

THE CATHOLIC PARISHES OF CHIPPENHAM & CORSHAM

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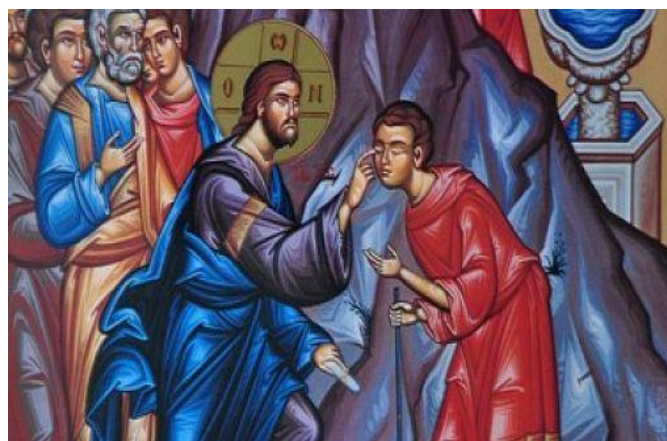
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THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT A

19TH MARCH 2023

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

4.20pm–4.50pm (Sat) Confessions

4.15pm Eucharistic Adoration (Ch)

4.50pm Benediction

5pm (Sat) (Ch) Vigil Mass (*Pro Populo*)

9am (Cor) Sung Mass (*Pro Populo*)

11am (Ch) Sung Mass

(*Intentions of Jane Wragg*)

Mon 20th March The Solemnity of

Saint Joseph, Spouse of the BVM

No Mass

Tues 21st March Weekday of Lent

12.10pm Mass (Ch) (*Aemelia Grantham*)

Wed 22nd March Weekday of Lent

Mass 12pm (Cor) (*June Romain*)

Thurs 23rd March Weekday of Lent

12.10pm Mass (Ch) (*Jane Kelson*)

Fri 24th March Weekday of Lent

12pm Mass (Cor) (*Brianna Wong*)

Sat 25th March Solemnity of the

Annunciation of the Lord

26TH MARCH 2023

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

4.20pm–4.50pm (Sat) Confessions

4.15pm Eucharistic Adoration (Ch)

4.50pm Benediction

5pm (Sat) (Ch) Vigil Mass 9am (Cor)

Sung Mass (*Pro Populo*)

11am (Ch) Sung Mass (*Pro Populo*)

LAETARE SUNDAY Today is the halfway mark of the Sundays of Lent. This Sunday is known as *Laetare* Sunday taken from the first word of the Entrance Antiphon *laetare* (rejoice); it is a Sunday of joy. The celebrant has the option to wear rose-colored vestments. The Church's liturgy, on this the Fourth Sunday of Lent, invites us to retrace one of the fundamental dynamics of our baptismal re-birth through the Gospel account of the healing of the 'man born blind'. It is the passage from the darkness of sin and error to the Light of God, who is the Risen Christ. Today is also 'Mothering Sunday' when we remember our mothers in our prayers whether living or departed. Posies will be blessed and given to children this weekend to give to their Mums and those who care for them.

LENT ACTIVITIES Full details of our Lent activities are available in the special Lent and Easter leaflet available in Church or on the web site.

OUR JOINT PARISH LENT & EASTER EVENINGS St Patrick's Hall on Thursdays @ 7pm. Lent & Eastertide is an ideal time for us to grow in the faith. This year we will follow "Sycamore", an informal course about the Christian faith and its relevance for life today. The course is designed to give you space to meet other people, share ideas, explore your beliefs, and think about questions that really matter. Everyone is invited. Do bring your friends along. The third gathering is on **The Holy Spirit and the Church – 7pm 23rd March.**

RECOMMISSIONING OF EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION takes place for most of St Mary's ministers this weekend. Safeguarding/DBS checks need applications or renewals where appropriate. Please collect your envelope from the Sacred Heart altar. Lynn Salter and Teresa Gosling will hold surgeries for ID checks and queries the weekend of 15th and 16th April.

ALTAR SERVERS NEEDED! We are in need of more altar servers for Saturday and Sunday masses in Chippenham. Some training will be given. Please speak to Fr Michael if you would like to take up this ministry. It is a ministry open to all.

