



Third Sunday of Lent

ME AS I AM BEFORE YOU AS YOU ARE

Sunday 3rd March 2024

Mass Book Page 154



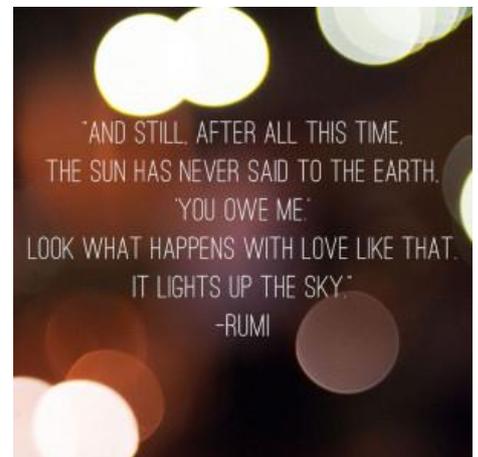
To some people, the Gospel story for the Third Sunday of Lent, unfolds in the Temple in Jerusalem. But Jesus has another name for this building. He calls it, 'My Father's House' (v14). We can see the problem. If the building is a Temple, there is business to be done and deals to be struck. Here, worship is a commercial venture. Exchange is the name of the game. Worshippers give God something and God gives them something. The basic exchange is flexible enough for all the versions of, "You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours." And if you can offer an animal without blemish, you go to the front of the queue. The mindset of the marketplace so fills the Temple that it has become a place for making deals with God.

Jesus' Father is not a deal maker. He does no exchange favours or forgiveness for sacrifices. The Father is Free, and the flow of Love from His Heart cannot be bought, bartered, bargained for or gained with a bribe. Hard cash and animals are useless to those who know they are in the Fathers House. So, you set the animals free, and you chase out the cash converters. They may be needed in the Temple, but they are not needed in 'My Father's House' (v.16). What is more, when Jesus entered into a conversation with a woman who came to draw water at a well, He tells her that the building itself isn't necessary. (Jn 4:23-24) Worship can unfold right where we are. We don't have to move towards anything. Anyone who asks for the gift of the Holy Spirit and is moved by the Spirit is worshipping The Father! Since Jesus is the fullness of Grace and Truth from whom all receive the Spirit, (Jn 1:14,16) His presence stirs up a sense of the Sacred. Jesus may be doing more than a clearance of the Temple; He may be replacing it!

This isn't going to be well received by the Temple Authorities. What Jesus has done is dangerous. His zeal will consume Him, and it will provoke conflict. He will be consumed by the anger of others who profit from Temple commerce. They arrive on time, and they know that His cleansing actions and words can belong only to the Messiah. So they ask for a sign of authenticity, a miracle or two might do. But what He offers only baffles them. They take literally what is offered symbolically. They cannot see the spiritual revelation. So Jesus says, 'Destroy this Temple - His Body - the dwelling place of God - and by the power and presence of God he will rise again because of His communion with His Father. Their malice and violence will only reveal more of the Fathers face. But the sign they seek is a sign they cannot read.

So let's go back to our favourite pastime - deal making. It isn't hard to see how an activity that is so embedded in our lives could be carried into our spiritual lives. How do we get what we want from God and how does God get what He wants from us? We think we have to bargain with the Father to get what we want. This is more than a little theological error. It is a huge obstacle to any real spiritual development. And it can turn ugly when so called religious 'elitists' set themselves up as brokers of the deal. Jesus rejects this approach. "Beware of the scribes who ... devour widows' houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers" (Mk 12:38). These intermediaries are being paid to pray to God for poor widows. It is an unscrupulous manipulation by callous people. But the sad truth is that it is easier to destroy the Temple than to eradicate the deal making God.

In the film, "A House of Sand and Fog", the son of an Islamic man is shot. His distraught father instinctively begins to pray for him. He says to God, "If you let my son live, I will lay in the park, put bird seed in my eyes, and let the birds eat out my eyes". The deal emerges from the depth of his suffering and wells up to the heart that he shares with all people. Stress, hurt, and tragedy bring it out of hiding. For most of us it is hard to move beyond the deal making default. Or perhaps the Father of Jesus who is often not at home with images of buying and selling, is at home when we are grateful for the gift of life and serve life in any way we can. We can receive and give, and when both make us truly happy, we can be said to be at play in God's Temple. In fact, we have been admitted to the 'Holy of Holies' (Heb 9:3). Here, our 'sacrifice' mingles with the divine 'sacrifice' which makes life holy by pouring Himself out. The challenge and the gift is not in making a good deal, but in getting beyond deals and into





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 #012



First Aider & Fire Marshal Progress:

Thank you to everyone who offered to be a fire marshal or first aider. We are no longer recruiting at this time. If you volunteered you will be contacted with training dates shortly.

We are finalising wave 2 pledges of the GIVE campaign and will have more news in the coming weeks.

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!

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, 6th March, at 7:30pm in the church hall.

Parish Safeguarding Refresher Course

On 9th March there will be a safeguarding refresher 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.

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.

2023 Confirmation Cohort

If you were part of last year's Confirmation cohort and would like to stay in touch with the group, please contact the office.

Confession Times

This week there will be the Sacrament of Reconciliation after the Saturday Vigil Mass and the 8:30am Sunday Mass, with Fr. Philip Adede.

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, 31/03, both
Sunday masses



Soup & Roll

08/03, 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	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 Saligo	Margaret Finnieston
Margaret Pearce	Marie Swash	Mary King	Mary Murray	Mary Phelan
Maureen Baxter	Patricia Holmwood	Paula Sandford	Phyllis Lewis	Prim & Ian Maynard
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

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

Saturday	2nd	6pm	Mass	<i>The Shore Family & Alisdair</i>
		7pm	Confessions	
Sunday	3rd	8:30am	Mass	Parish Intentions
		9:30am	Confessions	
		10:30am	Mass	<i>Jane Adams (sick)</i>

Monday	4th	NO MASS		
Tuesday	5th	NO MASS		10am Communion Service
Wednesday	6th	NO MASS		10am Communion Service
Thursday	7th	NO MASS		10am Communion Service
Friday	8th		11am	Stations of the Cross
			11:30am	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
		NO MASS		12 noon Communion Service
Saturday	9th	NO MASS		

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Saturday	9th	6pm	Mass	<i>Liam Byrne RIP</i>
Sunday	10th	8:30am	Mass	<i>Charles, Sarah, Sven & Lloyd (sick with cancer)</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>



PASTORAL CARE

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.



Bereavement support

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://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