

OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH In NEW MILTON

Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth

15 Mount Ave, New Milton. BH25 6NT.

Parish priest: *Father George Ngwa*

Church opening hours **07.30- 17.00 (during winter)**



1st Sunday of Lent Year B 18 February 2018

Message of the Holy Father Pope Francis for Lent 2018

“Because of the increase of iniquity, the love of many will grow cold” (Mt 24: 12)

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Once again, the Pasch of the Lord draws near! In our preparation for Easter, God in His providence offers us each year the season of Lent as a “sacramental sign of our conversion”.^[1] Lent summons us, and enables us, to come back to the Lord wholeheartedly and in every aspect of our life.

With this message, I would like again this year to help the entire Church experience this time of grace anew, with joy and in truth. I will take my cue from the words of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew: “Because of the increase of iniquity, the love of many will grow cold” (24:12).

These words appear in Christ’s preaching about the end of time. They were spoken in Jerusalem, on the Mount of Olives, where the Lord’s passion would begin. In reply to a question of the disciples, Jesus foretells a great tribulation and describes a situation in which the community of believers might well find itself: amid great trials, false prophets would lead people astray and the love that is the core of the Gospel would grow cold in the hearts of many.

False prophets Let us listen to the Gospel passage and try to understand the guise such false prophets can assume.

They can appear as “snake charmers”, who manipulate human emotions in order to enslave others and lead them where they would have them go. How many of God’s children are mesmerized by momentary pleasures, mistaking them for true happiness! How many men and women live entranced by the dream of wealth, which only makes them slaves to profit and petty interests! How many go through life believing that they are sufficient unto themselves, and end up entrapped by loneliness!

False prophets can also be “charlatans”, who offer easy and immediate solutions to suffering that soon prove utterly useless. How many young people are taken in by the panacea of drugs, of disposable relationships, of easy but dishonest gains! How many more are ensnared in a thoroughly “virtual” existence, in which relationships appear quick and straightforward, only to prove meaningless! These swindlers, in peddling things that have no real value, rob people of all that is most precious: dignity, freedom and the ability to love. They appeal to our vanity, our trust in appearances, but in the end they only make fools of us. Nor should we be surprised. In order to confound the human heart, the devil, who is “a liar and the father of lies” (Jn 8:44), has always presented evil as good, falsehood as truth. That is why each of us is called to peer into our heart to see if we are falling prey to the lies of these false prophets. We must learn to look closely, beneath the surface, and to recognize what leaves a good and lasting mark on our hearts, because it comes from God and is truly for our benefit.

A cold heart In his description of hell, Dante Alighieri pictures the devil seated on a throne of ice,^[2] in frozen and loveless isolation. We might well ask ourselves how it happens that charity can turn cold within us. What are the signs that indicate that our love is beginning to cool?

More than anything else, what destroys charity is greed for money, “the root of all evil” (1 Tim 6:10). The rejection of God and his peace soon follows; we prefer our own desolation rather than the comfort found in his word and the sacraments.^[3] All this leads to violence against anyone we think is a threat to our own

“certainties”: the unborn child, the elderly and infirm, the migrant, the alien among us, or our neighbour who does not live up to our expectations.

Creation itself becomes a silent witness to this cooling of charity. The earth is poisoned by refuse, discarded out of carelessness or for self-interest. The seas, themselves polluted, engulf the remains of countless shipwrecked victims of forced migration. The heavens, which in God’s plan, were created to sing His praises, are rent by engines raining down implements of death.

Love can also grow cold in our own communities. In the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, I sought to describe the most evident signs of this lack of love: selfishness and spiritual sloth, sterile pessimism, the temptation to self-absorption, constant warring among ourselves, and the worldly mentality that makes us concerned only for appearances, and thus lessens our missionary zeal.[4]

What are we to do? Perhaps we see, deep within ourselves and all about us, the signs I have just described. But the Church, our Mother and Teacher, along with the often bitter medicine of the truth, offers us in the Lenten season the soothing remedy of prayer, almsgiving and fasting.

By devoting more time to *prayer*, we enable our hearts to root out our secret lies and forms of self-deception,[5] and then to find the consolation God offers. He is our Father and he wants us to live life well.

