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St Bon's eNewsletter

2nd February 2018

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

A Message from Fr Tom

Spring is in the air! I know it has been very wet and I know that it is still pretty cold but, we have had some beautifully sunny days. I love Spring, usually I am desperate for it, lighter and longer days, the beauty of the crocuses, daffodils and snowdrops and the birds singing all bring a sense of joy to this time of year. But of course Spring means Lent!

It is no coincidence that Lent and Easter occur at this time of year; they are two seasons about rebirth and new life, just like Spring itself. It is quite a wonderful thing that nature aids us in our desire to grow and seek the new life of God. For this new life to come we have to take Lent seriously. Over the years, I have noticed how as Catholics we can make Lent something routine and maybe a bit trivial. We laugh at what we are giving up as if it isn't that important or joke that we don't want to take it too seriously so we won't give up something that we would really miss. The most common conversations I have are with people finding the most determined rationalisations as to why they cannot fast, I am good at them myself!

We often tell people what we are doing for Lent while Jesus in Matthew's Gospel makes it clear that we should keep our good works and spiritual practices between us and our Heavenly Father. If we can approach Lent with generosity and resolve we can find it will bring us spiritual rebirth and new life. If we can discipline our minds and bodies a little, with God's grace, we will see this new life grow within us. The secret of Lent is undertaking our offering with God and though God, not by our own efforts or under our own steam, but with God guiding us. Lent is not a time to try and be the world's strongest Christian, performing feats of disciplinary prowess but it is a time of gentle but determined return to God.

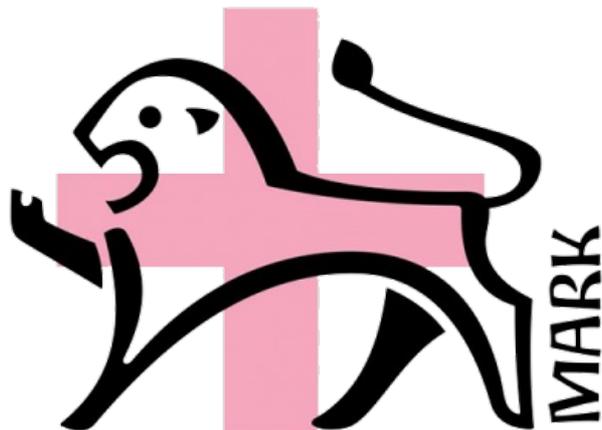
Before Lent begins it might be worth taking a look at our lives. Do we place spiritual things first in our lives? Are we focused on having, on our status or reputation? Is my life focused around taking or about giving and doing? Do I give God much time in my day or is my time given over to 'noise' from the world around me? Jesus gives us three ancient practices, prayer, fasting and almsgiving, to help us move closer to God. Each of them is challenging and I believe we need a little of all three for Lent to be really effective. Making time for prayer can be hard, but why not use Lent as a time to actually do it rather than meaning to do it. If you pray already, what can you do to improve or deepen your practice? Fasting seems to have gone out of fashion in modern Catholic spirituality, it is all the rage among health gurus though! Fasting is emptying our body to make space for God, even more it is emptying our minds, try it and see what effect it has on your mind! You might find a battle taking place when your body doesn't get its fix of its favourite food! That is a chance to open up and give that space to God. When we genuinely grow closer to God we care more about those around us, almsgiving is a sign that we are caring for others. If we gave even our coffee money away each week, we would be sacrificing something important to us for the sake of another.

There is a little time to think about what we are going to do this Lent, whatever it is hopefully it will enable the new life of God to grow within us, that when we come to celebrate the resurrection we can embrace it in our hearts!

Fr Tom

Year of Mission

MISSION



Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

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

The 'first full day' of Jesus' ministry is a full one! You really get a sense that preaching and proclaiming the kingdom needs so much energy and enthusiasm. This Sunday's gospel takes us to a home – the home of Simon and Andrew. It's here that Jesus reaches out to the mother-in-law. He reaches out and he touches her just as he reaches out and touches so many in his ministry. Jesus isn't frightened or constrained by those barriers which might have prevented him from touching. There is no one who is excluded now from the touch of God in their lives. Having been healed, Simon's mother-in-law gets up and waits on them – that encounter with Jesus leads to discipleship. There will be opportunities during this week for each of us to have a touching impact on those around us; someone may come to encounter Christ in us which may well lead them to discipleship. In this Year of Mission, let's not be afraid to be the very touch of God in the lives of others.

Saint of the Week



St Scholastica

Scholastica was the sister of St Benedict and the first Benedictine nun. Her nunnery was about five miles from Monte Cassino. She would meet Benedict once a year and on his last visit to her she asked him in vain to stay longer to discuss “the joys of heaven”. When he refused, she prayed for rain to such effect that a violent thunderstorm prevented him from leaving. She died three days later c.543 and was buried in the tomb Benedict had prepared for himself.

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.

Those whose anniversaries are at this time: Tom Lynas R.I.P.

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 February 6th 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.

PACT: The Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT) are looking for Volunteers at HMP Bristol. PACT believes that everyone deserves a fresh start with non-judgemental support. They have roles in the Visitor centre, Catering and Play areas. These positions vary, and all

require DBS clearance - some require prison vetting experience. Please note this can take a number of weeks. For full descriptions and to apply please check:

<https://www.prisonadvice.org.uk/volunteer>

or contact Casey Clay at

Email: casey.clay@prisonadvice.org.uk

Mobile: 07703705110

Catechists' Formation: The Diocese will be running their course aimed at forming new catechists as well as supporting and refreshing existing and "well-seasoned" catechists every Wednesday evening once a month from 28th February 2018 at St Patrick's Parish Hall, Brockworth. There will be plenty of parking at St Patrick's, sessions start at 7.30pm with refreshments from 7pm. Further information can be found at: <https://cliftondiocese.com/news/new-catechists-formation-course/>.

Hosanna House & Children's Pilgrimage Trust (HCPT) Fundraising Coffee Morning: Veronica and Chris Swann are holding a Fundraising Coffee Morning/bring and buy/cake sale for HCPT on Saturday 10th February 10am - 1pm at 12 Malmesbury Close. Please come along and support this and bring cakes, books, DVDs, bric-a-brac, unwanted Christmas presents etc. to sell. If you are unable to come but have donations of goods to sell these could be left in the Presbytery (in a marked bag please) or taken to the house beforehand. For further information please telephone: 0117 9427018.

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.

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 - Fifth Week of Ordinary Time

Sunday 4th February - Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

9.30am Mass *Eileen McGeary R.I.P.*

7.00pm Mass *Pro Pop*

Monday 5th February - Memorial of St Agatha

9.00am Morning Prayer

9.15am Mass *Judy Tooze R.I.P.*

Tuesday 6th February - Memorial of St Paul Miki & Companions

9.00am Morning Prayer

9.15am Mass *Caci Family*

Wednesday 7th February - Weekday in Ordinary Time

9.00am Morning Prayer

9.15am Mass *Tony Russo R.I.P.*

9.45am Holy Hour

Thursday 8th February - Weekday in Ordinary Time

No Mass

Friday 9th February - Weekday in Ordinary Time

7.00pm Mass

7.30pm Holy Hour

Saturday 10th February - Memorial of St Scholastica

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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