Roman Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth Reg'd. Charity No. 246871

Newsletter of the Catholic Parish of St Thomas More



Third Sunday of Lent Year A

22nd/23rd March 2014

Weekday Masses Tuesday - Friday, 9.30am

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www.facebook.com/bournemouthandavonstourcatholicyouth

Week beginning 22nd March :		Mass Intention
Saturday 22nd March 6.00pm	First Mass of the Third Sunday of Lent	Vocations (Catenians)
Sunday 23rd March 9.30am	**THIRD SUNDAY of LENT**	People of the Parish
Monday 24th March	—	—
Tuesday 25th March 9.30am	**THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD,** *solemnity*	For all the faithful departed
Wed. 26th March 9.30am 10.00am - 12.00 noon	of the 3rd Week of Lent Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	For all the faithful departed
Thurs. 27th March 9.30am After 9.30am Mass -	of the 3rd Week of Lent **Lectio Divina**	For all the faithful departed
Friday 28th March 9.30am **6.30 pm**	of the 3rd Week of Lent **Stations of the Cross**	Kevin Martin, RIP
Saturday: 5.15 – 5.45 pm	Sacrament of Reconciliation	
Masses Sat. 6pm & Sun. 9.30am	Fourth Sunday of Lent	

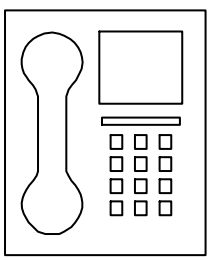
THANKS FOR SUPPORTING CAFOD LAST FAST DAY.

Together, our parish raised **£ 207.10** for CAFOD'S work. Thank you for your generous compassion for those living in poverty, and for fasting in solidarity with them. Our prayers and donations are helping to ensure thousands more people worldwide are able to eat healthy, nutritious food today, and face the future with greater hope and security.

THE KNIGHTS OF SAINT COMUMBA
Thirtieth Sponsored Walk is <u>this Sunday</u>, 23rd March.
The five mile walk is to raise money for the Amelia Grace Rainbow Fund. Details on noticeboard in church.

TELEPHONE NUMBER FOR FR DARRYL:
Please note that Father's telephone number is given for EMERGENCIES ONLY.

There will usually be someone in the parish office Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.
If you are unable to speak to anyone please leave a message on the office answerphone.
The parish office will be closed on Mondays, Father's day off.



The Third Sunday of Lent Yr A

Respecting her Dignity

Today's gospel contains many powerful insights into the mind of Jesus. It is almost impossible for us to imagine how radical this encounter with the woman really was. It went completely against everything that a religious Jew would have held sacred. His conversation with her and with his disciples showed clearly how Jesus thought about certain issues.

In today's world it is quite common for parents to be worried about the next generation. Change is coming so fast, and all our traditional values are being challenged. The children are not going to church, they are living with a partner, or they have children while not being married. All of this seems to fly in the face of everything the parents were brought up to believe in. While I understand their confusion and their concern, I often speak to them about the situation in which one mother found herself. Her name was Mary, and her son was Jesus. Mary was reared in the best and purest Jewish traditions. Her background and upbringing would have been very religious and traditional. Just imagine, on a human level, the problems she might have had with her son. He appeared to deliberately kick against every single religious tradition that was sacred to her. He completely ignored the law on many issues. He touched the untouchables, he spoke to prostitutes and to Samaritans, and he hung around with the riff-raff of society. This wasn't rebellion for the sake of rebellion. It is worth reflecting on exactly why this was so, and what it tells us about Jesus.

The most obvious point in today's gospel is the respect and the personal dignity that Jesus afforded a woman who would have been scorned by society. He spoke to her as a human being and, while he challenged her, he did so with respect. It is generally accepted that she came to the well at midday because everybody else stayed indoors during the hottest part of the day. She had to avoid the scorn and disdain of her neighbours. Jesus knew that there was an emptiness within her that she had tried to fill in so many ways. He spoke to her of the life that he offered, of the Spirit that rises up like a fountain from within the heart of his followers. He offered her something that she really needed, and, by the end of the story, it seems that his words had got through to her.

