

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 **8:00am - 4.00pm**



FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT YEAR "C" 10TH MARCH 2019

POPE'S MESSAGE FOR LENT 2019

"For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God" (Rom 8:19)

Dear Brothers and Sisters

Each year, through Mother Church, God "gives us this joyful season when we prepare to celebrate the paschal mystery with mind and heart renewed... as we recall the great events that gave us new life in Christ" (*Preface of Lent I*). We can thus journey from Easter to Easter towards the fulfilment of the salvation we have already received as a result of Christ's paschal mystery – "for in hope we were saved" (*Rom 8:24*). This mystery of salvation, already at work in us during our earthly lives, is a dynamic process that also embraces history and all of creation. As Saint Paul says, "the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God" (*Rom 8:19*). In this perspective, I would like to offer a few reflections to accompany our journey of conversion this coming Lent.

1. The redemption of creation

The celebration of the Paschal Triduum of Christ's passion, death and resurrection, the culmination of the liturgical year, calls us yearly to undertake a journey of preparation, in the knowledge that our being conformed to Christ (cf. *Rom 8:29*) is a priceless gift of God's mercy.

When we live as children of God, redeemed, led by the Holy Spirit (cf. *Rom 8:14*) and capable of acknowledging and obeying God's law, beginning with the law written on our hearts and in nature, *we also benefit creation* by cooperating in its redemption. That is why Saint Paul says that creation eagerly longs for the revelation of the children of God; in other words, that all those who enjoy the grace of Jesus' paschal mystery may experience its fulfilment in the redemption of the human body itself. When the love of Christ transfigures the lives of the saints in spirit, body and soul, they give praise to God. Through prayer, contemplation and art, they also include other creatures in that praise, as we see admirably expressed in the "Canticle of the Creatures" by Saint Francis of Assisi (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 87). Yet in this world, the harmony generated by redemption is constantly threatened by the negative power of sin and death.

2. The destructive power of sin

Indeed, when we fail to live as children of God, we often behave in a destructive way towards our neighbours and other creatures – and ourselves as well – since we begin to think more or less consciously that we can use them as we will. Intemperance then takes the upper hand: we start to live a life that exceeds those limits imposed by our human condition and nature itself. We yield to those untrammelled desires that the Book of Wisdom sees as typical of the ungodly, those who act without thought for God or hope for the future (cf. 2:1-11). Unless we

tend constantly towards Easter, towards the horizon of the Resurrection, the mentality expressed in the slogans “*I want it all and I want it now!*” and “*Too much is never enough*”, gains the upper hand.

The root of all evil, as we know, is sin, which from its first appearance has disrupted our communion with God, with others and with creation itself, to which we are linked in a particular way by our body. This rupture of communion with God likewise undermines our harmonious relationship with the environment in which we are called to live, so that the garden has become a wilderness (cf. *Gen 3:17-18*). Sin leads man to consider himself the god of creation, to see himself as its absolute master and to use it, not for the purpose willed by the Creator but for his own interests, to the detriment of other creatures.

Once God’s law, the law of love, is forsaken, then the law of the strong over the weak takes over. The sin that lurks in the human heart (cf. *Mk 7:20-23*) takes the shape of greed and unbridled pursuit of comfort, lack of concern for the good of others and even of oneself. It leads to the exploitation of creation, both persons and the environment, due to that insatiable covetousness which sees every desire as a right and sooner or later destroys all those in its grip.

3. The healing power of repentance and forgiveness

Creation urgently needs the revelation of the children of God, who have been made “a new creation”. For “if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away; behold, the new has come” (*2 Cor 5:17*). Indeed, by virtue of their being revealed, *creation itself can celebrate a Pasch*, opening itself to a new heaven and a new earth (cf. *Rev 21:1*). The path to Easter demands that we renew our faces and hearts as Christians through repentance, conversion and forgiveness, so as to live fully the abundant grace of the paschal mystery.

