

The Parish of St. Edward the Confessor

Registered Charity no. 234025

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Newsletter for Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2025

Sunday Readings Cycle C

Weekday Readings Cycle I

Readings for 3<sup>rd</sup> Lent Sunday: Exodus 3:1-8,13-15; Psalm 103(102) 1 Corinthians 10:1-6,10-12; Luke 13:1-9

**Psalm's Response: The Lord is compassionate and gracious.**

Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> Mar 5.30pm 1<sup>st</sup> MASS of the 3<sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY of LENT

Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> Mar 10.30am MASS of the 3<sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY of LENT

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> Mar 9.15am Mass

Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> Mar **Solemnity: The Annunciation of the Lord**

Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> Mar 11.30am Mass

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> Mar

Friday 28<sup>th</sup> Mar 1.00pm Mass (in Hospital Chapel)

Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> Mar 10.00am Mass

10.30-11am Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> Mar 5.30pm 1<sup>st</sup> Mass of the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent

Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> Mar 10.30am Mass of the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent

Readings for 4<sup>th</sup> Lent Sunday: Joshua 5:9,10-12; Psalm 33; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Luke 15: 1-3,11-32

### STATIONS of the CROSS & LENT SOUP LUNCH

**Lent Fridays** 21<sup>st</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> in March & 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> in April: at **12 noon** in the Community Room: the PPC have organized *Stations of the Cross* in the Community Room followed by a *Lent Soup Lunch*. Come & join the Pastoral Council members. For more information, contact Steve James [sjames2@btinternet.com](mailto:sjames2@btinternet.com) or [john\\_mears@outlook.com](mailto:john_mears@outlook.com)

### CHURCH & C. ROOM CLEANING

**Wed 9<sup>th</sup> April** 12noon- after the late morning 11.30am Mass. Come and take part in preparing the church, sacristy & community room, kitchen & toilets for Holy Week in a joint group clean of about 1 ½ hours.

### THANK YOU for YOUR GREAT GENEROSITY

Last Sunday's Collection £244.50

Cafod Lent Fast £233.65

Piety Stall £20.00

### DIOCESE LOURDES 2025 PILGRIMAGE

Brochures & Booking Forms for this year's pilgrimage to Lourdes at the end of July are now available to download from the pilgrimage website [www.shrewsburypilgrimage.co.uk](http://www.shrewsburypilgrimage.co.uk) and bookings are now open.

### FOOD BANK

The *Silk Life* Food Bank appeals for items listed on noticeboards e.g.: UHT milk, stewed steak, beef casserole, chili con carne, instant mash - also toiletries and 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 C. know as soon as possible tel: 01625 423576 or by e-mail [st.edmacc@gmail.com](mailto:st.edmacc@gmail.com)

### DIARY OF EVENTS

**Next Sun 30<sup>th</sup> March** Start of British Summer Time (B.S.T.)

**Fri 4<sup>th</sup> April** Christ the King Pr. Sch closes for Easter break

**Sun 13<sup>th</sup> April** Palm & Passion Sunday

**Sun 20<sup>th</sup> April** Easter

**Tues 22<sup>nd</sup> April** Christ the King pr. Sch opens for Summer term

**Sun 18<sup>th</sup> May** 1<sup>st</sup> Holy Communion

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## Still time to stop assisted suicide becoming law, says Bishop John Sherrington in interview

When the Private Members' Bill seeking to legalise assisted suicide passed its Second Reading and vote back in November 2024, it felt like a dark day – one that could lead to a fundamental shift in our culture regarding end-of-life care. Not only that, concerns were aired and remain that the most vulnerable could be coerced into a bad choice, or be made to feel a real burden on those around them.



*Bishop John Sherrington*

Now in the latter weeks of the Committee Stage ahead of the Report Stage, attention is also falling on the myriad of problems with this Bill. The Bishops are opposed in principle but, in addition, the Bill clearly generates more questions than it answers. Will the hospice movement be allowed to continue to punch above its under-funded weight to deliver the end of life care services it is heralded for? Will palliative care be invested in and bolstered in all areas of England and Wales? Will healthcare professionals, many Catholic, be afforded the freedom of conscience not to participate in an assisted death? Will the trusted doctor-patient relationship be forever changed? If made law, would this grease the ‘slippery slope’ pulling other vulnerable groups into scope? Clearly this is something we have witnessed in other jurisdictions where assisted suicide is legal. Safeguards were promised. A key assertion was the need for a judge to sign-off on a request for an assisted death. No longer necessary, apparently. However you cut it up and amend it, this remains a flawed bill that has not been given the time, and indeed scrutiny, required to legislate on a crucial matter of life and death.

