

Newsletter of the Catholic Parish of St Thomas More



Fifth Sunday of Lent Year A

5th/6th April 2014

Weekday Masses Tuesday - Friday, 9.30am

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Week beginning 5th April :		Mass Intention
Saturday 5th April 6.00pm	First Mass of the Fifth Sunday of Lent	Jozef Weyers, RIP
Sunday 6th April 9.30am	FIFTH SUNDAY of LENT	People of the Parish
Monday 7th April	—	—
Tuesday 8th April 9.30am 7.00pm	of the fifth week of Lent RECONCILIATION SERVICE	Marcelina Lobo, RIP
Wed. 9th April 9.30am 10.00am - 12.00 noon	of the fifth week of Lent Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	For all the faithful departed
Thurs. 10th April 9.30am	of the fifth week of Lent	For all the faithful departed
Friday 11th April 9.30am	of the fifth week of Lent	For all the faithful departed
Saturday: 5.15 – 5.45 pm		Sacrament of Reconciliation
Masses Sat. 6pm & Sun. 9.30am Palm Sunday		

LITURGY OF THE WORD WITH CHILDREN

There will be a special **Stations of the Cross for children** in the church hall on Good Friday at 2.30pm (- could a parent or guardian accompany their children for this please).

EASTER GARDENS The Liturgy of the Word with Children team plan to decorate the Easter Garden again this year. If anyone could bring along a little pot of flowers to help with this please leave it in the flower room - that would be very much appreciated. Thank you! In addition, the children attending the LOWC sessions will be given the materials to make their own individual Easter Gardens at home.

EASTER BONNETS The children are invited to come to Mass on Easter Sunday wearing their Easter Bonnets/Hats! There will be a prize for the best one!

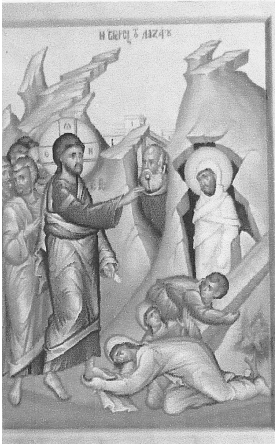


FLOWERS FOR EASTER The members of the flower team are making plans for decorating the church at Easter! If anyone would like to sponsor an arrangement, please contact Jo. Any donations towards the cost of the flowers will be gratefully received.



The Fifth Sunday of Lent Yr A

IN THE PLACE OF LAZARUS



It seems a bit strange that the Church presents us with this gospel reading today on the Fifth Sunday of Lent, it seems to be clearly about the resurrection and yet we haven't got there yet, we are still plodding through Lent and have to get through Maundy Thursday and Good Friday before we get to the resurrection. What's going on; have the Church's liturgical engineers got it all wrong?

Perhaps this text is more about death than resurrection. After all, Lazarus isn't walking around today; he had to undergo another death. This text is more about our life and death here and now rather than about the resurrection. We will have time enough to consider the resurrection when we get to Easter Sunday and the weeks of celebration afterwards.

St Ignatius in his book on the Spiritual Exercises suggests that when we come to consider a particular Gospel passage we should put ourselves in the place of each character in turn and use our imagination to see how we would feel in the circumstances. This can be a most revealing exercise.

How about putting yourself in the place of Lazarus? You are dead to everything and then you hear a voice: 'Come out, Lazarus.' You look around and there you are lying in a tomb swathed in bandages and surrounded by darkness.

If we ask ourselves how we would feel the answer, of course, would be different for everyone but I think we might be surprised at how many would say: Thanks Lord, but I'd prefer to stay where I am.

But putting ourselves in Lazarus' place we might feel we are unable to move or perhaps we might become aware of how tomb-like our present way of life really is. This exercise might arouse in us a sense of hope; rekindle a longing for freedom which has perhaps been buried for years.

I think that this Gospel reading is placed here in Lent to help us to realise that we have to live this life to the full and that it is often only through experiencing death that we are shocked into it. This can happen to us in all sorts of ways; often it can happen through a loss or bereavement, it might be through a religious experience, or a meeting with someone significant. It may be a terrible mistake that we have made or an experience of suffering. It is amazing how often it takes something negative to make us realise how much there is that is truly positive and worth living for.