This “eager longing”, this expectation of all creation, will be fulfilled in the revelation of the children of God, that is, when Christians and all people enter decisively into the “travail” that conversion entails. All creation is called, with us, to go forth “from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God” (*Rom 8:21*). Lent is a sacramental sign of this conversion. It invites Christians to embody the paschal mystery more deeply and concretely in their personal, family and social lives, above all by fasting, prayer and almsgiving.

Fasting, that is, learning to change our attitude towards others and all of creation, turning away from the temptation to “devour” everything to satisfy our voracity and being ready to suffer for love, which can fill the emptiness of our hearts. *Prayer*, which teaches us to abandon idolatry and the self-sufficiency of our ego, and to acknowledge our need of the Lord and his mercy. *Almsgiving*, whereby we escape from the insanity of hoarding everything for ourselves in the illusory belief that we can secure a future that does not belong to us. And thus to rediscover the joy of God’s plan for creation and for each of us, which is to love him, our brothers and sisters, and the entire world, and to find in this love our true happiness.

Dear brothers and sisters, the “lenten” period of forty days spent by the Son of God in the *desert* of creation had the goal of making it once more that *garden* of communion with God that it was before original sin (cf. *Mk 1:12-13*; *Is 51:3*). May our Lent this year be a journey along that same path, bringing the hope of Christ also to creation, so that it may be “set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God” (*Rom 8:21*). Let us not allow this season of grace to pass in vain! Let us ask God to help us set out on a path of true conversion. Let us leave behind our selfishness and self-absorption, and turn to Jesus’ Pasch. Let us stand beside our brothers and sisters in need, sharing our spiritual and material goods with them. In this way, by concretely welcoming Christ’s victory over sin and death into our lives, we will also radiate its transforming power to all of creation.

From the Vatican, 4 October 2018, Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi

FRANCIS

"It is Lent again – so what is the meaning of Lent?"

Lent is a period of fasting, moderation, and self-denial traditionally observed by Catholics and some Protestant denominations. It begins with [Ash Wednesday](#) and ends with [Easter Sunday](#). The length of the Lenten fast was established in the 4th century as 46 days (40 days, not counting Sundays). During Lent, participants eat sparingly or give up a particular food or habit. It's not uncommon for people to give up smoking during Lent, or to give up watching television or eating candy, chocolate, drinking alcohol or telling lies. It's six weeks of self-discipline.

Lent began as a way for Catholics to remind themselves of the value of repentance. The austerity of the Lenten season was seen as similar to how people in the Old Testament fasted and repented in sackcloth and ashes (Esther 4:1-3; Jeremiah 6:26; Daniel 9:3). However, over the centuries Lenten observances have developed a much more "sacramental" value. Many Catholics believe that giving something up for Lent is a way to attain God's blessing. Jesus taught that fasting should be done discreetly: "When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen" (Matthew 6:16-18).

Fasting can be a good thing, and God is pleased when we repent of sinful habits. There's absolutely nothing wrong with setting aside some time to focus on Jesus' death and resurrection. However, repenting of sin is something we should be doing every day of the year, not just for the 46 days of Lent; although lent makes it very apt. The key to Lenten observance is to focus on repenting of sin and consecrating oneself to God. Lent should not be a time of boasting of one's devotional practice but trying to feel the pitch of our own sins and trying to understand what it cost Christ to redeem us all in his self giving sacrifice on Cavalry. **Fr, George Ngwa**

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

CAFOD PRAYER INTENTION FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

We pray for all those who hunger: through the grace of God may they know that they are not forgotten. May they find the strength and support that they need to lift themselves out of poverty.

Fr George's Anniversary of 25 Years in the Priesthood – 19th March 1994 – 19th March 2019

We would like to congratulate Fr. George on the occasion of 25 years in Ministry. Detail on the Celebrations in our next Newsletter Issue.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY Please don't forget our Programme starts today 10th March. Full details on the noticeboard at the back of Church.

CAFOD LENT FAMILY FAST DAY Friday 15th March

CAFOD Lent family fast day is an opportunity to support our brothers and sisters overseas who are in need. On Friday 15th March can you eat a simple meal so that others can simply eat. Through CAFOD's global network your support can reach to the ends of the earth so please collect your fast day envelope from church and give whatever you can or you can donate online at <https://cafod.org.uk/Fundraise/Fast-Day> Thank you!

