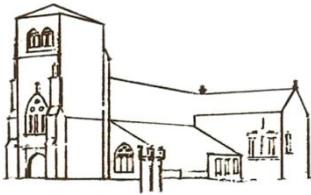


Newsletter for the parish of St. Anne & St. Bernard.



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Fourth Sunday of Lent

26.03.17

Happy Mothers' Day. We wish all our mothers and all the mothers of our parish community, especially those here with us today, a very happy **Mothers' Day**.

For many of us our parents are no longer with us, but today they are very specially in our prayer. Like many traditions and festivities, Mothering Sunday began with a religious purpose. Held on the fourth Sunday in Lent, exactly three weeks before Easter Sunday, it was originally a day to honour and give thanks to Mother Mary. Such celebrations required people to visit their "mother" church, the church of our Baptism – or alternatively the main church or cathedral in a family's area. The American Mothers' Day is very different. Of secular origin it was started in 1908 and is celebrated in May.

Today's Scripture Readings. Today we have the second of three Gospel readings for this first cycle of Lent, each one being taken from St. John's Gospel. They are chosen as examples of conversion, where people meet Jesus, and through conversation with him and things he does, come to recognize him as the Saviour. They have a particular significance for those approaching Baptism, illustrating that the journey to God as the passage from darkness to light, from death to life.

Today's theme is Jesus as the light of the world, the one who enters the darkness of the man born blind, who dazzles him and the world with his light, and illuminates all who live in darkness. As St. John says, that darkness cannot overcome him.

The man born blind is brought to light. He washes in the pool, the water, a symbol of Baptism. First of all he is able to see physically, but much more significantly he is brought to the light of faith. The Pharisees who have always had physical sight, suffer the worst possible blindness. Waiting for the one God has promised they fail to recognise him when he comes. They are so full of their own ideas of how God should work. They have failed to reflect on their Scriptures in a spirit of real humility. They have reduced God to their own level. They are the ones who are really blind.

The conversation, as John presents it in the Gospel, also reflects a stage in the development in the Church at the time that John is writing, when all converts from Judaism to Christianity had been expelled from the Synagogue, and their families forbidden to speak to their Christian relatives. John is begging these new Christians not to renege on their faith, saying that those who are in darkness, those truly blind, are the people who reject Jesus as Lord, not recognising the real fulfilment of the ancient promises. Jesus alone is the light of the world. So it comes back to us, John is saying. There is an urgency in these readings. Now is the time, No more hesitation. To look elsewhere is to be in darkness. Embrace Jesus as your Lord.

MASS this week will be as follows:

Saturday	5.30 p.m.	Carol & family
Sunday	10.30 a.m.	50 th . Wedding anniversary – Robert and Pat Darracott
Tuesday	12.00 noon	Michael Crowley
Wednesday	7.30 p.m.	Parishioners
Thursday	12.00 noon	Annie McEvoy
Friday	12.00 noon	Mary O'Connor's ints.
Saturday	5.30 p.m.	Winifred & Edward Neary

Prayer before the Blessed Sacrament - Saturday 4.15-5.15

Sunday 9.15-10.15 a.m.

Confessions are heard during these times.

Stations of the Cross every Wednesday in Lent at 7.00 p.m.

Retreat at Noddfa. We need to let the Noddfa Sisters know how many we wish to cater for. The Social and Community group has organised the **retreat at Noddfa**, Penmaenmawr, and have made a provisional booking for Monday, 22nd. May to Wednesday, 24th. May. Cost will be £110.00 per person and will include full board, accommodation and all meals. There are individual rooms and family rooms. If you would like to be included please talk to Marie Grey or Patsy Kelly. A number of people have already written down their names. There is no maximum or minimum number. To be highly recommended. You will remember how much the altar servers enjoyed their day out there. Now it is our turn. It is very close to Llandudno and the Great Orme.

Messy Church next Saturday 2.30-4.30 p.m. Messy Lent & Easter.

The next **Justice & Peace** meeting will be on 6th. April in St. Bernard's House.

The **Men's group** meets on Monday, 10th. April, at 7.30 in St. Bernard's.

The **Journey to Faith.** Tuesday evening at 7.00 p.m.

The **Prayer Group** meets on Friday at 7.30 p.m. in St. Anne's.

Money Report. The collection last weekend was **£431.44** . Add on £624.80 from standing orders and tax returns to make a total of **£1,056.24**.

Family Fast Collection-Cafod. You contributed the extra ordinary sum of **£1,325.00**

Thank you very much. The cheque has been sent off but anything you give to Cafod will always find its way there.

If there is anyone ill in the parish please let us know. Currently Eucharistic ministers take Holy Communion to twenty/ thirty sick people in the parish each week. Also Fr. Peter is anxious to administer the Sacrament of the Sick to everyone who is ill.

It is so sad to hear someone has died in the parish and we haven't been there for them.

Baptisms of children please phone Jane on 709 4434 (Tuesday to Friday 9.30-12.30) or see Deacon Francis after Sunday Mass.

For Baptism, Holy Communion and Confirmation of adults and marriage please see Fr. Peter or Deacon Francis..

Tip for caring for our common home- make your freezer more efficient by filling it to capacity. If you don't have enough food for this fill it with scrunched paper.

It is getting closer and more urgent. Does anyone know of rented accommodation available for a few months for a mother and daughter while they choose and purchase a house? It needs to have easy access for a wheelchair? Can you help? Please see me.

