



Fourth Sunday of Lent

IS DARKNESS BETTER THAN LIGHT?

Sunday 10th March 2024

Mass Book Page 162

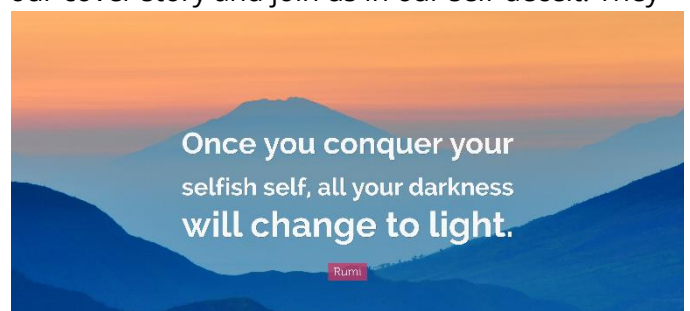


When death bites, it hurts. The Beloved Son of God comes from above and becomes death, death on a cross. If, when we see Him and believe in Him, Eternal Life will flow into us. This is the wonder of it all. That Eternal Life appears at the exact moment when human life is failing and carries us through the loss of all that we know. Eternal Life suffuses and carries us to the other side of what we cannot yet see. This truth is grasped by looking on the crucified One, who transfigures death into the servant of life.

And there is more! In Christ there is no condemnation! This is the truth. It is, if you like, the highest truth, or the revelation of the One who is behind all that His Beloved Son does. Our lives are a mystery to us and we are sustained by what we cannot really understand. But we are led to the truth that the ground on which we stand sings of the self-giving love of the Father who is dedicated to human fulfilment. This is what Dante calls, 'the Love which moves the sun and the other stars'. (Paradiso, 33.145) The Beloved Son is sent by this Love, who cannot bear to see His creation being unravelled by death. The Son brings life without end. He does not seek condemnation but Salvation. God's judgement is love and life. If we accept this gift, condemnation cannot touch us. But if we refuse the gift we are undone. Perhaps this is why, when we are drawing closer to God, and the light of Love begins to shine more brightly in us, there is a risk that when we see the full horror of sin we might want to cover ourselves in darkness again. But the Light of Mercy suggests another direction. A direction which begins with gratitude for the Grace of God which is, and always has been, the source of all the good we have done. A choice which keeps choosing to move more deeply into the light.

When we hear the Good News that in Christ there is no condemnation, we might not believe it. We are so used to being judged - and condemned - by people. Are we not always being put on the scales, weighed in the balance and found wanting? We even do it to ourselves! Husbands, wives, parents, and children do it. Bosses, work colleagues, neighbours and friends have mastered the look that lets us know we are not quite good enough. So, when we hear that God has abandoned judgment and condemnation in favour of Love, we may have to work on ourselves to let this Truth come home. Having done that, there is no sense of being off the hook. We are, but we are now on another one. The light of Love will reveal to us how we ourselves might live in the twilight zone of sin and the judgement and condemnation of others.

In the beautiful Parable of St. John's Gospel 8.6, Jesus bends down to write in the sand, deliberately evoking a memory of undeserved forgiveness in Exodus 31.18 where God gives Moses a masterclass in Mercy. The Pharisees claim that their only motivation for stoning the woman is faithfulness to the teaching of Moses. But Jesus, the true interpreter of Moses, wants them to drop their cover story and be searingly honest with themselves about why they are really there. He gives them a chance to come into the light. But they will not take it. They have been casting the stones of judgement and condemnation for a long time and old habits are hardest to break. The invitation to come into the light is no match for the comfort of darkness. One by one, they move away from the light. And this preference for darkness has become a free choice for self-condemnation. It is a strange truth that preferring darkness is easier than we might think. We do not always recognise our habitual ways of relating as darkness, so first we have to see it for what it really is. Only with the arrival of the Light does the racist, sexist, classist and separatist character of our thinking become clear. It is easier to create a cover story for our bad behaviour than to engage in painful self-examination. Other people seem eager to buy into our cover story and join us in our self-deceit. They are happy to not look at what we will not look at if we agree to return the favour. The light is not welcome. It calls for a decision to change. Perhaps this is why some prefer the darkness. In this fourth week of Lent, let's pray that this is not us!





The funeral service for Doreen Pryor will take place on 19th March, 12 noon at Easthampstead Park Crematorium.

