

ST THOMAS MORE – PARISH NEWSLETTER

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SUNDAY 25TH FEBRUARY 2024

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT (Year B)

Stations of the Cross

Please note that Stations of the Cross will take place in the church every Friday of Lent at 6pm. For those who have not attended before, the stations last about half an hour.

Parish Film Club

The Parish Film plans to project a number of religious films and programmes on certain Wednesdays before Easter. The next meeting is on Wednesday 28th February at 10.45am after the 10am Mass. The plan is watch the second and final part of a film about St Pius of Pietrelcina (Padre Pio).

First Holy Communion Classes

First Holy Communion classes take place on Saturdays in the parish centre 11.00am to 12 noon.

Sunday 3rd March: Tea and Coffee

There will be tea and coffee after the 11am Mass on Sunday 3rd March on the lower floor of the parish hall. It provides an opportunity to get to know fellow parishioners better, and also to buy items from the parish shop (repository), also located on the lower ground floor.

Cardinal's Lenten Appeal 2024

If you can, please show your support for the Cardinal's Lenten Appeal. All funds raised go towards projects across our Diocese. Each year, the Diocese uses donations made to support the work of its services, such as Marriage & Family Life, Youth Ministry and Education. Funds are also used to support the work of Caritas Westminster, who work for and with some of the most vulnerable people in our Diocese. Archbishop Cardinal Nichols has expressed his gratitude to everyone who supports the appeal, with whatever they can afford. Donation envelopes will be provided in the entrance to the church during Lent. We will make use of one of the collection boxes in the wall of the Narthex for this purpose. You can also use the QR code to make your donation online. However, it is not possible to use the card reader in the Narthex for this appeal due to difficulties with regard to gift aid issues. Thank you for your generosity.

Area for young children during Sunday Mass

If you are new to the parish it may help to know that during the 9.30am and 11am

Masses on Sundays we generally open the parish hall and project a view of the sanctuary onto the screen in the seminar room (top floor). This enables parents with small children who become restless to follow the Mass from there if they so wish. Please help to make newcomers aware of this helpful area in the parish hall.

Mass Intentions

Please use the brown Mass Offering envelopes in the Narthex to request a Mass and provide the information requested. These envelopes can be handed to a priest or put through the letterbox of the presbytery. Please speak to Maggie Ainsworth in the Parish Office (Tuesday or Friday mornings) or email her at swisscottage@rcdow.org.uk about any Masses you wish to be offered on a specific day.

If your Mass intention is for someone who has recently died or is seriously ill, we shall try to allocate a Mass as soon as possible. However, bear in mind that it is not unusual for Masses to be offered several weeks after they have been requested.

Please do not use the Mass Offering envelopes for general donations to the church, as there are separate larger blue donation envelopes for this purpose.

Annual Mass of Thanksgiving for the Sacrament of Matrimony Westminster Cathedral, 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 Fr Nicholas the following details: husband and wife's names, wedding date, full postal address and email (or telephone number, if no email).

The Cardinal writes: *This occasion is one where joy, gratitude and also the deep emotions of a shared journey are celebrated. During the liturgy the couples will be invited, in a simple way, to renew their marital commitment and we shall pray for them and their families. The Mass will be an opportunity to acknowledge the joys and blessings of marriage, while remaining mindful of the need for healing and compassion for those who have experienced upset and suffering in their married life. The order of service will contain information on opportunities for enrichment, support and healing, highlighting agencies and movements who work to support marriage and family life both within the Diocese and nationally.*

CAFOD Lent Fast Day

As announced at the end of Mass last Sunday, the CAFOD Lent Fast day was on Friday 23 February. There will be a retiring collection for the work of CAFOD the Catholic International Aid Agency this Sunday 25 February. Donations can also be given using the envelopes in the entrance to the church or online at cafod.org.uk. The money raised is to support families around the world and help them with the resources to feed their families in a sustainable way.

The Pope's Lenten Message

Some more excerpts from the Pope's Message for Lent 2024 entitled Through the Desert God Leads us to Freedom

When our God reveals himself, his message is always one of freedom: "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery" (Ex 20:2). These are the first words of the Decalogue given to Moses on Mount Sinai. Those who heard them were quite familiar with the exodus of which God spoke: the experience of their bondage still weighed heavily upon them. In the desert, they received the "Ten Words" as a thoroughfare

to freedom. We call them “commandments”, in order to emphasise the strength of the love by which God shapes his people. The call to freedom is a demanding one. It is not answered straightaway; it has to mature as part of a journey. Just as Israel in the desert still clung to Egypt – often longing for the past and grumbling against the Lord and Moses – today too, God’s people can cling to an oppressive bondage that it is called to leave behind. We realise how true this is at those moments when we feel hopeless, wandering through life like a desert and lacking a promised land as our destination. Lent is the season of grace in which the desert can become once more – in the words of the prophet Hosea – the place of our first love (cf. *Hos 2:16-17*). *God shapes his people, he enables us to leave our slavery behind* and experience a Passover from death to life. Like a bridegroom, the Lord draws us once more to himself, whispering words of love to our hearts.

