

The Parish of St. Edward the Confessor

Registered Charity no. 234025

Father Peter Cryan

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Newsletter for the week of 3rd March 2024

Sunday Readings Cycle B

Weekday Readings Cycle II

Readings for 3rd Lent Sunday: Exodus 20:1-17; Ps 18; 1 Corinthians 1:22-25; John 2:13-25

Saturday 2nd March 5.30pm 1st MASS of the 3rd SUNDAY of LENT

Sunday 3rd March 10.30am MASS of the 3rd SUNDAY of LENT

Monday 4th March

Tuesday 5th March

Wednesday 6th March 11.30am

Thursday 7th March

(Optional: Ss. Perpetua & Felicity, martyrs)

Friday 8th March 10.30am **Funeral Mass for Stanley Spackman** (Optional: St. John of God, religious)

Saturday 9th March 10.00am Mass with Stations of the Cross after Mass (Optional: St. Frances of Rome)

10.50-11.20am Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday 9th Mar 5.30pm 1st Mass of the 4th Sunday of Lent

Sunday 10th Mar 10.30am Mass of the 4th Sunday of Lent

Readings for 4th Lent Sunday: 2 Chronicles 36:14-16,19-23; Psalm 136; Ephesians 2:4-10; John 3: 14-21

CHILDREN'S CATECHIST & CHILDREN'S SUNDAY LITURGY

The parish through the Diocese has appointed *Sarina Bloor* to restart the **Children's Liturgy** in the Community Room during school term time & to spend a little bit of time each week in Christ the King Primary School to be a **parish link** with staff, children & their parents & to give them **support**. The post is in development-initially for up to a year & open to review. Payment for the post will be drawn from the *Our Mission Together (OMT)* money set aside for projects in the parish which at this moment stands at about £12,000.



PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

Next Thurs 7th March (postponed from Tuesday) 6.30pm meeting in the Community Room.

FUNERAL MASS

Next Fri 8th March 10.30am for *Stanley Spackman* with internment in Bedfordshire on Monday 11th March

CRAFT CLUB

Wed 13th March 12.15-2.15pm after morning Mass

STATIONS of the CROSS

Sat. 9th March after Saturday 10.00am morning Mass

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GREAT GENEROSITY

Last Sunday £263.10

Cafod Lent Fast Appeal £167.20

CATENIAN BURSARY FUND

If any young person 16 -18 years is interested in joining the Youth Pilgrimage to Lourdes Wed 24th July to Fri 2nd Aug. apply by email to youth@dioceseofshrewsbury.org for an application form to join the youth Lourdes Pilgrimage There's funding too to help you via the *Catenian Bursary fund*. Click on the link Catenian Bursary Fund - [visit](#)

GET IN TOUCH QUICKLY –IF YOU ARE SICK If you or your relative enters Macclesfield Hospital let Fr.

Peter know as soon as possible tel: 01625 423576 or by e-mail st.edmacc@gmail.com

DIARY of EVENTS

-Sat 30th March start of B.S.T.(British Summer Time);-Wed 20th March Church Cleaning; -Sun 31st March Easter

FURTHER THREAT TO THE UNBORN OF ABORTION UP TO BIRTH

Bishop Mark writes: "In the next couple of weeks an attempt is to be made to widely decriminalise abortion up to the birth. This is a further assault on the sanctity of human life in our society. This extreme amendment to the Criminal Justice Bill is being made by Diana Johnson MP and parliamentarians will be under pressure to support the amendment on grounds of compassion for mothers who seek to abort their unborn child beyond the legal limits. The effect would be to withdraw legal protection from the unborn. It is important to make our voice heard in support of the unborn child. Please contact your Member of Parliament, **David Rutley MP** at House of Commons London SW1A 0AA or email: david.rutley.mp@parliament.uk to ask that they oppose the decriminalization of abortion up to birth.. The *Right to Life* website has details under 'Take Action' which enables you to find and contact your MP directly and the website of the *Society for the Protection of Unborn Children* has helpful information under 'Resources.' The *Right to Life* website also has details of an alternative amendment by *Caroline Ansell MP* to reduce the legal limit for abortion from 24 to 22 weeks on the basis of the increased survival rates for babies being born at 22 and 23 weeks. We cannot doubt the impact which your e-mail or letter will have in making known opposition to decriminalizing abortion up to birth and in support of the value of every human life." Visit <https://righttolife.org.uk/littlefighters> or <https://www.spuc.org.uk/>



Who Decides If Unborn Lives Matter?

