

HIGH TIDE

*Parish
Magazine*

*Weymouth
St Paul
with Fleet*

MAR 2024



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Many thanks to all who have contributed to this issue of the Parish Magazine and to Liz Evans for the proofreading.

*The next Magazine will be published on **Sunday 31st March**. Please, send all articles, information, news you wish to be published by Sunday 24th March.*

Front cover: “The Crucifixion of Christ” (oil on canvas, detail)
by Pompeo Batoni (1762); Museum of fine Arts, Boston (USA).

From the Vicar

Dearly Beloved,

This morning - it is Ember Friday - there was a very interesting reading from St. Augustine in the Breviary on today's Gospel. The Gospel was the one about a man who, after 38 years of illness and many attempts to reach the "troubled waters" of the pool of Bethesda (John 5,1-15) in vain, was finally healed by the Lord Jesus. St. Augustine first recalls the forty days of fasting of Moses (= the Law), of Elijah (= the Prophets), and of Christ (= the Gospels) and shows how "*the number forty is put before us as hallowed, and, in a way, perfect.*" Then he turns his attention to the man suffering for 38 years, and says:

"I wish to explain why this number of thirty-eight is proper rather to weakness than to health. In love we have given us two precepts '*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets*' (Mt 22,37-40). If, then, the law is fulfilled in the number forty, and it is not fulfilled if there be lacking the two precepts of love, what wonder is it that he was infirm who lacked two of forty?"

In other words, St. Augustine teaches a great truth to his flock: those who do not love, they are like grievously ill people who deserve, more than our judgement, our prayers and our pity. We all know how sad and terrible it is to be sick in body. Why would it be different for infirmities of the soul? The same teaching we received from St. Paul on Quinquagesima Sunday, at the very beginning of Lent: "*If I should speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have charity, I have become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And if I have prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains, yet do not have charity, I am nothing. And if I distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, yet do not have charity, it profits me nothing*" (1 Cor 13).

Lent is the time when by prayer we elevate our minds, in fasting we curb our vices, and through alms-giving we seek eternal rewards—but all that would be in vain without love and charity. So as we do all these things, firstly and most importantly we fix our eyes on the Lord Jesus, on his Passion, Agony, and Death and we ask him humbly and earnestly to be moved by such immense love to love him more, and, for his sake, others. So that our "38 years" spent in church - praying, fasting, and doing good - be not in vain, leaving us with deadly illness, but that we can finally be healed and saved!

Assuring you of my prayers, I am,
ever yours in Christ,

Fr. Gregory

Lenten array in the Sarum use

Before exploring a few details of Lenten arrays in the Sarum use, perhaps recalling some basic information to our minds will be useful. Those who worship at St. Paul's are familiar with the custom of covering the images and statues in our church. This happens during the last two weeks of Lent which is called Passion-tide - purple or violet covers on every painting and statue with the exception of the Stations of the Cross and, obviously, of stained glass windows.

However, the duration of such veiling varies from place to place. While in most places, like at St. Paul's, images are veiled for the two weeks of Passion-tide, in some places they are veiled for the whole duration of Lent. This would have been the normal practice everywhere in medieval England.

In some places images and statues were, or still are, actually removed from the church and not simply veiled, especially after Holy Thursday.

Before moving on, we should perhaps explain what "Sarum use" means. As worship developed in the Church, very often different countries introduced different elements into worship. There was no uniformity in the Church, especially not during the Middle Ages. Religious Orders, such as the Dominicans or Norbertines or Cistercians, all had their own customs and traditions. So did some cathedrals: Lion, Milan, or, in our case, Salisbury. Sometimes the difference was only in the wording of some prayers but often these differences were more obvious. For example, the Dominicans pour wine and water into the chalice at the very beginning of the Mass. These differences are called "use".

If a cathedral or religious order was particularly prominent in an area, its own "use" influenced local churches or even entire dioceses. In medieval England the most widespread uses were Sarum (Salisbury), York, and Hereford and by the time of the Reformation, the Sarum use was certainly the most known and followed use in England. The particular customs, traditions, and uses of the cathedral of Salisbury, its saints and feast-days, "showed up" in many many churches across England.

One custom of the Sarum use was to cover all images and statues from Ash Wednesday (nothing surprising so far!)—but not in purple which would have been an expensive dye to acquire! Instead, bleached linen with simple Lenten and Passion designs were used: the idea was for a general negation of colour during Lent.

This is called the Lenten Array and it includes a curtain which hides the reredos, a frontal which covers the altar, and veils which cover other statues and pictures in the church. The colour was also referred to as ash



colour. The explanation of this use of white, which is closely akin to ashen, is “*in this time of Lent, which is a time of mourning, all things that make to the adornment of the church are either laid aside or else covered, to put us in remembrance that we ought now to lament and mourn for our souls dead in sin, and continually to watch, fast, pray,*

give alms. Wherefore the clothes that are hanged up this time of Lent in the church have painted on them nothing else but the pains, torments, passion, blood-shedding, and death of Christ, that now we should only have our minds fixed on the passion of Christ, by whom only we were redeemed.” (From: *An Introduction to English Liturgical Colours.*)

This practice made a startling transformation of the church for the whole of the Lenten season so that, with all its colours, Easter literally burst forth like the Lord from the tomb when the church was returned to normal state.

Finally, a few words on the origins of veiling images and statues. It probably derives from a custom, noted in Germany from the ninth century, of extending a large cloth before the altar from the beginning of Lent. This cloth, called the “Hungertuch” (hunger cloth), hid the altar entirely from the faithful during Lent and was not removed until during the reading of the Passion on Good Friday at the words “*the veil of the temple was rent in two.*”

This was a remnant of the ancient practice of public penance in which the penitents were ritually expelled from the church at the beginning of Lent. After the ritual of public penance fell into disuse — but the entire congregation symbolically entered the order of penitents by receiving ashes on Ash Wednesday — it was no longer possible to expel them from the church. Rather, the altar or “Holy of Holies” was shielded from view until they were reconciled to God at Easter.

When we see our images and statues veiled at St. Paul’s we should be reminded of this public expulsion of sinners: how, because of our sins, we would deserve to be removed from God’s presence and doomed to the greatest possible punishment and torment: a life without him. At the same time, these veils remind us of how God, in his infinite love and most tender mercy, gave us the means of penitence so that, with the help of his grace, we can be led back to the greatest and fullest possible joy: a life with him.

Kenya

Jeanne James writes:



A few months ago we had a visit at church from Josie Hastings MBE who is heavily involved with the Dorset/Murugi Child Sponsorship Project - Kenya. She came to talk to

a group of us about the project and how it has helped many children in Kenya to be able to attend school regularly and receive a meal at lunchtime. Some older children benefit from attending a course which helps them to learn a trade.

I listened intently and watched while Josie showed us pictures of some of the children and the work that volunteers have done to improve the lives of those most in need. Josie showed us some albums with photos and the often heartbreaking stories of the children and their families. It was easy to want to help make a difference to these children. My own children are now grown up and have had very privileged childhoods. Some of the Kenyan children have nothing.

I decided to sponsor twins, Lillian and Dennis. They are 5 years old. It is a long time since I shopped for 5 year olds. I took great delight in choosing clothes, toys, sweets, colouring books and pencils for “my” twins. They live with their mum, Ann, in a wooden house on a small plot of land with only one window and no water or long drop. The volunteers will visit and will help to move their house to a larger plot where they hope to make it water and draught proof. I wrote the twins a letter explaining who I am and where I live and asking about them. I am eagerly awaiting perhaps a drawing back from them.

If you feel you could sponsor a child in this way or would like more information please get in touch with Josie Hastings on 07796 028479 or email mrsjosiehastings@gmail.com Thank you.



The Barn Chapel offers us a quiet space to talk, debate and reflect. Meetings during a pilgrimage can be ideal occasions for us to grow as part of a community, when we can take a considered look at our spiritual progress as Christians.
Pilgrims from St Saviour's,
Eastbourne

Barn Chapel Appel

On suggestion from our Rosary Group, St. Paul's Lenten Collection is to help the restoration of the Barn Chapel in Walsingham. St. Paul's has had a long and deep spiritual relationship with "England's Nazareth" and in the past few years the Barn Chapel was used daily during our pilgrimage for Morning Prayer and reflection.

Fr. Kevin Smith writes: "*The Barn Chapel is a unique and much-valued place of stillness and peace. Built in typical rural Norfolk style, it retains an atmosphere of simplicity.*" However, the Shrine team has noticed with increasing concern that damp levels in the Barn Chapel are rising and sadly it is now not fit for purpose. Their fundraising target is £130,000 but they have already reached 65% of that amount. Now they rely on past, present, and future pilgrims to help them to raise the remaining £45,500.

You can contribute to this Lenten Collection in cash (please put the money in an envelope, write "Barn Chapel" on it, and give it to Liz or one of the Churchwardens) or via BACS into our PCC account (ST PAULS PCC, 00292006, 30-99-56 indicating it's for the Barn Chapel) or with cheques made payable to ST PAULS PCC (please write "Barn Chapel" on the back of the cheque using pencil). Money from the Cross will go to this appeal too.



"Sadly, because of the condition in the Barn Chapel it is no longer fit for use and prevents many of our pilgrims from using it during our stay"

Revd Canon Howard Stoker, Rector of Holt with High Kelling and Guardian of the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham

Lent and divine life

by Carl E. Olson

“Fasting is a medicine.” — St. John Chrysostom.

