

OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH

in NEW MILTON

Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth

15 Mount Ave, New Milton. BH25 6NT

Our Parish live streaming: <http://churchservices.tv/newmilton>

Website: www.nfwp.org.uk

Church opening hours 7am to 7pm.



3rd Sunday in Lent

Year A

19th March 2017

MY JOY BEING A PRIEST.

There is an African proverb that says “If a child washes his hand then he can eat with the elders” It is just another way of say that a young man who attains the heights of his endeavours is recognized by the authorities. I do not think I have achieved anything in life as yet even as I write, but simply being a Priest that God called me to be. This date today 19th of March 1994 Christ showed his love for me, when His Grace Archbishop Paul Verdzev of Blessed memory anointed me in Christ with the oil of gladness, and this anointing made me to accept and appreciate this great gift: the gladness, the joy of being a PRIEST.

I have often been asked the question – “Are you happy being a Priest?” This has come from people of all ages, different cultures and works of life; and it is worth mentioning that the young boys and girls many of them contemplating a religious vocation, constitute the majority. My answer has often left most of them flabbergasted. “I would have been very angry with God if he did not call me to be his Priest.” This does not in any way say that I am or was very qualified to be chosen by God. No I was nothing before I was called, I did nothing to be called and I do not think I have done anything to justify that I was supposed to have been called by God to be his Priest. I am only happy that God chose me his lowly poor wretched creature the works of his hands to be a labourer in his vineyard. Reflecting on this gives me real joy that it was God not man that called me.

Priestly joy is a priceless treasure, not only for the priest himself but for the entire faithful people of God: that faithful people from whom he is called to be anointed and to whom he, in turn, is sent to anoint. We can rightly say the priest is anointed with the oil of gladness so as to anoint others with the oil of gladness. Priestly joy has its source in the Father’s love, and the Lord wishes that the joy of this Love to be “ours” and to be “complete” (Jn 15:11). There is nothing more beautiful for a man than to be called to the priesthood, called to follow Jesus, to be with Him, to bring Jesus to others, to bring them His Word and His forgiveness. Although the work of a priest is not always easy, drawing near to Jesus in daily sacrificial love can renew and re-animate priestly zeal.

I think that the priest is very little and weak creature: the incomparable grandeur of the gift granted us for the ministry sets us among the least of men. The priest is the poorest of men unless Jesus enriches him by his poverty, the most useless of servants unless Jesus calls him his friend, the most ignorant of men unless Jesus patiently teaches him as he did Peter, the frailest of Christians unless the Good Shepherd strengthens him in the midst of the flock. No one is more “little” than a priest left to his own devices; and so our prayer of protection against every snare of the Evil One is the prayer of our Mother: I am a priest because he has regarded my littleness (cf. Lk 1:48). And in that littleness we find our joy.

For me there are three significant features of our priestly joy.

✓ It is a joy which comes when we Priests are anointed and which has penetrates deep within our hearts, shaping and strengthening us sacramentally. Thus making the Priest always desiring to pass on and share with others all that the Lord has given them. Grace fills to the brim and overflows, fully, abundantly and entirely in each priest. We are anointed down to our very bones and our joy, which wells up from deep within, is the echo of this anointing.

✓ it is a joy which makes imperishable the fullness of the gift, which no one can take away or increase; it is an unfailing source of joy, an imperishable joy which the Lord has promised no one can take from us. It is the joy we see in the Apostles and early Christians who were persecuted but remained steadfast and happy to do the same things that made them to be punished. Here St. Paul's exhortation to Timothy remains ever timely: "I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God that you possess through the laying of my hands" (cf. 2 Tim 1:6).

✓ It is a missionary joy which spreads and attracts because it is deeply bound up with God's holy and faithful people. I came to the UK out of the required mandate of my Priestly Obedience. I did not at anytime imagine myself to be a missionary. Any talk of going missionary for me was a no go conversation. See now how the Good Lord acts. I count my Priestly Ministry here in the UK another vocation which has added to my being a happy Priest. **The Diocese of Portsmouth, the parishes I have served while here and now Our Lady of Lords Parish New Milton, is for me just home like the home I left just to get home.** This for me is an eminently missionary joy. My Priesthood is meant to serving God's holy and faithful people; baptizing and confirming them, healing and sanctifying them, blessing, comforting and evangelizing them.