Recent news stories reveal a contradictory attitude to how we treat unborn lives in our society.

It was reported in the news last week that parents in England who have experienced the devastation of losing a baby before 24 weeks of pregnancy can apply for a 'baby loss certificate' from 22 February of this year. The very next day, however, the Health Secretary revealed she would support an amendment to decriminalise women who procure an abortion beyond 24 weeks, on which MPs will get a free vote next month along with another amendment to lower the 'upper' legal abortion limit from 24 to 22 weeks.

Is an unborn baby to be cherished and mourned if it is lost, or it is something that can be terminated up to birth? We cannot have it both ways.

The Anscombe Bioethics Centre supports and welcomes the efforts to support parents who experience miscarriage. Around a quarter of a million miscarriages are thought to occur every year in the country.

One of the independent Pregnancy Loss Review's recommendations was the introduction of baby loss certificates to provide parents, on a voluntary basis, with official recognition of their deceased baby or babies. So far, applicants who were living in England at the time of their loss can already apply for a certificate and there are plans to introduce them in Wales soon. In Scotland there is a memorial book, created by the Scottish government and National Records of Scotland, where parents can record any miscarriages that occur before 24 weeks and receive a certificate if requested.

Death certificates of babies who die after 24 weeks in the womb (i.e. stillbirths) already exist, but until recently there was no official certificate to document a death before that point in the pregnancy. Hence, it is good that the different parts of the United Kingdom are seeking to provide comfort to grieving parents who want their loss in early pregnancy to receive official recognition. It is also good that improvements to maternity care and birth trauma support are a priority in the Government's women's health strategy in England.

These are sensitive and thoughtful ways to support parents. By stark contrast, to decriminalise women who procure an abortion after 24 weeks flies in the face of the apparent recognition that a miscarriage is the loss of a baby, of a person who was to be loved but is mourned instead. But both news stories have something in common: whether the unborn baby has status as a person is thought to depend on the parents recognising its personhood or not. If the mother mourns for her lost baby, she may voluntarily request a certificate. If she does not choose to recognise her baby as a person, she may be permitted (the current proposals succeed) to terminate its life with an abortion at any stage of the pregnancy for any reason.

A humane society is one in which our status as persons with dignity and rights is recognised to be innate, and given simply by virtue of being a human being. Every human life is a person. All persons have dignity. We do not receive our dignity by being the citizen of any state, nor by our dignity being recognised by any other person. Hence, parents cannot decide to deny the dignity and rights of their unborn children, just as the government cannot strip the parents of their dignity and rights.

Our society's growing support for parents who suffer the loss of their baby is already pointing to the truth: that a life lost is mourned for because it is a life that must be cherished, not ended.

END

Notes to Editors:

- Any part of the above can be quoted as coming from our Public Bioethics Fellow, Dr Mehmet Çiftçi.
- For more background information on this issue, see the Anscombe Centre's Bioethics in Brief on Abortion.
- For more information on the Anscombe Bioethics Centre, see our website: www.bioethics.org.uk
- For interviews or comment, contact: media@bioethics.org.uk

THE *Wednesday*
WORD



Encountering Christ
The Wednesday Prayer Custom
for Homes, Schools & Parishes

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 3rd March 2024
THE CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE

Just before the Jewish Passover Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and in the Temple he found people selling cattle and sheep and pigeons, and the money changers sitting at their counters there. Making a whip out of some cord, he drove them all out of the Temple, cattle and sheep as well, scattered the money changers' coins, knocked their tables over and said to the pigeon-sellers, "Take all this out of here and stop turning my Father's house into a market." Then his disciples remembered the words of scripture: Zeal for your house will devour me. The Jews intervened and said, "What sign can you show us to justify what you have done?" Jesus answered, "Destroy this sanctuary, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this sanctuary: are you going to raise it up in three days?" But he was speaking of the sanctuary that was his body, and when Jesus rose from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the scripture and the words he had said. During his stay in Jerusalem for the Passover many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he gave, but Jesus knew them all and did not trust himself to them; he never needed evidence about any man; he could tell what a man had in him.