“What are you giving up for Lent?” While the question might be common in many Christian circles, it seems that answers to it are, well, increasingly creative. In fact, there are websites and books (with work sheets!) aplenty that offer “creative” suggestions for those trying to discern what needs to be given up. But Lent is firstly not about *what* and *how* but about *why*.

The great Orthodox theologian Fr. Alexander Schmemmann in his wonderful book *Great Lent* stresses the basic need for repentance. This is, of course, hardly news to serious believers. But Schmemmann is only beginning, for he dives deep and then deeper and points out that we often fail to really see and celebrate Christ’s Resurrection as something that still happens to *us*. We fail to live the divine life gifted to us at baptism. Often *we live as if Christ never came*. As if He never rose from the dead, never conquered death, and never really established a Church able to withstand the storms from without and the betrayals from within. But, as the Apostle Paul made clear to the struggling Christians in Corinth, the Resurrection really is an all-or-nothing proposition: “*And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain*” (1Cor 15,14).

How, then, to recover the vision of the new life—the fact that we who are baptized have been baptized into Christ’s death so we might walk in newness of life (Rom 6,1), and that we are, by God’s astounding, bountiful grace, actual children of God (1John 3,1)?

Fr. Schmemmann’s answer is simple: the liturgical worship of the Church. “And in the centre of that liturgical life,” he writes, “as its heart and climax, as the sun whose rays penetrate everywhere, stands *Easter*.” Worship is always a ‘watch’—we expect the glorified and risen Bridegroom and wait for Him in readiness and joy. Christ who comes to us in the Eucharist, shall also come in glory at the consummation of all time.

While many religions know the act of fasting (or even health-movements), there is something unique about Christian fasting. This is evident from the story of Adam who, in the Garden of Eden, breaks his “fasting” and he and Eve eat from the prohibited tree (Genesis 2,8-17; 3,1-7). Prior to the Fall, to man’s first sin, Adam was fasting in the sense that he refused to grasp onto anything that would sever his communion with God. His relationship with God was rooted in trust, love, and fidelity. In breaking the fast, Adam broke communion with God, and was mortally wounded.

It is not by chance that Christ, led into the desert by the Holy Spirit, started his public ministry with a fast of forty days. The old Adam was tempted and he succumbed to temptation; Christ, the new Adam, was tempted and he overcame that temptation. The results of the first Adam's failure are expulsion from Paradise and death. The fruits of the victory of the second Adam, Christ, are the destruction of death and our return to Paradise.

In this context, fasting is shown to be far more than just an obligation or even a discipline; it is connected with the very mystery of life and death, of salvation and damnation. Sin is not just a breaking of rules or a rejection of a moral code, but a mutilation of life given to us by God.

The tragedy of Adam is that he ate food for its own sake, apart from God and independent from the Source of all life and love. Adam failed to see that the world and all its good—including food—was created so that man could have communion with God. Before the Fall everything clearly pointed to God and everything was an instrument for man to get closer to God. But then Adam thought he could feed himself well enough to stay alive, even without God. From that moment, Adam, we could say, believed in food, whereas the only object of faith, of dependence is God and God alone.

We remain slaves of “food,” of all those things in which we knowingly or unthinkingly place our trust over and against God. Fasting, and the hunger that comes with it, helps us to shed that dependence, revealing our aching hunger and our essential dependence on God. Through fasting we can learn again to believe and to trust in God and not in created comfort or sustenance; we can learn to live by God as Christ did.

And yet we do try to live by bread alone. By money alone. By power alone. By pleasure alone. Yet Christ alone saves us from sin and death, not food, not money, not power. And fasting, which is so essential to Lent, is our entrance and participation in that experience of Christ Himself by which He liberates us from total dependence on food, matter, and the world.

Fasting from natural food demands an increase in supernatural food. And the hunger we feel in our bodies should intensify our hunger for the Word of God, for Holy Communion, and for the presence of the Spirit.

Pope John Paul II wrote: “In celebrating the sacrifice of the Lamb in the Eucharist, we are united to the heavenly liturgy and become part of that great multitude which cries out: ‘*Salvation belongs to our God who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb*’ (Revelation 7,10). The Eucharist is truly a glimpse of heaven appearing on earth. It is a glorious ray of the heavenly Jerusalem which pierces the clouds of our history and lights up our journey.” Indeed, this is how we can know that our Lent and our fasting are going in the right direction: our hunger and thirst for Christ and for his Sacraments increase.

How the Irish monks and saints helped save Europe

by Fr. Sean Connolly

Only Ireland, on the outer fringe of Western Europe, was left unconquered by the mighty Roman Empire. The weather was too rough (the Romans referred to the island as “Hibernia, Land of Winter”), and its Celtic warriors too fierce, to make a military expedition there worth it. One saint, however, was braver than the Roman generals; St. Patrick was able to conquer the remote island nation for Christ during his missionary labours there from 432 to 461.

When Patrick was laying the foundations of the Irish Church, no one could have foreseen the vital role it would play shortly after his death in preserving the light of faith and learning in the midst of Europe’s dark age. During Ireland’s “Golden Age,” which lasted from the sixth century until the Viking invasions of the ninth century, 500 recognized saints came from the Emerald Isle, and its many monasteries produced a flourishing of art and learning that missionaries took to a suffering European continent in the wake of Rome’s collapse. How the Irish Church came to the rescue of civilization is Patrick’s greatest legacy.

The church founded by Patrick had three distinct characteristics: it was Celtic, monastic, and missionary.

Patrick showed great respect for the native spirituality and traditions of the Irish, which were incorporated into Christian practice. The native Celtic culture was transformed by the Gospel from within without being eradicated. In becoming an Irishman, Patrick wedded his world to theirs, his faith to their life.

Patrick’s importing of Christianity brought writing to Ireland. The only alphabet the Irish had previously known was prehistoric Ogham—the twenty characters of its alphabet simply consisted of parallel strokes on either side of or across a continuous line. Within a generation, the Irish would master Latin, Greek and even some Hebrew.

There was a close affinity between the Christian faith and traditional Irish spirituality. The fit was so natural that there were no martyrdoms as Christianity spread throughout the land. Ireland is unique in religious history for being the only land into which Christianity was introduced without bloodshed. The Irish Church soon produced an unprecedented number of monks and missionaries. In Patrick’s time, the Irish Church already developed a monastic spirit. Many of his young converts, including even sons and daughters of kings, were eager to dedicate their lives to God as monks and nuns.

Over the course of the century after Patrick's death, monasteries were established all over Ireland and they became centres of economy and learning. Ireland was unlike the rest of the Western Church, which was organized into dioceses. Medieval Ireland had no cities and, as a result, the Irish didn't quite see the point of bishops whose importance were superseded by abbots. These monastic city-states became hubs of civilization.



Most important were the libraries and scriptoria where the wisdom of the ancient Greco-Roman world was preserved. The isolated island nation did not suffer the ravages of the empire's collapse to the barbarian hordes. Patrick brought the best of Roman religion and learning to the island, which continued to thrive in its many monasteries while the rest of Western Europe descended into the Dark Ages.

Even the most secular of modern men takes for granted the historical Christian identity of Europe. It is easy to overlook, however, that after the fall of Rome, Christianity could have easily become extinct on the continent. Rome was a Christian empire that fell to pagan barbarians. If a pagan tribe was able to consolidate power at this time, Christianity could have very well declined and not become the fixture of Western civilization that it did. All the great continental libraries had vanished with the fall of the Western Roman Empire just a few years after Patrick's death. As a contemporary historian wrote after Rome's fall: "The libraries, like tombs, were closed forever."

An illiterate Europe of warring tribes emerged. Rather than the pursuit of learning, arts, and culture, those tribes were preoccupied with filling the power vacuum left by the collapsed Roman Empire. In comparison to the "light" of classical antiquity, historians have labeled this early medieval period the "Dark Ages" as the realm of the former empire slid into an economic, intellectual, and cultural decline.

Saintly bishops on the continent like Pope Gregory in Rome and Isidore in Seville, did their part to save civilization by building libraries. But their efforts did little to stem the tide of Western Europe's decline.

Back in Ireland, the light of classical civilization was kept alive in its monasteries. Art was flourishing, as typified by the metal work of the Ardagh Chalice, the stone work of the high crosses dotting the landscape of church yards and cemeteries, and the lavish decorations of illuminated manuscripts like the Book of Kells. Most important were the monastery libraries and scriptoria where the wisdom of old was preserved and expanded. As the

Roman Empire fell, as all through Europe matted, unwashed barbarians descended on the Roman cities, looting artefacts and burning books, the Irish, who were just learning to read and write, took up the great labor of copying all of Western literature—everything they could lay their hands on.

Patrick imparted to the Irish Church a missionary impulse. The generation of saints that followed him would not be content in keeping the treasure Christianity and the wisdom of the ancients to themselves.

The first great figure in this era of enormous Irish missionary activity was St. Columcille (521-597), Latinized as “Columba.” He established the famed monastery at Iona on the coast of Scotland and continued on to evangelize the Scots and the Picts on the mainland. Other great Irish missionary figures who established monasteries in Britain and across northern continental Europe included Saints Aidan, Fridolin, Fursey, Kilian, and Gall. The greatest among them, St. Columbanus (543-615), established monasteries in Belgium, Switzerland, France, and Italy, where he is buried at Bobbio Abbey which later became a renowned centre of learning in the early Middle Ages, rivaling St. Benedict’s abbey at Monte Casino.