Almsgiving sets us free from greed and helps us to regard our neighbour as a brother or sister. What I possess is never mine alone. How I would like almsgiving to become a genuine style of life for each of us! How I would like us, as Christians, to follow the example of the Apostles and see in the sharing of our possessions a tangible witness of the communion that is ours in the Church! For this reason, I echo Saint Paul’s exhortation to the Corinthians to take up a collection for the community of Jerusalem as something from which they themselves would benefit (cf. *2 Cor* 8:10). This is all the more fitting during the Lenten season, when many groups take up collections to assist Churches and peoples in need. Yet I would also hope that, even in our daily encounters with those who beg for our assistance, we would see such requests as coming from God Himself. When we give alms, we share in God’s providential care for each of His children. If through me God helps someone today, will He not tomorrow provide for my own needs? For no one is more generous than God.[6]

Fasting weakens our tendency to violence; it disarms us and becomes an important opportunity for growth. On the one hand, it allows us to experience what the destitute and the starving have to endure. On the other hand, it expresses our own spiritual hunger and thirst for life in God. Fasting wakes us up. It makes us more attentive to God and our neighbour. It revives our desire to obey God, who alone is capable of satisfying our hunger.

I would also like my invitation to extend beyond the bounds of the Catholic Church, and to reach all of you, men and women of good will, who are open to hearing God’s voice. Perhaps, like ourselves, you are disturbed by the spread of iniquity in the world, you are concerned about the chill that paralyzes hearts and actions, and you see a weakening in our sense of being members of the one human family. Join us, then, in raising our plea to God, in fasting, and in offering whatever you can to our brothers and sisters in need!

The fire of Easter Above all, I urge the members of the Church to take up the Lenten journey with enthusiasm, sustained by almsgiving, fasting and prayer. If, at times, the flame of charity seems to die in our own hearts, know that this is never the case in the heart of God! He constantly gives us a chance to begin loving anew.

One such moment of grace will be, again this year, the “24 Hours for the Lord” initiative, which invites the entire Church community to celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation in the context of Eucharistic adoration. In 2018, inspired by the words of Psalm 130:4, “With you is forgiveness”, this will take place from Friday, 9 March to Saturday, 10 March. In each diocese, at least one church will remain open for twenty-four consecutive hours, offering an opportunity for both Eucharistic adoration and sacramental confession.

During the Easter Vigil, we will celebrate once more the moving rite of the lighting of the Easter candle. Drawn from the “new fire”, this light will slowly overcome the darkness and illuminate the liturgical assembly. “May the light of Christ rising in glory dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds”,[7] and enable all of us to relive

the experience of the disciples on the way to Emmaus. By listening to God's word and drawing nourishment from the table of the Eucharist, may our hearts be ever more ardent in faith, hope and love.

With affection and the promise of my prayers for all of you, I send you my blessing. Please do not forget to pray for me. *From the Vatican, 1 November 2017 Solemnity of All Saints*

Lenten lunches will take place in the hall each Friday in Lent between 12-1.30 starting on 16th February. They will consist of soup, rolls, butter and cheese. Cost £3.50. Proceeds will go to the Parish funds. Thank you, Robin and team.

Catholic Youth News from the diocese.

Youth 2000 Retreat

Youth 2000 will be returning to the Diocese for a weekend retreat from 27 - 29 April at St Jude's School, Fareham. These retreats offer an incredible opportunity for our young people (ages 16 - 35) to encounter with the Lord in both the Eucharist and in Confession, and are led entirely by young people with invaluable support from clergy and religious.

The weekend will include 24 hour Eucharistic Adoration, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, praise and worship, social time, talks from diocesan and national speakers and a smorgasbord of workshops to deepen your knowledge of the Catholic faith.

Places cost £65, although participants are encouraged to contribute according to their means. Put the dates in your diary, and booking will be available on Eventbrite very soon!

World Youth Day - Panama

We have a small number of places left! Please get in touch if you would like to participate.

Diocesan Youth Ministry lead Tom Sellars 01329 318869

CAFOD exists entirely to serve and uphold the most vulnerable people in our world. Let us pray for them wherever they are and for all who hold power that they may be guarded from its temptation. As this season of Lent begins, let us seek in prayer and fasting a renewal of our fragile world. Amen. **Don't forget** this coming Friday is **Family Fast Day** and there will be a talk at Masses this Sunday from your CAFOD representative about where CAFOD, on your behalf, will spend the money they receive from next week's second collection.

