

Third Sunday of Lent

DISAPPEARING INTO THE FULLNESS OF JOY: THE WOMAN AT THE WELL

Sunday 8th March 2026

Missal Page 121

Good teachers and good spiritual teachers highly value the experience of their disciples. They will often return to these experiences as they journey together, as a way of making things clearer. Good spiritual teachers often invite their disciples to begin to recognise patterns in their experience. Or, to put it another way, to map the sequence of their growth in understanding.

For example, St Paul, in his letter to the infant church in Rome (Romans 5,3-5) proposes a sequence that begins with suffering. Suffering produces endurance, endurance produces character, character produces hope and hope does not disappoint us because the Love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us. Mother Theresa of Albania often handed out a business card with this information: The fruit of SILENCE is prayer. The fruit of PRAYER is faith. The fruit of FAITH is love. The fruit of LOVE is Service. The fruit of SERVICE is Peace.

Sometimes the patterns of our experience and what these have taught us can be easily grasped. When this happens, their wisdom is clear. At other times, the patterns of our experience and what these have taught us is less clear. It is harder to 'get it' or to put Wisdom into action.

This week's Parable of the Woman at The Well is one of these patterns. It might go like this:

- the one who hears the voice of the bridegroom greatly rejoices
- bringing the bridegroom children
- that one disappears into the fullness of joy.

Notice this great woman's journey as she develops her understanding of Jesus which takes her past his Jewishness, past his prophetic status, past his role as messiah, finally arriving at the realisation that He is the 'I Am' or God made visible. When she grasps this, she is filled with the love she has always been looking for. Her joy is complete. She has found the Bridegroom.

The first joy is found in hearing the voice of the bridegroom, the wedding and the wedding night. Now it matures into a fuller joy when the marriage becomes fruitful with children. The first joy becomes the impetus for mission. She moves out, attracting people to the voice she has heard. She presents these 'children' to her true husband, so that they too might experience the gift of God.

Now she moves into deep waters. If the experience is true, she must not claim permanent status as a messenger. Her 'children' tell her that she is no longer needed. Now that they have seen for themselves, no other intermediary is required. If she is mature enough, she will be happy that, like the Baptist, He must increase while they decrease. But they aren't having to be dragged from centre stage. Their leaving is gracious and, as they decrease, their joy increases!

So, what is going on here? When we see clearly the gift of God, there is a 'knowing' that enables us to grasp more fully the work of the Holy Spirit. Strangely the gift arrives as 'living water' which can never be grasped. Nor can we ever use it to promote ourselves or our ego. Whoever tries to seize the Spirit watches it move elsewhere. By disappearing, we have permanent access to the fountain. I think this is what the woman at the well realised. I hope that one day we will too.

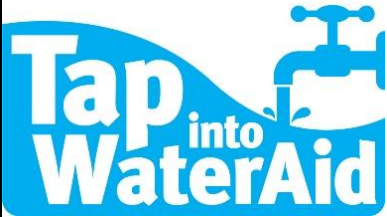


Insights from our Parish Contemplative Movement

*"We are such value to God that he came to live among us ... and to guide us home.
He will go to any length to seek us, even to being lifted high upon the cross to draw us back to himself.
We can only respond by loving God for his love."*
St Catherine of Siena



GIVE Campaign Update #114



WaterAid donations in envelopes and jars will be collected at every Mass this weekend, jars after Mass in the narthex and envelopes after the Mass or in the offertory collections. We will give you an update later in Lent of the collection total from card, envelopes and jars- thank you for your support.

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School are looking for parishioners to come in as reading volunteers - any days, any times etc! The person would need to make a DBS application, but they will support you with that.



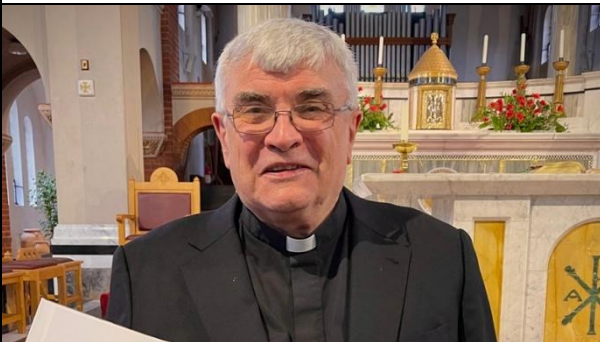
**Save
the
Date**



New and exciting Parish outings are as follows:

- Fri 20th March 2:30pm @ South Hill Park Cinema: Elvis in Concert, £11
- Sat 11th April 2:30pm @ Windsor Theatre: Joseph and his Technicolour Dreamcoat (performed by a youth group)
- Wed 17th June 7:45pm @ South Hill Park: One Night in Dublin, £29
- TBA July: Boat Trip in Windsor (40 mins/£13, 2 hours /£20)
- Thursday 15th October 2:30pm @ Windsor Theatre: The Mousetrap, £36

Please call or text 07395 077913 (Rita) to register your interest, or to discuss future events.



Father Padraig Faughnan RIP

The Tuesday before last, Fr. Pat Faughnan, one of our retired priests, died. In 1984, Fr. Pat was appointed Parish Priest of St. Margaret Clitherow, Bracknell, where he stayed until 1991. He had been considerably unwell these last months and was in the Royal Berkshire Hospital. His sister Breda and family were present. We thank God for his life and ministry and we pray for his well-earned repose with the Lord.

Let us thank God for his loving service to the people whom he was called to serve. May the Lord grant him eternal rest in the love that he so generously served through his ministry. May he rest in peace. Hear with favour our prayers, which we humbly offer, O Lord, for the salvation of the soul of Padraig, your servant and Priest, that he, who devoted a faithful ministry to your name, may rejoice in the perpetual company of your Saints.

Lenten Penitential Service

On Thursday 26th March, from 7:30pm-8:30pm, the church of the Immaculate Conception, Sandhurst, GU47 9BS, will be holding a penitential service to prepare us spiritually for Easter.





Polish Community Easter Basket Blessing

Once again, St Joseph's Bracknell will celebrate Świąconka - the blessing of the Easter baskets - with members of the Polish community on Holy Saturday, at 12 noon.

Catholic Social Teaching

You may have noticed the 7 facets of Catholic Social Teaching (CST) on the wall in the hall. CST emphasises the inherent dignity of the human person, the common good, and the importance of community and solidarity in addressing social issues. It provides a moral framework for addressing contemporary social issues, advocating for justice, and the well-being of people. By emphasising human dignity, the common good, and solidarity, CST encourages individuals and communities to work towards a more just and equitable society. These principles serve as a guide for Catholics and others seeking to engage with the world in a meaningful and responsible way.

Parish Events	When?	Where?
Gospel Outreach with Music	11/03, 1:45pm-3pm	Bracknell Care Home, RG12 7DN
Gospel Outreach with Music	25/03, 1:45pm-3pm	Bracknell Care Home, RG12 7DN
Children's Liturgy (please pre-book) 🧒🧒	08/03 & 22/03	Church Hall
Cuppa & Chat (60+) ☕	Every Tuesday (term time only), 2pm-3pm	Church Hall
New Parent Coffee Morning	03/04, 9am-10:30am	Church Hall
Soup & Roll	13/03, 10/04, 12:45pm	Church Hall
ALPHA	12/03, 8pm-9pm	Online
Parish Prayer Group 🙏	10/03 7pm	Church Hall
Monthly Filipino Mass	05/04, 5pm	St. Joseph's Church

WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN OUR PARISH COMMUNITY WHO ARE SICK, HOUSEBOUND OR IN HOSPITAL AND FOR THOSE WHO CARE FOR THEM

Amanda Killestein	Claire Berry	Evelyn Caruso	Mary Phelan	Sarah Flemming
Angela Dossett	Claire Hose	Inge Walker	Mary Stocking	Stan & Margaret Aburn
Ann D'Ambrosio	Colleen McCormack	Jacqueline Marshall	Mary Sullivan	Susan Tobin
Ann O'Sullivan	Debbie Hanley	Janet Read	Patricia Holmwood	Terri & Andy Landmann
Anne Hardy	Dorcas Innes-Grant	Jean Lovejoy	Paula Sandford	Ursula Docherty
Arthur Hardy	Douglas & Bernadette Hunt	Judith Newman	Peggy McCullough	Vilma Taborda
Audrey Lam	Dymphna Slade	Margaret Finnieston	Raf Roberts	Vivienne Halfpenny
Brenda Lynch	Eamon McNeill	Marie Swash	Rico Morales	
Bridget Riordan	Edmund & Kate Carroll	Mary King	Rita Hayes	Joseph Rice
Charles Beard	Eileen Tanner	Mary Murray	Sally Torode	

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

"Operation Epic Fury and the Iranian fight-back are truly disturbing. As ever in the Middle East, events can easily spiral out of control, with more and more countries involved. At his Angelus address on Sunday, Pope Leo said: "Stability and peace are not built with mutual threats, nor with weapons, which sow destruction, pain, and death, but only through a reasonable, authentic, and responsible dialogue." Lent is a time of prayer, self-denial and charity. This week, let us pray to the Holy Spirit, yes, for peace, but especially that as many innocent people as possible are spared and that there will grow up a renewed desire for diplomacy and dialogue."

-Bishop Philip

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	7 th	6pm	Mass	<i>Monsignor Kevin O'Callaghan</i>
Sunday	8 th	8:30am	Mass	<i>Terry McCullough RIP</i>
		10:30am	Mass	<i>Fr Pdraig Faughnan RIP</i>
Monday	9 th		NO MASS	
Tuesday	10 th	10am	Mass	
Wednesday	11 th	10am	Mass	
Thursday	12 th	10am	Mass	<i>Marie-Danielle Tichbon RIP</i>
Friday	13 th	11am	Stations of the Cross	
		12 noon	Mass	Parish Intentions
Saturday	14 th	10am	Mass	
		11am	Confessions	
FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT				
Saturday	14 th	6pm	Mass	Parish Intentions
Sunday	15 th	8:30am	Mass	<i>Derek Alexander RIP</i>
		10:30am	Mass	<i>James Reilly RIP</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>

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

bereavement@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.

SVP 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: 119956