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St Bon's eNewsletter

9th February 2018

Welcome to our newsletter bringing you Sunday's news on Friday!

A Message from Fr Tom

I have a friend whose birthday is on the 14th February. This is great for me as I can never forget it, unlike most of my friend's birthdays. This year Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday coincide. My friend is a plugged-in Catholic and I know she will be engaging with the fasting and abstinence asked of us by the church on Ash Wednesday—that makes for a bizarre birthday. I have some idea of her going to a restaurant to celebrate with a glass of water! The coincidence of Valentine's Day with Ash Wednesday throws up many possibilities if you want to engage faithfully with the church's guidelines on fasting and abstinence (see back page). It actually makes for the perfect date, you bring your loved one to Mass on Ash Wednesday evening and dine on the food of eternal life! What's more you save on the meal, which means you tick the fasting box, and then you can give the money saved to charity which means you tick the almsgiving box. It is a win win. You spend time with your loved one too. What could be better? As we approach Lent, I find myself comparing our observances with those of our Muslim brothers and sisters.

I think I have some type of religious inferiority complex. When I think of Ramadan, the words discipline, meaningful, significant, hardcore, serious all come to mind. It sounds really testing and probably involves a lot of faith to do it properly. If you don't know, a Muslim will forego both eating and drinking (even water) during the hours of sunlight for a month. This of course means that many will fill up early in the morning and in the evening but, nonetheless, it is something to admire. When I think of Lent, the words that come to my mind are not about what it is meant to be but about what it has seemed to have become, not serious, lite, inconvenient, excuse, habit, routine. I wonder if anyone would look at the Catholic community in Western Europe and feel inspired by Lent, maybe, but one of its main tenants, fasting, has become a lost

treasure, seemingly the reserve of spiritual elites like monks or cloistered nuns or of the fanatical who take their faith too seriously.

Lenten practice is not a sectarian competition, they do this so we must do that, nor is it a feat to be achieved. True fasting and abstinence is something we undertake in relationship with God, we do it in his grace and through his strength. That is the point of it, not to prove something of ourselves but to make ourselves a little more vulnerable and more in need of God's presence in our lives. It's purpose is to make a deeper space for God in our lives and to be renewed by his power and love. I am very attached to my creature comforts, now with the able help of Alexa, my virtual assistant, I don't even need to leave the sofa to dim the lights! I like many have been softened by Western luxury, comfort and convenience but Lent offers us an opportunity to tap into something deeper, a spiritual practice going back thousands of years that can help us connect with the eternal, with our creator, with our origins. If the thought of fasting unsettles you, good - it is simple but challenging, it says I am not the centre of the world. It points to the existence to one who is above all and the source of all. With God's grace, let us make this Lent a time of renewal and return to the source. That we may be truly alive to the love of God.

Fr Tom

Lent 2018

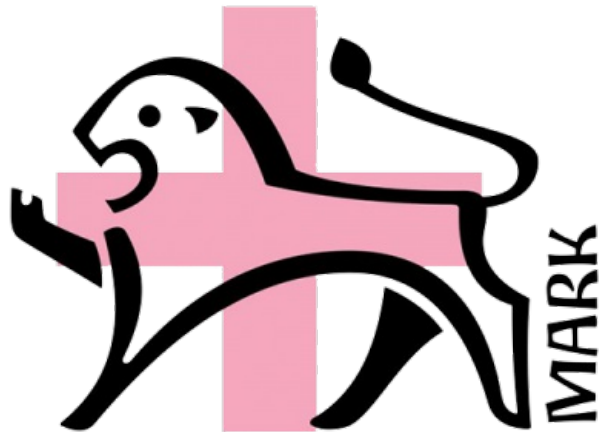
Ash Wednesday: Ash Wednesday, 14th February 2018, is the Church's solemn call to keep the season of Lent. We accept this call united with the catechumens and recalling our own baptism as we enter this special time of prayer and penitential practice. Lent is not simply a time of personal devotion and renewal. It is a time of community renewal as we seek to renew hearts and souls together. Ashes are blessed and distributed after the homily of the Mass, opening this season of sorrow and mercy. These ashes will be ritually washed away in the new waters of the Easter Vigil. These ashes are of branches of the olive, palm or other tree, which have been blessed on Palm Sunday, the previous year.

Fasting is observed by all 18 years of age and older, who have not yet celebrated their 59th birthday. On a fast day, one full meal is allowed. Two other meals, sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to each one's needs, but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted, but liquids, including milk and juices, are allowed. Parents should ensure that even those who are still too young to be bound by the laws of fasting and abstinence are trained to have a true appreciation of penance.