Since this joy is one which only springs up when the shepherd is in the midst of his flock, it is a "guarded joy", watched over by the flock itself. Even in those occasional moments when things look dark and a feeling of isolation and boredom at times set in, even in those moments God's people are able to "guard" that joy; they are able to protect me, to embrace me and to help me open my heart to find renewed joy. A "guarded joy": one guarded by the flock but also guarded by God

Priests are taken up into the Father's own pleasure in the Son. The holiness of God radiates this joy that He has in all that exists. When Jesus ate and drank with tax collectors and prostitutes, it was not a duty. It was utter delight in their company, in their very being. When Jesus touched the untouchable, it was not a clinical gesture, but the hug of joy. So it belongs to our priesthood that we rejoice in the very existence of people, with all their attempts to live and love, whether they are married or divorced or single, whether their lives are lived in accordance with church teaching or not. The holiness of the priesthood is radiant with this joy. The church should be and is a community in which people discover God's delight in them. This is the ministry of a priest; this is my life, which sums up for me the reasons why I'm so very happy all these years that God brought me beyond my failings and limitations to serve him so that this becomes my joy as well. I pray that when in the fullness of time I complete my earthly ministry this Prayer of Fr. Augustine Baker (*Holy Wisdom*) should be the summary of my Priestly life and longing. "My God I am nothing, I have nothing, I desire nothing but Jesus and to see him in peace in the heavenly Jerusalem – Amen."

Fr George Ngwa

Lenten Lunches

Lenten lunches will be served in the Hall on Fridays during Lent Each lunch will consist of soup, roll and butter, cheese and a piece of fruit. Cost £3.50. Served from 12.00 – 1.30pm. Look forward to seeing you all there. **Robin Bantin.**

Lenten Spiritual Refreshment. Mondays at 12.45 -13.45 cuppa soup and spiritual food-The Mystery of Jesus' Passion.**Listen** to a CD, which is a commentary by Frances Hogan on St Matthew's Passion 45 minutes. A course of 10 sessions in the Church Hall. Come even if you have missed any as all are enlightening. Johanna

Don't forget!

Stations of the Cross:

Tuesdays of Lent at 6:30 p.m. followed by Holy Mass at 7:00 p.m and Fridays of Lent at 9.30 am followed by Holy Mass at 10.00am
There will be No exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on these days.

We ask that you please do not take the Stations of the Cross booklets home as we need them. They were given out free to people last year so we realise some people may think these are also free but we have had to get more so we have a store to use. Thank you.

Cleaning the Church. Thank you very much to all the regular cleaners who keep the church looking lovely. Please can you put your names down on the list at the back of the Church as it is empty at present. Please remember that if you do not clean on a Saturday that you are cleaning in the week before that date and not after. Anyone who wishes

to join the rota please let me know on 07761788343 as you would be very much appreciated. **Johanna Chrism Mass at Portsmouth Catholic Cathedral. Tuesday 18th April. There are some spaces on the coach now as Catherine d’Espagnac has managed to procure a bigger one. Please contact her with payment of £5 for the round trip.**

This week we commemorate many English Martyrs.

20 March –

Saint Cuthbert, bishop

21 March-

Blessed Thomas Pilchard, priest and martyr (Dorchester, Elizabeth I)

Blessed William Pike, martyr,

Blessed Matthew Flathers, priest and martyr (York, James I)

22 March-

Saint Nicholas Owen, SJ, religious and martyr (London, James I)

23 March-

Blessed Edmund Sykes, priest and martyr (York, Elizabeth I)

25 March-

Saint Margaret Clitherow, martyr (York, Elizabeth I),

Blessed James Bird, martyr (Winchester, Elizabeth I)

The following is taken from the Open Doors Website which supports Persecuted Christians

Prayer is the ultimate fellowship

Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering—Hebrews 13:3

Many persecuted Christians often feel isolated and alone, since they are unable to fellowship with other believers. However, prayers from Christians half a

world away have brought the same amount of encouragement that fellowship would have for these persecuted Christians. Prayer is vital—not only as a direct line to God, but as a way to encourage our persecuted brothers and sisters around the world.

An Egyptian Christian reflected on the way he was treated when he converted to Christ: *“In great suffering you discover a different Jesus than you do in normal life... Pain and suffering bring up to the surface all the weak points of your personality. In my weakest state, I had an incredible realization that Jesus loved me even right then.”*

1 Corinthians 12:26 tells us that we are one body—when one member suffers, we all suffer. When one member is lifted up, we all rejoice. Persecuted Christians and Christians in the free world are not two separate entities, but rather are one body. The persecuted church needs the free church to support them and most importantly to lift them up in prayer. The church in the free world learns lessons from the persecuted who have stood strong in the face of persecution. Christ is the head of the body and uses the church (both free and persecuted) in unique and powerful ways. **Pope Francis’s Apostleship of Prayer Intentions for March are for persecuted Christians.**

From Bishop Philip, Bishop of Portsmouth

Please include in your prayers (e.g. to offer the Rosary) for the defeat of the private members Bill going through Parliament at the moment that seeks to widen the scope for abortion, including abortion up to birth. This Bill has caught us all somewhat by surprise. It gained approval in its first hearing last week.

