

# 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 07.30am – 4.00pm



FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT - YEAR "A" 1<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2020

## Lent 2020 The Reasons We Fast As Christians.

It is Lent again, the favourable time of grace. Fasting is a sacred time in which Christians abstain from food, or other pleasures, and take the time to focus on God. Many Christians follow the tradition of fasting through the season of Lent as prescribed by the Church. Although many will not fast completely for the 40 days, some will choose to commit to various forms of fasting that require some sort of personal sacrifice. So why is fasting so important to us Christians?

**Fasting Is Good** – Fasting is a very important habit, a very powerful thing that opens us up to receive more of the Lord and have less of ourselves. Fasting is more than just depriving ourselves of food for a certain period of time. It's a means to achieve something that we cannot achieve using any other means.

Unlike medical fasting where a patient merely avoids food in preparation for some medical examination, or weight-loss fasting where people deliberately skip a meal to lessen fat intake, our fasting doesn't just involved skipping a meal to get better medical results and a slimmer waistline.

Fasting is an old habit being done by those who want to seek God. Those who want to deny themselves to follow Christ have a great help in fasting, and those who want to establish a greater desire for God would want to do it and develop the discipline of fasting every now and then.

*However before you fast remember the following:*

Hold the right motives. Note that fasting as a Christian means to humble yourself before God. It is a way to glorify our Lord. Keep these aspects in mind while you fast. Don't confuse this with any other reasons for fasting such as weight loss, etc. Centre your fasting on Jesus alone.

Pray before your fast. Go to confession and confess every one of your sins, and inviting the Holy Spirit to lead your life. Let Jesus know you wish to know Him personally. Humble yourself to ask forgiveness from everyone you have hurt and ask forgiveness from God. Forgive those who have hurt you. You do not want to enter into a fast holding grudges, carrying envy, pride, anger or hurt. The enemy will try to use those things to distract you from your fast.

Meditate on the Gospel, and on the Holy traits of our Lord. These may include the ability to forgive, His strength or wisdom, His peace, the capacity to love unconditionally, etc. Praise Him for these attributes.

Take note of the length of your fasting experience. Note the type of fast you are being called to. A partial fast may mean giving up only certain types of foods. Juice fasts remove the pleasure of chewing any type of solid food,

Drink enough water to support life, since it is not a food, observing this *Absolute Caution*: In an absolute fast one abstains from solid and liquid "foods" for example, fruit juices are foods. But, water is essential for life much as breathing, as one may go into state of dehydration.

*Here are some reasons why fasting as a Lenten discipline is very important for us Christians:*

**1. It allows us to deny ourselves** - *"Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.'" (Matthew 16:24)*

In fasting, we all deny ourselves of something so hard to deny: food and other things. There are many things that we do during lent as means of fasting. Authentic fasting means we will deny ourselves of food – a basic necessity – so that we can seek God. The Bible warns us about turning our stomach into a god, saying such people are enemies of God:

*"For many are walking in such a way that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ. I have told you of them often and tell you again, even weeping. Their destination is destruction, their god is their appetite, their glory is in their shame, their minds are set on earthly things." (Philippians 3:18-19)*

Fasting without the intention to seek God isn't fasting. It's merely skipping a meal for some reason.

**2. It Strengthens Our Spirit And Weakens The Flesh** - It's a known Biblical principle that those who walk in the flesh, fulfilling its desires, won't be strong in the Spirit. Galatians 5:16 tells us, *"I say then, walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."* When we fast, we train our stomach to submit to God's Spirit.

**3. It Shows Our Desire To Seek God** - Fasting is a simple way to show how much we long for God. In Luke 5:34-35, we read the Lord Jesus telling certain people, *"Can you make the attendants of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them. Then in those days they will fast."* (Simply put, we who are longing for His return fast and pray for Him to return. Our fasting doesn't benefit Him, but it does show how serious we are towards Him.)

**4. Jesus says so** - "In Matthew 6:16, he says: 'When you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others...' Instead, do it in secret; it's between you and God. He doesn't explain what fasting is for, he just assumes people will do it. So there is a strong biblical warrant for this kind of spiritual discipline."