Her attitude was typical of most people who are involved in any kind of compulsive or addictive behaviour. She was in total denial, and her arguments were coming from her head. Jesus, however, gently confronted her with the truth. It was for people like her that he had come, and when his disciples urged him to have something to eat, he spoke of his real hunger. His desire to seek out and to find the lost sheep was his driving force, because that is why the Father sent him.

There is an interesting and important point at the end of his encounter with the woman. She ran off to get her friends. They came to meet Jesus, and to listen to him. They told the woman that they believed, not because she had told them, but because they had met him and listened to him themselves. I could apply that concept right here now - I could pray that you might believe, not because I am telling you, but because you have met Jesus, you have listened to him, and you have come to know him yourselves.

The word incarnation might put us off, but the reality of it is very simple. God could have loved us from a distance, but he decided not to. He decided to come to where we're at, and to meet us as we are. "I did not come to condemn the world Neither do I condemn you," says Jesus. In today's gospel we have a good example of Jesus meeting someone and accepting someone exactly as she was. He was totally aware of how she was, and of the situations within her life. He sat down and chatted with her, listened to her, and gently challenged her. He wanted to free her from bondage, and to restore her dignity and self-respect.

Many of us have friends and associates who may not be as we would wish them to be. I know, on a human level, it can be difficult, but the Christian law of love must extend to all, without exception. Supposing you have a son or daughter not going to church, or involved in an irregular relationship. If you were to die right now, there is only one question you would have to answer about that person. "Did you still love that person, as a parent is expected to love a child, or was your love lessened because your child did not live up to your standards for her?'

Put yourself for a moment in the place of the woman at the well. Jesus looks at you, and he knows you through and through. How comfortable would you feel in his presence? Would you be able to fully open out the canvas of your life to his gaze, without fear of condemnation? If you get a few spare moments today, maybe you might try that. It is important to be fully open to him, and it is also important to accept his total acceptance.

I suppose it's fair to say that there are traces of bigotry, racism, biases, and self-righteousness within all of us. On a human level, it would be impossible to be any other way. It is only through the presence and the work of the Spirit within us that we can hope to be freed enough to begin to love others as Jesus loves us. I have just mentioned the importance of accepting his acceptance of us. The ideal, then, would be to begin extending that same acceptance to others.

What can I do personally about the vast harvest that Jesus speaks of? As a Christian, I must be concerned, it is my business, and I just cannot leave it to others. I begin, of course, with myself. Like the friends of the woman, I too come to meet him, to listen to him, and to believe him myself. Christianity is more about attracting than promoting. Your most effective sermon is your life. The greatest witness a recovering alcoholic can give is to walk sober down the main street of his home town. You write a new page of the gospels each day, by the things that you do, and the words that you say. People will read what you write, whether faithful or true. What is the gospel according to you?

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PASTORAL AREA RECONCILIATION SERVICE : St Thomas More
Tuesday 8th April 7.00pm.

RTU

Jo has sent some pictures taken at the Sports Day at 'Reaching the Unreached' on her recent trip to India:









Charitable Marathon Sponsorship

Frances (Frankie) the daughter of Ray & Bridie is running in the Brighton Marathon on Sunday 6th April in aid of bladder cancer. As you may know Ray has been suffering from this type of cancer for some months. Her aim is to raise awareness, and funds for this form of cancer, which has minimal resources and research. You can find out more about bladder cancer online at Action on Bladder Cancer (ABC) Charity http://www.actiononbladdercancer.org/ and if you wish to donate to her marathon, please go online to https://mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/frankierocks
Should you want further information or help phone Ray & Bridie.

PLANNED GIVING ENVELOPES

Please note that the current set of planned giving envelopes run out on Sunday 30 March. A new set will be ready for collection for the w/e 29th/30th March. This year everyone will retain the same number as on the current envelopes. We do, however, need to keep our records up to date and appeal again to *those who do not have envelopes* to let us know if they would like a set. Also we urge *those who pay tax* and who have not completed a gift aid form to do so. Every pound you give will become £1.25 to the parish. This is vital income to us. Please remember that the envelopes are part of 'planned giving': this means that you are committing a certain amount to the parish every week. The expectation is that you will *make up the missing contributions* when you are unable to attend Mass here when you return. Finally, we really need to increase the number of *standing orders*. Giving this way saves you the need to remember your envelopes and guarantees that the parish receives your offering regularly.

If you currently have a set of envelopes and *do not want a new set* please let us know so that we can 'free up' another envelope number. Those who donate by standing order will automatically receive a new box since they also contain envelopes for special collections.

Thank you all for your continued generosity.
Steve, Chair of Fabric and Finance Committee.

Upcycle your old FHC 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 brought along at 9.30 on 26/4. Unsold/un-borrowed items will be returned.
Please call Kathy with any queries. Thank you!

Have you any old glasses? - The Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus at the convent in Parkwood Road collect unwanted reading glasses and send them to the sister's mission centre in Bikop Cameroon.

Bishop Philip's Lent Catechesis Online catechesis is offered each week. 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. For more information, see the poster.

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! 26th March, 2nd & 9th April 6-7pm at Corpus Christi (757 Christchurch Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth, Dorset BH7 6AN) We invite all young people to join us for this beautiful time of prayer. You will be given a free rosary, and on the first Wednesday of each month (for the over 18s) we will be going to the pub for a meal after our Holy Hour :D

Monthly Area Youth Mass! Sunday 6th April 5-8pm at Corpus Christi (757 Christchurch Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth, Dorset BH7 6AN) Come and join us for our Monthly Area Youth Mass which will be followed by a movie on the big screen! "From the Eucharist comes strength to live the Christian life and zeal to share that life with others" -Blessed John Paul II

WEEK OF GUIDED PRAYER : 11th – 17th May 2014 In our local area. To find out more or to book a place please e-mail piccadilly@postmaster.co.uk See poster on noticeboard.

PILGRIMAGE TO WALSINGHAM : Please join the Bournemouth Ordinariate on this year's pilgrimage to Walsingham from 27th to 30th June, led by Fr Darryl Jordan and Mgr. Edwin Barnes. The pilgrimage includes half-board accommodation, transport by coach and use of the coach during our stay and a visit to historic Clare Priory on the return journey : cost £215 (child under 16 £155). Booking forms are available in church. For more information, please ring Madeleine c/o Our Lady Queen of Peace Church.

MEDJUGORJE 2014 – An Avon Stour/Bournemouth area PILGRIMAGE. 15-22 September 2014. From Gatwick. £529 (twin room), £649 (single room) + insurance. See poster in porch. Contact: Barry and Jo c/o Corpus Christi Church.

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND: Calling all married couples. A weekend of discovery and renewal for your marriage. Interested? A Marriage Encounter weekend is an opportunity for couples of any age to enrich their relationships in a relaxed and caring atmosphere. Places available on the weekend starting Friday 20 June.
For details and dates of other weekends please visit the website wwme.org.uk

SIGNIFICANT WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES: The Diocese's sixth Significant Anniversaries Mass and Reception will be celebrated at 11.00am and on Saturday 28th June 2014 at St Bede's, Basingstoke for those celebrating their 25th, 40th, 50th, 60th and 60+ wedding anniversaries in 2014. Bishop Philip will preside at the Mass. Attendance is by invitation; if you are celebrating one of these anniversaries, please fill out the online form available on www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk by clicking 'Significant Wedding Anniversaries Mass 2014' or alternatively, email anniversaries@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

CAFOD PORTSMOUTH GOLF DAY: This popular event returns this year and will take place again at the Royal Winchester Golf Club on Tuesday 20 May. Full details and applications forms can be obtained from CAFOD Portsmouth on 01252 329385 or portsmouth@cafod.org.uk

THANK YOU	**for your weekly**	**offerings;**	**15th / 16th March**
Envelopes :	£ 194.19	Cash :	£ 75.68
Standing Orders :	£ 144.93		**Total : £ 414.80**