Abstinence is observed by all 14 years of age and older. On days of abstinence, no meat is allowed. Note that when health or ability to work would be seriously affected, the law does not oblige. When in doubt concerning fast and abstinence, the parish priest should be consulted. Almsgiving in conjunction with fast and abstinence and linked with a greater intensity in prayer opens our awareness to the needs of others for whom fasting and abstinence are a way of life by virtue of their socio-economic status. For those of us who have the privilege of being able to fast and abstain, we do so in solidarity with our less fortunate sisters and brothers throughout the world, and unite our sacrifice with theirs in interceding to the Lord for peace in our time.

Year of Mission

MISSION



Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time & First Sunday in Lent

During this *Year of Mission*, Fr Christopher from the Diocese's Department for Adult Education and Evangelisation shares these thoughts with us:

Sixth Sunday of The Year

This Sunday's gospel, like last week's, is a touching encounter – the physical touch of a leper... an untouchable. This is a life changing encounter for the leper and a transformation from a nobody into a someone; from being outside to a re-joining of community and society; from a life that is a kind of half-life to the gift of re-newed life. 'Of course I want to!' says Jesus. And Jesus risks everything by touching the leper, by reaching out to him. It is amazing how a simple outreach towards others who feel forgotten and ignored can bring them back to life. Pope Francis reminds us that no one is excluded from what the Lord brings but, like Jesus reaching out to the leper, it means taking a risk! Let this coming week be a 'risky' week where you find yourself drawing others into love of God through the outreach you offer.

First Sunday of Lent

We've begun our Lenten pilgrimage and this first Sunday of Lent sends us back into the wilderness. Mark's account is short and to the point. He tells us that Jesus 'was with the wild beasts'. As we face the truth of our lives, as we seek to embrace the challenge and invitation of Jesus' own call, 'Repent', we have to face those demons, those wild beasts within. These are the things that need our focus and our attention during this season of renewal and growth – taming these wild things within us; letting go of the 'wild' things so that we grow to become more the person God calls us to be. But Jesus' first words in Mark's gospel also reveal to us the message we proclaim as missionary disciples: God's kingdom is near, God is near. May this first week of Lent allow God's nearness to come to those around us through the God we reveal in our words and our actions.

News and Events

R.I.P.: Please pray for the repose of the soul of Judy Tooze. Judy Tooze's funeral will be at St Bon's on Monday 19th February at 12pm.

Ash Wednesday 14th February: There will be two Masses at St Bon's on Ash Wednesday at 9.15am and 7pm.

Fasting & Abstinence: Ash Wednesday is one of two days of fasting and abstinence in the Church's calendar. The guidelines are detailed on the back page of the newsletter.

Lent Day By Day: These booklets are now available at the back of Church. Please do take a copy in return for a small donation.

Stations of the Cross: Every Friday during Lent at 11.30am and 6.15pm.

New Job Share Vacancy: Are you gifted in communications? Do you love social media? If so, Fr Tom needs you! We are looking to employ a new communications co-ordinator to work alongside our parish administrator to help people get to know about St Bon's and learn about all the amazing things that are happening here. The job would be 9 hours a week, including school holidays. Flexible hours and opportunity to work some hours from home. If you are interested and would like to apply, please email the Parish Office and we will send you a detailed job description and application form. Deadline for submission Monday 19th February 2018.

Mass Times: As most of you will be aware, Fr Tom would like to ask your opinion as to whether you would like to see a different time for the weekend Masses. The questionnaire is now available at the back of church or you can now complete it online via <https://tinyurl.com/stbonmass>. It sets out times for each weekend Mass to enable parishioners to choose a first and second option. When completing the questionnaire, please consider not what you are used to but what may be better for our whole community and in particular to encourage new people to our parish. To avoid electoral corruption(!) for each response to be accepted you must write your name on the questionnaire. It would also be helpful if you put on the questionnaire which Mass you normally attend. If you have already completed a paper questionnaire, thank you and please do not complete the online one as well. We look forward to hearing your views.

Business Centre & Development Fund: Thank you for your tremendous support and pledges. We are really excited to let you know that the business centre is now fully let! If you have not collected your signed loan certificates, please don't forget to do so—they are ready for collection after Mass at the weekends or you can collect them from the Counting Room in the Presbytery. Thank you again for all your support with this project and thank you to Bristol Spaceworks for their great efforts in finding us occupants for the offices.

Praying the Rosary: The monthly Parish Rosary Prayer Group will meet on Tuesday 6th March at 2pm in the Dining Room in St Bonaventure's Presbytery. We will pray and discuss the Rosary and have a cup of tea. Contact Chris Searle 07771161259. All welcome. Prayer requests most welcome.

