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Newsletter for the week of 22nd March 2026 *Sunday Readings Cycle A* *Weekday Readings Cycle II*

Readings for the 5th Sunday of Lent Ezekiel 37:12-14; Psalm 130(129); Romans 8:8-11; John 11:1-45

Today: instead of the Wednesday Word & the Psalm's Response, there is a sheet with all the readings for you to use!

Saturday 21st March 5.45pm 1st MASS of the 5th SUNDAY of LENT

Sunday 22nd March 10.30am MASS of the 5th SUNDAY of LENT

Monday 23rd March 9.15am Mass

Tuesday 24th March

Wednesday 25th March 11.30am Mass Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord

Thursday 26th March

Friday 27th March 1.00pm Mass (in Hospital Chapel)

Saturday 28th March 10.00am Mass

10.30-11am Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday 28th March 5.45pm 1st Mass of Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord -with the Blessing & Procession of Palms

Sunday 29th March 10.30am Mass of Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord – -with the Blessing & Procession of Palms

Readings for Palm & Passion Sunday: Isaiah 50:4-7; Psalm 22(21); Philippians 2:6-11; Matthew 26:14-27:66

MISSIONARY APPEAL

Today Sat 21st /Sun 22nd Missionary Sisters, *The Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Mother of Christ* visit us to make an appeal. They were founded in 1937 in Nigeria by Archbishop. Charles Heerey CSSP. He had come as a young missionary priest with a group of Irish Spiritan Missionaries to Nigeria in 1922, and he was moved by compassion when he saw the deplorable conditions many Nigerians were forced to live in. He established the Sisters to alleviate in particular, the very high number of mother & infant deaths that he found. Now the Sister's engage in social work, teaching, medical care, catechetical & pastoral care. So two sisters have come this weekend from Birmingham, one to St. Edward's & one to St. Alban's to tell us about their work and to make an appeal.

STATIONS of the CROSS & LENT SOUP LUNCH

Lent Friday: 27th March at 12noon in the Community Room: Stations of the Cross in the Community Room followed by a simple Lent Soup Lunch organised by members of the PPC

SACRAMENT of RECONCILIATION

This Monday 23rd March at 7pm in St. Alban's: Fr. Tomasz invites us to join St. Alban's parishioners for their *Service of Reconciliation* with up to 7 priests for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Many Catholics find it fruitful in their spiritual life to come occasionally – especially in the seasons of Lent & Advent- to bring the disappointments & struggles as a disciple to Jesus our Lord, and to seek his gift of healing, forgiveness & grace to overcome temptations & weaknesses in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

VOLUNTEERS for the WASHING of the FEET

This year Fr. Peter wishes to re-start the *Washing of the Feet* on Holy Thursday at the 7.00pm Mass of the Lord's Supper. A minimum of 6 is needed to be viable. Pope Francis permitted not just men but women & children also. Any child volunteer needs to be accompanied by a parent volunteer & also have received 1st Holy Communion. Please sign up on the clip-boards provided at the church entrances..

THANK YOU for YOUR GENEROUS GIVING

Last Sunday's Collection £265.70

FOOD BANK

The Gulf War is increasing the cost of living : remember those who need help from the *Silk Life* Food Bank. See items listed on the posters e.g.: UHT milk, stewed steak, beef casserole, chilli con carne, instant mash - also toiletries & baby items.

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

DIARY OF EVENTS

Sun 29th March start of British Summer Time (BST);

Thurs 2nd April 7.00pm Mass of the Lord's Supper

Friday 3rd April 3pm Solemn Liturgy of Good Friday

Sat 4th April 8.00pm Vigil Mass of Easter

Sun 5th April 10.30am Easter Day Mass

Sun 17th May 1st Holy Communion

THE ANNUNCIATION TELLS US: OUR CONSENT IS NEEDED

Our salvation hinges upon our consent to being saved.

“The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary;.....And she conceived by the Holy Spirit ...”

The Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord is celebrated by the Catholic Church on the 25th March — exactly nine months before the Nativity of the Lord, in December. Why do we bother to recall this singular moment — one that many non-Catholic Christians barely consider, except, perhaps, in the run-up to Christmas? Because this single moment contains within it the first and foremost lesson of Christianity — the one around which every other lesson revolves: *Our salvation hinges upon our consent to being saved*, and it is a consent that must be given over and over again. Just as God’s own intention — his Word of assent — was necessary for the creation and sustained expansion of the universe, so was Mary’s “yes” necessary to the its salvation. God said, “*Let there be ...*,” and from that was brought forth light. At the Annunciation it is the created creature who says the Word. “Yes,” Mary said, “*let it be ...*,” and from that was brought forth the light of the world.