NATIONAL NOVENA TO ST. JOSEPH – 10th – 18th March 2019 – The National Novena to St. Joseph will take place from 10 to 18th March 2019 at St. Joseph's Church in Maidenhead and at Herbert House, Freshfield, Liverpool. Each year the Mill Hill Missionaries prepare for the Feast of St. Joseph, their patron, with a special Novena of Masses and prayers to ask for God's blessing on their Society and the missionary outreach of the Church, as well as for the intentions of all those who support their work. You are invited to send in your petitions and/or to request a Novena booklet to enable you to join in from home by praying the daily Novena prayer. Please write to Fr. Brian Oswald MHM, St. Joseph's Missionary Society, 58 Cookham Road, Maidenhead, SL6 7HT or email: novenamhm@gmail.com

Saturday Vigil	09	Mar.	FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT YEAR "C"	18.00 VIGIL MASS of FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT YEAR "C" – Daniel & Brigit O’Sullivan (RIP) & Patrick	Coffee & Tea in the Hall after Mass
Sunday morning	10	Mar.		10.00 Holy Mass – <i>Speedy Recovery for a Friend of Margaret Hobbs</i>	
Monday	11	Mar.			
Tuesday	12	Mar.	Tuesday of the 1 st Week of Lent Yr C	18.25 Stations of the Cross 19.00 Holy Mass - <i>Fr. George’s Birthday</i>	
Wednesday	13	Mar.	Wednesday of the 1 st Week of Lent	09.25 Stations of the Cross 10.00 Holy Mass – <i>For all deceased members of the Buckland Family</i>	Confession after Mass
Thursday	14	Mar.	Thursday of the 1 st Week of Lent	09.00 Exposition, 09.30 Rosary, 09.50 Benediction 10.00 Holy Mass - <i>Paul & Bill Ratcliffe</i>	
Friday	15	Mar.	Friday of the 1 st Week of Lent	09.25 Stations of the Cross 10.00 Holy Mass - <i>Pam Loftus Birthday</i>	Confession after Mass
Saturday	16	Mar.	Saturday of the 1 st Week of Lent	09.30 Divine Mercy Devotion 10.00 Holy Mass – <i>Roy & Mary Tanner Anniversary</i>	Confession after Mass
Saturday vigil Mass			Saturday of the 1 st Week of Lent	18.00 - Vigil Mass of the Second Sunday of Lent – <i>Brigid Horan</i>	17.30 Confession
Sunday	17	Mar.	SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT YEAR C CAFOD Lent Day	10.00 Holy Mass. – <i>Brigid Horan</i>	Coffee & Tea in the Hall after Mass

IMPORTANT – MASS OFFERINGS/INTENTIONS. If you would like Holy Mass said for your Intention(s), then please take one of the envelopes on the shelf by the Confessional and fill in your details, add an offering and place it into the general collection at one of the weekend Masses. The next available day will be booked in the diary. If you wish a specific date, please give plenty of notice and phone the office during opening times or call in to check the date is available. Thank You!

Collections 2 nd /3 rd March		Sat. 09 Mar.	Sun. 10 Mar.	Sat. 16 Mar.	Sun. 17 Mar
loose	£374.72	Reader B. Dempster	C. Barrett	J. Marriott	A.Punchekun
envelopes	£255.00	K. Dempster	C. Barrett	G. Gordelier	A. Joseph
		EMHC M. Harwood	M. Tanner	F. Fallon	J. Nichols
		J. Thomas	Akhil Joseph	M. Newland	S. Salinger
		C.d’Espagnac	J. Nichols	T. Gearey	M. Buckland

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lolnewmilton@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Secretary: Lizzie Davies Wednesday 12.00h-16.00h & Friday 10.00h-14.00h

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

Website: www.nfwp.org.uk

Safeguarding Minister: Tony Harwood Tel: **01425 511 952** or email hughharwood314@hotmail.co.uk

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.