Taken from John 2:13-25 The Third Sunday of Lent, Year B

2

Reflect

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

According to John, this scene took place at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, on the first of Jesus' four visits to Jerusalem. At each subsequent visit the Temple authorities lay in wait for Jesus, increasingly keen to eliminate him, but unable to do so till his Hour had come. The other gospels place both this incident and all other scenes of Jesus in Jerusalem as the final climax of Jesus' ministry. Whichever is correct, the incident is the basic cause of Jesus' arrest and his tortured death. By his action Jesus had demonstrated that the worship carried out in the Temple had become vain in God's eyes owing to its lack of integrity and must be superseded. To the Temple authorities this was intolerable, and he must be removed. Again, Jesus demanded a complete reversal of standards. His puzzling saying about building the Temple anew in his body was at last understood by his disciples after his resurrection when they realised it meant the Temple that was his Body, the Church. The material building which had been the centre of worship was no longer important. Henceforth all worship would take place in any place, but within the Christian community. The community - or the Church - was now the place of sanctification and of prayer to God. **What does it mean to think of the Church as Jesus' Body? What does it mean to you to be a member of Christ's Body, the Church?**

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, self control, patience, joy, forgiveness, hope or something else.

4

Pray for Families

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

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 3rd March 2024



1st Reading: *Exodus 20:1-17 (shorter form)*

The Ten Commandments

God spoke all these words. He said, "I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no gods except me. You shall not utter the name of the Lord your God to misuse it, for the Lord will not leave unpunished the man who utters his name to misuse it. Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. Honour your father and your mother so that you may have a long life in the land that the Lord your God has given to you. You shall not kill. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour. You shall not covet your neighbour's house. You shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or his servant, man or woman, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is his."

The Ten Commandments are not harsh rules, but an invitation to Israel, showing them how to be God's people: if you wish to keep close to God, you must behave in a way compatible with God's own nature. They come in an order which may surprise us perhaps, opposite to the priorities of the modern materialistic world: for God comes first, then they deal with the value of persons; the value of things and possessions comes only at the end. We need to think of the commandments not as prohibitions but as expressing positive values. So 'keep holy the Sabbath day' implies freedom of worship and freedom for leisure. 'Honour your parents' includes not only obedience of children, but real parental care for children and of adult children for aged parents, as well as other family values. 'No adultery' means fostering the marriage bond and continually deepening it. 'No false witness' includes the right to free speech, and giving others a good reputation, free of slander - no brainwashing or distortion by the media. Many of these laws occur in other ancient law-codes, but in Israel they have a special meaning, for here they are the guidelines for living under divine protection and in the company of the Lord.

How do these Ten Commandments help you to live more closely day by day with the Lord?



2nd Reading: *1 Corinthians 1:22-25*

The Scandal of the Cross

While the Jews demand miracles and the Greeks look for wisdom, here are we preaching a crucified Christ; to the Jews an obstacle that they cannot get over, to the pagans madness, but to those who have been called, whether they are Jews or Greeks, a Christ who is the power and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

This reading is all about power and wisdom: 'the Jews demand miracles (works of power) and the Greeks look for wisdom'. These are two measures of success in the normal terms of our modern materialistic society. Power comes in the form of wealth, authority, command, being the boss. Wisdom results in the respect and reputation we accord to particular people: he or she is someone who makes the right decisions. But where do we find 'power' and 'wisdom' in the crucified Christ? He was a prisoner, powerless, horribly tortured, mocked and derided. He commanded nobody. Surely there is nothing we can respect about a tortured prisoner? God's standards are different, and we heard them in the form of the commandments in the first reading. It was these standards that brought Jesus to the situation of the Passion, for these were the standards he had sought to live out and show to people by his way of living and acting. This way was the Kingship of God which he came to proclaim and to spread. In the first reading we heard the demanding, positive standards for membership of God's people. Now in this second reading we receive strength and comfort from the reassurance of the model of Christ.

Where do you find your source of true wisdom and strength?

“ We receive strength and comfort from the reassurance of the model of Christ. ”

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**