The disciples of Columbanus are credited with establishing more than a hundred more monasteries throughout the continent—each serving as a light that illumined Europe during the darkness.

Europe’s first Renaissance, presided over by Charlemagne (747-814), would not have been possible without the influx of Irish codices on the continent. Charlemagne was said to have loved the “wandering monks” of Ireland.

The outstanding philosopher of the Carolingian era, the man who Bertrand Russell called “the most astonishing person of the ninth century,” was John Scotus, called “Eriugena”, that is the Irish-born.

For all of these reasons we can affirm that the monastic scribes and missionaries of Ireland effectively saved European civilization in the midst of the Dark Age. It’s a compelling story that should be of interest to more than just the Irish. Especially in the times we are living when our own, traditionally Christian Western civilization is in terrible decline by just about every measure. What lesson can we learn from on how the Irish saved civilization all those centuries ago?

It can only be done by faith—by faith taken seriously. The twenty-first century must be spiritual or it will not be. If our civilization is to be saved—forget about our civilization, which, as Patrick would say, may pass ‘in a moment like a cloud or smoke that is scattered by the wind’—if we are to be saved, it will not be by the Romans but by saints.

Palms. But why?

Have you ever wondered why do we use palms at the beginning of the Holy Week, on Palm Sunday? I mean, beyond the obvious answer that palms were what the citizen of Jerusalem waved to greet the Lord Jesus as he entered the Holy City. My question is more about: why did *they* do it? Why are palms so special in the Bible?

‘Cause doubt not! palms are indeed important in the Holy Scripture. The palms are the princes of the vegetable kingdom. With the cylindrical stem, unbroken by branches, springing high into the air and unfurling a canopy of enormous leaves, fan-shaped or feathery, in the shadow of which are suspended great clusters of fruit, no tree can look more lordly or more bountiful.

The Church uses the image of palm tree at Mass on feast days of Confessors: “*The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon*” (Psalm 92,12). Believers are often likened to trees in Scripture anyway: “*He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper*” (Psalm 1,3). “*I am like a green olive tree in the house of God*” (Psalm 52,8). “*His branches shall spread, and His beauty shall be as the olive tree, and His smell as Lebanon*” (Hosea 14,6)—but most often they are likened to the fruit-bearing, stately, and beautiful date palm.

The date palm, a widespread tree in Palestine (Joel 1,12; Nehemiah 8,15), is described as flourishing (Psalm 92,12), tall (Song of Solomon 7,7), upright (Jeremiah 10,5). Its branches are a symbol of victory (Revelation 7,9). The whole land of Palestine was called by the Greeks and Romans *Phoenicia* which means “the land of palms,” they even named a city in the desert *Palmyra*, that is “city of palms.”

So beautiful are they that, when first mentioned in the Bible, they remained impressed on peoples’ minds so much that they even remembered their number: “*And they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm trees: and they encamped there by the waters*” (Exodus 15,27). Note that these palms are very different from the ones of Egypt. Later, when Solomon built the Temple of Jerusalem, he adorned it with carvings and images of palms. “*And he carved all the walls of the house round about with carved figures of cherubims and palm trees and open flowers, within and without. The two doors also were of olive tree; and he carved upon them carvings of cherubims and palm trees and open flowers, and overlaid them with gold, and spread gold upon the cherubims, and upon the palm trees.*” (1 Kings 6,29.32).

The most beautiful palms grow in Jericho (Deuteronomy 34,3) and along the banks of Jordan. Branches of palms were carried at the Feast of the Tabernacles (Leviticus 23,40), and, finally, as mentioned above, at our Lord's triumphal entrance into Jerusalem the crowds took palm branches, and went forth to meet him, crying, "*Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord*" (Matthew 21,8; John 12,13).

It is easy to see the deep, spiritual link between the Gospels and the Book of Revelation: in both there are crowds greeting the Lord Jesus with palms. Indeed, Jerusalem on Palm Sunday was a picture in miniature and a symbol of the great multitude of the redeemed and resurrected saints who will greet the Lord Jesus at His throne, "*clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands*"; crying, "*Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb*" (Revelation 7,9.10). What an amazing, inspiring, fear-instilling call this is when we walk in procession with our blessed palms on Palm Sunday: we must be (or, if not yet, then become) that countless multitude of Saints who, with their faith and virtues and innocence of life, praise their God and Saviour!

There is another spiritual link created by palms and not to be overlooked. After God had delivered the people of Israel out of their bondage in Egypt, and while they were on their way to the promised land, God commanded them to celebrate an annual feast. It was called the Feast of Tabernacles; and in it, the people were to celebrate for a seven day period by living in little "booths" or "tabernacles" that they were to make out of palm branches and the boughs of other leafy trees (Leviticus 23,40). Thus palms became symbols of Israel's freedom from slavery and of God dwelling with his people. Thousands of years later when Jesus transfigured on the Mount of Tabor, during the Feast of Tabernacles, Peter wanted to build palm-tents because he recognised God's presence in Jesus. Peter thought that was it! Finally, God dwells with us and we will be free from the slavery of sin and death! Little did he know that God's plans were different and finally victory had to be brought about not by Jesus' glorious Transfiguration but his Passion and Death. Hence the palms as he enters Jerusalem.

When we take home the blessed palms and keep them the whole year in our homes, we, too, must remember that the glory of Resurrection to a new, divine, and eternal life come by passing through the Passion of Christ. Mortification and penance, and often even suffering, is part of our "maturing" from earthly to heavenly life.

This is perhaps the point to recall another characteristic of date palms: they seldom bear fruit till six, eight, or even ten years after they have been planted; but they will continue to be productive for one hundred years.

What a strikingly fitting symbol of Christian life and spirituality. The patient work and perseverance it takes to grow in our spiritual life discourages many. We always want results: good, abundant, and quick results... preferably with little effort. Christian life, a life of prayer, could not be further from this.

Finally, we must also admire and learn from what is “invisible” in palm trees: their root system. The date palm has extremely deep tap roots—called a root ball—and thus can flourish even in the desert, growing tall and living long. It is perhaps the most useful of all trees, not only producing dates, but also sugar, wine, honey, oil, resin, rope, thread, tannin, and dyestuff. Its seeds are fed to cattle and its leaves are used for roofs, fences, mats, and baskets. Its fruit is said to get sweeter as the tree grows older, and this is compared to the believer in a beautiful verse: “*Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing*” (Psalm 92,13,14).

For this reason, for its amazing root system, date palm is a symbol of stability that cannot be shaken. Palm trees are able to bend 40 to 50 degrees without snapping and can even withstand hurricane-force winds. At the end of a storm, they will return to their upright position with their root systems intact. Surprisingly, storms can stretch and even strengthen a palm tree’s roots. In many cases, palm trees are stronger in the aftermath of a powerful windstorm.

Tall, upright, flourishing, and fruitful to a great age. Palms trees are like Christians should be. Growing slowly but steadily upwards, through prayer. Each and every part of us, of our life, must be “useful”, put, that is, to God’s use as and when he wishes in his love and wisdom. No tempest, no drought, no calamity should affect us if, as palms trees, we are planted close to the Living Water, rooted deeply in God.

To finish, perhaps two more surprising things about palm trees. Firstly, they show the place of water. It may take a good amount of digging but where there is a palm tree, there is water underneath. Just like the presence of a Christian, wherever and whenever, ~~should~~ must (!) be indicative of God’s presence. Secondly, palm trees cannot be grafted. It is impossible to graft a palm tree onto another palm tree. If it is done it will die. It has this unique character of identity. A ‘Palm-tree Christian’ cannot be grafted to any another identity. We are Christians, through and through, or we perish away...

May God enable each of us to flourish like the palm tree—beautiful in the Lord, useful in His service, bearing good fruit to His glory, even into old age!

Solutions to Crossword Puzzle of Saints

Across: **3.** Franciscan Martyr who died in Auschwitz: Maximilian **Kolbe** (he offered to die instead of a family-father). **6.** He had a wild life before his conversion. His mother (St. Monica) followed him everywhere and prayed for him: **Augustine**. **9.** She said: “I am the Immaculate Conception.” **Mary** (to Bernadette when she appeared in Lourdes). **11.** He wrote many letters to various churches: **Paul**. **12.** People in heaven are called **saints**. **13.** St. **Dominic** Savio (died at the age of 14 in 1857, he was noted for his prayerfulness and goodness). **14.** St. **Joan** of Arc. **15.** She served the poor and sick in Calcutta: **Teresa**. **17.** Our Lady’s mother: **Anne**. **18.** The first pope: **Peter**. **20.** St. **Francis** of Assisi.

Down: **1.** St. **Therese** of Lisieux. **2.** St. **Kateri** Tekakwitha (the first Native American saint, from the tribe of Mohawks, to be canonised). **4.** She saw Our Lady in Lourdes: **Bernadette**. **5.** Using a three leaf clover, he taught people about the Holy Trinity: **Patrick**. **7.** St. **Thomas** Aquinas (often quoted by the Vicar). **8.** A doctor who refused cancer treatment to save her baby she was pregnant with: **Gianna** (Gianna Beretta Molla, died in 1962 in Italy). **9.** He was a tax collector: **Matthew**. **10.** St. **Juan** Diego saw Our Lady of Guadalupe. **14.** Foster father of Jesus: **Joseph**. **16.** St. **Maria** Goretti (her relics are in the Trinity-altar in our church). **19.** St. **Rose** of Lima (She was the first person born in the Americas to be declared a saint).