Lenten Reconciliation Mass: The Lenten Reconciliation Mass will take place at St Teresa's on Thursday 22nd March at 7pm led by Bishop Declan. You are warmly invited to attend.

Modern Slavery Event: Following on from the collection of Christmas presents for the women in the Modern Slavery safe house, St Bon's would like to provide continued support. We understand that there are items required on an on going basis for the house (such as welcome packs for the ladies, who arrive with nothing but the clothes they are wearing) and also that there is the opportunity to provide social support (with some training). In order to get a full picture of what is required Simone Lord, the manager of the house, will visit us on Sunday 18th March. She will speak at both Masses. We are also organising an afternoon event in the Presbytery from 5pm-6.30pm on the same day with a much more detailed talk and an opportunity to ask questions and speak with Simone. Please could you let the Parish Office know if you wish to come (for numbers). Please bring a friend who might be interested in helping. Those who do not attend St Bon's are also welcome to attend.

HCPT Quiz & Curry Night: Saturday 24th February 7.30pm at St Teresa's Social Centre, Filton. Come and have a fun evening. Raffle on the night. Prize for winning team.

Summer Camps: Clifton Diocese Summer Camps have launched for 2018 and bookings are now being taken. This year, the camps have moved to a new location at the Viney Hill Adventure Centre in the Forest of Dean and are being held between 13-17 August (ages 7-11) and 20-24 August (ages 12-16). The camps promise to be a week full of fun, faith and friendship. If you are interested in finding out more, or to book a place for your child, please visit <http://livingyourfaith.co.uk> or email livingyourfaith@hotmail.co.uk.

St Bon's Newsletter: In an effort to reduce the amount of paper we use, we are now printing less copies of the paper newsletter and encouraging as many to subscribe to the e-Newsletter as possible. If you have access to the internet, please go to our website www.stbonsbristol.co.uk and at the bottom of the homepage you can add your email to subscribe. If you do subscribe already, please do not take a paper copy as well as these are needed by those without access to the internet.

Mass Times - Sixth Week of Ordinary Time

Sunday 11th February - Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

9.30am Mass *Michael Cafferkey R.I.P.*

7.00pm Mass *Judy Tooze R.I.P.*

Monday 12th February - Weekday in Ordinary Time

9.00am Morning Prayer

9.15am Mass

Tuesday 13th February - Weekday in Ordinary Time

9.00am Morning Prayer
9.15am Mass *Alan Taylor R.I.P.*

Wednesday 14th February - Ash Wednesday

9.00am Morning Prayer
9.15am Mass
9.45am Holy Hour
7.00pm Mass

Thursday 15th February - Thursday after Ash Wednesday

No Mass

Friday 16th February - Friday after Ash Wednesday

7.00pm Mass *O'Gorman & McCarthy Family & Friends*
7.30pm Holy Hour

Saturday 17th February - Saturday after Ash Wednesday

7.00pm Mass (Vigil) *Pro Pop*

Mass Times - First Week of Lent

Sunday 18th February - First Sunday of Lent

9.30am Mass *Bob Honeyfield R.I.P.*
7.00pm Mass *Judy Tooze R.I.P.*

Monday 19th February - Weekday of Lent

No Morning Prayer or Mass
12.00pm Requiem Mass *Judy Tooze R.I.P.*

Tuesday 20th February - Weekday of Lent

9.00am Morning Prayer
9.15am Mass

Wednesday 21st February - Weekday of Lent

9.00am Morning Prayer
9.15am Mass (St Bon's Year 3 attending)
9.45am Holy Hour

Thursday 22nd February - Feast of the Chair of St Peter the Apostle

No Mass

Friday 23rd February - Weekday of Lent

7.00pm Mass
7.30pm Holy Hour

Saturday 24th February - Weekday of Lent

7.00pm Mass (Vigil) *Judy Tooze R.I.P.*

Confession

Saturday 6.00pm - 6.40pm

Eucharistic Exposition

Monday 10.00am - Wednesday 12.00am

Wednesday 9.45am - 10.45am

Friday 7.30pm - 8.30pm

Saturday 6.00pm - 6.40pm

Please Pray For: Geoff Barrett, Anita Bridges, Christopher Browne, Una Cunniffe, Monica Fletcher, Sheelagh Gaines, Bernadette Minihane, Pat Parry, Nedra Paynter, Roger Paynter, Margaret Rogers, Zygmunt Sawko, Bernard Seward, Ivy Sewell, Martin Sewell, Peter Sewell, Jim Smith and Maria Wysocka.

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