



THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF
OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION,
FOSTER AVENUE, BEESTON,
NOTTINGHAM, NG9 1AE
and
ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI CHURCH,
TAMWORTH ROAD,
LONG EATON, NG10 1DH



Nottingham Roman Catholic Diocese Trustees Company No. 7151646 Charity No. 1134449

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TIMES OF MASSES AND OTHER SERVICES: FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT : B

Fifth Week of Lent (Passiontide begins): 21st – 27th March 2021 (Weekday Cycle Year I / Psalter Week I)

<p><u>Saturday 20th March:</u> <i>Lenten Feria</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Mass; Holy Souls</p> <p><u>Sunday 21st March:</u> <i>Fifth Sunday of Lent: B</i></p> <p>10:00 am: Mass; Nora Morgans RIP (12th Anniversary) (Harvey)</p> <p><u>Monday 22nd March:</u> <i>Lenten Feria</i></p> <p>10:00 am: Mass; Elizabeth Reilly RIP (Wilson)</p> <p><u>Tuesday 23rd March:</u> <i>Lenten Feria</i></p> <p>10:00 am: Mass (St Francis); Thomas O' Brien RIP</p> <p>5:30 pm: Reception: Eileen Hopkins RIP</p> <p><u>Wednesday 24th March:</u> <i>Lenten Feria</i></p> <p>10:30 am: Requiem Mass; Eileen Hopkins RIP</p> <p><u>Thursday 25th March:</u> <i>The Annunciation of the Lord (Solemnity)</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Mass; Marie Devlin RIP</p> <p><u>Friday 26th March:</u> <i>Lenten Feria</i></p> <p>10:00 am: Mass; Marianne Walton RIP (Solloway)</p> <p><u>Saturday 27th March:</u> <i>Lenten Feria</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Mass; Pro Populo; People of the Parish</p> <p><u>Sunday 28th March:</u> <i>Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord: B</i></p> <p>10:00 am: Mass; Celebrant's Intentions</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Your Prayers are requested for those who are sick:</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Isobel Alana Barnes, Marica Borsos, Jessie Breame, Margaret Brown, Fr John Cairns, Pat Constable, Francesca Lina Craparotta, Jim & Margaret Dougan, Fr Theodore Gomes, Ann Harrison, Fr Peter Harvey, Andrea Hoffman, Farzin Kazem, Breeda Keaney, Anne – Marie Reid, Canon Owen O'Neil, Alan Roberts, Simpson Family, Evelyn Venning and John Wilcox.</p>
<p>UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED THE ABOVE MASSES WILL ALL BE SAID PRIVATELY!</p>	
<p><i>The Parish Hall of Our Lady of the Assumption and the Parish Hall at St Francis of Assisi are closed to members of the public, until further notice. If you urgently wish to contact Fr Christopher please telephone 0115 922 8145 (at any reasonable time). For enquiries or to book a Mass Intention, please see me after the one of the Scheduled Public Masses or contact me by telephone. Mass Stipends and Parish Collection Envelopes can be posted or given at a later date.</i></p>	

HOSPITALS

A number of priests are still trying to maintain an 'on – call' rota for City and QMC. This is strictly calls for Anointing of the Sick when someone is nearing the end of their life. The hospital will not call us out for a request for prayers or when someone has already died – these will be dealt with by a member of the Chaplaincy Team who may or may not be a Catholic minister. Holy Communion is not being taken into hospital by Eucharistic Ministers. Families should not contact a priest directly to visit their loved one in hospital – all requests need to go through the Ward and Chaplaincy Department. QMC 0115 924 9924 ext. 63799 or City 0115 969 1169.

Items for the newsletter can be given to Fr Christopher or e – mailed to frcathomas@live.com by WEDNESDAY of each week for inclusion in the next issue.

REQUIESCAT IN PACE: Please remember in your prayers to pray for the repose of the soul of *Eileen Hopkins* who died on *Wednesday 24th February 2021*. Eileen will be received into Church on Tuesday 23rd March and her Requiem Mass will take place on *Wednesday 24th March 2021 at 10:30 am* followed by Burial at Wilford Hill Cemetery. We remember her and her family at this sad time. May she rest in peace.