Solutions to “Is it in the Bible?”

1. No. *Eve didn’t eat an apple, the Bible doesn’t specify the type of fruit.* **2. No.** *True as it is, it’s not in the Bible.* **3. Yes.** *Proverbs 13,24.* **4. No.** *The Bible doesn’t tell us their number; three is only assumed because of the three gifts.* **5. Yes.** *Psalm 53,1. Of course, the context is: “The fool hath said in his heart: “There is no God.”* **6. No.** *Just as in the case of the apple or the number of the Magi, the Bible doesn’t say what kind of fish swallowed Jonah.* **7. No.** *Just a popular saying.* **8. No.** *Even though it does sound very biblical.* **9. Yes.** *Job 19,20.* **10. No.** *We only know about it from tradition.* **12. Yes.** *Although this is a tricky one. Jesus says in Matthew 5,43 “Ye have heard that it hath been said [...] hate thine enemy.” but actually nowhere in the Old Testament does it directly state that one should hate one’s enemies, though it is implied by several verses.* **13. No.** *Again, sounds very biblical but not in the Bible.* **14. Yes.** *Job 40,15-24.* **15. Yes.** *Jeremiah 13,23.* **16. No.** **17. No.** **18. Yes.** *Matthew 15,14.* **19. Yes.** *Isaiah 40,15.* **20. Yes.** *In the books of Genesis and Numbers and possibly in Ezekiel.* **21. Yes.** *Matthew, Mark, Luke, Acts, and other references to it in various epistles.* **22. Yes.** *Acts 12,2.* **23. Yes.** *Luke 4,23.*

**Calendar, Service times,
and Prayer Intentions**

Anniversaries of death

Order of Morning and Evening Prayer

Calendar for March 2024

FRI	1 st	Feria (<i>St. David Bishop</i>)	12pm, <i>5pm Stations</i>
SAT	2 nd	Monthly Requiem	9.30am
SUN	3 rd	3RD SUNDAY OF LENT	10.30am, 4pm
MON	4 th	Feria (<i>St. Casimir</i>)	9am
TUE	5 th	Feria	9am
WED	6 th	Sts. Perpetua & Felicity, Martyrs	10am
THU	7 th	St. Thomas Aquinas	6pm
FRI	8 th	Feria (<i>St. John of God</i>)	12pm, <i>5pm Stations</i>
SAT	9 th	St. Frances of Rome, Widow	9.30am
SUN	10 th	4TH SUNDAY OF LENT	10.30am, 4pm
MON	11 th	Feria	9am
TUE	12 th	St. Gregory the Great, Pope	9am
WED	13 th	Feria	10am
THU	14 th	Feria	6pm
FRI	15 th	Feria	12pm, <i>5pm Stations</i>
SAT	16 th	Feria	9.30am
SUN	17 th	PASSION SUNDAY	10.30am, 4pm
MON	18 th	St. Edward King, Martyr	9am
TUE	19 th	ST. JOSEPH	9am
WED	20 th	Feria	10am
THU	21 st	St. Benedict Abbot	6pm
FRI	22 nd	Feria (<i>Anointing</i>)	12pm, <i>5pm Stations</i>
SAT	23 rd	Feria	10am
SUN	24 th	PALM SUNDAY	10.30am, 4pm
MON	25 th	Monday of Holy Week	9am
TUE	26 th	Tuesday of Holy Week	—
WED	27 th	Wednesday of Holy Week	10am, 6.30pm
THU	28 th	MAUNDY THURSDAY	6pm
FRI	29 th	GOOD FRIDAY	2.30pm, 7pm
SAT	30 th	HOLY SATURDAY	10am, 7pm
SUN	31 st	EASTER SUNDAY	10.30am

Daily Intentions



Anniversaries of death

We pray for...

- 1st Dying - *Elizabeth Gentle, Vernon Thomas pr, Sophie Llewellyn*
- 2nd Departed - *Joan Witham*

- 3rd Our Parish
- 4th Immigrants and refugees
- 5th Reconciliation - *Lilian Miles*
- 6th Healing
- 7th Priests & Vocations - *John Pryer, Lucien Ciceron*
- 8th Chapter of St. Aldhelm (Servers) - *Beryl Grove*
- 9th Cell of O.L.W. - *Ernest Sibley, Jack Harvey*

- 10th Our Parish
- 11th Our choir and musicians - *Suzanne Hart, Gilbert Turner, John Haining*
- 12th Our PCC - *Doreen Legg*
- 13th Conifers - *Leonard Patt*
- 14th Beechcroft
- 15th Our Benefactors, living & departed
- 16th Shrine of O.L. of Walsingham - *Jack Bibby*

- 17th Our Parish
- 18th Peace in Ukraine - *Olive Riggs, Elfreda Paddock, Ronald Coleman, June Shirt*
- 19th Fathers (spiritual, foster, of families) - *Phyllis Lee*
- 20th Peace in Israel and Palestine - *Noel Wray, Grant Goodwin*
- 21st Mothers - *John McCaig*
- 22nd Sick - *Vera Sertin*
- 23rd Jobseekers - *Charles Seyfang, Graham Hardick*

- 24th Our Parish - *Cyril Croxford, Mark Houghton, Ruth Edgar*
- 25th Catholic Societies
- 26th The spread of Christ's Gospel - *Muriel Curley*
- 27th Spiritual renewal of our Parish - *Doreen Mounce, Bernard Collick*
- 28th Our Parish - *Ann Uphill, Peggy Moore*
- 29th Our Parish - *George Hornby*
- 30th Our Parish

- 31st Our Parish - *Martyn Fisher pr, Nigel Brown*

If there are names missing from the list or you want to add names, please, talk to the Vicar.

Open, O Lord, my mouth to bless thy holy Name; cleanse also my heart from all vain, evil, and wandering thoughts; enlighten my understanding and kindle my affections; that I may worthily, attentively, and devoutly recite this Morning Prayer, and so be meet to be heard before the presence of thy divine Majesty. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

MORNING PRAYER

V. The Angel of the Lord brought tidings to Mary.

R. And she conceived by the Holy Ghost.

V. Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

R. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it unto me according to thy word.

V. Hail Mary... R. Holy Mary...

V. And the Word was made flesh.

R. And dwelt amongst us.

V. Hail Mary... R. Holy Mary...

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

V. Let us pray. We beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts, that as we have known the Incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so by his Cross and Passion we may be brought unto the glory of his Resurrection; through the same Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

V. O Lord, open my lips. R. And my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

V. O God, make speed to save me. R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. R. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

V. Let us rejoice in the Lord; let us joyfully sing to God our Saviour! Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us joyfully sing psalms to him!

R. The Lord has promised a crown to those who love him.

V. For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hands are the depths of the earth; and the heights of the mountains are his.

R. The Lord has promised a crown to those who love him.

V. The sea is his, for who but he made it; and his hands fashioned the dry land. O come, let us worship and fall down, and weep before the Lord who made us! For he is the Lord our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

R. The Lord has promised a crown to those who love him.

V. Today if you shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts: As in the provocation, on the day of temptation in the wilderness, where your fathers tempted me, and put me to the test, and they saw my works.

R. The Lord has promised a crown to those who love him.

V. For forty years I loathed that generation, and I said: They always err in heart, they have not known my ways, so I swore in my wrath: they shall not enter my rest.

R. The Lord has promised a crown to those who love him.

V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

R. The Lord has promised a crown to those who love him.

HYMN

The fast, as taught by holy lore,
We keep in solemn course once more:
The fast to all men known, and bound
In forty days of yearly round.

More sparing therefore let us make
The words we speak, the food we take,
Our sleep and mirth, and closer barred
Be every sense in holy guard.

Avoid the evil thoughts that roll
Like waters o'er the heedless soul;
Nor let the foe occasion find
Our souls in slavery to bind.

In prayer together let us fall,
And cry for mercy, one and all,
And weep before the Judge's feet,
And his avenging wrath entreat.

Forgive the sin that we have wrought;
Increase the good that we have sought:
That we at length, our wanderings o'er,
May please thee here and evermore.

Grant O thou Blessed Trinity,
Grant, O Essential Unity,
That this our fast of forty days
May work our profit and thy praise.

The appointed Psalm(s) and Reading(s) follow:

1	Psalms 41	Genesis 45,16-end Hebrews 3,7-end	3	18 v. 1-25	Jeremiah 38 Philippians 1,1-26
2	25	Genesis 46 Hebrews 4,1-13	4	5	Genesis 47 Hebrews 4,14-end

5	9	Genesis 48 Hebrews 5	19	25, 147 v. 1-12	Isaiah 11,1-10 Matthew 13,54-end
6	38	Genesis 49 Hebrews 6	20	55	Exodus 9,1-12 Hebrews 12,1-13
7	56	Genesis 50 Hebrews 7,1-10	21	40	Exodus 9,13-end Hebrews 12,14-end
8	22	Exodus 1 Hebrews 7,11-end	22	22	Exodus 10 Hebrews 13,1-16
9	31	Exodus 2,1-10 Hebrews	23	23	Exodus 11 Hebrews 13,17-end
10	27	1 Samuel 16,1-13 John 9,1-25	24	61, 62	Zechariah 9,9-12 1 Corinthians 2,1-12
11	77	Exodus 2,11-end Hebrews 9,1-14	25	41	Lamentations 1,1-12 Luke 22,1-23
12	79	Exodus 3 Hebrews 9,15-end	26	27	Lamentations 3,1-18 Luke 22,24-53
13	90	Exodus 4 Hebrews 10,1-18	27	102 v. 1-18	Jeremiah 11,18-20 Luke 22,54-end
14	86	Exodus 5 Hebrews 10,19-25	28	42, 43	Leviticus 16,1-24 Luke 23,1-25
15	102	Exodus 6 Hebrews 10,26-end	29	69	Genesis 22,1-18 Hebrews 10,1-10
16	32	Exodus 7 Hebrews 11,1-16	30	142	Hosea 6,1-6 John 2,18-22
17	107 v. 1-22	Exodus 24,3-8 Hebrews 12,18-end	31	114, 117	Genesis 1,26-end 2 Corinthians 5,14-end
18	73	Exodus 8 Hebrews 11,17-end			

Each reading ends with these words:

V. This is the word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTUS – *One of the following antiphons is used:*

Ant: Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil and when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He was hungry.

Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel, *
 who has come to his people and set them free.
He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour, *
 born of the house of his servant David.
Through his holy prophets God promised of old *
 to save us from our enemies, from the hands of all that hate us,
To show mercy to our ancestors, *
 and to remember his holy covenant.
This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham: *
 to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
Free to worship him without fear, *
 holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life.
And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, *
 for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,
To give his people knowledge of salvation *
 by the forgiveness of all their sins.
In the tender compassion of our God *
 the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, *
 and to guide our feet into the way of peace.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, *
 and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, *
 world without end. Amen.

Ant: Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil and when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He was hungry.

V. Let us pray. – ***Intercessions*** are offered for the Church, for the Sovereign (the world), for those in need, and for the dead. Then follows one of the Collects:

Grant, O Lord, that your faithful people may, with true piety, undertake the time-honoured custom of fasting and may carry it out with unwavering devotion. Through Christ our Lord. **R.** Amen.

V. Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on

earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

V. The Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil, and keep us in eternal life.

R. Amen. V. Let us bless the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

V. And may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. R. Amen.

Morning Prayer ends with the final Antiphon of Our Lady:

Hail, O Queen of heaven, enthroned! Hail, by Angels Mistress owned!
Root of Jesse, Gate of morn, Whence the world's true Light was born:
Glorious Virgin, joy to thee, Loveliest whom in heaven they see:
Fairest thou, where all are fair, Plead with Christ our sins to spare.

V. Allow me to praise thee, O holy Virgin.

R. Give me strength against thine enemies.

V. Let us pray. Grant, O merciful God, to our weak natures thy protection, that we who commemorate the holy Mother of God may, by the help of her intercession, arise from our iniquities. Through the same Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

EVENING PRAYER

V. The Angel of the Lord brought tidings to Mary.

R. And she conceived by the Holy Ghost.

V. Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

R. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it unto me according to thy word.

V. Hail Mary... R. Holy Mary...

V. And the Word was made flesh.

R. And dwelt amongst us.

V. Hail Mary... R. Holy Mary...

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

V. Let us pray. We beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts, that as we have known the Incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so by his Cross and Passion we may be brought unto the glory of his Resurrection; through the same Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

V. O God, make speed to save me. R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

R. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

HYMN

O kind Creator, bow thine ear
To mark the cry, to know the tear
Before thy throne of mercy spent
In this thy holy fast of Lent.

Our sins are many, this we know;
Spare us, good Lord, thy mercy show;
And for the honour of thy name
Our fainting souls to life reclaim.

Our hearts are open, Lord, to thee:
Thou knowest our infirmity;
Pour out on all who seek thy face
Abundance of thy pardoning grace.

Give us the self-control that springs
From discipline of outward things,
That fasting inward secretly
The soul may purely dwell with thee.

We pray thee, blessed Trinity,
One God, unchanging Unity,
That we from this our abstinence
May reap the fruits of penitence. Amen.

The appointed Psalm(s) and Reading(s) follow:

1	Psalms 6	Jeremiah 10,1-16 John 7,14-24	7	59	Jeremiah 14 John 8,31-47
2	23	Jeremiah 10,17-24 John 7,25-36	8	69	Jeremiah 15 John 8,48-end
3	11, 12	Exodus 5 Matthew 10,16-22	9	116	Jeremiah 16 John 9,1-17
4	17	Jeremiah 11 John 7,37-end	10	13, 14	Exodus 6,1-13 Romans 5,1-11
5	64	Jeremiah 12 John 8,1-11	11	25	Jeremiah 17 John 9,18-end
6	39	Jeremiah 13 John 8,12-30	12	80	Jeremiah 18,1-12 John 10,1-10

13	91	Jeremiah 18,13-end John 10,11-21	23	130	Jeremiah 25,1-14 John 12,36-end
14	94	Jeremiah 19,1-13 John 10,22-end	24	69 v. 1-20	Isaiah 5,1-7 Mark 12,1-12
15	16	Jeremiah 19,14-end John 11,1-16	25	25	Lamentations 2,8-19 Colossians 1,18-23
16	140	Jeremiah 20 John 11,17-27	26	55 v. 13-24	Lamentations 3,40-51 Galatians 6,11-end
17	34 v. 1-10	Exodus 7,8-24 Romans 5,12-end	27	88	Isaiah 63,1-9 Revelation 15,1-4
18	132	Hosea 11,1-9 Luke 2,41-end	28	39	Exodus 11 Ephesians 2,11-18
19	1, 112	Genesis 50,22-end Matthew 2,13-end	29	130, 143	Lamentations 5,15-end John 19,38-end
20	62	Jeremiah 23,1-8 John 12,1-11	30	116	Job 19,21-27 1 John 5,5-12
21	43	Jeremiah 23,9-32 John 12,12-19	31	105	Ezekiel 37,1-14 Luke 24,13-25
22	31	Jeremiah 24 John 12,20-36			

Each reading ends with these words:

V. This is the word of the Lord. **R.** Thanks be to God.

MAGNIFICAT

Ant: Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation; let us approve ourselves in fastings, in prayer, and in love unfeigned.

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,+
my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,*
he has looked with favour on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed;+
the Almighty has done great things for me*
and holy is his name.

He has mercy on those who fear him,*
from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm*
and has scattered the proud in their conceit,
Casting down the mighty from their thrones*
and lifting up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things*
and sent the rich away empty.
He has come to the aid of his servant Israel,*
to remember his promise of mercy,
The promise made to our ancestors,*
to Abraham and his children for ever.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, *
and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

Ant: Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation; let us approve ourselves in fastings, in prayer, and in love unfeigned.

V. Let us pray. – *Intercessions* are offered for the Church, for the Sovereign (world), for those in need, our Benefactors, and for the dead. Then one of the following Collects is said:

Grant, O Lord, that your faithful people may, with true piety, undertake the time-honoured custom of fasting and may carry it out with unwavering devotion. Through Christ our Lord. *R.* Amen.

V. Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

All: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen. *V.* Let us bless the Lord. *R.* Thanks be to God. *V.* And may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. *R.* Amen.

Optional private prayer to be said after Evening Prayer: To the Most Holy and undivided Trinity, to our Lord Jesus Christ Crucified, to the fruitful Virginity of the most blessed and most glorious Mary, always a Virgin, and to the holiness of all the Saints be ascribed everlasting praise, honour, and glory, by all creatures, and to us be granted the forgiveness of all our sins, world without end. Amen.

Prayers for Passion-tide

I beseech you, most sweet Lord Jesus Christ, grant that your Passion may be to me a power by which I may be strengthened, protected, and defended. May your wounds be to me food and drink, by which I may be nourished, inebriated, and overjoyed. May the sprinkling of your Blood be to me an ablution for all my sins. May your death prove to me life everlasting, and your cross eternal glory. In these be my refreshment, my joy, my preservation, and sweetness of heart. Who lives and reigns, world without end. Amen.

Passion of Christ! Strengthen me under the pressure of temptation. Strengthen me to do Your Will, My God. Strengthen me in moments of suffering, in times of loneliness, in periods of depression. Strengthen me that I may never swerve from You, dear Christ. Strengthen me to accept my cross and carry it generously to the end. On the battlefield of life, stand by me that I may share in your victory. Amen.

O my good Jesus, my dear Saviour, I compassionate Thee in Thy sufferings. I fervently bless Thee and thank Thee for all Thou hast suffered for me; give me grace to weep over the sins and the ingratitude which caused Thy dreadful agony. Sweet Jesus, pardon me for my past indifference to Thy love. Heart of Jesus, burning with love for us, set our hearts on fire with love of Thee. May those bonds which confined Thy hands burst the fetters of my sins! I cast myself at Thy Sacred feet, O my King and my God. Thou hast undergone the humiliation of allowing Thyself to be bound by Thy creatures; may I place my happiness in sharing Thy humiliations, and carrying Thy Cross. Amen.

O Precious Blood of Jesus, infinite price of sinful man's redemption, both drink and laver of our souls, Thou who dost plead continually the cause of man before the throne of infinite mercy; from the depths of my heart, I adore Thee, and so far as I am able, I would requite Thee for the insults and outrages which Thou dost continually receive from human beings, and especially from those who rashly dare to blaspheme Thee. Who would not bless this Blood of infinite value? Who doth not feel within himself the fire of the love of Jesus who shed it all for us? What would be my fate, had I not been redeemed by this Divine Blood? Who hath drawn it from the veins of my Savior, even to the last drop? Ah, this surely was the work of love. O infinite love, which has given us this saving balm! O balm beyond all price, welling up from the fountain of infinite love, grant that every heart and every tongue may be enabled to praise Thee, magnify Thee and give Thee thanks both now and for evermore. Amen.