GARDENERS NEEDED! Many thanks to St Mary's long-serving gardener, Patrick Rooney, who is retiring after many years. Therefore, we are looking for someone who can cut the hedges and look after the pots at the front of the church. Please contact Teresa Gosling if you are interested.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS are celebrated Tuesdays @ 11.30am (Chippenham) Fridays @ 11.20am (Corsham). Many thanks to those who have

signed up to take a turn to lead the meditation. Come and follow the way of Jesus to his passion, death and resurrection as part of your Lent.

JOINT PARISH FIRST HOLY COMMUNION Our programme continues this weekend, on Saturday 18th March in St Mary's Church Hall for those children enrolled in our first Communion program. Please ensure that the Mass participation record is filled in each week. Weekly participation in Mass is the most important part of a child's preparation for the Sacrament and shows us that our children are ready to receive the Eucharist this year. Thank you.

HEALTH AND SAFETY REP We are looking for someone with health and safety experience to assist us at St Mary's. If you have any knowledge in this area then please contact Teresa Gosling, Parish Administrator.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (Confession) is a central part of our Lent journey. Confessions are heard in Corsham after the weekday masses and in Chippenham on Saturday 4.20-4.50pm.

HOLY COMMUNION OF THE SICK If you are sick/housebound and would like to receive Holy Communion (or the Sacrament of the Sick) at home, please call or ask a member of your family to call Fr Michael or Teresa Gosling our Administrator and we will be very happy to arrange this. If you are going into hospital and would like to receive the Sacrament of the Sick before being admitted, please see Fr Michael and we will arrange this for you.

ADULT FORMATION AND EVANGELISATION OFFICER The Diocese has a vacancy for this role and the person appointed will be someone committed to the mission of the Church, a confident communicator, able to promote the Gospel and support parishes to grow in their capacity to be places of mission and outreach. He or she will work closely with the Office for Caritas and Environment on some joint projects, particularly in the area of Youth Ministry. Apply to sarah.adams@cliftondiocese.com, Tel 0117 902 5595. Further information can be found here <https://cliftondiocese.com/diocese/working-for-us/>

'I WITNESS' is to a thought-provoking resurrection play at St Bartholomew's, Corsham at 2pm on Wednesday 5th April.

LGBT+ MASS A monthly celebration of the Eucharist for LGBT+ Catholics, families and friends will take place at St Nicholas of Tolentino RC Church on Sunday 19th March at 3pm <https://tolentino.org.uk>

SJOG UKRAINE CALL FOR SUPPORT People still flee Ukraine as the war continues and they are in Poland awaiting for new homes in the UK. SJOG will be holding a webinar for UK residents interested in hosting a Ukrainian guest or family under the Homes for Ukraine scheme on Wed, March 29 at 7pm. <https://fb.me/e/N9EtGqhe> A Facebook post about the event can be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/search/posts/?q=diocese%20of%20plymouth>.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS THIS WEEK

The Sick: Corsham: Coleen Milne, Richard Keat, Sheila Taylor, Christopher Brawl, Lindsay Price, Derek Keohane. Chippenham: Brian Tuersley, Lydia Connell, David Lunt, Jon Taylor, Michael Kenny, Mike Merry, Nic Pollastrone, Anne Marie Naylor, Chris Rosario, James Carine, Michaela Finn, Eoin O Mahony, Alan Hoghton. Pray for all suffering with Coronavirus, all in our hospitals, nursing homes and those who care for them.

Prayer for Candidates for the Sacraments at Easter

Recently Departed: Anna Colleta

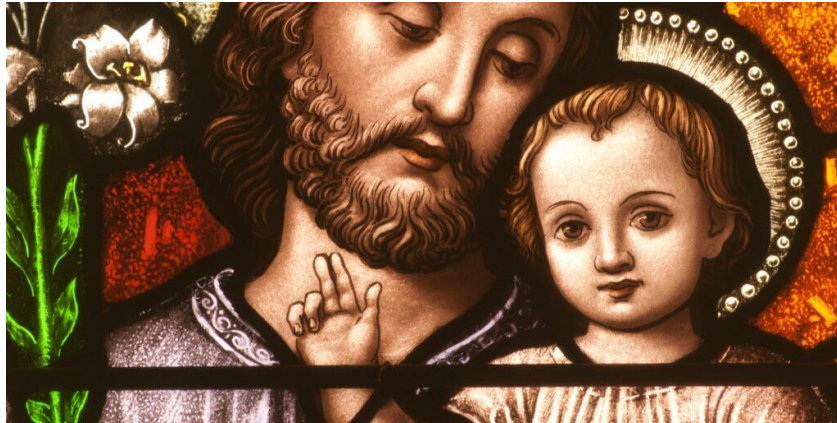
RIP Anniversaries: Rosie Bamber, Mary Bourne

The Holy Father's Prayer March Intention: We pray for those who have suffered harm from members of the Church, may they find within the Church herself a concrete response to their pain and sufferings.