POOR CLARES: I will be visiting the sisters on *Monday 29th March 2021* to take donations from our Parish, this is the Monday of Holy week and so it will be good that the Sisters will receive our gifts before Easter – in time for their celebrations. When I visited them three weeks ago they were all well and some of them had received their first Covid vaccinations. Any donations for the Sisters can be left in the box at the back of Church or given to me or Father Christopher. Please remember in your prayers *Sister Francesca Hofmann*, who died on 13th March 2021, after 62 years in the Religious Life. Sister Francesca was from Frankfurt, Germany. She originally entered the Palletine Sisters in Germany and was sent to Hull University to study Classics. She decided however, that she was called to the Poor Clare Life and entered the Poor Clares in England. During her 62 years as a Religious she served as Abbess and then as Novice Mistress. She loved reading and was very involved in the Franciscan Movement. For the last few years, she was lovingly cared for by her community. Three weeks ago, Sister Francesca was taken into the Queens Medical Centre in Nottingham, where she contracted the Corona virus. We are asked to pray now for the happy repose of Sister Francesca's soul and remember in our prayers the Sisters at Bulwell. Thank you – *Diane Wilson*.



CALLING ALL PARISHIONERS!!

English Martyrs' Chaplaincy Team, with some members of EM staff and parishioners from both St Francis and The Assumption are taking on the Lent Walk for Water Challenge. We will each be aiming to walk 10, 000 steps a day for 40 days to raise money for CAFOD's

work around the world. Follow the link below for sponsorship or share the link with your friends and family if you would like to join in with the challenge: <https://walk.cafod.org.uk/fundraising/english-martyrs-chaplaincy-team-and-catholic>. Check out our Social Media platforms for regular updates throughout Lent @em_chaplaincy Instagram and English Martyrs' Youtube Channel. Thank you so much for your continued support. – *Year 6 Chaplaincy Team*

THE CHILDREN'S LITURGY WALK FOR WATER: The children from the Parish are doing brilliantly in their efforts for CAFOD's Walk for Water over Lent. Taking part, we have: *Gethin, Carwyn, Fiorella, Gino, Phoebe, Lottie, Flora, Blathnaid, Dylan, Oliver, Max, Grace, Flo, Frank, Arthur, Bella, Niamh, Freddie and Henry*. So far they have walked just under 2 million steps! Their fundraising total stands at **£ 676. 00**. Thank you so much to everyone who has sponsored them so far. All of the donations are really spurring them on. If you would still like to sponsor them, you can do so by going to this link: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/assumptionchildren>. Thank you in advance for all your support. – *Catherine Agius and the children and families of the Children's Liturgy Group*.

MISSIO: Red Boxes – There are copies of the Spring edition of Mission today at the back of the Church – please help yourself to a copy. If you have a box that needs to be emptied would you contact me on the number on the bottom of the box or leave it with Father Christopher. Many Thanks – *Diane Wilson Parish MISSIO Secretary*.

BRITISH SUMMER TIME: Please note that this begins next *Sunday, 28th March 2021* and the clocks go forward by 1 hour from 2:00 am on that day.

BISHOP PATRICK'S LENTEN TALKS: You are invited to join Bishop Patrick and people from across the diocese this Lent in reflecting on our relationship with God. To be a disciple of Jesus means to know and love Him, but to also know we are known and loved by Him too. Bishop Patrick will give the second of two talks on Zoom exploring God's Love for us and how we can respond to it: *Knowing the Love of God* (understanding our identity as God's sons and daughters) **Thursday 25th March 2021 at 7:00 pm**. The talk will include input from Bishop Patrick, a time for questions and answers, and small group discussion. You can register for the talk on the diocesan website: www.dioceseofnottingham.uk.

CHRISM MASS: This year the Chrism Mass will be closed to the general public due to the restrictions on numbers permitted to gather for public worship during the time of the Covid – 19 Pandemic, only members of the presbyterate have been invited to attend. The Mass will be live streamed and recorded and can be watched via the Cathedral website: stbarnabascathedral.org.uk

SACRAMENTAL CELEBRATIONS: Obviously due to the Coronavirus Pandemic we have been unable to Celebrate some of the important Sacraments in the life of the Church over the past year. Specifically, Baptisms, First Confessions and First Holy Communion and Marriage. I am hoping that Baptisms can begin again after all the restrictions are finally lifted by the Government on **21st June 2021**. Any families wishing to have their child(ren) Baptised are asked contact me as soon as possible to arrange a date for after the 21st June. Similarly, with First Confessions and First Holy Communion, it is hoped that we can complete the programme that was begun in 2020 and that the Celebration of the First Holy Communion Mass can be held some time at the beginning of the New School Year in either September or October 2021. Any children who would have ordinarily made their First Holy Communion in 2021 (School Year 3) will now begin preparations in 2022 and we will two Schools Years' Celebrations at the same time. Any couples who intend to marry in 2021 are also asked to contact me as soon as possible to confirm dates and make arrangements for the Marriage Preparation Course.