From the Book of Common Prayer

Lent 3: *WE BESEECH THEE, Almighty God, look upon the hearty desires of thy humble servants, and stretch forth the right hand of thy Majesty, to be our defence against all our enemies, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

The verb, “to beseech”, is more appropriate than the verb, “to ask”, when addressing Almighty God, our Creator and Judge, because it presents us as his loyal subjects and servants. After all he is the King of all kings and Source of all power and authority and we speak in this prayer of “thy Majesty”.

Before praying this prayer we need to be spiritually prepared to address God. We call ourselves “thy humble servants” and humility is not a normal characteristic of our souls. It comes after due self-examination and penitence before God. Further “hearty desires” (praying with earnestness, fervour and sincerity) only arise when we are bowed before God in the right spirit.

The petition is for the omnipotent Lord God to defend us against all our enemies. While this always has reference to some human enemies, it also covers the spiritual enemies (Satan and his assistants - Ephesians 6,12: “*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*”) who seek to damage our covenantal relation of grace with God the Father through Jesus Christ.

“The right hand of thy Majesty” echoes various petitions in the Psalter (see Psalm 138,7: “*Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.*” or 74,10-11); but, it also refers to the One who is seated at the right hand of the Father in glory, even the Lord Jesus Christ, who is One with the Father; and it is, of course, in the Name of this same Jesus that we pray, for he is our Mediator before God the Father Almighty.

Let us in Lent celebrate the power of God to bring us into his kingdom of grace and save us from our enemies. “*Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power; thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy. Thou stretchedst out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them*” (Exodus 15,6,12). As this Collect is fulfilled in us we shall walk in love (Ephesians 5,1-14) and we shall be preserved from Satan and Beelzebul (Luke 11,14-28) and all their works and deceit.

The Rev'd Dr Peter Toon (+2009)

Healing Prayers

collected by Fr. James

For Those Battling Cancer or Other Life-Threatening or Chronic Disease — Lord Christ, by your own scourging and crucifixion, you yourself were broken in body and spirit. And so you intimately know and understand the brokenness of our own bodies. This disease/illness has shaken us to the very core of who we are and we are afraid. And yet by your stripes we have been made whole. Help us to trust in you that though our bodies may now be broken and diseased physically, you will bring wholeness to the entirety of our lives, in body and in spirit. Grant us the strength and grace to endure what we must endure. And in your due time, raise us up to new life with you. May this suffering not be in vain but used to draw us ever closer to you and to the fullness of life that you desire for us. For our life depends not upon the wellness of our bodies but upon your great mercies. Grant this for your great love's sake. Amen.

For the Loss of a Dream — Lord, it seems like only yesterday that we dared to dream our dreams. But now all of that is too quickly gone as the flowers of the fields. But you, O Lord, who are the Alpha and the Omega, are the same yesterday, today, and forever. For you never change and your tender mercies and love never come to an end; they are new every morning. Great, indeed, is your faithfulness. Rekindle within us a sure confidence that you will rebuild the now seeming ruins of our lives. You are the God who works wonders and you desire for us far better things than we can ever hope for or imagine. Help us to rest in that great promise. For your mercy's sake, we pray. Amen.

For a Major Transition in Life — Loving Father, you know how we yearn in our innermost being for the need for stability, for a strong anchor amid the storms and uncertainties of life. Yet life is a journey and the circumstances of that journey have now changed. And we feel disoriented and unsure of the way ahead. But you never change and your care for us never ceases. Guide us along the right paths as we transition from one stage of our lives to one that is known only to you. Send forth your light to illumine our path and even if the way remains dark and unsure, grant us a sure confidence and trust in you as a faithful guide and steady anchor. For you are the source of our lives and you will guide us into the fullness of life with you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever. Amen.

For a Person in Despair — O God, you rule over your creation with tenderness, offering fresh hope in the midst of the terrible misery. We pray for our brother/sister whose soul is blackened by despair, infusing him/her with the pure light of your love. As he/she curses the day he/she was born and yearns for oblivion, reveal to him/her the miracle of new birth which shall prepare him/her for the joys of heaven. Amen. (7th century, prayer from an Irish monk)

For People Critically Ill, or Facing Great Uncertainty — God of the present moment, God who in Jesus stills the storm and soothes the frantic heart; Bring hope and courage to N as he/she/they wait/s in uncertainty. Bring hope that you will make her/him/them the equal of whatever lies ahead. Bring her/him/them courage to endure what cannot be avoided, for Your will is health and wholeness; You are God, and we need you. Amen.

For the Mentally and Emotionally Ill — Most merciful and loving Father, with whom nothing is impossible, we pray that you will restore the light of reason and wholeness to those who are in mental or emotional darkness and despair. May your great love encompass them and may all discord and confusion be dispelled until your eternal peace and tranquility possess their souls; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Another prayer for the same — Mighty God, in Jesus Christ you deal with spirits that darken our minds and set us against ourselves. Give peace to those who are torn by conflict, cast down, or lost in worlds of illusion. By your power, drive from our minds demons that shake confidence and wreck love. Tame unruly forces within us, and bring us your truth, so that we may accept ourselves as your beloved children in Jesus Christ. Amen.

Trying to Find a Way Ahead — Lord, you promised that the night is as bright as the day to you. But this present night of my life seems very dark indeed. I yearn to see some glimmer, some faint reassurance of light and to find a way through this present darkness. May I trust that even in what seems to be an impenetrable darkness that you are here, gently guiding and leading me through. And even though I do not see the way ahead, much less the path that I must tread, I trust that you will guide me safely to my journey's end. Like blind Bartimaeus I yearn to see again. Apply your healing salve to my blinded eyes so that I behold your presence. For you are the light of the world and you will make my way bright. For in your light, we see light. In your holy Name I pray. Amen.

For Relief from Depression — Father God, the gloom of depression has taken hold of my life. Everywhere that I turn I seem to encounter only pain, layer upon layer of pain. My eyes constantly stream with tears. I hurt. Your presence seems so distant. And my friends stand aloof and darkness seems to be my one companion. Come into the gloom and agony of my mind and breathe your gentle Holy Spirit to sweep away the fog of depression and anxiety. And fill me with your gentle, healing presence so that I may know wholeness once more. Through your Son Jesus Christ, the One who comes to make us whole. Amen.

For the Victims of Addiction — O blessed Lord, you ministered to all who came to you: Look with compassion upon all who through addiction have lost their health and freedom. Restore to them the assurance of your unfailing mercy; remove from them the fears that beset them; strengthen them in the work of their recovery; and to those who care for them, give patient understanding and persevering love. Amen.

Another prayer for the same — Gracious God, the helper of all who put their trust in you, we pray for those who are enslaved by intoxicants or by some evil habit, especially (*name*). Give them, O Lord, the desire and the will to be free, and the grace to continue in the right way; and show us how to help them and to lead them to you who is our hope and strength. Through Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Psalm 121: The Lord is Our Protector

I lift up my eyes to the mountains; *
from where shall come my help?
My help shall come from the Lord *
who made heaven and earth.
May God never allow you to stumble! *
Let your guard not sleep.
Behold, neither sleeping nor slumbering, *
Israel's guard.
The Lord is your guard and your shade; *
and stands at your right.
By day the sun shall not smite you *
nor the moon in the night.
The Lord will guard you from evil, *
and will guard you soul.
The Lord will guard your going and coming *
both now and for ever.

Simple Jewish recipe

“Jewish Eggs” — Eggs are a beloved ingredient of Jewish dishes. For example, Sephardic Jews prepared *buevos haminad* (long-boiled eggs) for the Sabbath on Fridays. For this, eggs and onion skins were steamed on the stove for up to twelve hours: the white egg skin became darker from the onion skin, and the inside got a characteristic taste. The following recipe is a much quicker one and is still extremely popular in Poland and Hungary (two countries with high numbers of Jewish population). I make it often as a simple dinner and is a great choice during Lent. Ingredients:

- 6 hard boiled eggs
- mustard
- goose (or duck) fat
- onion
- salt and pepper

Preparation: Cook the hard boiled eggs (10 mins), peel them and wait for them to cool down completely. Grate (using the largest shredding holes) the eggs or break them with a fork.

Finely chop the onion. You can use any onion you prefer: jumbo salad onions, spring onions, brown or red onion, or shallots. They will all give an authentic but slightly different taste to the dish. Add the chopped onion to the eggs together with 2-3 spoons of goose fat.

Add 1-1,5 spoon of mustard. Do not use strong mustard, such as Dijon or English mustard, but a very mild one. Most supermarkets will have Polish mustard which makes the dish more authentic.

Mix everything well but try not to “mash” the eggs too much. Salt and pepper to taste. Finally, adjust the taste, if necessary, with more mustard and/or goose fat. Add more fat especially if you find the dish too dry.

Let it rest at least half an hour. Serve at room temperature. Traditionally it is spread on fresh bread or baguette, or on toast but can be served with raw or cooked vegetables as well.

The above recipe is already complete and authentic however it was used predominantly by less wealthy Jewish families. More wealthy families used to fry some goose (or, in descending order of wealth and “poshness”, duck or chicken) liver in goose fat for 10 mins or so (if you fry it for longer, the liver will become really dry). They broke the fried liver with a fork, and, once cooled down, added it to the eggs together with the fat.