**5. We follow in his footsteps** - "Jesus himself fasted for 40 days (Matthew 4:2, Luke 4:2). The 40 days of Lent are a way of identifying ourselves with him during the days leading up to his crucifixion and resurrection. Denying ourselves a favourite food or some other luxury is a sign we are walking with him to the cross."

**6. Fasting is a form of offering** - "When we deny ourselves something we enjoy, and which it isn't wrong to want, we are saying there is something more important in our lives than purely physical pleasure. If we fast because we're dieting for our health, it's because how we feel and look is more important. Fasting in Lent means that God is more important."

**7. It's a spiritual discipline** - "When we fast, we are exercising our spiritual muscles. When we refrain from a basic physical desire such as eating, we're saying we refuse to be dominated or controlled by the needs of our bodies. If we can deny ourselves food, we can learn to deny ourselves other things too, which may be much more harmful or morally questionable."

**8. It reminds us of God** - "Many of us get through the day without thinking much about God. But knowing we have to be alert and in control of our instincts, having to fight the temptation to indulge in something we enjoy, reminds us of our discipleship and of his reality in our lives."

*Fr. George Ngwa*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**PRAYER CORNER** – Ash Wednesday, the start of the 40 days of Lent, gives us a new opportunity to pray, fast and give alms in a special way for our intentions. Could you pray for an end to abortion, an end to the killing of unborn babies in our country? Would you pray an Our Father, Hail Mary, Rosary, participate in an extra Mass or any prayer of your choice for an end to this scourge? Our Lady of Walsingham pray for us. Our Lady of Guadalupe Mother of the Unborn – pray for us.

**LIVING ROSARY GROUP** – Next Meeting on **Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March** at 5.45 p.m.

**PALS - Outing for those booked Thursday March 5<sup>th</sup>** - Please be at usual pickup point . **PALS - Monthly Meeting - March 6 after Mass in our hall.**

**CAFOD LENT FAMILY FAST DAY – Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March**

This Lent CAFOD's family fast day is an opportunity to reach out to some of the poorest , most marginalised of our sisters and brothers. Please consider eating a simple meal and put what you save in the CAFOD collection envelope. Through CAFOD's global Church family your support can help those living in poverty overseas so many thanks for your donation.

**WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2020 – Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March – Praying with Zimbabwe** There will be a service for everyone at St. Mary Magdalene C of E Church, Church Lane, New Milton on **Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March** at 2.30 p.m. **Rise! Take your Mat and Walk.** Refreshments will be served after the service.

**BIBLE IN ACTION – A NEW DIOCESAN SERIES FOR LENT** Bible in Action, which has been provided for the Diocese by CAFOD and Caritas, is being introduced by the Diocese as part of the *Year of the Word*. This series features short podcasts to help us live this Lent in the light of Scripture and Laudato Si', with practical suggestions. To tune in, visit :<http://www.godwhospeaks.org/media> and scroll down to Bible in Action. Each week during Lent, Jo Lewry from CAFOD Portsmouth, and Kevin Gallaher from Caritas Diocese of Portsmouth, will offer us a reflection on their work in the light of Scripture and Pope Francis' Laudato Si', with concrete suggestions for us to live according to the **Word of God** in our personal, family and parish life.

**REFLECTIONS DURING LENT** After his baptism, Jesus is led by the Holy Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. Jesus has shown his solidarity with humankind by being baptised by John – even though, being sinless, he has no need of it – and in doing so has been revealed as the Son of God; now he goes even deeper into his solidarity with weak and fragile humanity by allowing himself to be tempted - and, in doing so, yet again reveals the power of his divinity. As he overcomes the Devil's temptations, Jesus reveals that his power and his mission flow from his identity as the beloved Son of the Father, and sets the pattern for how we, made adopted children of God by baptism, can emerge strengthened and empowered for mission by overcoming our own temptations through his aid. The Diocese encourages us to reflect on:-

**Faith** - do I know and understand that the love of Jesus is greater and stronger than any temptation or difficulty I might face?