Diocesan Prayer Link: Chaplaincies to HM forces in the diocese.

In compliance with the requirements of GDPR permission must be sought from an individual (or next of kin) before their name can be added to a list of those who are sick. Do please advise us of any changes to be made to this list.

March – The Month of Saint Joseph



The month of March is dedicated to Saint Joseph. We don't know much about him except what is mentioned in the Gospels. Joseph was the husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the foster-father of Jesus. Holy Scripture proclaims him as a "just man," and the Church has turned to Joseph for his patronage and protection.

In the litany of St Joseph, we say, "*St Joseph, Head of the Holy Family, pray for us.*" There is more hidden behind this invocation than meets the eye. We know, of course, that Mary is the Virgin Mother of Jesus Christ. We know that the Saviour was not conceived of a human father. Yet the Church has never tired insisting on the fatherhood of Saint Joseph in the Holy Family. It is crucially important to understand that there are two levels to fatherhood. There is the physical level of providing for the conception of a human body. In this sense, Christ did not have a human father. But a father is not only to cooperate with his wife in generating a child. He is also to cooperate with her in rearing the offspring which his spouse brings into the world. From all eternity, Joseph was destined to be the spouse of the Blessed Virgin. They were truly married. Joseph was Mary's husband, and she was his wife.

Marriage is the most intimate of all unions between two human beings. It imparts a community of gifts between those joined together in matrimony. Consequently, in giving Joseph the Blessed Virgin as his spouse, God appointed him to be not only her life's companion, but also the witness of her virginity, the protector of her honour. No, by reason of his conjugal tie to Mary, he participated in her sublime dignity.

We cannot exaggerate the importance of seeing Saint Joseph as the true spouse of Mary. Under God, he was to share in her unique role as Mother of the Word made flesh who dwelt among us. Saint Luke tells us that, on returning to Nazareth after Mary and Joseph found the young Christ in the temple, "*Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and grace before God and men (Luke 2:52)*". What are we being told? We are being told that the Christ child constantly manifested greater wisdom as he grew in age. In God's mysterious providence, both Mary and Joseph contributed to this manifestation of greater wisdom in Jesus.

Father John Hardon

Collect for Solemnity of St Joseph (20th March 2023)

Grant, we pray, almighty God,
that by Saint Joseph's intercession your Church
may constantly watch over the unfolding of the mysteries of human salvation,
whose beginnings you entrusted to his faithful care.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

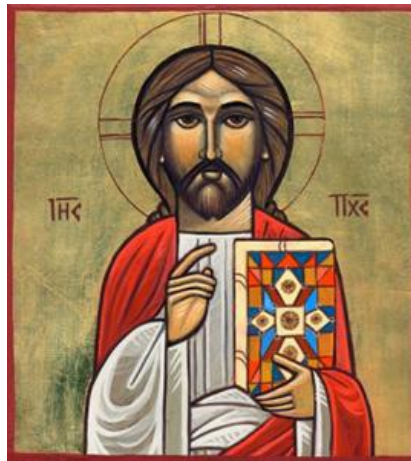
A Prayer for Ukraine



Loving God,
We pray for the people of Ukraine,
for all those suffering or afraid,
that you will be close to them and protect them.
We pray for world leaders,
for compassion, strength and wisdom to guide their choices.
We pray for the world
that in this moment of crisis,
we may reach out in solidarity
to our brothers and sisters in need.
May we walk in your ways
so that peace and justice
become a reality for the people of Ukraine
and for all the world.
Amen.

THE WORD THIS WEEK

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT A



First reading

1 Samuel 16:1,6-7,10-13

A reading from the first book of Samuel

The Lord said to Samuel, 'Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have chosen myself a king among his sons.' When Samuel arrived, he caught sight of Eliab and thought, 'Surely the Lord's anointed stands there before him,' but the Lord said to Samuel, 'Take no notice of his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him: God does not see as man sees: man looks at appearances but the Lord looks at the heart.' Jesse presented his seven sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, 'The Lord has not chosen these.' He then asked Jesse, 'Are these all the sons you have?' He answered, 'There is still one left, the youngest; he is out looking after the sheep.' Then Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send for him; we will not sit down to eat until he comes.' Jesse had him sent for, a boy of fresh complexion, with fine eyes and pleasant bearing. The Lord said, 'Come, anoint him, for this is the one.' At this, Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him where he stood with his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord seized on David and stayed with him from that day on.