The Liverpool-based Volunteer Mission Movement www.vmminternational.org is looking for volunteers (18-80+ years) to become members of our local support group. The group aims to help raise funds and also to recruit new volunteers to serve for periods of 2 weeks to 2 years in East Africa. It is a fun, worthwhile, and rewarding group, which provides a sense of satisfaction for its members. Please contact Van at van@vmminternational.org or phone 0151 291 3438

Understanding CAFOD

Tuesday 28th March, 7-9.00, CAFOD Liverpool, 27 Crofton Road, L13 5UJ

All are welcome to our informal evening to learn about the work of CAFOD, meet people involved here in the Liverpool Archdiocese, and get involved yourself! For more information contact liverpool@cafod.org.uk or call 0151 228 4028.

If you would like to support cocoa farmers in developing countries, then you will be interested in purchasing one of our **Fair Trade Real Easter Eggs**. Not only are these eggs made from fairly traded ingredients, but they include a booklet telling the story of Easter. They are available from the Fair Trade stall and cost £3.99 each. If you wish to order a dark chocolate Real Easter Egg (cost £5.50) please leave your name at the stall.

These same Easter Eggs are being advertised and sold by Tesco. Same price. Come to us.

Lampedusa pilgrimage. Our J & P group decided in principle that we would propose a parish pilgrimage in the church in Holy Week to show solidarity with those fleeing war, poverty and persecution. In the Year of Mercy, Pope Francis invited us all to make a pilgrimage to mark 'an extraordinary moment of grace and spiritual renewal'.

The Lampedusa Cross Refugee Solidarity Pilgrimage was to be the vehicle for this.

CAFOD has produced a template for a Lampedusa pilgrimage which we could adopt.

There are seven stages: each stage has a script, with a leader, readers, and group responses. Each stage takes about two minutes.

The Liverpool CAFOD office has a cross we can use for the purpose of symbolising our intention.

So, we need to decide: Whether or not to proceed with the pilgrimage; yes or no?

If we do, to decide when we should do it; when in Holy Week? And if we do, to get the cross and provide copies of the scripts, and, on the night identify leaders and readers.

Also in Holy Week I suggest we have a nonstop public reading of St. Mark's Gospel. We will need 16 volunteers who will each proclaim a chapter.

The Tenderness of God. Gillian Ahlgren has sent us a collage including all the responses you made when she requested your understanding of the tenderness of God. All the responses are themselves typed on the same sheet which is available in church. You are invited to take one. I am very grateful to Frances Ripley for bringing Gillian to St. Anne's

Marriage Preparation Facilitators needed!

Do you want to be part of a friendly team helping couples create healthy marriages?

The Archdiocese in partnership with Marriage Care are looking for volunteers to train as facilitators and provide engaging, interactive courses, helping couples live out the sacrament of marriage with the practical and spiritual tools they need. For more information please contact: Co-ordinator for Marriage and Family Life Maureen O'Brien Tel: 0151 522 1044 Email: m.obrien@rcaol.co.uk or take a look at

www.marriagecare

Nugent Charity Shop on Allerton Road is in urgent need of stock consisting of clothing, books, bric-a-brac, shoes, handbags. If you have any unwanted items please consider donating them to our Charity Shop, and these can be dropped off at 73, Allerton Road, Liverpool L4 2DH from 9.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m., Monday to Saturday. At present we are asking if people can drop off their donations only, as we do not have the facility to collect donations at the moment. Thank you.

Priest shortage warning The departing papal nuncio to Ireland has warned that the crisis in vocations to the priesthood has left the Irish Church at the edge of a “cliff”, poised for freefall. Speaking to the Irish Times, Archbishop Charles Brown, who leaves for Albania in April, described the age profile of serving priests and the lack of vocations as alarming. “We’ve a lot of priests in Ireland who are in their 70s, who are working right now. Some are in their 80s. In 10 years they’re not going to be working. We’re at the edge of a ... cliff.”

Priests’ formation. I am in the process of presenting a short paper to the deanery priests on how the Church here, in Liverpool and the country at large, can more faithfully bear witness to the Gospel of Jesus. I need your help. You have a far broader vision of life “out there” than I do and so I need your insight, experience, judgement and encouragement. I always remember Fr. Austin’s assessment that, like it or not, priests are at the heart of the problem. Tell me face to face what you think, or better still, write a few sentences (or more) about your thoughts in this matter. We need to start a dialogue. It is crucial.

*Lord make me an instrument of your peace
Where there is hatred let me sow love
Where there is injury, pardon
Where there is doubt, faith
Where there is despair, hope
Where there is darkness, light
And where there is sadness, joy
O divine master grant that I may
not so much seek to be consoled as to console
to be understood as to understand
To be loved as to love,
For it is in giving that we receive,
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
And it is by dying that we are born to eternal life*

St. Francis was so gifted in knowing the love of God and our own human condition. There is such wisdom and insight in this prayer. If we really want to make something of this Lent why not make this prayer your main reflection point. Then when it comes to your Easter confession your conscience examination will flow from it. It covers all our relationships, what we think, say and do. In highlighting my weaknesses I can only turn to God.

Little Mick’s Spot - paws for thought. See what I mean about these lovely people who come and love me. TD’s an old spoil sport. He never does that to me. I have been in the dog ’ouse this week. I had an accident. It was his fault for changing my morning routine. I am really a clean little dog. Did you see that video doing the rounds – my friend Purnima sent it to me, of a little dog, doing all sorts of household chores, even putting on CDs and brushing the floor. I’m glad to say that TD did not suggest that I do those things. You know why. He wouldn’t know where to start to train me. I know what I’m good at – smelling, chasing, hunting, but TD has found my weakness. I charge into brambles, briars, holes, I’ll go anywhere following a smell or the ball except – into nettles. I’m not that daft. I don’t want a nose full of stings. And I can’t wipe my nose on dock leaves. At least not yet, maybe I can be trained to do that.