This gospel is not here on this Sunday to get us to focus on the resurrection of the body and life everlasting; that comes on Easter Day. This Gospel is here to get us to wake up from our sleep and to realise that we have some living to do. We are supposed to be Christians. We are supposed to be followers of Jesus, the best man who ever lived, the only man who ever fully lived. The only man who really understood how to live.

There are many people who have experienced a resurrection experience in their lives. We have a few in the Gospel today, apart from Lazarus himself. Look at Martha and Mary; they both blamed Jesus for letting Lazarus die. But when they hear Jesus speak their faith is restored.

But as we say Sunday after Sunday: We don't experience Christ in a vacuum. We don't find him when things are bowling along as usual and we are keeping our head down. We meet him in suffering, we meet him in encounters with others, we meet him in challenging situations, we meet him when we are vulnerable, we meet him basically when our defences are down and we are open and receptive.

And he shows us the way. And the way is to be like him. And that means getting close to people, it means living for others, it means healing the sick, it means carrying other people's burdens, it means loving the poor, it means being close to the Father in prayer, it means dying to self so we can rise to new life in him.

www.biblical.ie/lections

Our next Ignatian day - Easter Saturday April 19th

Our next Ignatian day will be on Easter Saturday when we will use this very special period of transition to prepare for the resurrection with Mary, our mother. All are welcome to join us as we pray with Mary to move from sorrow to joy, as we travel from death to life with Mary as our guide. We begin at 10.30 for 11am and finish at 4.15pm in St. Joseph's parish centre. Remember to bring a packed lunch.

A Week of Accompanied prayer Sunday 11th – Saturday 17th May Please make a note of the dates **Sunday 11th – Saturday 17th May** when there will be the opportunity to take part in a week of individually accompanied prayer based around St. Joseph's Christchurch (or St Thomas More's if sufficient numbers interested) This week will be an opportunity to experience a guided retreat in the midst of your daily life, without the need to stay away from home.

PASTORAL AREA RECONCILIATION SERVICE.... here, THIS Tuesday 8th April 7.00pm.

LECTIO DIVINA Thursdays, in the sacristy after the 9.30am Mass.

Lectio Divina literally means 'divine reading' - It is a praying of the Scriptures.

Everyone is welcome.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS Every Friday at 6.30pm in the church.

In addition to the 6.30pm Stations of the Cross on Fridays in Lent, there will be

Stations of the Cross on Good Friday at 2.30pm.

Please note that there will also be a special **Stations of the Cross for children** in the church hall at the same time (- could a parent or guardian accompany their children for this please.)

MAUNDY THURSDAY There is a 'sign-up' list on the notice board. Please add your name if you wish to have your feet washed.



READERS FOR HOLY WEEK AND EASTER - Please sign your name on the list on the notice board if you would like to be a reader for these services.

Bishop Philip's Lent Catechesis The Fifth Sunday of Lent – Bishop Philip reflects on the raising of Lazarus. Online catechesis is offered each week to help you take a spiritual pilgrimage with Christ this Lent. The video is available on www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk each Monday which includes the Gospel for the coming Sunday, followed by Bishop Philip's catechesis. There are also accompanying discussion questions which can be downloaded. You may wish to use these materials individually, or in small groups within the parish. For more information, see the poster.

EWTN Lent Reflections – Bishop Philip & Priests of the Diocese

If you missed these Lenten reflections, you can now view them at www.ewtn.co.uk/lent-2014.

A REMINDER! -

***If you have not already done so, please take your box of envelopes from the table at the back of church.
Many thanks.***

Copies of our Pastoral Area magazine, 'the Link' still available!

Also, have you picked up your copy of Portsmouth People? Latest edition out now.

