

University of Warwick Chaplaincy

Fourth Sunday of Lent

22nd March, 2020

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Welcome. Today is the third Sunday of Lent, “Laetare Sunday” – “Be Glad Sunday”.

Last Sunday we heard the story of the Samaritan woman at the well and heard how Jesus promised her “living water”. She journeyed from ignorance and rejection of Jesus to faith. This week we hear about another man who made the same journey as he moves from blindness into the light.

Prayer Before Mass

God our Father, you sent Jesus, our High Priest, to redeem us and you willed that His saving work should continue through the ministry of priests. Enlighten us to celebrate this Sunday Mass with our priest, so that, empowered by the Word of life and the Eucharist, we may be strengthened by the Holy Spirit to live to the full our Christian calling. We ask this through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, 22 nd March Fourth Sunday of Lent <i>Day of Prayer for the Candidates for the Sacraments</i> Mothering Sunday	No Mass Today	<i>Jennifer Shaw</i>
Monday, 23 rd March <i>Commemoration of St. Turibius of Mongrovejo</i>	No Mass Today	<i>Anne Doherty (Get well)</i>
Tuesday, 24 th March	No Mass Today	<i>The People of the Parish</i>
Wednesday, 25 th March Solemnity of the Annunciation	No Mass Today	<i>The Brogan Family</i>
Thursday, 26 th March	No Mass Today	<i>Doreen Ryan</i>
Friday, 27 th March	No Mass Today	<i>Jack McCrave (Anniversary)</i>
Saturday, 28 th March	No Mass Today	<i>Mrs Elizabeth Conry</i>
Sunday, 29 th March Fifth Sunday of Lent <i>Day of Prayer for the Candidates for the Sacraments</i>	No Mass Today	<i>Chris Mullen</i>
Sacrament of Reconciliation: on request (please phone to make sure I am available)		

Happy Mothering Sunday to all Mums.

Each of us has a mother, whether she is with us or has passed away. We thank God for them and pray for them especially today. We also pray for our holy Mother Church.

“A Retreat in Daily Life”: during Week 4 of the summer term there will be the chance to do a retreat here in the Chaplaincy which fits around your work commitments. With the stress of term 3, this is a great opportunity to take time out, relax, reflect and pray under the guidance of a trained spiritual director. **I highly recommend it.** See me for more details.

It will come as no surprise to hear that there is a tale of cancellations. There will be no Stations of the Cross today or next Sunday, no “Let It Be” course or Memory Café tomorrow, no Prayer and Action Prayer Group on Thursday, no prayer on Thursday morning or Evening Chapel on Friday. Essentially, anything that calls for a gathering of people in the church or in the hall cannot happen. Normal service will be resumed as soon as possible.

Dear Friends. I think that this is the last thing that I ever expected to have to write, but because of the need to prevent the spread of disease, from last Friday onwards there will be no public services held in this or any other Catholic church in the country. That does not mean that you cannot pray or visit the church, but public gatherings are not allowed. I know this is something that many will hear with disbelief and deep disappointment, but it is important not to lose hope and feel sustained by our faith and our parish community. I shall remove the Blessed Sacrament from the Chapel on campus, but the Chapel will still be available as a quiet place for prayer. Please respect others' space if there is already someone there.

St. Joseph's church will be open every day (except Tuesday) from about 9.30 in the morning until about 6.00 in the evening. I shall celebrate Mass privately each day for the intentions that have been requested and for all of you.

There will be an end to this situation one day, but we have to take steps to ensure that our community survives. St. Joseph's will be open each day for private prayer and I do encourage you to come and use it as much as you can. I shall be available for private meetings (in the hall, at a suitable safe distance!) and for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and I hope to be able to expose the Blessed Sacrament to allow private devotion in the church. I shall try to keep the parish website up to date with relevant information. I have printed some leaflets which you may find helpful to put through the doors of people who are self-isolating offering your help. Please come and collect from me if you can offer this support to your neighbours or fellow parishioners.

On Sunday at 12.30 pm, when we should be coming together in the Chaplaincy for Mass physically, can I ask each of you to pray for one another. This can take whatever form you wish, from just spending a couple of minutes praying for the people you can think of all the way through to using your Sunday Missals to pray all the parts of the Mass. I shall leave the exact form to you, but if we can feel that we are united in time if not in place, then we still exist as a community.

I hope to put a few thoughts and ideas on the St. Joseph's parish website (www.sjtwcoventry.org.uk), so please have a look there. If you have ideas and suggestions that would help us please do share them. I have left copies outside the Chapel of what I would have said as a homily during Mass today – vital reading for all (especially insomniacs). If you wish, please take a copy (but don't handle and then leave it for others).

For those of you who are able to use computers, Mass from churches around the Diocese will be live streamed so that you can watch them at home. Obviously, this is not the same as being present at Mass, but it is the next best thing. Go to www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/parishes-online and click on the church of your choice.

May God bless us all, keep us safe and sustain us through this period of trial.

Tailpiece: The parish priest of a small country church had been having trouble because the collections at Mass were so small. One Sunday he announced, "Now, before we take the collection, I would like to request that the person who stole the eggs from Mrs Jones's chicken coop please refrain from giving any money to the Lord. God doesn't want money from a thieving sinner." The collection plate went round, and for the first time in months everybody gave.

P.S. Don't forget to put your clocks forward an hour next Saturday night as British Summer Time begins!



May God bless you and all those whom you love.
Fr. Harry