“Behold the handmaid of the Lord: Be it done unto me according to thy word.”

“Yes.” “Let it be.” These are the words that permit life rather than refuse it. Creation and sustenance are born of positive assent, affirmation. “*God created us without us, but he will not save us without us,*” wrote Augustine in one of his sermons, and the Annunciation demonstrates it.

While today we remember the Annunciation in a special way, the Church puts this great truth and ever-instructive mystery before us constantly by [recommending the daily recitation of the Angelus](#), whose words continually bring us back to the beginning, that first lesson, for our continued instruction — the reminder that our every *yes* keeps us on a God-directed path. And then it does something else. It plops us right into a mystery that is imponderable and yet ever-pleasant to dwell upon:

“And the Word was made Flesh: And dwelt among us”

To remember the incarnation, every day, is to also remember the Passion and death of Christ Jesus, every day; which is also to remember that there is nothing we suffer in life that God himself did not consent to suffer, as well, out of sheer love for us. It is, finally, to remember that this love, this consent, this yes, has conquered all, which means we are — with every surrender, every yes of our own — made continually free, in Christ.

How grateful I am that our Church encourages the daily refreshment that is found in recalling the Annunciation, because in that brief pause of prayerful remembrance, there is an invitation to continual immersion in transcendent light and life. To rise of a morning with the words of the Angelus on our lips, “*The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary ...*” and then to repeat them at noon, and at six, and again upon retiring, or to use those words while announcing the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary, is to be continually drawn back to what is real, and true, and salvific; our perspective is trained toward Christ, and heaven, and the long view of things.

One antiphon in the Office of Readings for the Solemnity of the Annunciation urges us, “*Surrender to God, and he will do everything for you.*” Each time I encounter it I am shocked, because it seems such a bold statement, and also a bit too easy, doesn’t it? Like something a salesman, or a politician, might say: vote for me, and I will do everything for you. Except, then I remember that in God’s case, it is true; the more we surrender to God’s purposes, give up our own will, the more we assist in the propulsion of his will in our lives, which is really all about cooperating with his purposes for the good whole world.

Behold the handmaid of the Lord: Be it done unto me according to thy word ...

*And the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us ...*From that,

all else follows.

Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.



MASS READINGS for 5th Sunday of Lent

Sunday 22 March 2026

First reading

Ezekiel 37:12-14

‘I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live.’

Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I will open your graves and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will bring you into the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will do it, declares the LORD.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 130(129):1-2. 3-4. 5-6b. 6c-8. R7bc

*R/With the LORD there is mercy,
in him is plentiful redemption.*

Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD;
Lord, hear my voice!

O let your ears be attentive
to the sound of my pleadings.

*R/With the LORD there is mercy,
in him is plentiful redemption.*

If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities,
Lord, who could stand?
But with you is found forgiveness,
that you may be revered.

*R/With the LORD there is mercy,
in him is plentiful redemption.*

I long for you, O LORD,
my soul longs for his word.

My soul awaits the Lord
more than watchmen for daybreak.

*R/With the LORD there is mercy,
in him is plentiful redemption.*

More than watchmen for daybreak,
let Israel hope for the LORD.

For with the LORD there is mercy,
in him is plentiful redemption.

It is he who will redeem Israel
from all its iniquities.

*R/With the LORD there is mercy,
in him is plentiful redemption.*

Second reading

Romans 8:8-11

‘The Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you.’

Brothers and Sisters: Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

MASS READINGS for 5th Sunday of Lent

Gospel

John 11:1-45

'I am the resurrection and the life.'

At that time: A certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. It was Mary, who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent to him, saying, 'Lord, he whom you love is ill.' But when Jesus heard it he said, 'This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.'

Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So, when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. Then after this he said to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judea again.' The disciples said to him, 'Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone you, and are you going there again?' Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.' After saying these things, he said to them, 'Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him.' The disciples said to him, 'Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover.' Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep. Then Jesus told them plainly, 'Lazarus has died, and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.' So Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him.'

Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary remained seated in the house. Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?' She said to him, 'Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.'

When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in private, 'The Teacher is here and is calling for you.' And when she heard it, she rose quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him. When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there. Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled. And he said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to him, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus wept. So the Jews said, 'See how he loved him!' But some of them said, 'Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?'

Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, 'Lord, by this time there will be a smell, for he has been dead four days.' Jesus said to her, 'Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, 'Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me.' When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out.' The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go.'

Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him.