of his presence and power. Jesus then made a claim which only God could rightfully make. Jesus stated unequivocally, I am the light of the world (John 9:5). In so many words Jesus was saying that he is the one true source of power and light which sustains life and overcomes the darkness of sin, confusion, and spiritual blindness. Jesus' mighty works - his miraculous signs - confirmed the truth of his message and claim to divine authority and equality with his Father in heaven. One of his greatest signs was the healing of a man who had been blind from birth.

When Jesus approached the blind man he first awakened hope in him - the hope which God offers those who seek his help. Jesus then did something quite remarkable for the blind man, both to identify with this man's misery and to draw expectant faith in him as well. Jesus touched the man's eyes with his own spittle mixed with dirt and bid him to wash in the Pool of Siloam which was close to the Temple. This pool of fresh flowing water was one of the landmarks of the city of Jerusalem. Its source

came from the Gihon spring located in the valley outside the walls of Jerusalem. This pool was likely used as a ceremonial bath of purification for people who were going up to the Temple to worship. On the yearly feast of Tabernacles, one of the priests brought a golden pitcher of water from this pool and poured it out over the altar in the temple while reciting from the verse, "You will draw water from the wells of salvation" (Isaiah 12:3). What is the significance of the healing of the blind man at the Pool of Siloam? It is certainly more than just a miraculous event. It is a "sign" that points to the source of the miraculous life-giving water which Jesus offers through the gift and work of the Holy Spirit (John 7:38). Do you want the Holy Spirit to pour out on you his renewing power of faith, vision, and healing love?

The Pharisees were upset with Jesus' miracle on two counts. First, he healed the blind man on the Sabbath, which they considered a serious violation of the command to rest on the Sabbath. Second, how could a "sinner" and a "Sabbath-breaker" do such a marvellous work of God! The man who claimed to have been healed by Jesus must not have really been blind to begin with! Contrary to this false charge, the fact of this man's blindness was well known to many people, including the parents who testified under oath that he had indeed been blind since birth. The prejudice of the religious leaders made them blind to God's intention for the Sabbath (to do good rather than evil) and to Jesus' claim to be the One sent from the Father in heaven to bring freedom and light to his people. The Jewish leaders tried to intimidate both this cured man and his parents by threatening to exclude them from membership in the synagogue - the local congregation of the worshipping community of Jews. This man was shunned by the religious authorities because he believed that Jesus healed him and was the Messiah.

Jesus is ever ready to heal us and to free us from the darkness of sin and deception. There is no sickness, whether physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual that the Lord Jesus does not identify with. Isaiah prophesied that the "Suffering Servant" would be bruised for our iniquities and by his stripes we would be healed (Isaiah 53:5). The Lord offers us freedom from spiritual blindness due to sin and he restores us to wholeness of body, mind, soul, and heart. Augustine of Hippo, in his commentary on this Gospel passage, remarks: "If we reflect on the meaning of this miracle, we will see that the blind man is the human race ... You already know, of course, who the "One Sent" is. Unless he had been sent, none of us would have been freed from sin."

let us know how you and your neighbours are coping, or if people are in need of help.

Those of us who remain in good health have a Christian responsibility to look out for others. Our SVP Group are on hand to help with shopping and befriending and other needs at this time. However, we are also asking the whole community to be involved, to the extent that we are able. Looking out for the elderly or vulnerable in your own street is one way everyone can help. You don't need to be a parishioner of St George's or indeed a Catholic to find yourself in need of help, and we should all be ready to help *everyone* in need. Please do not hesitate to be in contact with the presbytery either by phone or email if you are in need or know someone who is.

We will follow instructions from the diocese on the celebration of funerals. At the time of writing we not are permitted to celebrate Funeral Masses in the parish church. I realise this is difficult and sensitive and we will follow advice as the weeks, and even months' progress.

The mission of the parish continues, as do all the costs necessary to maintain our presence here in Sudbury. We kindly ask that, if you are able, you might still consider contributing to this undertaking so that we do not find ourselves in further difficulties, and we

thank you once again for everything you give to our parish, financial, spiritual and pastoral. We all rely on this generosity of heart and spirit. Once life returns to something like normal, we can also address this situation through fundraising activities and other ideas, so that we can rebuild together the work of the Gospel in our little part of God's world.

I, Fr John and Peter hold you all in our prayers and I hope we are all united in this most difficult of moments. We are also in solidarity with the people and priests of our deanery and the wider area who form the living Church in this part of the Diocese of Westminster.

This Lent has proved to be the most challenging of seasons. But every Easter we celebrate the triumph of God's love over sin and death. Let us pray that God's love may be among us at this demanding time, as we seek to overcome our present difficulties with the strength of his grace and the power of his victory.

