

The Parish of St. Edward the Confessor

Registered Charity no. 234025

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Newsletter for the week of 2nd February 2025

Sunday Readings Cycle C

Weekday Readings Cycle I

Readings for the Presentation of the Lord: Malachi 3:1-4; Psalm 24(23) Hebrews 2;14-18; Luke 2:22-40

Psalm's Response: The Lord of hosts, he is the king of glory!

Saturday 1st Feb 5.30pm 1st MASS of the FEAST of the PRESENTATION of the LORD

Sunday 2nd Feb 10.30am MASS of the FEAST of the PRESENTATION of the LORD

Monday 3rd Feb 9.15am Mass *St. Werburgh, religious*

Tuesday 4th Feb

Wednesday 5th Feb 11.30am Mass *St. Agatha, virgin, martyr*

Thursday 6th Feb *St. Paul Miki & 25 Companions, martyrs*

Friday 7th Feb 1.00pm Mass (in Hospital Chapel)

Saturday 8th Feb 10.00am Mass (Optional: *St. Jerome Emiliani, priest, religious founder & St. Josephine Bakhita, religious*)
10.30-11am Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday 8th Feb 5.30pm 1st Mass of the 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday 9th Feb 10.30am Mass of the 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Readings for the 5th Ordinary Sunday: Isaiah 6:1-8; Psalm 138(139); 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Luke 5:1-11

FEAST of the PRESENTATION

Today we celebrate the Presentation of the Lord by gathering in the Community Room before Mass both on Saturday and Sunday. We light candles, bless them, read the Gospel & all, carrying the candles, make a procession into the church.

SACRAMENT of CONFIRMATION

Today Sun 2nd Feb after Mass in the Community Room meeting of interested young Catholics & their parent(s) . Young people who are in Year 8 & above who have not yet received the Sacrament of Confirmation together with a parent(s) are invited to meet with Fr. Peter. In the Macclesfield area for Confirmation the candidates from each parish come together in one celebration with Bishop Mark usually on a Friday in June.

REVISED PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL(PPC) CONSTITUTION

The PPC has reviewed & revised its constitution and it is posted for inspection in the Community Room & church and is now on the parish website at <https://www.st-edward-macclesfield.org.uk/pastoral-council/>

LOURDES ROADSHOW

Sat 15th Feb 2pm-4pm at St. Anthony's Woodhouse Park Wythenshawe , M22 0WR: an opportunity to find out more about the diocese's pilgrimage to Lourdes at the end of July. Information & register of interest cards will be available , and members of the Lourdes management will be able to answer any questions

THANK YOU for YOUR GENEROSITY

Last Sunday's Collection £275.30

FOOD BANK

The *Silk Life* Food Bank is looking for items. It is at this time of the year when struggling people & families often need the most help. See the lists on posters e.g.: UHT milk, stewed steak, beef casserole, chili con carne, instant mash.

A VALENTINE CONCERT for the MARTYN DONALDSON TRUST

Sat 15th Feb 7.30pm at Macclesfield Methodist Church: an evening of romance for young & not so young alike with the Macclesfield Methodist Community Choir & Soloists. Tickets £10 adults, £7.50 & £5.00 children from 01625 433187 or 01625 615298

GET IN TOUCH QUICKLY –IF YOU ARE SICK If you or your relative enters Macclesfield Hospital or East Cheshire Hospice let Fr. Peter C. know as soon as possible tel: 01625 423576 or by e-mail st.edmacc@gmail.com

DIARY OF EVENTS

Sat 1st March 10.45am Provisional date & time for 1st Sacr. of Reconciliation

Wed 5th March Ash Wednesday

Sun 16th March CAFOD Lent Fast Collection

Sun 30th March Start of British Summer Time (B.S.T.)

Sun 20th April Easter

Sun 18th May Provisional date for 1st Holy Communion

What you need to know about the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord



If you count 40 days after the celebration of Christmas you reach **2nd February** . Early on, the Church marked that day with a special feast and it is the final "baby Jesus" day in the liturgical calendar before the celebration of Lent. The feast has many different names in the Roman Catholic Church. It has been called the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Candlemas. Each name highlights a different aspect of the feast that the Church celebrates.

The Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary

First of all, it is called the Feast of the Purification of the BVM on account of an ancient Mosaic law in Leviticus. *[If a woman conceives, and bears a child she shall be unclean] And when the days of her purifying are completed, whether for a son or for a daughter, she shall bring to the priest at the door of the tent of meeting a lamb a year old for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or a turtledove for a sin offering, and he shall offer it before the Lord, and make atonement for her; then she shall be clean. (Leviticus 12:6-7)*

Mary, being a faithful Jew, abided by the law and did what was required of her. After 40 days passed she approached the priest with the proper offering to be declared "clean."

The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord

The liturgical celebration is also called the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, and again corresponds to an ancient Jewish practice of presenting the first-born to God.

Everything that opens the womb of all flesh, whether man or beast, which they offer to the Lord, shall be yours; nevertheless the first-born of man you shall redeem. (Numbers 18:15)

As a result, Mary and Joseph brought with them Jesus, as St. Luke narrates,

"And when the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord')" (Luke 2:22-23).

Candlemas.

St. Luke narrates how, while at the Temple, the Holy Family encountered an old man named Simeon and what he said next constitutes the basis for why the feast is called Candlemas.

*Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word:
for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you prepared in sight of all the peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and for glory for your people Israel. (Luke 2:29-32)*

Simeon declared that Jesus would be a "**light**," and the Church developed a custom of lighting and blessing candles on this day. Historically the priest would bless all the candles used during Mass for the entire year. The congregation also received candles and the words of Simeon were repeated in song. The current Roman Missal has the following prayer that summarizes the symbolism.

*O God, source and origin of all light,
who on this day showed to the just man Simeon
the light for revelation to the Gentiles,
we humbly ask that, in answer to your people's prayers,
you may be pleased to sanctify with your blessing these candles,
which we are eager to carry in praise of your name,
so that, treading the path of virtue,
we may reach that light which never fails.*

It is a beautiful day in the Church's calendar, though not a holy day of obligation: one that signals the end of the "Christmas-Cycle" and looks forward to the light that will shatter all darkness at the Easter Vigil -- when another candlelight service is performed in recognition that, "*the people who sit in darkness have seen a great light, on those dwelling in a land overshadowed by death light has arisen*" (Matthew 4:16).





Prayerfully preparing for Sunday Mass with special prayers for our school families



Set aside 10-15 minutes and create a suitable environment by removing any distractions. Make sure that you are comfortable. Perhaps light a candle. Make the sign of the cross and remain still for a minute of settling silence.



Remember that through this scripture our Lord is truly present. Read the Gospel, aloud and slowly, and pay attention to any words that stand out. If any do, meditate on them for a few minutes and be invited into a dialogue with God.

1

Read

The Gospel for Sunday 9th February 2025

THE CALL OF THE FIRST DISCIPLES

Jesus was standing one day by the lake of Gennesaret, with the crowd pressing round him listening to the word of God, when he caught sight of two boats close to the bank. The fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats - it was Simon's - and asked him to put out a little from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. When he had finished speaking he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water and pay out your nets for a catch." "Master," Simon replied, "we worked hard all night long and caught nothing, but if you say so, I will pay out the nets." And when they had done this they netted such a huge number of fish that their nets began to tear, so they signalled to their companions in the other boats to come and help them; when these came, they filled the two boats to sinking point. When Simon Peter saw this he fell at the knees of Jesus saying, "Leave me, Lord; I am a sinful man." For he and all his companions were completely overcome by the catch they had made; so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were Simon's partners. But Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on it is men you will catch." Then, bringing their boats back to land, they left everything and followed him.

Taken from Luke 5:1-11 The Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

2

Reflect

After reading the Gospel, did any words stand out? If they did, ponder or discuss them before proceeding with the reflection.

After spending a few minutes considering this Gospel, continue by reading Fr Henry Wansbrough's reflection.

There were obviously several different versions of the call of the first disciples circulating in the early Church. In the gospels of Mark and Matthew, Jesus is passing along the shore of the lake when he calls two pairs of disciples. In John it takes place where John the Baptist was preaching. The story in Luke has many similarities to the story at the end of John's gospel after the Resurrection, when the risen Christ commissions Peter: a night of failed fishing is followed by a huge catch as a consequence of obedience to Jesus' instructions, and so the Church has always seen this event as signifying the need for obedience to Christ. Luke's version combines the same play on words as in Mark and Matthew about fishing for people, but Luke sets the story a little later. In Mark the fishermen have never seen Jesus and follow him blindly; in Luke Peter and his friends have already got to know Jesus before they are commissioned. A special feature in Luke is Peter's cry that he is an unworthy sinner. Luke often teaches us that no one can be a disciple of Jesus without first admitting their sinfulness: Zacchaeus the tax-collector (Luke 19:1-10), and the woman who wept at Jesus' feet (Luke 7:36-50) are other examples.

What is significant about the Lord's call of his disciples according to Luke's account?

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

3

Respond & Request

Now slowly and prayerfully read the Gospel once again but this time in silence. Consider how this Gospel could apply to your life in general. Thank God for any insight you may have received.

Then ask God to bless you with a spiritual gift to help you act on any resolution you have made. Perhaps: love, hope, understanding, wisdom, faithfulness, peace, patience, humility, joy, forgiveness, self-control, courage, generosity, faith or something else.

4

Pray for Families

This Wednesday's word for our school families is FOLLOW !

After praying for your loved ones, please remember to pray for our present and future Church, particularly for the families connected to our schools. You may want to conclude this special weekly time with a simple prayer such as:

St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church, pray for us. Mary, Star of Evangelisation, pray for us. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

WEDNESDAY WORD PLUS †

Fr Henry's reflections on the first and second readings of **Sunday 9th February 2025**



1st Reading: Isaiah 6:1-8

The Holy One of Israel

In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord seated on a high throne; his train filled the sanctuary; above him stood seraphs, each one with six wings. And they cried out one to another in this way, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. His glory fills the whole earth." The foundations of the threshold shook with the voice of the one who cried out, and the Temple was filled with smoke. I said, "What a wretched state I am in! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have looked at the King, the Lord of hosts." Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding in his hand a live coal which he had taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. With this he touched my mouth and said, "See now, this has touched your lips; your sin is taken away, your iniquity is purged." Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? Who will be our messenger?" I answered, "Here I am; send me."



This passage recounts the first calling of the prophet Isaiah. For Isaiah God is primarily the Holy One of Israel. This vision of the Triple-Holy, seated on the throne of glory in the Temple, does all that is possible to convey in words the daunting otherness of the One whose glory fills the whole earth. The human reaction to this manifestation of God is acute awareness of uncleanness. Isaiah can only shrink away from God until his uncleanness has been purged by the burning fire of God's love upon his lips. No human being can see God and live. The glory seen by Isaiah (and by Moses on Mount Sinai) is only the outer fringe of the fullness of God's glory, but it leaves the human visionary stunned and aghast at the contrast between the divine holiness and human unworthiness. Throughout the Book that bears his name Isaiah will revert again and again to the awesome holiness of the Lord. God is our loving Father, but there can be no neglecting the distinction which lies between Creator and created. At the same time we are both attracted and daunted by the living God.

What does it mean to describe God as "holy"? What does it mean when we describe a disciple of Christ as "holy"?



2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:3-8. 11

The Earliest Gospel

In the first place, I taught you what I had been taught myself, namely that Christ died for our sins, in accordance with the scriptures; that he was buried; and that he was raised to life on the third day, in accordance with the scriptures; that he appeared first to Cephas and secondly to the Twelve. Next he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died; then he appeared to James, and then to all the apostles; and last of all he appeared to me too; it was as though I was born when no one expected it. But what matters is that I preach what they preach, and this is what you all believed.



The most precious element of this reading is the proclamation of the Good News of Christ's death and resurrection, which the earliest Christians already saw as fulfilling the Scriptures. We can tell that by Paul's time this recital of the Good News was already traditional. Firstly, Paul here uses the terms which were used by the rabbis for the handing on of tradition, 'I taught you what I had been taught myself'. Secondly, the language is not quite Paul's own; for instance: for scriptural fulfilment Paul always writes 'as it is written', whereas here we twice have 'in accordance with the scriptures', which Paul himself never says. To witness to the resurrection of Christ was the primary task of the apostles. For us, too, it is the primary task: not merely by our words, but by the way we behave, we need to live in the awareness that Christ's resurrection (after his endurance of humiliation and dreadful suffering) is the basic fact of life. The central factor in Christian faith and witness is not the empty tomb but the experience of the apostles in meeting the Risen Christ. This is what unbelievably transformed them from being a defeated and hopeless rabble, huddled in hiding, into courageous and enterprising witnesses. **What lies at the heart of our tradition which we hand on to others?**

It is the primary task to witness to the resurrection of Christ, not merely by our words, but by the way we behave.

The Wednesday Word Connecting Home, School & Parish through the Word of God

**The Wednesday Word is under the patronage of St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church
Within the tradition of the Catholic Church, each Wednesday is dedicated to St Joseph**