Lourdes Pilgrimage 26th to 28th March 2018 Make this year's Lent special with a wonderful opportunity to be in Lourdes during the beginning of Holy Week. Celebrate the 160th Anniversary of Lourdes with Mass in the grotto, stations of the Cross following the beautiful Via Crucis Way and more. By train and by air (via Stansted). Accommodation at the St Bernadette Pastoral House with bed and breakfast and evening meal included. Approximate total cost will be £200 with £100 deposit. The last date for booking is Sunday 25/2/2018 so don't leave your decision too late. There have to be enough people, at least 6, to make it viable. For further information contact Lucian on 07434546688

Jesus Youth cordially invites you to be a part of "Awakening", a 100 days Eucharistic Adoration initiative happening all across the UK and Europe. Come and join us as one family as we pray especially for our mother church, intentions of Holy father, stronger family and marriage bonds, for peace in the world and for Jesus Youth and all other movements within the Catholic Church.

We would like to solicit each of your esteemed presence during the Adoration here at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish. The first date is **on Friday 23rd February from after mass in the morning until 2pm** and there will be another on Thursday 15th March. There is a sign up sheet at the back of the Church for 23rd February. Thank you. Akhil Joseph.

PALS COMING PROGRAMME:

FEBRUARY: 2nd - Meeting 20th - Lunch 28th - Day Out

MARCH: 2nd - Meeting 13th - Day Out 18th - Lunch For more info contact Jane Gow.

1st Sunday of Lent Year B 18 February 2018

Sunday	18	February	1 st Sunday of Lent	18.00 Vigil Mass – <i>James Reddington - healing intention</i> 10.00 Holy Mass – <i>Missa Pro Populo</i>	Coffee & tea in hall after Mass
Monday	19	February		No Mass	
Tuesday	20	February	of the 1 st week of Lent	18.30 Stations of the Cross 19.00 Holy Mass – <i>Sheila Vernon -for healing</i>	7 pm Tap classes in hall
Wednesday	21	February	of the 1 st week of Lent	9.30 Stations of the Cross 10.00. Holy Mass- <i>June Savage</i>	Confessions after Mass
Thursday	22	February	Chair of St Peter	09.00 Exposition, 09.30 Rosary 09.50 Benediction 10.00 Holy Mass –	Rosary intention for peace in the world
Friday	23	February	of the 1 st week of Lent FAMILY FAST DAY	09.30 Stations of the cross 10.00 Holy Mass – <i>The Living Rosary Group in thanksgiving for their spiritual support</i> Adoration (Jesus Youth UK) after Mass until 2pm 2.30pm Rehearsal in Church for Woman's World Day of Prayer	Confessions after Mass Lenten lunch 12.00-13.30 Cost £3.50
Saturday	24	February	of the 1 st week of Lent	09.30 Divine Mercy chaplet veneration of the relic of Sr Faustina 10.00 Holy Mass – 18.00 Vigil Mass – <i>Elza RIP</i>	Confessions after morning Mass & before Vigil Mass
Sunday	25	February	2 nd Sunday of Lent	10.00 Holy Mass – <i>Chris Brennan RIP</i>	Coffee & tea in hall after Mass

Prayer to St Michael, said at the end of Masses. St Michael, the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who wander through the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen

Collections 10/11 February	
loose	£ 424.99
envelopes	£195.00
Thank you for your continued support	

	Sat 17 Feb	Sun 18 Feb	Sat 24 Feb	Sun 25 Feb
Reader	B Coyne	S Ramsay	A Nash	M Tanner
	T Gearey	J Thomas	P Thorpe	J Thomas
EMHC	J Thomas	P Clarke	J Coyne	J Kurian
	R or M Yon	S Salinger	M Newland	M Tanner
	F Fallon	A Caneda	N Coyne	A Joseph

New rotas are available don't forget yours.

Parish priest: Father George Ngwa

email: gngwa@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk emergency mobile: **07475753040**

Parish office: 01425 614968 Hall Booking via Parish Office

ololnewmilton@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Secretary: Johanna Thomas Wed/ Fri 10.45-12.00.

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

Website: www.nfwp.org.uk

Safeguarding: Katherine Dempster Tel: 01425 611643 email: katherine.dempster@btinternet.com

Stations of the Cross this Lent: Tuesdays 6.30pm, Wednesdays and Fridays 9.30 am