**Hope** – do I trust that overcoming my temptations, with Jesus' help, will draw me closer to Him?

**Love** – do I seek God and the good of others, rather than my own gain or satisfaction, in every decision I make?

### PRAYERS FOR THE NEW ARCHBISHOP



On 22<sup>nd</sup> February a new Archbishop was installed in our Sister Diocese of Bamenda, **Archbishop Andrew Nkea Fuanya**. May we all pray for him in his future ministry as Archbishop. Archbishop Cornelius will now retire. We pray for him and for his health and happiness, grateful to God for all he achieved

**THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT – YEAR “A” 1<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2020**

Saturday	29	Feb.	Vigil Mass of the First Sunday in Lent – Year A	18.00 VIGIL Mass of the First Sunday in Lent – Year A – <i>Brigid Horan (RIP)</i>	
Sunday	01	Mar.	FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT -YEAR A	10.00 Holy Mass - <i>John Lee Williams (4<sup>th</sup> Anniversary - RIP)</i>	
Monday	02	Mar.			
Tuesday	03	Mar.	Tuesday of the 1 <sup>st</sup> Week of Lent - Year A	18.25 - <i>Way of the cross, 19.00 Holy Mass - MPP</i>	
Wednesday	04	Mar.	Wednesday of the 1 <sup>st</sup> Week of Lent – Year A	09.25 - <i>Way of the Cross, 10.00 Holy Mass Kathleen Hawkins (Wellbeing for a speedy recovery)</i>	Confession after Mass
Thursday	05	Mar.	Thursday of the 1 <sup>st</sup> Week of Lent - Year A	09.25 - <i>Way of the Cross, 10.00 Holy Mass Bruno Barros (for wellbeing)</i>	
Friday	06	Mar.	Friday of the 1 <sup>st</sup> Week of Lent – Year A	09.25 - <i>Way of the Cross, 10.00 Holy Mass Teddy Therese (for his Soul – RIP)</i>	Confession after Mass
Saturday	07	Mar.	Saturday of the 1 <sup>st</sup> Week of Lent – Year A	09.30 <i>Divine Mercy Devotion 10.00 Holy Mass – Holy Souls</i>	
Saturday vigil Mass			Vigil Mass of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent - Year A	18.00 - <i>Vigil Mass of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent – Year A - Mary Davies (wellbeing)</i>	Confession 5.30 pm
Sunday	08	Mar.	SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT - Year A	10.00 Holy Mass – <i>The Cole Family (for health &amp; wellbeing)</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!

**This Weekend – 2<sup>nd</sup> Collection for CAFOD**

Collections 22/23 Feb. 2020		Sat. 29 Feb.	Sun. 01 Mar.	Sat. 07 Mar.	Sun.08 Mar.
Loose	£344.81	Reader T.Gearey	S.Salinger	M.Hobbs	P.Caffyn
Envelopes	£159.00	M.Newland	S.Ramsay	A.Nash	P.Caffyn
Thank you for your continued support		<b>EMHC</b> K.Dempster	A.Caneda	T.Gearey	M.Buckland
		C.d’Espagnac	Joseph Kurian	M.Harwood	Akhil Joseph
		B.Dempster	M.Tanner	M.Newland	J.Nichols

**Parish priest: Father George Ngwa**

email: [gngwa@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:gngwa@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk) emergency mobile: **07475753040**

**Parish office: 01425 614968** Hall Booking via Parish Office [ololnewmilton@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:ololnewmilton@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](http://www.nfwp.org.uk)

**Safeguarding Minister: Tony Harwood** Tel: **01425 511 952** or email [hughharwood314@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:hughharwood314@hotmail.co.uk)

Prayers to be said at the end of all Masses. O Sacred Heart of Jesus, we beg you to change us, to convert us and to make us holy. Fill us with a deeper faith, hope and love for you. Send into our hearts the cleansing fire of the Holy Spirit and powerfully renew all the clergy, religious and laity of our Diocese. Unite us in love and respect for one another and unify us as your one, holy people. Grant us a new passion and zeal for the Catholic Faith, for Mission, Outreach and Service. Help us to proclaim your Gospel generously to the poor and needy that many more souls may be saved by finding their way to you in your Church. May Mary Immaculate help us. May St. Edmund of Abingdon and Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati pray for us. Amen

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