

St Thomas More – Parish Newsletter

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Sunday 5th March 2023, Second Sunday in Lent (Year A)

*A reading for Lent from the Apostolic
Exhortation of St John Paul II
Reconciliation and Penance (1984) no.10*

Reconciliation Comes from God

God is faithful to his eternal plan even when man, under the impulse of the evil one and carried away by his own pride, abuses the freedom given to him in order to love and generously seek what is good, and refuses to obey his Lord and Father. God is faithful even when man, instead of responding with love to God's love, opposes him and treats him like a rival, deluding himself and relying on his own power, with the resulting break of relationship with the one who created him. In spite of this transgression on man's part, God remains faithful in love. It is certainly true that the story of the Garden of Eden makes us think about the tragic consequences of rejecting the Father, which becomes evident in man's inner disorder and in the breakdown of harmony between man and woman, brother and brother. Also significant is the gospel parable of the two brothers who, in different ways, distance themselves from their father and cause a rift between them. Refusal of God's fatherly love and of his loving gifts is always at the root of humanity's divisions.

But we know that God, "rich in mercy," (cf Eph 2:4) like the father in the parable, does not close his heart to any of his children. He waits for them, looks for them, goes to meet them at the place where the refusal of communion imprisons them in isolation and division. He calls them to gather about his table in the joy of the feast of forgiveness and reconciliation.

This initiative on God's part is made concrete and manifest in the redemptive act of Christ, which radiates through the world by means of the ministry of the church.

For, according to our faith, the word of God became flesh and came to dwell in the world; he entered into the history of the world) summing it up and recapitulating it in himself. (cf Eph 1:10) He revealed to us that God is love, and he gave us the new commandment" of love, (Jn 13:34) at the same time communicating to us the certainty that the path of love is open for all people, so that the effort to establish universal brotherhood is not a vain one. By conquering through his death on the cross evil and the power of sin, by his loving obedience, he brought salvation to all and became "reconciliation for all. In him God reconciled man to himself.

The church carries on the proclamation of reconciliation which Christ caused to echo through the villages of Galilee and all Palestine and does not cease to invite all humanity to be converted and to believe in the good news. She speaks in the name of Christ, making her own the

appeal of St. Paul which we have already recalled: "We are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We beseech you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God."(Cf 2 Cor 5:20)

Those who accept this appeal enter into the economy of reconciliation and experience the truth contained in that other affirmation of St. Paul, that Christ "is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility..., so making peace" that he "might reconcile us both to God."(cf Eph 2: 14-16) This text directly concerns the overcoming of the religious division between Israel-as the chosen people of the Old Testament-and the other peoples, all called to form part of the new covenant. Nevertheless it contains the affirmation of the new spiritual universality desired by God and accomplished by him through the sacrifice of his Son, the word made man, without limits or exclusions of any sort, for all those who are converted and who believe in Christ. We are all therefore called to enjoy the fruits of this reconciliation desired by God: every individual and every people.

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Club Lodwar

Congratulations to all the winners and to everyone for their support of the Vulnerable Children's Fund in Lodwar. Consider starting a membership for a friend or family member - membership is still open for new members.

Club Lodwar February 2023 Prize Winners

1 st	£164.80	26	Kate Moody
2 nd	£123.60	16	Charlie Sharman
3 rd	£41.20	15	Sue Sharman
4 th	£41.20	61	Kathleen Tarling
5 th	£41.20	25	Gladys Ching

Magnificat — March and Lent

The March Magnificat (£5) and Holy Week companion (£2) are now available to buy.

Please ask Maggie, or one of the priests for copies.

Lenten Stations of the Cross

Stations of the Cross will take place in the church every Friday of Lent at 6pm.

Confirmation Classes

The last of the Confirmation classes takes place this Sunday 5th March from 3.30 to 4.30pm in the hall.

Retiring Collection for CAFOD

There will be a retiring collection for the work of CAFOD on Sunday 5th March.

Young Adults Group

A group of young adults (between 21 and 30 years of age) are starting a monthly social meeting with informal discussions about philosophical, anthropological and sociological questions related to the faith. These will take place monthly in the Parish Hall after the 6pm Sunday Mass.

The first session will take place on Sunday 5th March. Please contact Fr Alvaro (alvaro.tintore@netherhall.org.uk) for further details.

Repository

Items from the repository relating to Lent and Easter will be on sale in the Narthex after the morning Masses on Sunday 5th and 12th March. This was done before Christmas and proved to be popular as the devotional objects for sale are then visible to everyone as they leave church.

Seniors' Coffee Morning

The next coffee morning will be on Tuesday 14th March after the 10am Mass. Please sign up on the list in the Narthex.

Film Club

On Tuesday 7th March after the 10am Mass, the Film Club will show a film about St John Bosco. Please sign up on the list in the Narthex if you would like to watch it.

