

The Parish of St. Edward the Confessor

Registered Charity no. 234025

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Newsletter for Sunday 6th April 2025

Sunday Readings Cycle C

Weekday Readings Cycle I

Readings for 5th Lent Sunday: Isaiah 43:16-21; Psalm 126(125); Philippians 3:8-14; John 8:1-11

Psalm's Response: What great deeds the Lord worked for us! Indeed we were glad.

Saturday 5th April 5.30pm 1st MASS of the 5th SUNDAY of LENT

Sunday 6th April 10.30am MASS of the 5th SUNDAY of LENT

Monday 7th April 9.15am Mass *Optional: St Jean Baptiste de la Salle, priest, religious founder, educator)*

Tuesday 8th April

Wednesday 9th April 11.30am Mass

Thursday 10th April

Friday 11th April 1.00pm Mass (in Hospital Chapel) (*Optional: St. Stanislaus, bishop, martyr*)

Saturday 12th April 10.00am Mass

10.30-11am Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday 12th April 5.30pm 1st Mass of Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

Sunday 13th April 10.30am Mass of Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

Readings for Palm & Passion Sunday: Isaiah 50:4-7; Psalm 22(21); Philippians 2:6-11; Luke 22:14-23:45

N. B. Readers for the Passion for next weekend should take a Palm & Passion Booklet from the sacristy.

CHURCH & C. ROOM CLEANING

Next Wed 9th 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.

STATIONS of the CROSS & LENT SOUP LUNCH

Lent Fridays this Fri 4th & next Fri 11th 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 or john_mears@outlook.com

THANK YOU for YOUR GREAT GENEROSITY

Last Sunday's Collection £328.50

Final Cafod Lent Appeal Total £365.55

GIVING WITH GIFT AID

If you are an income tax payer and give regularly to the Church, you can boost the amount you give by *Gift Aiding* it. A record of your giving either by a Standing Order or by an offertory envelope needs to be recorded by our *Parish Gift Aid Organiser, Chris Doyle* who is very willing to explain the scheme. Contact chris.doyle46@ntlworld.com

FOOD BANK

The *Silk Life* Food Bank appeals for items listed on noticeboards: especially requested are **tinned vegetables**

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

HOLY WEEK ARRANGEMENTS

Palm Sunday 10.30am: Blessing of Palms in the Community Room with procession outside weather permitting. Reading of the Passion.

Maundy Thursday 7.00pm M Liturgy. Reading of Passion. Veneration of the Cross by making a bow, a sign of the cross or touching the cross. Holy Communion. Collection for the *Holy Places*

Easter Vigil 8.30pm: Start with the Easter Fire outside main entrance. Paschal candle brought into a darkened church with progressive lighting of congregation's candles; then "Exultet" Hymn sung. Three O.T. readings, one N.T reading & Gospel, Blessing of water. Renewal of Baptismal promises. Liturgy of the Eucharist as normal

Easter Day 10.30am: Mass as normal with renewal of Baptismal Promises.

DIARY OF EVENTS

Fri 4th April Christ the King Pr. Sch closes for Easter break

Sun 13th April Palm & Passion Sunday

Sun 20th April Easter

Tues 22nd April Christ the King Pr. Sch. opens for Summer term

Sun 18th May 1st Holy Communion

FROM CARDINAL VINCENT NICHOLS AND ALL THE BISHOPS OF ENGLAND AND WALES

Pastoral Letter on the Terminally Ill Adults(End of Life) Bill

To be read at all Masses on 5th and 6th April 2025, Fifth Sunday of Lent

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I wish to speak with you today about the process in which our Parliament is currently considering legalising assisted suicide through the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill. As I have made clear earlier in this debate, as Catholics we have maintained a principled objection to this change in law recognising that every human life is sacred, coming as a gift of God and bearing a God-given dignity. We are, therefore, clearly opposed to this Bill in principle, elevating, as it does, the autonomy of the individual above all other considerations.

The passage of the Bill through Parliament will lead to a vote in late April on whether it progresses further. This will be a crucial moment and I, together with all the Bishops of England and Wales, am writing to ask your support in urging your MP to vote against this Bill at that time. There are serious reasons for doing so. At this point we wish not simply to restate our objections in principle, but to emphasise the deeply flawed process undergone in Parliament thus far. We wish to remind you that it is a fundamental duty of every MP to ensure that legislation is not imposed on our society which has not been properly scrutinised and which will bring about damaging consequences.

The Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill will fundamentally change many of the key relationships in our way of life: within the family, between doctor and patient, within the health service. Yet there has been no Royal Commission or independent inquiry ahead of its presentation. It is a Private Member's Bill. The Bill itself is long and complex and was published just days before MPs voted on it, giving them inadequate time to consult or reflect upon it. The time for debate was minimal. The Committee examining the Bill took only three days of evidence: not all voices were heard, and it comprises an undue number of supporters of the Bill. In short, this is no way to legislate on such an important and morally complex issue.

One consequence of this flawed process is that many vital questions remain unanswered. Can MPs guarantee that the scope of the Bill will not be extended? In almost every country where assisted suicide has been introduced the current scope is wider than was originally intended. What role, if any, will the judiciary have in the process? We were told that judicial oversight was a necessary and vital part of the process; now we are told it isn't needed at all. What will protect the vulnerable from coercion, or from feeling a burden on family? Can the National Health Service cope with assisted suicide or will it, as the Health Secretary has warned, cause cuts elsewhere in the NHS? Can MPs guarantee that no medical practitioner or care worker would be compelled to take part in assisted suicide? Would this mean the establishment of a 'national death service'?

In contrast to the provisions of this Bill, what is needed is first-class, compassionate palliative care at the end of our lives. This is already provided to many in our society but, tragically, is in short supply and underfunded. No-one should be dispatched as a burden to others. Instead, a good society would prioritise care for the elderly, the vulnerable, and the weak. The lives of our families are richer for cherishing their presence.

It is sad reflection on Parliament's priorities that the House of Commons spent far more time debating the ban on fox hunting than it is spending debating bringing in assisted suicide. I am sure that you will share these concerns. It is now clear that this measure is being rushed without proper scrutiny and without fundamental questions surrounding safeguards being answered. This is a deeply flawed Bill with untold unintended consequences. Every MP, and Government, has a solemn duty to prevent such legislation reaching the statute book. This, tragically, is what may happen. So I appeal to you: even if you have written before, please make contact now with your MP and ask them to vote against this Bill not only on grounds of principle but because of the failure of Parliament to approach this issue in an adequate and responsible manner.

In his Letter to the Philippians, from which we heard in the Second Reading, St Paul reflects on the difficulties and responsibilities of life. He speaks of 'pressing on' and 'striving' for the fulness of life promised in Christ Jesus. Yet he is totally confident in his struggles because, as he says, '*Christ Jesus has made me his own*'. We too have many struggles. We too know that Christ Jesus has made us his own. So we too press on with this struggle, so important in our times.

May God bless you all.

+ **Vincent Cardinal Nichols Archbishop of Westminster**

+ **Mark Bishop of Shrewsbury together with all the Bishops of England and Wales**

Wednesday 2nd April 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 6th April 2025

THE WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY

Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. At daybreak he appeared in the Temple again; and, as all the people came to him, he sat down and began to teach them. The scribes and Pharisees brought a woman along who had been caught committing adultery; and making her stand there in full view of everybody, they said to Jesus, "Master, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery, and Moses has ordered us in the Law to condemn women like this to death by stoning. What have you to say?" They asked him this as a test, looking for something to use against him. But Jesus bent down and started writing on the ground with his finger. As they persisted with their question, he looked up and said, "If there is one of you who has not sinned, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." Then he bent down and wrote on the ground again. When they heard this, they went away one by one, beginning with the eldest, until Jesus was left alone with the woman, who remained standing there. He looked up and said, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" "No one, sir," she replied. "Neither do I condemn you," said Jesus. "Go away, and don't sin any more."

Taken from John 8:1-11 The Fifth 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.

Why this reading from John in the middle of the Year of Luke? All the other gospels during this Lenten season have been from Luke. The answer is that it is an independent, floating story which does not even fit into the Gospel of John. In early manuscripts of the gospels this story moves around and is found in various places before it becomes anchored as an example of Jesus' teachings just after he says, 'Our Law does not allow us to pass judgement on anyone without first giving them a hearing' (John 7:51). It is appropriate for this Year of Luke because the tone of the story and the theme of welcome for the repentant sinner are both thoroughly Lukan, a theme which is constantly stressed in Luke's Gospel (for example, in the Parable of the Prodigal Son). What did Jesus write on the ground, or was it that he was just doodling to allow the accusers time to reflect on their self-righteousness? The latter is certainly one of the main concerns of St Luke's Gospel, where it is made clear that you cannot be a follower of Christ without first admitting your sinfulness: when Peter meets Jesus, he tells Jesus to go away, because he (Peter) is a sinner; Zacchaeus recognises that he is a sinner and promises to make multiple restitution for his embezzlements; the woman at the supper weeps for her sins at Jesus' feet. **Why do you think Jesus wrote on the ground? Do I find myself judging others too quickly and too often?**

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 words for our school families are NEW START !

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

WEDNESDAY WORD PLUS †

Fr Henry's reflections on the first and second readings of **Sunday 6th April 2025**



1st Reading: Isaiah 43:16-21

The New Exodus

Thus says the Lord, who made a way through the sea, a path in the great waters, who put chariots and horse in the field and a powerful army, which lay there never to rise again, snuffed out, put out like a wick: "No need to recall the past, no need to think about what was done before. See, I am doing a new deed, even now it comes to light; can you not see it? Yes, I am making a road in the wilderness, paths in the wilds. The wild beasts will honour me, jackals and ostriches, because I am putting water in the wilderness (rivers in the wild) to give my chosen people drink. The people I have formed for myself will sing my praises.



During Lent we have been working through the story of Israel preparing – or being prepared – for the coming of Christ: we have heard of Adam, Abraham, Moses, the monarchy, and now we hear of the promise of a new beginning. For that is what Easter is. This part of Isaiah was written during the Exile of the Jews in Babylon, a traumatic event which seemed to them to be the end of all their hopes; it seemed to be permanent condition of exile and slavery, far from their beloved Jerusalem - 'There we sat and wept,' says the Psalmist. But the prophet (whose work is attributed to Isaiah) set out to re-invigorate them with the promise that they would return to Jerusalem, and that the wonders of the Exodus from Egypt would be renewed. There would be a new road across the desert and miraculous supplies of water for the travellers. The desert would bloom afresh (for the slightest supply of water brings the withered plants to life in the spring), and the curious beasts of the desert, jackals and ostriches, would praise the Lord. There is a lesson for us too. Our trust in God teaches us – and our own experience eventually grudgingly reinforces this – that seemingly total disaster can become a source of strength and instruction.

In what way would you wish to be transformed by the new beginning of Easter?

All our power comes from the Resurrection of Christ.



2nd Reading: Philippians 3:8-14

Pushing Ahead for Olympic Gold

I believe nothing can happen that will outweigh the supreme advantage of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For him I have accepted the loss of everything, and I look on everything as so much rubbish if only I can have Christ and be given a place in him. I am no longer trying for perfection by my own efforts, the perfection that comes from the Law, but I want only the perfection that comes through faith in Christ, and is from God and based on faith. All I want is to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and to share his sufferings by reproducing the pattern of his death. That is the way I can hope to take my place in the resurrection of the dead. Not that I have become perfect yet: I have not yet won, but I am still running, trying to capture the prize for which Christ Jesus captured me. I can assure you my brothers, I am far from thinking that I have already won. All I can say is that I forget the past and I strain ahead for what is still to come; I am racing for the finish, for the prize to which God calls us upwards to receive in Christ Jesus.



As we prepare for the celebration of the Passion next week, we read of Paul's own struggle in this letter to his special friends at Philippi in Northern Greece. He is tired, probably already quite elderly, and longs to finish his race and be with Christ in tranquillity. The games and athletic contests were the football tournaments of the ancient world. Corinth, where Paul spent so long, was the centre for the Isthmian Games (more important at the time than the Olympics) and Paul often uses imagery of running and even boxing. He knows the thrill of the contest, but at the same time he recognizes that all our power comes from the Resurrection of Christ. Christ endured and was raised by the Father. Often for us Christianity consists of also enduring – enduring slights, insults or neglect and replying with a cheerful word or gesture which dissolves the hurt and seeks to renew friendship and genuine relationship. There is no need aggressively to turn the other cheek; it needs more of the courage of Christ to reply with a positive advance. If I can bring myself to ask, 'What would Jesus have done?' I am already sharing in his strength. In this way, the aggression of the athlete is redirected!

Apart from his suffering and death, what do you find most inspiring about Jesus' life-story and his character as portrayed in the gospels?

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**