The word of the Lord

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 22(23)

*The Lord is my shepherd:
there is nothing I shall want.*

The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures
where he gives me repose.
Near restful waters he leads me,
to revive my drooping spirit.

He guides me along the right path;
he is true to his name.
If I should walk in the valley of darkness
no evil would I fear.
You are there with your crook and your staff;
with these you give me comfort.

You have prepared a banquet for me
in the sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing.

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me
all the days of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell
for ever and ever.

Second reading

Ephesians 5:8-14

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

You were darkness once, but now you are light in the Lord; be like children of light, for the effects of the light are seen in complete goodness and right living and truth. Try to discover what the Lord wants of you, having nothing to do with the futile works of darkness but exposing them by contrast. The things which are done in secret are things that people are ashamed even to speak of; but anything exposed by the light will be illuminated and anything illuminated turns into light. That is why it is said:

Wake up from your sleep,
rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.

The word of the Lord

Gospel Acclamation

Jn8:12

Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God!
I am the light of the world, says the Lord;
whoever follows me will have the light of life.
Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God!

Gospel

John 9:1-41

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, for him to have been born blind?' 'Neither he nor his parents sinned,' Jesus answered 'he was born blind so that the works of God might be displayed in him.

'As long as the day lasts
I must carry out the work of the one who sent me;
the night will soon be here when no one can work.
As long as I am in the world
I am the light of the world.'

Having said this, he spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man, and said to him, 'Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam' (a name that means 'sent'). So the blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored.

His neighbours and people who earlier had seen him begging said, 'Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'Yes, it is the same one.' Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.' The man himself said, 'I am the man.' So they said to him, 'Then how do your eyes come to be open?' 'The man called Jesus' he answered 'made a paste, daubed my eyes with it and said to me, "Go and wash at Siloam"; so I went, and when I washed I could see.' They asked, 'Where is he?' 'I don't know' he answered.

They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. It had been a sabbath day when Jesus made the paste and opened the man's eyes, so when the Pharisees asked him how he had come to see, he said, 'He put a paste on my eyes, and I washed, and I can see.' Then some of the Pharisees said, 'This man cannot be from God: he does not keep the sabbath.' Others said, 'How could a sinner produce signs like this?' And there was disagreement among them. So they spoke to the blind man again, 'What have you to say about him yourself, now that he has opened your eyes?' 'He is a prophet' replied the man.

However, the Jews would not believe that the man had been blind and had gained his sight, without first sending for his parents and asking them, 'Is this man really your son who you say was born blind? If so, how is it that he is now able to see?' His parents answered, 'We know he is our son and we know he was born blind, but we do not know how it is that he can see now, or who opened his eyes. He is old enough: let him speak for himself.' His parents spoke like this out of fear of the Jews, who had already agreed to expel from the synagogue anyone who should acknowledge Jesus as the Christ. This was why his parents said, 'He is old enough; ask him.'

So the Jews again sent for the man and said to him, 'Give glory to God! For our part, we know that this man is a sinner.' The man answered, 'I don't know if he is a sinner; I only know that I was blind and now I can see.' They said to him, 'What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?' He replied, 'I have told you once and you wouldn't listen. Why do

you want to hear it all again? Do you want to become his disciples too?' At this they hurled abuse at him: 'You can be his disciple,' they said 'we are disciples of Moses: we know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.' The man replied, 'Now here is an astonishing thing! He has opened my eyes, and you don't know where he comes from! We know that God doesn't listen to sinners, but God does listen to men who are devout and do his will. Ever since the world began it is unheard of for anyone to open the eyes of a man who was born blind; if this man were not from God, he couldn't do a thing.' 'Are you trying to teach us,' they replied 'and you a sinner through and through, since you were born!' And they drove him away.

Jesus heard they had driven him away, and when he found him he said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' 'Sir,' the man replied 'tell me who he is so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said, 'You are looking at him; he is speaking to you.' The man said, 'Lord, I believe', and worshipped him.

Jesus said:

'It is for judgement
that I have come into this world,
so that those without sight may see
and those with sight turn blind.'

Hearing this, some Pharisees who were present said to him, 'We are not blind, surely?' Jesus replied:

'Blind? If you were,
you would not be guilty,
but since you say, "We see,"
your guilt remains.'

The Gospel of the Lord