With my prayers and good wishes,

Mgr. Jeremy Fairhead

# NEWS & VIEWS

Dear Parishioners of Saint George's, I write to you with important information for the parish regarding the suspension of normal activities due to the Covid-19 coronavirus disease. We are following the advice and instructions from the Cardinal, the Diocese of Westminster and the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (CBCEW). You will see also attached to this letter, a Pastoral Letter from Cardinal Vincent Nichols.

off' to enable us to disinfect the relevant pews on a daily basis in order to keep you safe. Please know that Christ's presence is always amongst us, even in the most difficult times, in the Blessed Sacrament. We can always meet him in the tabernacle, offer our prayer and intentions before him. However, the church will be closed during the celebration of Mass in order to safeguard and care for everyone's health and hygiene. We kindly ask that you do not associate in the church in large groups.

From midday on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March the *public* celebration of Masses here at St George's, Sudbury will be suspended. Please note carefully that this does not mean there will be no Masses. The Eucharist is always the centre of our lives and of the saving work of Christ in his Church. I and Fr. John will continue to celebrate Mass every day for your intentions and for the spiritual good of all. If you have asked for a Mass intention on a particular day this will continue to be honoured.

We think it is important that the parish church remains open as a place of prayer. The church will be open every day from 10.00am to 4.00pm. If you are among those who are still able to go outdoors, please continue to visit the church, light candles and offer prayers here. Part of the church will be "roped

Please carefully note that all other activities in the church and hall are now cancelled or suspended, including our groups and catechetical programmes. The parish, however, is a *living body* – we are not disappearing. We must continue here differently, spiritually, until this difficult time is over. The angelus bell will still ring out to remind us and others of Go's continuing presence in our world.

The Parish Office will operate a limited service. Please contact us preferably by phone or email, unless you have pre-arranged to come in, as we also have a duty of care for our staff. We all need to follow official guidance issued by HM Government, especially the elderly and those with ongoing health concerns who are asked to observe special measures. It is also important that you

## St Vincent de Paul Society

The Catholic Parish of St George, Sudbury

### Help during the Coronavirus outbreak

Do you need help with tasks such as shopping, posting letters and urgent supplies during the current Coronavirus outbreak?

Are you **feeling isolated** and just want to have a chat with a friendly person over the phone?

If you would like practical **assistance** or if you know of someone who may need some help, please contact us so that we can be ready to assist you when you need it.

If you are referring someone else, please make sure that they are happy for you to provide their details and for us to contact them.

Please contact St George's SVP

Tel. 0208 9000250 or 0775 3654154 (Theresa)

email: StGeorgeSVP@pm.me



**To ponder:** The man born blind went round telling everyone about Jesus, but Christians sometimes want to pick and choose who receives the Good News.

#### Pope Francis reflects:

The salvation which God has wrought, and the Church joyfully proclaims, is for everyone ... No one is saved by himself or herself, individually, or by his or her own efforts. ... This people which God has chosen and called is the Church. Jesus did not tell the apostles to form an exclusive and elite group ... To those who feel far from God and the Church, to all those who are fearful or indifferent, I would like to say this: the Lord, with great respect and love, is also calling you to be a part of his people! [113]

Being Church means being God's people, in accordance with the great plan of his fatherly love ... It means proclaiming and bringing God's salvation into our world, which often goes astray and needs to be encouraged, given hope and strengthened on the way. The Church must be a place of mercy freely given, where everyone can feel welcomed, loved, forgiven and encouraged to live the good life of the Gospel. [114]

**Question:** Who needs the Good News of God's mercy today?

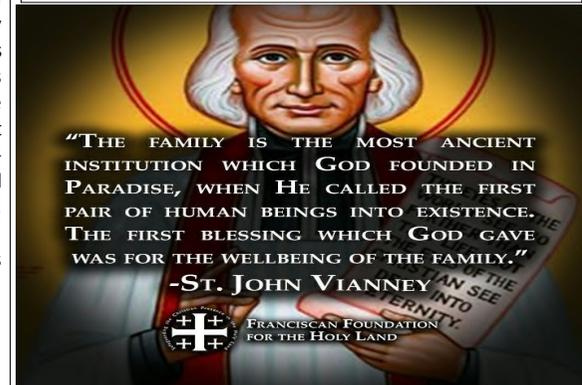
POPE FRANCIS

# LITURGICAL CALENDAR & MASS INTENTIONS

DUE TO THE COVID 19—CORONAVIRUS THREAT THE CHURCH IS NOW CLOSED FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP, THOUGH MASS WILL BE OFFERED EVERY DAY

The Masses that have been booked for the Sunday will be offered during the week.