Obituary Please pray for Archbishop Luigi Barbarito who died on 12 March 2017. Archbishop Barbarito was the Apostolic Pro-Nuncio, then Nuncio to Great Britain from 1989-1997.

The Neocatechumenal Way On Monday 13th March in St. Paul’s Paulsgrove, I officially welcomed the four families of the Neocatechumenal Way, with the two sisters assisting them and Fr. Vittorio Scamparin, their chaplain. I then inaugurated the ‘Missio ad gentes.’ I express huge gratitude to Fr. Joe McNerny for all his energy and help in establishing the community in the parish. Please pray for God’s blessing on this long-term project as they seek to draw others, especially those on the margins, to salvation in Christ.

Pray for Youth of Diocese I am making a brief visit with Fr PJ Smith to Turin in order to place all our diocesan youth work under the patronage of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati. His relics are entombed in Turin Cathedral and I will be celebrating Mass there. Please pray for all the young people of our Diocese.

	Third Sunday of Lent	Third Sunday in Lent Sat Vigil Mass 6pm- <i>dantis</i> 10.00 Holy Mass- <i>Bert Crittal RIP</i>	Coffee in the Hall after Mass on Sundays
Mon 20 th Mar	Feast of St Joseph, solemnity	9.00 Exposition, 9.30 Rosary, 9.50 Benediction 10.00 Mass- <i>Don and Agnes Campbell RIP</i>	12.45- 13.30 Commentary (CD) on The Mystery of Christ's Passion in Church Hall
Tues 21 st Mar		18.30 Stations of the Cross 19.00 Holy Mass- <i>Thanksgiving 10th Wedding Anniversary Shine and Jenny</i>	
Wed 22 nd Mar		9.00 Exposition, 9.30 Rosary, 9.50 Benediction, 10.00 Holy Mass- <i>Carl Parker RIP</i>	Rosary intentions for the sick of the Parish.
Thur 23 rd Mar		9.00 Exposition, 9.30 Rosary, 9.50 Benediction, 10.00 Holy Mass- <i>Thanksgiving birthday Agnes Mambo</i>	Rosary intentions for peace in the world. Choir practice after Mass
Fri 24 th Mar		9.30 Stations of the Cross 10.00 Holy Mass- <i>Martin Hogan RIP</i> 5.30- 6.30 Indian Community Stations of the Cross	Lenten lunches from 12- 1.30pm in Hall 5pm Holy Communion Classes in the hall
Sat 25 th Mar	The Annunciation of the Lord, solemnity	9.30 Chaplet of Divine Mercy and veneration of relic of St Sister Faustina, 10.00 Holy Mass- <i>Private intention of donor</i> Fourth Sunday of Lent. Vigil Mass 6pm- Derrick Hobbs RIP	.
Sun 26 th Mar	Fourth Sunday of Lent (Mothering Sunday)	10.00 Holy Mass-	Coffee in hall after Mass

Collections for 12th March Loose. £292.19 and gift aid (envelopes only) £251.00 **CAFOD- loose £284.20 and gifted aided £272.70**. Thank you very much for your continued support of the Church. Second Collection on March 25th is for the Clergy Assistance Fund

For enquires about Baptisms and Weddings please contact the office for forms, and for funerals please discuss dates first with the funeral directors and meet the parish priest with a date.

Reader 18/19th March

Sat: B Dempster M Newland

Sun: C Fradd H Fawcett

EMHC 18/19th March

Sat: B Petts M Harwood F Fallon

Sun J Thomas P Clarke J Kurian

Readers 25/26th March

Sat: M Hobbs Cd'Espagnac

Sun: J Thomas G Mambo

EMHC 25/26th March

Sat: J Coyne M Newland B Coyne

Sun: J Nichols G Mambo A Joseph

Sacrament of Reconciliation After Wednesday and Saturday morning Mass and before Sat Vigil Mass at 5.45pm and on request.

Parish Priest: Father George Ngwa:
email: gngwa@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk.
Emergencies only: mobile 07475753040
Parish Office: Mrs Johanna Thomas:
ololnewmilton@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
Tel. 01425 614968;
OFFICE HOURS Wed and Fri: 10.45 am – 12 noon;
Safeguarding: Katherine Dempster Tel. 01425 611643
Health and Safety: Lorenzo Bandonill
Hall Booking: via Parish Office

Advance warning. Johanna will be away from Saturday 25th March until Wednesday 5th April so the office will not be manned. All Masses during this time have already been booked, except for Sunday 26th March. So let me know this week if you wish this Mass for your intentions and not Father otherwise it will be confusing. Thank you. Johanna
PLEASE NOTE. THERE IS A MASS ON MONDAY 20th MARCH AS FEAST OF ST JOSEPH