MAY THE SOULS OF ALL THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED,
THROUGH THE MERCY OF GOD, REST IN PEACE. AMEN.



GIVE Campaign Update #013



We are excited to announce that we have released some new pledges, indicating the beginning of wave 2 of our campaign. These are CAFOD-related and can be found in the JUSTICE & PEACE section of our campaign page: <https://bracknellcatholicchurch.org/give/justice-and-peace/>. You can also e-mail justiceandpeace@bracknellcatholicchurch.org if you would like to volunteer.

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! Thank you.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

If you would like to enrich your faith and share it with adults seeking to join us in our Catholic faith, you are invited to the next RCIA team meeting on Wednesday, 13th March, at 7:30pm in the church hall.

Baptism Preparation Evening

If you are planning to have your child baptised, our next Baptism Preparation evening is Thursday, May 2nd 2024, at 7:30pm. To book a place please click on the following link:

<https://stjosephandstmargaretclitherow.churchsuite.com/events/5ypn1xt3> or email baptisms@bracknellcatholicchurch.org.

Pastoral Area Safeguarding Training Course

16/03- Windsor & Ascot, 30/03- South Berkshire. Specific venues confirmed at a later date. Child Protection: 10am-12 noon. Adults at Risk: 1pm-3pm. Light refreshments will be provided. Attendees will receive certificates on completion of their training to support continuing ministry. Please email safeguarding@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk to confirm your attendance.

Clergy Mission Sacrament of Reconciliation Dates

As part of our ongoing mission to integrate with Corpus Christi Wokingham and the Parish of Crowthorne and Sandhurst, Father Danny will be at Corpus Christi Wokingham on 25th April at 4pm to hear first confessions, and on 10th May at 4:30pm to hear confessions from those about to be confirmed.

Annual Memorial Service- A.B. Walker

A heartfelt gathering of reflection, support and shared memories will take place at Reading Minster Church of St. Mary the Virgin, St. Mary's Butts, Reading, RG1 2LG. It will be on the 21st April at 4pm, and all are welcome.

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



Parish Events:

Care Home Singing

12/03, 1:45pm-3pm,
Bracknell Care Home,
Crowthorne Road,
RG12 7DN



24/04, 1:45pm-3pm,
Farningham House,
Farningham, RG12 0XR

Cuppa & Chat, 60+

Every Tuesday,
2pm – 3pm



Children's Liturgy

17/03, 24/03, both
Sunday masses, please
book beforehand



Soup & Roll

12/04, 10/05 after 12
noon mass



Livestreaming Consent Form

In line with GDPR regulations we need consent from ***anyone involved in delivering a mass*** (e.g. readers, ministers, servers, announcers, choir) that you are okay with being livestreamed. Please complete this form: <https://stjosephandstmargaretclitherow.churchsuite.com/forms/wa5v9uyb> to give explicit consent, no later than the ***end of March***. If you are unable to access the form or you would not like to consent then please contact the parish office, thank you.

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	Douglas & Bernadette Hunt	Dymphna & John Slade	Eddie & Flo Moore	Edmund & Kate Carroll
Ethna Sweeney	Inge Walker	Janet Read	Jerry & Susan Tobin	John Moir
Kevin Sutton	Leonie Macintosh	Louis Burgisser	Lucia Saligo	Margaret Finnieston
Margaret Pearce	Marie Swash	Mary King	Mary Murray	Mary Phelan
Maureen Baxter	Patricia Holmwood	Paula Sandford	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

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Saturday	9th	6pm	Mass	<i>Liam Byrne RIP</i>
		7pm	Confessions	
Sunday	10th	8:30am	Mass	<i>Charles, Sarah, Sven & Lloyd (sick with cancer)</i>
		9:30am	Confessions	
		10:30am	Mass	Parish Intentions
Monday	11th	NO MASS		
Tuesday	12th	NO MASS		10am Communion Service
Wednesday	13th	NO MASS		10am Communion Service
Thursday	14th	NO MASS		10am Communion Service
Friday	15th	11am	Stations of the Cross	
		11:30am	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	
		NO MASS		12 noon Communion Service
Saturday	16th	NO MASS		

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Saturday	16th	6pm	Mass	<i>Marie Danielle Tichbon & Marie Claire Ducasse</i>
Sunday	17th	8:30am	Mass	Parish Intentions
		10:30am	Mass	<i>Mirosław Zakoscielny RIP (3rd anniversary)</i>

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