SUMMARY OF APC MEETING 29TH MARCH 2014 AT SOUTHBOURNE

The Council, having agreed the previous minutes and covered matters arising therefrom, updated their PA events calendar, agreeing on another walk in late spring early summer, finalised details of the Away Day planned in May and discussed arrangements for a PA Pentecost Taize Service, to be held in June (11th or 12th). A detailed presentation was given to the Council on the work and structures of the St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP), summarising its aims, history and rules by the District President, Ann Harris. The Council discussed the pros and cons of forming a pastoral area SVP Conference, (as local SVP groups are referred to), as opposed to separate parish conferences. It was agreed that each parish community would discuss with their Local Pastoral Council and inform the APC of their views by the end of April, via the Secretary.

Upcycle your First Holy Communion items

**- Gold ties, smart shirts, smart trousers,
veils, dresses etc. etc. -**

Do you have any items you would like to donate/lend or to sell on? We would like to hold a stall at our last children's session on 26th April in the church hall. You can leave donations in the box at the back of the church. Items you want to sell or lend can be marked with a price/ or please return label, and bring along at 9.30 on 26/4. Unsold/un-borrowed items will be returned. Thank you!

STM QUIZ NIGHT

A note for your diaries! Quiz Night: May 10th, 7pm.

In the church hall. Shared supper.

Tickets will be on sale weekends: 5th/6th April, 26th/27th April and 2nd/3rd May

TIMES OF WEEKEND MASSES in other Parishes in the AVON STOUR PASTORAL AREA

The Immaculate Conception and St Joseph's, Purewell, Christchurch	01202 483340	Saturday 6.30pm Sunday 9.00am, 10.45am
Holy Redeemer Kilmington Way, Highcliffe	01425 274838	Sunday 8.00am, 10.00am
The Sacred Heart and St Therese of Lisieux, Ringwood	01425 653131	Sunday 11.00am
Our Lady of Sorrows and St Philip Benizi, Fordingbridge	01425 653131	Saturday 6.00pm Sunday 9.00am
Our Lady Queen of Peace, Southbourne	01202 424960	Sunday 8.00am, 11.00am 6.00 pm

Hospital Visit, *Urgent requests* (usually for poorly patients who have not been visited in the last 48 hours) please call the chaplain or his substitute ***directly***, using, ***in order***, the following numbers: Fr John: Lee 01202 483340 Emergency Mobile: 07850 365897 If these fail, ring St Thomas More's 01202 485588 or the Annunciation Church 01202 513369

(Most) Weekly Youth Holy Hour! 9th April 6-7pm at Corpus Christi (757 Christchurch Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth, Dorset BH7 6AN)

Need some peace in the middle of your busy week of school, college, uni or work? Come along and make some new friends at this beautiful time of prayer. "From the Eucharist comes strength to live the Christian life and zeal to share that life with others" -Blessed John Paul II :D

THE CALLED AND GIFTED PROGRAM

This program will run in our diocese in 2014-2015. The Called and Gifted program is a 3 part discernment process intended to help Catholics discern their charisms.

Part 1: Called and Gifted workshop with Sherry Weddell

Part 2: One hour gift interview with one of our team

Part 3: The ongoing discernment process (our team can provide support with this)

PART ONE

Called and Gifted workshop 7pm-9pm Friday 27th June and 9-5pm Saturday 28th June 2014.

VENUE: Botleigh Grange Hotel and Spa, Grange Road, Hedge End, Southampton SO30 2GA.

COST: All day conference costs are paid for those in our diocese.

For those outside the diocese the cost is £50. PLEASE NOTE: accommodation at the hotel for the Friday night is not included. If you would like to stay you will need to book and pay for it yourself.

BOOK on www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/calledandgifted

PART TWO

Whilst at the workshop you will be given the opportunity to sign up for a discernment interview with one of our trained interviewers.

PART THREE

Following on from this our team will offer you support with your on going discernment process. This will be linked into the volunteer process for the Framework for Collaboration both at diocesan and local level.

PLEASE NOTE: places are limited so book as soon as possible.

THANK YOU

for your weekly

offerings;

29th / 30th March

Envelopes :

£ 220.23

Cash :

£ 139.94

Standing Orders :

£ 144.93

Total : £ 505.10

If anyone has any items for the newsletter, please e-mail the parish office at stmiford@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk or leave a note in the post box by the office door