Early Christian Writings

The Anonymous Letter to Diognetus

For the Christians are distinguished from other men neither by country, nor language, nor the customs which they observe. For they neither inhabit cities of their own, nor employ a peculiar form of speech, nor lead a life which is marked out by any singularity. The course of conduct which they follow has not been devised by any speculation or deliberation of inquisitive men; nor do they, like some, proclaim themselves the advocates of any merely human doctrines. But, inhabiting Greek as well as barbarian cities, according as the lot of each of them has determined, and following the local customs in respect to clothing, food, and the rest of their ordinary conduct, they display to us their wonderful and confessedly striking method of life.

They dwell in their own countries, but simply as sojourners. As citizens, they share in all things with others, and yet endure all things as if foreigners. Every foreign land is to them as their native country, and every land of their birth as a land of strangers. They marry, as do all others; they beget children; but they do not destroy their offspring. They have a common table, but not a common bed. They are in the flesh, but they do not live after the flesh. They pass their days on earth, but they are citizens of heaven (Phil 3:20). They obey the prescribed laws, and at the same time surpass the laws by their lives.

They love all men, and are persecuted by all. They are unknown and condemned; they are put to death, and restored to life. (2 Cor 6:9-10). They are poor, yet make many rich; they are in lack of all things, and yet abound in all; they are dishonoured, and yet in their very dishonour are glorified. They are evil spoken of, and yet are justified; they are reviled, and bless; they are insulted, and repay the insult with honour; they do good, yet are punished as evil-doers. (...).

To sum up all in one word — what the soul is in the body, Christians are in the world.

The soul is dispersed through all the members of the body, and Christians are scattered through all the cities of the world. The soul dwells in the body, yet is not of the body; and Christians dwell in the world, yet are not of the world. The invisible soul is guarded by the visible body, and Christians are known indeed to be in the world, but their godliness remains invisible.

The flesh hates the soul, and wars against it, though itself suffering no injury, because it is prevented from enjoying pleasures; the world also hates the Christians, though in nowise injured, because they abjure pleasures. The soul loves the flesh that hates it, and loves also the members; Christians likewise love those that hate them. The soul is imprisoned in the body, yet keeps together that very body; and Christians are confined in the world as in a prison, and yet they keep together the world. The immortal soul dwells in a mortal tabernacle; and Christians dwell as sojourners in corruptible bodies, looking for an incorruptible dwelling in the heavens. The soul, when but ill-provided with food and drink, becomes better; in like manner, the Christians, though subjected day by day to punishment, increase the more in number. God has assigned them this illustrious position, which it were unlawful for them to forsake.

This ancient work addressed to Diognetus is an apologetic exposition of the life of the early Christians, possibly written in Athens in the second century. Some think it may have originally been part of a letter addressed to the Roman Emperor at the time.

ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Second Sunday in Lent

5th March – 11th March 2023

Tel: 020 7435 1388; <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/swisscottage/>

	MASS	OTHER ACTIVITIES
SUN 5th March Second Sunday in Lent (Readings. Year A)	9.30am People of the Parish 11am Mass Club Lodwar/People of Lodwar 6pm Mass Jonathan Chalmers (intentions)	The Church opens at 9.15am 10.30am Confessions 3.30pm - 4.30pm Confirmation class 4 5.30pm Confessions
MON 6th March Lent feria	7am Mass For the victims of the Turkish/Syrian earthquakes 10am Mass Donor's private intention	The Church opens at 6.50am (Monday to Friday)
TUE 7th March Lent feria (Ss Perpetua and Felicity, Martyrs)	7am Mass Helen Birch (intentions) 10am Mass For the Holy Father's March intention	10.45am Film Club - St John Bosco
WED 8th March Lent feria (St John of God, Religious)	7am Mass Dr Jennifer Jones (intentions) 10am Mass Jean Meehan (RIP)	
THU 9th March Lent feria (St Frances of Rome, Religious)	7am Mass For Peace in Ukraine 10am Mass Donor's private intention	
FRI 10th March Lent feria Friday abstinence	7am Mass Carmine Albano (intentions) 10am Mass Ghislaine Williams (recently deceased)	10am – 12pm Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 6pm Stations of the Cross
SAT 11th March Lent feria	10am Mass For all those sick in the Parish	The Church opens at 9.30am

Prayer Intentions:

Recently deceased: Mike Cipolla; Michael Crook; Pope Benedict XVI; Angela Carpos; John Stopplecamp; Wendy Bellas; Irene O'Sullivan; Peter Glenn; Joseph Power

Anniversary: Mark Sharman; Elizabeth Covenden; Maria Fernanda; Simon Ulcickas; Nick Aldridge; Mabel Bull; Sofia Vukusic; Maroun Ramia; Irene Cole; Iris Nally

Confessions:

Monday to Friday (before and after 10am Mass)

Saturday: before and after 10am Mass

Sunday: 10.30am and 5.30pm (before Mass)

Forthcoming Events:

17th March: St PATRICK, Patron of Ireland

20th March: ST JOSEPH, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary