

First Sunday of Lent

CHANGING OUR HEARTS AND BELIEVING THE GOOD NEWS

Sunday 18th February 2024

Mass Book Page 148



If you made it to mass on Ash Wednesday, you will have received the traditional sign that Lent or Springtime has begun. The minister will have anointed your forehead with ashes and with words of invitation, "Change your heart, and believe the Good News!" It would be a mistake, of course, to think that this activity is confined to the six weeks of Lent! Changing hearts and believing in Jesus takes, at least, a lifetime.

Notice what unfolds as Jesus enters the waters of the river Jordan. He sinks. Then, He emerges in an act of human reaching and ascending openness. As He does so, he finds the heavens torn open, not for a second or two, but permanently. This opening allows the Spirit of Love to reach for Him. It does not land on him like a bird, it falls into Him. And then, from the inside, the Spirit drives Him into the wilderness. For Jesus, the moment of Baptism becomes the foundation for a struggle. The certainty of being loved unfolds into the desire to be faithful. This wilderness will be a place of testing and of conflict.

But not with God. It is Satan who holds sway here. Notice how quickly he makes his move on Jesus. He is associated with the 'wild beasts' - symbols of the violence Jesus will face if He is faithful to His mission. The Gospel of Mark isn't just 'Good News', it is good news in a bad world. Satan isn't a character in a novel and shouldn't be imagined this way. Rather, he is the inner, invisible energy of people, groups and nations who inflict suffering on others. This adversary of God manifests itself through individuals, groups and nations by turning them into wild beasts who devour God's good creation. At this moment, the Adversary is working through the wild beast Herod who has arrested John. But Jesus is not intimidated by this. In fact, he moves into the heart of Herod's territory. Jesus not only preaches the Kingdom of God, He is the Kingdom of God! His Baptism structures his identity in the world. He is sustained by divine love. His life in time is permeated by eternity. Now this must happen to others. Jesus' mission is to offer those He calls, the same gifts that are in Himself. This is why He tells them that the 'Kingdom of God is very near to you'.

Disciples must turn away from lives that alienate others and cause them suffering and turn toward lives that embrace the new humanity. Creation is being restored and they have a part to play in this work but the Adversary is strong and has many disciples of his own. This is why we speak of our struggle to be faithful. It does not come easily.

If we were to ask why it is difficult to change our hearts and believe the Good News, we might consider that it is because we also believe other things which don't sit well with the radical teaching of Jesus. We might prize wealth, beauty or power. We might have decided that no one can be trusted and increase our defence spending. We might believe in revenge or in our right to have power over others. This is why it is important to have a searing honesty with ourselves. Our behaviour will always reveal the beliefs we live by and this can be uncomfortable self-knowledge!

And finally, there is the thorny issue of time and death. If we allow Jesus to teach us how to value ourselves in a way that neither time nor death can destroy we will notice that our identity isn't defined by what we have or don't have. It will be found in the celebration of our true identity as daughters and sons of the Most High. If we keep faith with this, our faith in Jesus will gradually change to faith with Jesus. What we treasure and where our hearts live, will become united. The Good News will take us there and we will find that our choices, decisions and behaviour will flow from this treasure in our hearts. This is the adventure of discipleship. It is the lifelong journey of coming to know the infinite love which has chosen to live in the heart of our being. Wow!



GIVE Campaign Update #010



First Aider & Fire Marshal Progress:

Thanks to all those who stepped forward; we now have enough first aiders at the Sunday 10:30am mass! We would ideally have **one more** first aider at each of the other two masses and **two more** fire marshals at the Saturday Vigil mass (we currently have zero). Thank you for all your help.

Eucharistic Minister Progress:

We have had one enquiry regarding a potential new Eucharistic Minister, however we are still looking for other volunteers. It is a very rewarding and honourable position to hold; if you feel this vocation calls to you please contact the office.

If you think of a way to assist in church life that isn't highlighted in the GIVE section of our website, please reach out to the office. The pledges highlighted online are where the parish needs help the most, but you may well have thought of things we haven't. If you have nominated yourself for a pledge previously and haven't heard back, please reach out again!

Safeguarding Training Course

On 9th March there will be a safeguarding training course in the church hall for anyone in a role involving children, adults, anyone performing a ministry or anyone needing a DBS certificate. From 10:30am-1pm there will be a safeguarding course in relation to children, and from 1:30pm-4:30pm there will be a safeguarding course pertaining to adults.

Should this apply to you, please email safeguarding@bracknellcatholicchurch.org or text the safeguarding number 07712 048695 to confirm your attendance.

CAFOD Family Fast Day- Friday 23rd February

This Lent, your donations to CAFOD's Family Fast Day appeal will help hardworking people like James the fisherman in Liberia with resources, tools and training to feed their families for good. Give today using the envelopes at the front of church or online at cafod.org.uk and please join us in praying with James that our sisters and brothers around the world have what they need to feed their families.

2023 Confirmation Cohort

If you were part of last year's Confirmation cohort and would like to stay in touch with the group, please reach out to Bernard O'Neill at bernard194720002000@yahoo.co.uk.

Annual Lantern Retreat: A Day of Recollection

The Union of Catholic Mothers, Wokingham, have organised a lantern retreat from 10am on Saturday 2nd March, led by Fr. Liam Cummins MHM at Corpus Christi Church. The programme will cover Transfiguration, Our Mission, and Prayer. The day will include a mass, a buffet lunch and refreshments, at the cost of £10. Contact mvc.tomlin@btinternet.com to enquire.

Lepra and University of Essex International Women's Day Event

For International Women's Day there will be a free event at Essex University on 'How resilience is helping women win the battle with leprosy'. For those interested in watching online please reserve your free ticket here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/how-resilience-is-helping-women-win-the-battle-with-leprosy-tickets-816863730407?aff=oddtcreator>

Foodbank Requests

Please support the Bracknell foodbank by donating **non-perishable** items. These can be brought to the church or put in the collection boxes that can be found at most supermarkets. To see what is needed please use the app called **BankTheFood**.





Spare Planks

If anyone has any spare planks of wood lying around, a donation of them would be much appreciated so the parishes' back garden's fences can be repaired.

Bickerton House Care Home Events (RG12 2JB):

Canine Café The first Wednesday of each month, 2pm – 4pm 	Friendship Café The second Thursday of each month, 10:30am – 12noon 	Community Cinema The third Thursday of each month, 2:30pm – 4:30pm 	'Let's Talk About Dementia' Event Tuesday 20 th February, 10:30am – 12 noon 
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Parish Events:

Care Home Singing 28/02, 2-3pm, Farningham House, Farningham, RG12 OXR 	Cuppa & Chat, 60+ Every Tuesday, 2pm – 3pm 	Children's Liturgy 03/03, 17/03, both Sunday masses 	Soup & Roll 08/03, 12/04, 10/05 after 12 noon mass 
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WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN OUR PARISH COMMUNITY WHO ARE SICK, HOUSEBOUND OR IN HOSPITAL AND FOR THOSE WHO CARE FOR THEM

Amanda Killestein	Ann D'Ambrosio	Ann Lynch	Ann O'Sullivan	Anne Hardy
Arthur Hardy	Audrey Lam	Bernard O'Neill	Beryl Pilgrim	Blanche Shap
Brenda Lynch	Bridget Riordan	Charles Hose	Claire Hose	Clarita Kokou-Tchri
Dorcas Innes-Grant	Doreen Pryor	Douglas & Bernadette Hunt	Dymphna & John Slade	Eddie & Flo Moore
Edmund & Kate Carroll	Ethna Sweeney	Inge Walker	Janet Read	Jerry & Susan Tobin
John Moir	Leonie Macintosh	Louis Burgisser	Lucia Saligoi	Margaret Finnieston
Margaret Pearce	Marie Swash	Mary King	Mary Murray	Mary Phelan
Maureen Baxter	Patricia Holmwood	Phyllis Lewis		Rico Morales
Sally Torode		Terri Landmann	Terry and Peggy McCullough	
Tony Andrews	Ursula Docherty	Vilma Taborda	Vivienne Halfpenny	

To add or remove a name to this list with consent, please contact the Parish Office.

If you or your relative is housebound, or because of illness cannot come to Mass and wish to receive Holy Communion at home, call the office on 01344 425729 or email office@bracknellcatholicchurch.org

PARISH OF ST JOSEPH and ST MARGARET CLITHEROW, BRACKNELL

Parish Priest: Fr. Daniel McAvoy **Deacon:** Rev. Aidan Lynch

Parish Administrators: Francis Barton and Donna Mody

Safeguarding Team: Marion McGuire, Sarah Birch, Paula Read

07712 048695 safeguarding@bracknellcatholicchurch.org

Parish Office, St. Joseph's Church, 39 Braccan Walk, Bracknell, RG12 1HA

Office Hours: Monday - Tuesday 9:00-3:00pm, Wednesday - Friday 9:00-5:00pm

Telephone: 01344 425729

Email: office@bracknellcatholicchurch.org **Website:** <https://www.bracknellcatholicchurch.org>

MASS TIMES

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

Saturday	17th	6pm	Mass	<i>Amara Silveira RIP</i>
Sunday	18th	8:30am	Mass	Parish Intentions
		10:30am	Mass	<i>Danilo Rabulan RIP</i>

Monday	19th	NO MASS		
Tuesday	20th	10am	Communion Service	
Wednesday	21st	10am	Communion Service	

THE CHAIR OF ST. PETER, *feast*

Thursday	22nd	10am	Communion Service	
Friday	23rd	11am	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	
		12 noon	Communion Service	
Saturday	24th	NO MASS		
		NO CONFESSION		

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

Saturday	24th	6pm	Mass	<i>Breda O'Regan RIP</i>
Sunday	25th	8:30am	Mass	<i>Margaret Pierce (sick)</i>
		10:30am	Mass	Parish Intentions

ALL MASSES ARE LIVESTREAMED <https://www.bracknellcatholicchurch.org/watch-live>

New to our parish or not yet registered?

<https://www.bracknellcatholicchurch.org/parish-life/parish-registration>



01344 425729

office@bracknellcatholicchurch.org

Are you lonely? Are you ill and in need of prayer and/or support? Perhaps you have not had contact with the Catholic Church for a while. Whatever the reason, please do get in touch for a chat.



07852 497 218 / 07851 200 987

office@bracknellcatholicchurch.org

Are you in the land of loss & would appreciate a chat with someone in our group? If so, do not hesitate to get in touch.



Call **IN CONFIDENCE**
07731 862 349

If you are struggling financially and need practical assistance, the local Society of St Vincent de Paul (SVP) may be able to help. Do call us in confidence for a chat.

DONATIONS TO PARISH FUNDS Online, Bank Transfer, DD, <https://www.bracknellcatholicchurch.org/give/>
BANK DETAILS: Account Name: CDP Bracknell St Joseph Sort Code: 30-93-04; Account Number: 00875520
PLEASE MAKE CHEQUES PAYABLE TO: **CDP BRACKNELL ST JOSEPH**

JOBS AVAILABLE IN THE DIOCESE: <https://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/about-us/other/jobs>
South Berkshire Pastoral Area, Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth Registration Number: 1199568