CELEBRATION OF MASS: *The public Celebration of Mass is available once again.* Needless to say, that we still need to be aware of the need to follow the guidelines that we have in place and to remember to use the hand sanitisers, wear face coverings and maintain the 2 metre social distancing rule. Please remember that you will still need to book to come to Masses using the Diocesan booking system. Details of how to book for Mass can be found on the Diocesan Website by following the link: <https://massbooking.uk/> where you will first need to Sign Up (if you haven't already done so) in order to book for Mass. This is a pre – booking system and is the only way of regulating those who come to Church. **PLEASE NOTE: that you can only book on the Mass Booking System up to 7 days ahead, so some of the Masses will not be visible yet.** The latest time to book for a Mass will be **TWO HOURS** before. **PLEASE NOTE: If there are only two people coming from the same household please book TWO SEATS and not a whole pew as this will allow more people to attend Mass.** If you do not have access to or are unable to use a computer you may book for Mass, by telephone, by calling Marie Calladine for The Assumption (Tel: 07850 978788), or at Long Eaton by calling Christina Boott on 07875 625974; but I would ask that you only use this option if you are unable to book online. Mass will be available at The Assumption, Beeston on **Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays** and **Fridays** and, at St Francis, Long Eaton on **Tuesdays**, all at **10:00 am**. The Sunday obligation continues to be suspended, so if you are unsure about coming along, do not feel under any obligation to do so; and if you or someone in your household, displays symptoms of Covid19, then please do stay at home.

SENIOR SAFEGUARDING COORDINATOR: The Catholic Diocese of Nottingham seeks to appoint an experienced Safeguarding Professional to lead and manage its Safeguarding Service. Working with the Bishop, the Diocesan Trustees, Safeguarding Commission and Clergy and Parishes of the Diocese, this person will lead and develop safeguarding strategy and practice to the highest levels, and implement national policies and procedures fully and consistently. This is a key senior role, central to the commitment of the Bishop and the Diocese to minimise safeguarding risks, achieve excellent outcomes with and for children and vulnerable adults, and enable a protected, supportive environment in which the Mission of the Church demonstrably takes place safely across the Diocese. The successful applicant will be a highly motivated, energetic and enthusiastic individual with proven team leadership skills, and an expertise in, and commitment to, safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. **Salary:** £43,800 – £47,800 dependent on qualifications and experience **For more information and an application pack email:** office@dioceseofnottingham.uk *Closing date 11th April 2021. Interviews are expected to take place in person week commencing Monday 19th April 2021.*

The Fifth Sunday of Lent: B.

(**READINGS: Jeremiah 31³¹⁻³⁴; Psalm 50^{3-4, 12-15}; Hebrews 5⁷⁻⁹ and; John 12²⁰⁻³³**)

We are now just a week away from Palm Sunday and the start of Holy Week. And in today's Gospel you can feel the tension in the air. The Gospel starts with a simple request to see Jesus, but, by the end, Heaven and earth are crying out about what is about to happen, something that we will remember in the Liturgy in a special way next week: the Passion of the Lord and our Redemption.

Heaven and earth are exulting today because the Lord's wish expressed in today's First Reading is about to become a reality. God wants to go beyond just being a judge or legislator in our lives. The Law of God is for our good, but that Law at times can seem too strict, too hard, too impersonal to keep. The Law and the Covenant was how God tried to stay in the lives of His people Israel for thousands of years and, as He laments, they broke that Law over and over again.

Nevertheless, as a good Father God had to be strict with them so that they would keep on trying. Since the Law was the way that they could be connected with Him. But really God wants to write that Law onto our hearts, because once it is written there it can never be removed: so, when we go against our conscience, that Law in our hearts keeps reminding us that we could and should have done something different in our lives. And when we break that Law it not only puts distances and barriers between God and us, but all of humanity is kept away from Him due to our lack of love. Jesus taught us that we should build our lives on two fundamental Commandments from which all others flow: to love God above all else and to love our neighbour as ourselves. All God asks for is love and that doesn't seem so unreasonable, considering all the love that He has shown us. But, despite all that love which He has shown us, we still treat Him at times like a cold – hearted judge weighing us down with rules and regulations. In our lives we know that there is no substitute for God's love. We can't even find it just by being loving ourselves. God's Law, written in our hearts, shows us how incomplete we are when we don't have His love and don't share His love with others.

By the time we come to the moment in Our Lord's life which is recalled in today's Gospel, there is a huge void of love that everyone is feeling and that no one can fill. It is a void that has begun and grown since the Fall of Adam and Eve. It is caused by our sins, which has put distance between us, God and others. Our Lord came to bridge the gap, to fill the void and enable us to love the Father again and be reunited with Him. But that comes at a price, a price about which Jesus today is "troubled." In a few days, in the Garden of Gethsemane, we will see Him tremble: in His heart, He knows He can fill that void of love by obeying His Father and suffering and dying on the Cross to reunite us with Him.