This richer version of the recipe is still in use, especially on special occasions. The liver gives the dish a strong and characteristic taste. If you like liver, do try this version too... perhaps for Easter!

Saint of the month: St. Edward King, Martyr

18 March



A Child King of England, venerated by Anglicans, Catholics, and Orthodox alike, assassinated by a treacherous stepmother, adorned with many miracles, whose relics ended up in the safe of a bank... and, finally, not to be confused with Edmund the Martyr of Edward the Confessor.

Born around 962 he was the eldest son of Edgar the Peaceable, king of England. His mother was Æthelfled “the Fair”. Some sources say she and Edgar were married, but later divorced. However, others suggest that young Edward’s legitimacy was in doubt and that his parents never married. This last is compounded by suggestions of

‘youthful indiscretion’ on Edgar’s part.

Nothing is heard of Edward’s mother after his birth, possibly suggesting that she died shortly after. Edgar, however, married again – or at least formed another relationship. His second wife was Wulfthryth, with whom he had a daughter, Edith. Wulfryth became the abbess of Wilton and young Edith followed her mother into the convent and later became a saint.

And then Edgar formed a third and final relationship that would have far-reaching consequences for his first-born son, Edward. Edgar married Ælfryth, the daughter a powerful Devon thegn. Unlike Edgar’s previous ‘wives’, Ælfryth was crowned and anointed as queen, following her marriage with Edgar, which was officially blessed by the church. Ælfryth gave Edgar two sons: Edmund, who died in 971, and Æthelred.

After his father’s death in 975, Edward, at 13 years of age but with doubtful legitimacy, was one of two rival candidates for the crown. His claim to be king was contested by some who supported his younger half-brother, Æthelred who was 6 at that time. With both too young to make an independent bid for power, each boy was backed by court factions. At the end Edward was chosen as King and was crowned by his main supporters, the Archbishops Dunstan of Canterbury (a saint, later) and Oswald of York.

Edward seems to have been benevolent towards his stepmother, bearing her no ill will following her attempts to claim the throne for her own son. He allowed Ælfryth to claim her part of his father's dower and thus confirmed her jurisdiction over the whole of Dorset. She and Æthelred settled at Corfe Castle.

Ælfryth, however, may have been less forgiving and unwilling to settle for her son being Edward's heir. When the opportunity presented itself, she is said to have jumped at it, with few qualms.

In March 978 Edward had decided to visit his half-brother at Corfe; arriving on the evening of 18th March, with only a small band of men accompanying him. He was met at the gates of Corfe Castle by Ælfryth's retainers. Sources vary, some suggesting that he was presented with a cup; so he could quench his thirst after a long ride. What is certain, is that Edward was pulled from his horse and stabbed – murdered. Following the stabbing, Edward's horse bolted; with the dying king's foot caught in the stirrup, he was dragged along the ground for some considerable distance. He was 16. His killers escaped punishment.

Edward was buried quickly and without ceremony somewhere close by but miracles started to happen around his burial place so he was moved again, possibly to Wareham. But the miracles would not stop. In later chronicles we read:

“At the time they ordered him to be buried without honour at Wareham, grudging him consecrated ground, when he was dead, as they had gruded him the royal title while he was alive. So they enjoyed a public festival of rejoicing, as though they had buried his memory along with his corpse. But the Divine Serenity acknowledged him and did honour to the innocent victim with the glory of miracles: so far do Heaven's judgements outweigh those of men. Therefore at his grave, lights shone in the sky, there a lame man walked, there a dumb man regained the use of his tongue, there every kind of sickness gave way to health. The story spread through all England and made the Martyr's merits well known.”





Edward was soon venerated as a saint and martyr with Æthelred himself championing his brother's cult, translating Edward's bones to a new shrine at Shaftesbury Abbey in 1001. In 1008 Edward was officially declared saint and Shaftesbury Abbey was rededicated to the Mother of God and St. Edward. Many miracles were recorded at the tomb of St. Edward including the healing of lepers and the blind. Even Shaftesbury was renamed "Edwardstowe," only reverting to its original name after the Reformation.

During the Dissolution of the Monasteries, Shaftesbury Abbey was destroyed and Edward's shrine lost. However, in 1931 his grave was discovered by Mr. Wilson-Claridge and Edward's bones were removed. Tests on

the remains, in 1970, confirmed they were Edward's and the injuries on the bones were consistent with the wounds Edward is known to have received.

As it was the very "modern" '70s, neither the Churches of England or Rome wanted to take the relics for reburial and since it was he who discovered them, at that point Mr. Wilson-Claridge considered St. Edward's bones as his own property and, in his will, he gifted them to an Orthodox Church in Brookwood. However, Mr. Wilson-Claridge's heir, his brother, wanted the relics to be returned to Shaftesbury Abbey. Decades-long legal dispute started during which, for safekeeping!, St. Edward's bones were kept in a bank vault in Croydon.

The young king's remains were finally removed from the bank, in September 1984, to be interred in a shrine in the Russian Orthodox Cemetery at Brookwood, Surrey. And despite the fact Shaftesbury would like to have St. Edward back, the remains of the only Saxon king remain resting in a Russian Orthodox cemetery.

Images: 1) Icon of St. Edward King, Martyr; 2) A commemorative column of St. Edward's martyrdom at Corfe Castle. The inscription reads: "Edward the Martyr King of Wessex treacherously stabbed at Corves Gate in A.D. 978 by his stepmother Elfrida"; 3) St. Edward's bones discovered in a casket in 1931 during archeological excavation.

The mystery of Passion-tide

by Dom Proser Guéranger Abbot

The holy season of expiation continues its course until the fast of sinful man has imitated, in its duration, that observed by the Man-God in the desert. Christ's faithful children are still fighting against the invisible enemies of man's salvation; they are still vested in their spiritual armour, and, aided by the angels of light, they are struggling hand to hand with the spirits of darkness, by compunction of heart and by mortification of the flesh.

The miracle performed by our Saviour, by which He restored Lazarus to life, has roused the fury of His enemies. The people's enthusiasm has been excited, and they ask whether they ought not at once to receive this Jesus as the Messiah, and sing their Hosanna to Him. They cannot contain their feelings: Jesus enters Jerusalem, and they welcome Him as their King. The high priests and princes of the people are alarmed at this demonstration of feeling; they have no time to lose; they are resolved to destroy Jesus.

The Blood of the just Man is to be sold, the divine Victim betrayed; Jesus is to be judged, condemned, and crucified. Every circumstance of this awful tragedy is to be put before us by the liturgy, not merely in words, but with all the expressiveness of a sublime ceremonial.

We shall see our holy mother the Church mourning, like a disconsolate widow, and sad beyond all human grief. Hitherto she has been weeping over the sins of her children; now she bewails the death of her divine Spouse. The joyous *Alleluia* has long since been hushed in her canticles; she is now going to suppress another expression, which seems too glad for a time like the present. She is about to deny herself the use of that formula, which is so dear to her: *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost*. There is an accent of jubilation in these words, which would ill suit her grief and the mournfulness of the rest of her chants.

Her lessons, for the night Office, are taken from Jeremiah, the prophet of lamentation above all others. The colour of her vestments is the one she had on when she assembled us at the commencement of Lent to sprinkle us with ashes; but when the dreaded day of Good Friday comes, purple would not sufficiently express the depth of her grief; she will clothe herself in black, for Jesus, her Spouse, is to be put to death on that day: in all the realities of a last agony, He is to yield up His Soul to His Father.

The presentiment of that awful hour leads the afflicted mother to veil the image of her Jesus: the cross is hidden from the eyes of the faithful. The statues of the saints, too, are covered; for it is but just that, if the glory of the Master be eclipsed, the servant should not appear.

Why do the Stations of the Cross?

The object of the Stations is to help the faithful to make in spirit, as it were, a pilgrimage to the chief scenes of Christ's sufferings and death. Most simply, the stations of the cross are about remembering Christ's suffering for our sake. This is evidenced by the prayer uttered at each station: "*We adore you O Christ and we praise you, because by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.*"

The stations of the cross can remind us just how far Jesus went to save us, and, by their deep contrast to Easter-tide joy, they can make us understand a little bit more what an astonishing and awesome miracle it truly is that Christ rose from the grave.

Taking time to think, pray, and meditate at each station can help us intentionally spend time with Christ, thanking Him, praising Him, and learning from Him. Indeed, the important parts of the stations of the cross are not the meditations or the images - helpful as they are - but to constantly remind ourselves of Jesus' love, sacrifice, and forgiveness and to draw nearer to Him.

The benefits: The most important reason for making the Stations of the Cross is that it is a powerful way to contemplate, and enter into, the mystery of Jesus' gift of himself to us. It takes the reflection on the Passion out of our head, and makes it an imaginative exercise. It involves our senses, our experience, our emotions, and even our bodies. The Passion of Our Lord ceases to be something that simply exists in the past or in our head and becomes, mystically, a reality in which we can immerse ourselves completely. To the extent that we come to *experience* the love of Jesus for us as opposed to simply *knowing* about it. Consequently, the gratitude we feel will be deeper. Deep gratitude, then, leads to real generosity and a desire to love as we have been loved.

The History: From the earliest of days, followers of Jesus told the story of his passion, death and resurrection. When pilgrims came to see Jerusalem, they were anxious to see the sites where Jesus was. These sites become important holy connections with Jesus. Eventually, following in the footsteps of the Lord, along the way of the cross, became a part of the pilgrims' visit. The stations, as we know them today, came about when it was no longer easy or even possible to visit the holy sites. In the 1500's, villages all over Europe started creating "replicas" of the way of the cross, with small shrines commemorating the places along the route in Jerusalem. Eventually, these shrines became the set of 14 stations we now know and were placed in almost every Church in the world.

The Leonine Prayers

The prayers we, and countless other churches in the world, say after Mass on weekdays - the three *Hail Marys*, the *Hail, Holy Queen*, and the prayer to St. Michael - are called “Leonine Prayers” because of their link to Pope Leo XIII, even if these prayers started earlier. In 1859, Pope Pius IX ordered that three *Hail Marys* and the *Hail, Holy Queen* be said after Mass in Italy, as the Papal States were under attack by revolutionary leaders. By 1870 Rome fell and Pope Pius IX became a “prisoner” in the Vatican, no longer having any temporal land. Then in 1884 Pope Leo XIII decreed that these prayers be said everywhere after Mass, for the protection of the Church. Two years later in 1886, Pope Leo XIII added the St. Michael Prayer in response to a vision:

“One day, after celebrating Mass, the Pope suddenly sank to the floor. A doctor was summoned and several came at once. There was no sign of any pulse-beating; the very life seemed to have ebbed away from the already weakened and aged body. Suddenly he recovered and said: ‘What a horrible picture I was permitted to see!’ He saw what was going to happen in the future, the misleading powers and the ravings of the devils against the Church in all countries. But St. Michael had appeared in the nick of time and cast Satan and his cohorts back into the abyss of hell. Such was the occasion that caused Pope Leo XIII to have this prayer recited over the entire world at the end of Mass.”

In 1929, a treaty was signed that resolved the issue of land between Italy and the Pope, creating the Vatican City State. With this problem resolved, Pope Pius XI asked that these prayers should continue to be said, this time for the conversion of Russia. At the time Russia was in a state of turmoil with the rise of Communism, promoting an atheistic state that persecuted religion. This was of great concern for the Pope as he knew that a godless Russia would soon constitute a threat for the whole world. Not without good reasons had Our Lady, during her appearance in Fatima, already requested (13 July 1917) that Russia be consecrated to her Immaculate Heart.

In 1964, with the reform of the Roman liturgy, these prayers were suppressed with so many other wonderful and important prayers and rituals. Fortunately (*if that is a word we can use seeing the state of our world and, in some parts, of the Church*) later Popes and many Bishops recommended again these prayers to be said to protect the Church and our world from demonic powers.

So we do say them, daily (*according to the rubrics, they are omitted when there is a sermon; however, they can be still said privately as after-Mass prayers*) beseeching God to protect the Church, asking St. Michael to fight with us all evil, may they be demons or evil thoughts and sentiments of hate in the hearts of men, sometimes ours included, so that finally we may live in that peace and tranquility and blessed joy that comes from God and from Him alone!

The Psalms

Psalm 35: Lament of one of the “quiet in the land”

This Psalm is the lament of a man who is persecuted and, unlike many other lament psalms, it contains some features of a more personal character. The context is that the former friends of the psalmist have disappointed him and now they even attack him. The psalmist seeks protection from God against those who threaten his life and vindication against the false accusations. Three times the psalmist launches forth into lamentation and prayer.

Grief, exasperation, and restlessness fill the heart of the psalmist. However, as we shall see shortly, these lead him not into despair but to trust in God even more. For every Christian Psalm 35 is the prayer to go to in similar life-circumstances.

Verses 1-6 — In the opening verses, to describe how he feels inside, the psalmist uses the language of proper war. The first thing he asks of God is *inner* peace. Indeed, it becomes obvious very quickly that the persecuted and accused psalmist has no peace in his heart. On the contrary, it is filled with cruel rage, so much so that he utters low-level and passionate curses against his enemies. Yet, he knows this is not right. Indeed, in this part of his prayer he speaks of the Angel of the Lord who shall execute the terrible judgment on his enemies, as if he did not want to drag God himself down to his own level of hate and anger.

Verses 7-10 — The symbols and language of war gives place to those of hunting. As an innocently persecuted game by his hunters, so the psalmist feels in front of the attacks coming from his enemies. And while he reverts to uttering curses once again, he gives the first signs of realising that evil entails its own punishment! A thought arising from remembering God’s, often hidden but non the less real, righteousness. The chains in which his own passion and hate have put him, are being gradually loosened.

As he slowly leaves the darkness of fear-fuelled hate behind and enters into God’s “world”, the psalmist’s soul rises to a vow of thanksgiving and he begins to feel God’s presence, protection, and blessing.

Verses 11-18 — However, the psalmist’s grief is too deep-rooted and so his trust in God wavers. At the beginning of his second prayer, he relapses into lament. Yet something has changed in him: hate and dark grief givesxfeven gard place to a simple melancholy of heart—healing *is* happening.

Of course the ruthless gloating and venomous scorn of his former friends deeply affects the psalmist as he reflects on the ingratitude of those for whom he himself had evinced the deepest sympathy and always prayed for them! He feels betrayed and lonely, he feels anguish and none of these sentiments are condemned in this Psalm. It is only human to feel so in such circumstances! The question of Psalm 35 is: how should we react? Should we give way to these sentiments until they completely overtake us and lead to even greater grief and hate where we curse our enemies? Or should we rather use them as stepping-stones towards God and entrust us into his help and protection, avoiding the deadly trap of hate and vengeance.

Like the first part of lament (verses 1-10), this, too, closes with a vow of thanksgiving. Finally, he can see why God allowed all this to befall him: so that God's mercy and faithfulness may be made manifest and be praised in the "great congregation" of the faithful.

Verses 19-28 — The psalmist has once more drawn near to God in prayer; and since his thoughts are now more firmly focused on him, he develops a clearer vision and a calmer, more composed and more confident attitude.

Once more he launches forth in prayer and lament but this time with the certainty that evil bears with it its own punishment. Suddenly he stops feeling lonely and isolated because now, with a heart purged from hate, he can call on God to appear in judgement and to ensure, by his verdict, the triumph of good over evil. It is not his own misery or the boastful wickedness of his enemies the psalmist focuses on but the sure and never-distant victory of God's truth and righteousness. And in this thought he finally finds peace and hope, safety and just vindication of what he suffered. Now he can join the great number of those who are called, in purity and innocence of heart, to sing all the day long the praises of the majesty and righteousness of God.

A prayer for our enemies

Almighty God, have mercy on N. and on all that bear me evil will and would me harm, and on their faults and mine together, by such easy, tender, merciful means as thine infinite wisdom best can devise; vouchsafe to amend and redress and make us saved souls in heaven together, where we may ever live and love together with thee and thy blessed saints, O glorious Trinity, for the bitter passion of our sweet Saviour Christ. Amen.

(St. Thomas More, Martyr)

Win a free ticket for our Easter Hamper!

The first person handing over the right solution in person to the Vicar (just detach the last page of the Magazine) will receive one free ticket for the Easter Hamper draw! Good luck!

Across

- 1 Change direction
- 5 Unborn babies
- 9 Keep me as the ... of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings
- 14 It may be proper
- 15 Strips of palm leaves
- 16 Tiny amount
- 17 Performing ...
- 18 Well-off
- 19 Working smoothly
- 20 ... of orient are
- 23 Track
- 24 Welsh river
- 28 Model behaviour
- 31 Missing from action
- 33 Mountain pass
- 34 Conversation starter
- 36 Tiny bit
- 37 Fork prong
- 38 Swedish currency
- 39 Tortoise racer
- 40 Bronze
- 41 Tottering
- 45 Greek letter
- 46 Rash reaction?
- 47 Mistakes
- 48 What God did to Sarai, Abram and Jacob
- 50 Red and Dead
- 51 Precepts
- 57 Roughly
- 60 Roundish
- 61 Feline cry

- 62 So then ... worketh in us, but life in you
- 63 Jab
- 64 Great-grandson of Shem
- 65 In tune
- 66 Flock members
- 67 It smells

Down

- 1 Chew on
- 2 Long ago
- 3 Adjoin
- 4 Hold sacred
- 5 Alien
- 6 One of David's mighty men
- 7 Nail
- 8 Head of a Simonise family
- 9 Staring in amazement
- 10 Rainbow maker
- 11 Friend
- 12 There's no truth to it
- 13 Finish
- 21 Indian princess
- 22 Midnight's opposite
- 25 Common choir music book size
- 26 Shouter
- 27 Church officers
- 28 We are the clay, and you are our ...
- 29 Poppy plant derivative
- 30 Japanese city
- 31 First Hebrew letter
- 32 User-edited site

35 Isalmist militant group
 39 Biblical quartet
 41 New Testament book
 42 It's on the agenda
 43 Christmas tree debris
 44 Fraction of a kilo
 49 Sharp
 50 Serpent

52 Sulk
 53 Affirm solemnly
 54 Biblical peak
 55 They may get stepped on
 56 Certain
 57 Fuss
 58 Big ...
 59 Absalom catcher

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Parish Hall & Activities

*With enquires about **hiring the Parish Hall, joining the Munch Club or the Choir**, please, contact the Parish Office.*

A priest is always available for Confession, spiritual direction, or for a simple chat half an hour before every Service, or at any other time by appointment! For service times and other information about our churches and services (including weddings and funerals), please visit our website:

www.stpaulsweymouth.org