Sun 8 March 9.30am	<b>FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT PRO POPULO</b>
Mon 9 March 9.30am	<b>Lent feria</b> Vincent de Lima RIP
Tues 10 March 9.30am	<b>Lent feria</b> Barney Fox RIP
Weds 11 March 9.30am	<b>THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD</b> Dennis Burke RIP
Thurs 12 March 9.30am	<b>Lent feria</b> Peter & Joseph Molloy
Fri 13 March 9.30am	<b>Lent feria</b> People of Phillipines Intentions
Sat 14 March 9.30am	<b>Lent feria</b> Luis Santiago, Maura & Terezinna Dias RIP
Sun 15 March 9.30am	<b>FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT PRO POPULO</b>



# TODAY'S MASS

## Entrance Antiphon Cf. *Is 66: 10-11*

Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her. Be joyful, all who were in mourning; exult and be satisfied at her consoling breast.

## Collect

O God, who through your Word reconcile the human race to yourself in a wonderful way, grant, we pray, that with prompt devotion and eager faith the Christian people may hasten toward the solemn celebrations to come. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

## First Reading: *1 Samuel 16:1.6-7.10-13*

The Lord said to Samuel, 'Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have chosen myself a king among his sons'. When Samuel arrived, he caught sight of Eliab and thought, 'Surely the Lords anointed one stands there before him,' but the Lord said to Samuel, 'Take no notice of his appearance or his height for I have rejected him; God does not see as man sees; man looks at appearances but the Lord looks at the heart'. Jesse presented his seven sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, 'The Lord has not chosen these'. He then asked Jesse, 'Are these all the sons you have?'. He answered, 'There is still one left, the youngest; he is out looking after the sheep'. Then Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send for him; we will not sit down to eat until he comes'. Jesse had him sent for, a boy of fresh complexion, with fine eyes and pleasant bearing. The Lord said 'Come, anoint him, for this is the one'. At this, Samuel took the horn of

oil and anointed him where he stood with his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord seized on David and stayed with him from that day on.

The word of the Lord.

## Responsorial Psalm: *94*

**R./** *The Lord is my Shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.*

1. The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose.

Near restful waters he leads me, to revive my drooping spirit. **R./**

2. He guides me along the right path; he is true to his name.

If I should walk in the valley of darkness no evil would I fear.

You are there with your crook and your staff; with these you give me comfort. **R./**

3. You have prepared a banquet for me in the sight of my foes.

My head you have anointed with oil; my cup is overflowing. **R./**

4. Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days of my life, in the Lord's own house shall I dwell for ever and ever. **R./**

## Second Reading: *Ephesians 5:8-14*

You were darkness once, but now you are light in the Lord; be like children of light, for the effects of the light are seen in complete goodness and right living and truth. Try to discover what the Lord wants of you, having nothing to do with the futile works of darkness but exposing them by contrast. The things which are done in secret are

things that people are ashamed even to speak of; but anything exposed by the light will be illuminated and anything illuminated turns into light. That is why it is said:

Wake up from your sleep,  
rise from the dead,  
and Christ will shine on you.

The word of the Lord.

## Gospel Acclamation

***I am the light of the world, says the Lord; anyone who follows me will have the light of life.***

## Gospel: *John 9:1.6-9.13-17.34-38*

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. He spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man and said to him, 'Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam' (a name that means 'sent'). So the blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored.

His neighbours and people who earlier had seen him begging said, 'Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'Yes, it is the same one.' Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.' The man himself said, 'I am the man.' They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. It had been a Sabbath day when Jesus made the paste and opened the man's eyes, so when the Pharisees asked him how he had come to see, he said, 'He put a paste on my eyes, and I washed, and I can see.' Then some of the Pharisees said, 'This man cannot be from God: he does not keep the Sabbath.' Others said, 'How could a sinner produce signs like this?' And there was disagreement among them. So they spoke to the blind man again, 'What have you to say about him yourself, now that he has opened your eyes?' 'He is a prophet' re-

plied the man

So the Jews again sent for the man and said to him, 'Are you trying to teach us,' they replied 'and you a sinner through and through, since you were born!' And they drove him away.

Jesus heard they had driven him away, and when he found him he said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' 'Sir,' the man replied 'tell me who he is so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said, 'You are looking at him; he is speaking to you.' The man said, 'Lord, I believe', and worshipped him.

## Prayer over the Offerings

We place before you with joy these offerings, which bring eternal remedy, O Lord, praying that we may both faithfully revere them and present them to you, as is fitting, for the salvation of all the world. Through Christ our Lord.

## Communion Antiphon Cf. *Jn 9: 11, 38*

The Lord anointed my eyes: I went, I washed, I saw and I believed in God.

## Prayer after Communion

O God, who enlighten everyone who comes into this world, illuminate our hearts, we pray, with the splendour of your grace, that we may always ponder what is worthy and pleasing to your majesty and love you in all sincerity. Through Christ our Lord.

## Prayer over the People

Look upon those who call to you, O Lord, and sustain the weak; give life by your unfailing light to those who walk in the shadow of death, and bring those rescued by your mercy from every evil to reach the highest good.