Now is the **time to act** ahead of the Third Reading and vote at the end of April or start of May. You can still make your voice heard to oppose assisted suicide. *“All is not lost, and we must continue to fight this Bill, especially for the Third Reading,”* says Bishop John Sherrington, the Lead Bishop for Life Issues. *“It’s really important that people write to their MPs. You can either write a letter, use the cards that come from Right to Life, or use the e-campaign link. But we need to tell MPs of our concerns and why we’re opposed to this Bill.”*

Bishop Sherrington was speaking on our *Catholic News* podcast. The 25-minute interview, that you can listen <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/podcast-download/102800/life-bishop-on-next-steps-to-oppose-the-assisted-suicide-bill.mp3?ref=download> to or watch on YouTube here: <https://youtu.be/agJ9jSzveug> sees Bishop Sherrington talk about our objection to the Bill in principle, and goes into detail about the fundamental problems with this piece of proposed legislation.

Church teaching on the dignity and value of all human life is well documented. Poignantly, Bishop Sherrington gives an interesting personal insight, explaining his passion for pro-life work:

*“I remember when I was about seven, my grandmother had a massive stroke and then lived with us. In those days, the treatment for strokes was not as good as it is now. She had mobility, but she’d lost a lot of her speech, though her mind was very sharp. Of course, she’d become very frustrated in trying to express herself. As a child, I spent a lot of time with her, trying to help her to do that. Those family relationships for all of us are so important. They shape who we become. Having grandparents who were sick and loving them made me want their lives to continue, made me want to be with them and accompany them.*

*“The idea of ending a life because of suffering is just incomprehensible when I think of them. One grandmother was on her own, my other grandparents were together, but the way they managed each other’s old age was lovely to see and the love between them. So that must have begun a process in me of getting more concerned about the sacredness of life and the gift of life.”*

Visiting the Catholic Marian Shrine at Lourdes also had a profound impact on Bishop Sherrington:

*“Having been to Lourdes a number of times with pilgrimage groups, the Across Trust, and then the diocese, working with people who were terminally ill or perhaps living with disability, again made me value their lives as well as the gifts that I have. So all that shapes how we see life. That’s deepened in the light of the Gospel and the gift of life that God gives us and understanding the sacredness of life in the knowledge that Jesus shared in our human life fully.”*

### **Pope Francis**

It’s also particularly poignant during Lent for Catholics, not just here in England and Wales, but around the world, to consider how we accompany people through suffering and ill-health. Millions are looking to Rome’s Gemelli Hospital, praying for Pope Francis as he continues his treatment for double pneumonia. *“At the moment, I think Pope Francis wants to be a witness to suffering and living with his medical conditions. But we see him making the most of each day – phoning the parish community in Gaza, for example. He’s loving and concerned for them,”* says Bishop Sherrington. *“He’s still sending us messages of encouragement and the importance of loving and living with suffering. So the Pope gives great encouragement to those who are sick or dying at this time.”*

### **Human stories**

So, keep your foot on the gas and be vocal in your opposition to the bill, that’s the message from Bishop Sherrington who stresses the importance of sharing human stories and experiences:

*“We’ve got all our reasons, we’ve got our arguments, but the use of the stories, the use of the experiences – especially from people who have nursed a sick member of the family, and those who have been present at that sacred moment – that needs to be shared because it’s significant and it’s holy, and it’s important for us to recognise that.”*

### **Take action**

You still have time to make your voice heard and oppose assisted suicide becoming law in England and Wales. Use *Right to Life UK*’s simple and easy web form to ask your MP to vote ‘no’ to assisted suicide a Third Reading.

Click here: [righttolife.org.uk/AS](http://righttolife.org.uk/AS)

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Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025

**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 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2025

*TIME FOR REPENTANCE*

Some people arrived and told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with that of their sacrifices. At this he said to them, "Do you suppose these Galileans who suffered like that were greater sinners than any other Galileans? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen on whom the tower at Siloam fell and killed them? Do you suppose that they were more guilty than all the other people living in Jerusalem? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent you will all perish as they did." He told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard and he came looking for fruit on it but found none. He said to the man who looked after the vineyard, 'Look here, for three years now I have been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and finding none. Cut it down: why should it be taking up the ground?' 'Sir,' the man replied, 'leave it one more year and give me time to dig round it and manure it: it may bear fruit next year; if not, then you can cut it down.'"

**Taken from Luke 13:1-9 The Third Sunday of Lent, 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.**

We have seen how St Luke, in his gospel, places great emphasis on Jesus' message of repentance and forgiveness. At the beginning of Jesus' ministry Peter must admit his sinfulness before he is called to be an apostle; at the end, the good thief acknowledges his guilt and is welcomed into Jesus' kingdom. This gospel reading, with its historical examples and its parable, reinforces the Old Testament lesson of repentance. Notice also how, in Luke's account of the Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax-Collector, the latter wins through: his prayer is only 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner'. Every proclamation of the gospel in Luke's Acts of the Apostles ends with an appeal for repentance. Repentance means not simply bewailing our sins but doing something about it, changing our way of life, our scale of values. However, we are made in the image of God, and cannot expect God's forgiveness unless we too follow God's example and show the same forgiveness to others. The sinful woman who loved much was forgiven much (Luke 7:36-50). Nor is Luke the only evangelist to stress this point. Matthew adds at the end of the Lord's Prayer the saying of Jesus which underlines the importance of the single petition, 'Forgive us our sins as we forgive others'. **If you think of yourself as the fig-tree, what do you consider to be the part of yourself that you really need to change? Would the sacrament of Reconciliation help? What sort of injury do you find it hardest to forgive - an affront to your pride, your pocket or your person? Is there anyone you have not forgiven?**

*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 CHANGE!**

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.**

**The Jubilee**  
**Year of Hope**

**Share the Prayer:** Why not forward a digital copy of this Parish Version to your friends? Also, to see a sample of your primary school's *Family Version*, visit: [wednesdayword.org](http://wednesdayword.org)



# WEDNESDAY WORD PLUS †

Fr Henry's reflections on the first and second readings of **Sunday 23rd March 2025**



**1st Reading: Exodus 3:1-8. 13-15**

## Moses at the Burning Bush

Moses was looking after the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, priest of Midian. He led his flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in the shape of a flame of fire, coming from the middle of a bush. Moses looked; there was the bush blazing but it was not being burnt up. "I must go and look at this strange sight," Moses said, "and see why the bush is not burnt." Now the Lord saw him go forward to look, and God called to him from the middle of the bush. "Moses, Moses!" he said. "Here I am," he answered. "Come no nearer," he said. "Take off your shoes, for the place on which you stand is holy ground. I am the God of your father," he said, "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this Moses covered his face, afraid to look at God. And the Lord said, "I have seen the miserable state of my people in Egypt. I have heard their appeal to be free of their slave-drivers. Yes, I am well aware of their sufferings. I mean to deliver them out of the hands of the Egyptians and bring them up out of that land to a land rich and broad, a land where milk and honey flow." Then Moses said to God, "I am to go, then, to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you.' But if they ask me what his name is, what am I to tell them?" And God said to Moses, "I Am who I Am. This," he added, "is what you must say to the sons of Israel: 'The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is my name for all time; by this name I shall be invoked for all generations to come."



In our Lenten readings we have progressed through the story of God's people and now we come to the crucial point when God reveals his name to Moses. This is a decisive moment, because to give your name is a sign of trust and friendship. Someone who has your name has power over you in all kinds of ways, so you give your name only to those you trust. The Hebrew people, descendants of Abraham, are at a low point, a mere oppressed rabble of immigrants in Egypt, lacking land or security, marked out for extermination by a powerful bureaucratic state. It is as though God had waited for this moment to raise them up, to form them as a coherent group with a leader who could stand up for them in God's name. God does not yet give the meaning of the name; perhaps 'I Am who I Am' even means 'You mind your own business!' God's name does have something to do with Being, and the Greek translation of the Hebrew text understands it as 'Pure Being', 'the One who Is'. In the Hebrew Bible the meaning of the name is given later on at Sinai, after Israel's worship of the Golden Bull, when God passes before Moses crying out the name, 'The Lord, the Lord, a God of mercy and forgiveness'. This is the true significance of God's name which will echo in passage after passage later on in the Bible.

**What does this understanding of God's name mean to you?**



**2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 10:1-6. 10-12**

## The Rock which is Christ

I want to remind you, brothers, how our fathers were all guided by a cloud above them and how they all passed through the sea. They were all baptised into Moses in this cloud and in this sea; all ate the same spiritual food and all drank the same spiritual drink, since they all drank from the spiritual rock that followed them as they went, and that rock was Christ. In spite of this, most of them failed to please God and their corpses littered the desert. These things all happened as warnings for us, not to have the wicked lusts for forbidden things that they had. You must never complain: some of them did, and they were killed by the Destroyer. All this happened to them as a warning and it was written down to be a lesson for us who are living at the end of the age. The man who thinks he is safe must be careful that he does not fall.



As with the readings of the previous two Sundays, the second reading moves the first reading into a higher gear. God revealed his name to Moses in the desert, led the Israelites across the sea and cared for them in the desert with manna for food and water from the rock to drink. Paul uses the current rabbinic explanation of the two accounts (in the books of Exodus and Numbers) of Moses striking the rock for water: it is not two accounts of the same incident, but they are separate incidents. It is the same rock who accompanied the Israelites on their journey through the desert. How does a rock follow the people in their wanderings? Paul explains to us that the real meaning of the rock is Christ who nourishes us. However, Paul is really writing to chide the Corinthians on their undisciplined behaviour, especially when gathered at the Eucharist. Despite the wonders that accompanied the Israelites, the desert wanderings were a time of infidelity and rebellion which even the God of mercy and forgiveness was compelled to correct. Let the Corinthians learn their lesson! Even though their Christian life was marked by plentiful gifts of the Spirit, they must repent of their wild behaviour.

**Is Christ the rock who is with you always - the one who gives you the waters of life?**

**The rock is Christ who nourishes us.**