The exodus from slavery to freedom is no abstract journey. If our celebration of Lent is to be concrete, the first step is to desire to *open our eyes to reality*. When the Lord calls out to Moses from the burning bush, he immediately shows that he is a God who sees and, above all, hears: “I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey” (*Ex 3:7-8*). Today too, the cry of so many of our oppressed brothers and sisters rises to heaven. Let us ask ourselves: Do we hear that cry? Does it trouble us? Does it move us? All too many things keep us apart from each other, denying the fraternity that, from the beginning, binds us to one another.

During my visit to Lampedusa, as a way of countering the globalisation of indifference, I asked two questions, which have become more and more pressing: “Where are you?” (*Gen 3:9*) and “Where is your brother?” (*Gen 4:9*). Our Lenten journey will be concrete if, by listening once more to those two questions, we realise that even today we remain under the rule of Pharaoh. A rule that makes us weary and indifferent. A model of growth that divides and robs us of a future. Earth, air and water are polluted, but so are our souls. True, Baptism has begun our process of liberation, yet there remains in us an inexplicable longing for slavery. A kind of attraction to the security of familiar things, to the detriment of our freedom.

In the Exodus account, there is a significant detail: it is God who sees, is moved and brings freedom; Israel does not ask for this. Pharaoh stifles dreams, blocks the view of heaven, makes it appear that this world, in which human dignity is trampled upon and authentic bonds are denied, can never change. He put everything in bondage to himself. Let us ask: Do I want a new world? Am I ready to leave behind my compromises with the old? The witness of many of my brother bishops and a great number of those who work for peace and justice has increasingly convinced me that we need to combat a deficit of hope that stifles dreams and the silent cry that reaches to heaven and moves the heart of God. This “deficit of hope” is not unlike the nostalgia for slavery that paralysed Israel in the desert and prevented it from moving forward. (...) humanity has arrived at the threshold of universal fraternity and at levels of scientific, technical, cultural, and juridical development capable of guaranteeing dignity to all, yet gropes about in the darkness of inequality and conflict.

ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Second Sunday of Lent

Tel: 020 7435 1388

25th February- 2nd March 2024

<https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/swisscottage/>

	MASS	OTHER ACTIVITIES
SUN 25th February Second Sunday of Lent (Readings. Year B)	9.30am People of the Parish 11am Mass Duenas brothers and family (thanksgiving) 6pm Mass Jean Bevan (RIP)	The Church opens at 9.15am 10.30am Confessions 5.30pm Confessions
MON 26th February Lent Feria	10am Mass Patricia Herbert (intentions)	Church opens at 9.30am Monday to Saturday Church closes about 1pm on Mondays, other weekdays about 6pm
TUE 27th February Lent Feria	10am Mass Vasil Chornay (recently deceased)	
WED 28th February Lent Feria	10am Mass Marie Sobotta-Tabet (RIP)	10.45am Film Club (3)
THU 29th February Lent Feria	10am Mass Holy Souls	
FRI 1st March SAINT DAVID, Bishop, Patron of Wales Friday abstinence	10am Mass Betty Burke (RIP)	10.30 – 12 noon Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 6pm Stations of the Cross
SAT 2nd March Lent Feria	10am Mass Robinson Emmanuel (RIP)	The Church opens at 9.30am 11am-12pm First Holy Communion Class (16)

Prayer Intentions:

Recently deceased: Joan Ross; Maria Maguire; Mervyn Agnew; Fr Terry Murray OMI; Brian Ainsworth; Vasil Chornay

Anniversary: José Miguel Vargos Alvoraz; Mark Sharman; Mabel Bull; Nick Aldridge; Letizia Goodfellow

Confessions:

Weekdays: before and after 10am Mass

Saturday: before and after 10am Mass

Sunday: 9.30am then 10.30am and 5.30pm (before Mass)

Forthcoming liturgical celebrations:

19th March: **SAINT JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

24th March: **PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD**