

newsletter



18 and 19 March 2017

3rd Sunday of Lent – Year A



Catholic Parish of The Sacred Heart

Our Mission

Through the power of the Holy Spirit we will be a parish renewed in our knowledge and understanding of the love of Jesus Christ, to enable each of us to fulfil our Christian mission



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The Distinguishing Marks of Lent – Almsgiving

Of the three marks of Lent prayer, fasting and almsgiving, almsgiving is surely the most neglected. And yet, in the only place where the Bible brings all three together, the inspired author puts the emphasis firmly on the last: 'Prayer and fasting are good, but better than either is almsgiving accompanied by righteousness ... Those who regularly give alms shall enjoy a full life' (Tobias 12:8-9).

Why is almsgiving better than prayer and fasting? Because it is prayer, and it involves fasting. Almsgiving is a form of prayer because it is 'giving to God' and not mere philanthropy. It is a form of fasting because it demands sacrificial giving not just giving something, but giving up something, giving till it hurts.

Jesus presented almsgiving as a necessary part of Christian life: 'When you give alms, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by men. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing' (Matthew 6:2-3). He does not say IF you give alms, but WHEN. Like fasting and prayer, almsgiving is non-negotiable.

That was the living embodiment of a basic principle of Catholic social teaching, what tradition calls the universal destination of goods. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* puts it succinctly: 'The goods of creation are destined for the entire human race' (n. 2452). But they cannot get there unless we put them there and that requires effort.

As with prayer and fasting, so with almsgiving. If we have a plan, we will find it easier to do. Throughout history, many Christians have used the Old Testament practice of tithing as a guide, that is, they give a tenth of their income to God. In practice, that means giving it to the poor, to the parish, or to charitable institutions.



Adapted from <http://www.catholiceducation.org>

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN AMPHILL AND FLITWICK (CTA&F)

As part of our Lenten programme each of the six churches that are part of CTA&F have organised prayer spaces based on themes from people Jesus encountered on the way to the cross. Next Saturday **25 March** it will be at Sts Peter and Paul from 10.00 am till midday. Below are the other churches, their dates and themes. You are welcome to attend all or some of these open churches.

Date	Church	Theme
25 March	Sts Peter and Paul's Flitwick	A blind man receive sight
1 April	Amphill Methodist	Zacchaeus
2 April	St Andrew's Amphill	Jerusalem: The entry and the crowds

RCIA

Today, Sunday, our catechumen, Sharon will receive a personal copy of the creed as part of her preparation to be received into the church at Easter. Please remember her in your prayers.



OUR LENTEN CONVERSATION 'OUR PARTICIPATION IN THE MASS' ABOUT SESSION 3 – WORD

Each week we are extending the Lenten conversation 'Our Participation in the Mass' to everyone in the parish through this short summary of the session. There are questions to ponder in the week ahead in order that everyone can grow in their appreciation of the jewel of the church – the Mass. Why not join us in person on Tuesday!



When we refer to the Word within the Mass we are describing the time around the first 'table' of the Mass. The lectern is the focus for what is around half of the time we spend together at Mass, a time where all we hear and recite is inspired through the Holy Spirit and is great part of the words, teaching, stories and parables that were proclaimed by Jesus himself and honoured in the words of the New Testament letters of Paul, Peter, John and others.

We are urged to 'listen' to the Word – a major challenge as many like to read along with the text, yet Jesus himself asks us to listen. His call is not simply to listen with our ears, but to invest our whole being in 'listening' – with our mind, heart and soul. It is in this way that we can be active and conscious in our participation with the Word.

The whole package of the Word begins with the wisdom of the Old Testament, followed by the chant of the psalm and the letters and gospel. We break these words in the homily that the priest or deacon prepares with the help of prayer and reflection. We are not done with the Word even at this point. For as a community, we stand to express our solidarity with all that is taught by the Church in the words of the creed; this title derives from the Latin credo – I believe.

We spoke in the piece on 'gathering' about Jesus words 'when two or three come together in my name, there I am in your midst'. Jesus tells us all 'to ask for what you want, and you will get it'; thus we conclude our expression of the Word with our collective prayers, the 'prayers of the faithful'. These are prayers that reflect the needs and concerns of the community, and require our personal commitment to pray these prayers not only at Mass, but throughout the week ahead.

Here are some questions to ponder this week.

- † *In what way is the passage of scripture relevant as Good News for the world today?*
- † *What qualities should we be looking for, as people who listen to the Word?*
- † *In what ways does the community respond to the word we proclaim and what more might we be able to do in the world outside our four walls?*

FLITWICK FLAG COMPETITION

Flitwick Town Council would like members of the community to design a flag that they would like to represent the town. The flag will be flying throughout the year apart from National Holidays and will make its first appearance at the Carnival on Saturday 10th June to start off the parade. To enter you will need to be either a resident of Flitwick, attend school or be involved in a Club or Group in Flitwick. Closing date for entries is **Tuesday 28 March**. Entry forms are available on the noticeboard

Tea and coffee will be available after 11.00 am Mass. All welcome

PLANNED GIVING/GIFT AID

Boxes of offertory envelopes will be available for collection next weekend **24/25 March**.



Many thanks to those parishioners that have elected to make their offerings by standing order. This really does help us in reducing the amount of cash that has to be handled each week, and we are still encouraging you to change to this method. With around 69 individuals/families now offering by standing order we now are able to reduce the number of offertory envelope boxes required. As usual boxes will be arranged in alphabetical order.

Gift Aid

If you are a UK taxpayer and have not as yet made a Gift Aid declaration, we would request that you seriously consider completing a simple form. This will enable the parish to receive an additional 25p for every £1 offered.

John Fletcher will be available after both Masses next weekend to provide copies of the forms and further information on any of the planned giving methods. He can also be contacted on 01525 715 309 or by email plannedgiving@sacredheartflitwick.co.uk

We thank you for your weekly contribution to the parish. For 11 and 12 March the total was £542.45; this is £7.55 less than budgeted to meet parish running costs. The Finance Committee.

FOODBANK

We are part of the NEED Project which operates a Foodbank for people in Flitwick and Ampthill. The NEED project now needs **coffee, tinned carrots and small bags of sugar**.

CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP



The next meeting is on **5 April**, 7.30 pm till 9.30 pm. Contact Nicky Paterson on 01525 750 654.

The next meeting of the Sewing Group will be on **27 March** from 2.00 pm till 4.00 pm. For information contact Clare Bevan 01525 403 589.



MOTHERS' PRAYERS will meet on **20 March**. This meeting will be at the church for **Stations of the Cross**. Contact Sue Barley on 01525 634 186.



Sacred Heart 100 CLUB

The latest draw took place on 12 March and the lucky winners were first, **Kathleen Mapp**, second **Ros Penn** and third **Maria Curtin**.

BAPTISM PREPARATION COURSE FOR NEW PARENTS

The next baptism preparation classes will be held on Saturdays **25 March and 1 April**, starting at 10.00 am for one hour in the St Francis Suite. The parish encourages all new parents asking for baptism of their child, to attend. We also welcome parents who may wish to renew their preparation for baptism as their families grow larger. Asking for baptism for your child is the start of your child's sacramental journey in the Church. The sessions look at your role in the development of your child's faith, what you ask of the Church and the promises you make on behalf of your child. We look forward to seeing you and your family. Godparents and grandparents are welcome to join us.



We welcome Teagan, daughter of Helen and Adrian Normoyle, who will be baptised into the Catholic community today. We ask the whole parish to pray for her and her whole family on this special day, and wish her and her family all God's blessings on their journey of faith.



WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK IN OUR LENTEN PROGRAMME?

- **Monday 20 March** – Mothers' Prayers lead Station of the Cross at 7.30 pm
- **Tuesday 21 March** – Session 3 'Our Participation in the Mass' at 7.45 pm
- **Saturday 27 March** – Churches Together Prayer Space, at Sts Peter and Paul's, 10.00 am till 12.00 noon

PLEASE NOTE! There is now a new stock of Mother's Day cards and Easter cards in the repository. There is also new First Communion stock.

CIRCLE OF PRAYER FOR MARCH – CAFOD AND ITS WORK FOR JUSTICE

Fill the hearts of mankind with the fire of your love and with the desire to ensure justice for all. By sharing the good things you give us, may we secure equality for all our brothers and sisters throughout the world. May there be an end to division, strife and war. May there be a dawning of a truly human society built on love and peace.



INFORMATION

CONFESSION

Confession will be on Saturday evening at 5.30 pm and THIS Wednesday at 7.00 pm.

PRAYER LINE

Please ring for intercessory prayer on 01525 634 186. We have some wonderful answers to prayers. Be assured of full confidentiality.

CARDS, GIFTS, etc.

Are available for sale in Sacred Heart church after Mass. All are priced. Please put money in the repository box at the back of the church.

SAFEGUARDING

For information contact Paula Bates on 07834 715 978 or safeguarding@sacredheartflitwick.co.uk

CHURCH NEWSLETTER ONLINE

at <http://www.sacredheartflitwick.co.uk>

IN HOSPITAL, SICK OR HOUSE-BOUND?

Please let us know of anyone who needs a visit or requires Holy Communion at home.

THE ST VINCENT DE PAUL GROUP meets every Monday at 7.30 pm. If you would like to join us or want more details or if you know of anyone who needs a visit, help with transport or any other need, contact John Flanagan on 01525 406 810.

LITTLE 'UNS

Meet every Friday 10.15 am to 11.45 am in term time, in the church hall. This is a group for babies and pre-schoolers. For further information please contact Deacon Philip on deaconphilip@sacredheartflitwick.co.uk.

MASS INTENTIONS

For Mass intentions contact Deacon Philip who will arrange for Canon Bennie or another local priest to say a Mass.

Mass Times at Sacred Heart

Saturday	18 March	6.00 pm	The Intentions of all those diagnosed with cancer
Sunday	19 March	11.00 am	Bishop Peter's needs
Monday	20 March	9.30 am	Those who have died in the parish
Tuesday	21 March		No Service
Wednesday	22 March	7.30 pm	The People of the Parish
Thursday	23 March		No Service
Friday	24 March	9.30 am	Private Intentions

Newsletter copy deadline – Tuesday midday. Newsletter contact: Suzanne Yates; 01525 840 661; suz_yates@btinternet.com

Readers, Eucharistic Ministers and Drivers for this week, 18 and 19 March		
Mass	6.00 pm	11.00 am
1 st Reading	Mary Brown	Una McAlinden
2 nd Reading	Siobhan Campbell	Mansford
Eucharistic Minister	Deacon Philip Pugh	Deacon Philip Pugh
Eucharistic Minister	John Flanagan	Anne Gadsden
Driver		William Doyle
Readers, Eucharistic Ministers and Drivers for this week, 25 and 26 March		
Mass	6.00 pm	11.00 am
1 st Reading	Dee Brady	Ros Penn
2 nd Reading	Pat Crowe	Brendan Spillane
Eucharistic Minister	Deacon Philip Pugh	Deacon Philip Pugh
Eucharistic Minister	Don Perrett	Nicky Paterson
Driver		Ros Penn