The Second Reading today also reminds us that the work of Redemption was not just turning a blind eye to what had happened between God and us: "Christ offered up prayer and entreaty, aloud and in silent tears." Our Lord becomes the grain of wheat that can only bear fruit by dying so that the wheat can grow and be made into the bread which gives life. He becomes the way for us to return to the Father again and He stays at our side so that can we remain united with Him, in good times and bad, until one day we are reunited with the Father forever. Jesus' love for His Father never failed, so, as He finishes His mission on earth and is drawn back to His Father in Heaven, we must unite ourselves to His love for His Father, so that we too can be drawn to Heaven. When we love Jesus, we unite our love to His love for God the Father. It should fill us and draw us deeper and deeper into God's love. When we stay close to Christ, we go where He goes and He takes us with Him. Today He reminds us in the Gospel that we stay close to Him by serving Him and following Him, just as He teaches us by His example of serving His Father until His Death on the Cross.

On the ancient outskirts of Rome, along the Via Appia Antica, is a Church dedicated to an encounter between Our Lord and St Peter after the events told in the New Testament. It is called the Church of *Domine, Quo Vadis?* (translated as "Lord, Where are you Going?"). And the story is told that Peter had decided to flee the city due to the persecution and, near the spot where the Church is built today, he saw Our Lord heading into the city. Peter asked Him, "Lord, where are you going?"

Our Lord replied, "to be crucified again with my people." St Peter got the message. He turned around, went back into the city and was arrested and crucified. But he asked to be crucified upside down because he didn't feel worthy to be crucified as His Lord was.

We live in a very technology – centred world. And there is nothing intrinsically wrong with that. Even advanced technology is morally neutral; it is a useful tool, either for doing good or for doing evil. But our experience of the power of technology to solve material difficulties can also pose a danger to our spiritual lives. We can forget that as Christians, what matters most is not what we are able to do for God or for ourselves, but what God has done and wants to do for us. Jesus is first and foremost our Saviour, He is not our consultant or our therapist. Jeremiah makes this clear in today's First Reading. Through the prophet's words, God explains that He will make an everlasting covenant with us; He will plant the law of freedom and interior peace within our hearts; He will forgive our evildoing and remember our sins no more.

The Letter to the Hebrews reminds us of this same truth. Jesus doesn't point out how to reach everlasting happiness and then send us on our way, as if we could make the journey by our own efforts alone. But rather, through His Life, Death and Resurrection, He Himself becomes the "source of eternal salvation." And in today's Gospel passage, Jesus Himself explains that His total love and obedience, up to the point of His humiliating Death on the Cross, is the turning point of history. With His self – sacrifice on the Cross, "the prince of this world is to be overthrown." In other words, Christ's faithful love will undo Adam's original sin and conquer the devil's sinful rebellion, the source of evil in the world. By announcing this beforehand, He shows that He is going to suffer it willingly, freely fulfilling His Father's plan of salvation.

And this – what God has done for us – matters more than anything we can possibly do for God. As Pope Benedict XVI said, "It is easy to be entranced by the almost unlimited possibilities that science and technology place before us; it is easy to make the mistake of thinking we can obtain by our own efforts the fulfilment of our deepest needs. This is an illusion. Without God, who alone bestows upon us what we by ourselves cannot attain, our lives are ultimately empty. People need to be constantly reminded to cultivate a relationship with Him who came that we might have life in abundance."

Sometimes letting God be our Saviour means putting up with misunderstanding or ridicule. It is not always popular to seek approval from Jesus Christ instead of from the world and people around us. We only have a couple more weeks left of Lent. And nothing would please the heart of Our Lord more than if we made a real effort to spend more time with Him in prayer during these two weeks, to let Him really be our Saviour. True prayer is much more than just saying prayers. It is a heart – to – heart conversation with God, with the God who loves us so much that even while we were still sinners He climbed up onto a Cross and suffered, in His own body and soul, the consequences and penalty of our sins.

There are special graces in the to be had during Lent, but we will miss them unless we take time to sit close to the Lord and talk with Him. We are all busy and it may not be easy to make time to spend in prayer. God understands that. But if we try, I am sure that we can find ways. Maybe it is just a matter of saying an extra decade of the Rosary while you are driving to the shops or to work. Maybe it is just a matter of going to bed fifteen minutes earlier than usual, so that you can get up fifteen minutes earlier and spend that time reading a chapter of the Bible or of a good spiritual book and speaking to the Lord about what you read. Maybe it could be missing your favourite television programme for the next two weeks and using that time to pray for yourself and for all your loved ones. God will never let Himself be outdone in generosity. If we give Him a bit more time, He will shower us with a lot more grace – that is just how He is: His heart never gets tired of giving. We just need to give Him a chance to be our Saviour.