

This Fourth Sunday of Lent is also *Mothering Sunday* and can be called *Laetare Sunday* too. It is a day when the Church rejoices (and encourages us to rejoice) that Easter is approaching and seems to tell us to *keep going* with our Lenten observances. Lent is almost over! Jesus will soon rise from the dead. That is why, to-day, sombre Lenten purple gives way to *rose* or *pink*. (It is one of only *two* days in the year when rose or pink vestments may be worn, the other day being Advent 3.)

When we reach Easter, there are two symbols of the resurrection which we use in Church: fire and light (the Easter Candle) and water (the baptismal font). Last week, we reflected on water and this week there are passages all about light; the true light, which defeats the blindness of sin. This message should speak to all of us who have been baptised, for it invites us to be renewed in the *light of Christ* at Easter. There is a link between the readings set for this Sunday: in the first reading David is anointed and the Spirit of the Lord seizes on him. This anointing lights him along the right path - 'no evil would I fear', as the psalm says. Then Paul tells us more about this light: it is Christ shining on us, calling us to live as children of light. All this is summed up in the Gospel, the marvellous story of the healing (by being anointed with spittle) of the man born blind. Jesus is the light of the world!



*At both 8 and 10 o'clock on Sundays* there are always children's books and craft resources available next to the Children's Corner (by a warm radiator) and there is usually an adult on hand to help the children. Parents are, of course, very welcome to stay with their children during our worship.

**Introit:** Rejoice, Jerusalem! Be glad for her, you who love her; rejoice with her, you who mourned for her, and you will find contentment at her consoling breasts.

**Collect:** Let us pray (*for a greater faith and love*): Father of peace, we are joyful in your Word, your Son Jesus Christ, who reconciles us to you. Let us hasten toward Easter with the eagerness of faith and love. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. **AMEN.**

### **TO-DAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**A reading from the first Book of Samuel (16:1, 6-7 & 10-13):** *David is anointed King of Israel.*

The Lord said to Samuel, 'Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have chosen myself a king among his sons.' When Samuel arrived, he caught sight of Eliab and thought, 'Surely the Lord's anointed stands there before him,' but the Lord said to Samuel, 'Take no notice of his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him: God does not see as man sees: man looks at appearances, but the Lord looks at the heart.' Jesse presented his seven sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, 'The Lord has not chosen these.' He then asked Jesse, 'Are these all the sons you have?' He answered, 'There is still one left, the youngest; he is out looking after the sheep.' Then

Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send for him; we will not sit down to eat until he comes.' Jesse had him sent for, a boy of fresh complexion, with fine eyes and pleasant bearing. The Lord said, 'Come, anoint him, for this is the one.' At this, Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him where he stood with his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord seized on David and stayed with him from that day on.

**The response in the Psalm (22/23) is: *The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.***

**A reading from the letter of S Paul to the Ephesians 5:8-14:** *Rise from the dead and Christ will shine on you.*

You were darkness once, but now you are light in the Lord; be like children of light, for the effects of the light are seen in complete goodness and right living and truth. Try to discover what the Lord wants of you, having nothing to do with the futile works of darkness, but exposing them by contrast. The things which are done in secret are things that people are ashamed even to speak of; but anything exposed by the light will be illuminated and anything illuminated turns into light. That is why it is said: "Wake up from your sleep, rise from the dead and Christ will shine on you".

**Gospel Acclamation:** Glory to you, O Christ; you are the Word of God! 'I am the light of the world,' says the Lord; 'anyone who follows me will have the light of life.' ***Glory to you, O Christ; you are the Word of God!***

**A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John (9: 1, 6-9, 13-17 & 34-38):** *The blind man went off and washed himself and came away with his sight restored.*

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. He spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man and said to him, 'Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam' (a name that means 'sent'). So the blind man went off and washed himself and came away with his sight restored.

His neighbours and people, who earlier had seen him begging, said, 'Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'Yes, it is the same one.' Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.' The man himself said, 'I am the man.'

They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. It had been a sabbath day, when Jesus made the paste and opened the man's eyes, so when the Pharisees asked him how he had come to see, he said, 'He put a paste on my eyes and I washed and I can see.' Then some of the Pharisees said, 'This man cannot be from God: he does not keep the sabbath.' Others said, 'How could a sinner produce signs like this?' And there was disagreement among them. So they spoke to the blind man again, 'What have you to say about him yourself, now that he has opened your eyes?' 'He is a prophet,' replied the man.

'Are you trying to teach us,' they replied, 'and you a sinner through and through, since you were born!' And they drove him away.

Jesus heard they had driven him away and when he found him, he said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' 'Sir,' the man replied, 'tell me who he is, so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said, 'You are looking at him; he is speaking to you.' The man said, 'Lord, I believe', and worshipped him.

### **AT THE INTERCESSIONS**

Intercessor: Lord, in your mercy:

**All: hear our prayer.**

**We pray:** for our parish & for its needs; for local GPs; for the staff of our local hospitals; for all in Hillingdon, who are isolated at this time; for the pupils and staff of the four schools of our parish; for local funeral directors.

**We commend** to God our Father:

**the sick, the housebound & others in any kind of trouble or need:** Barry Beadle, Peter Bennett, Marion Fogell, Brian Measures, Rita Morris, Nellie O'Sullivan, Phil Parris, Mary Ratchford & Veronica Samuel.

**the recently departed:** Maurice Fletcher (*erstwhile NSM curate of All Saints*), June Violet Wilkerson.

**those whose anniversary falls at about this time:** Percy Blake, Gwen Beryl Bristowe, Harold Cox, Edwin Fairman, Michael Jones, Beryl Mearing, Dorothy Moule, Clive Pearce (*priest*), Lexi Sky Rowland-Tickner & Celia Whittaker.

**May they rest in peace and rise in glory!**

We commend all that we have just prayed for, our families, our friends & those we love to the intercession of Mary (the mother of Jesus), S Joseph (her spouse), S Dismas, S Catherine (of Sweden), S Edmund (of East Anglia) & all the saints: **Hail Mary...**



Our usual coffee & refreshments after the 10 o'clock Parish Eucharist are suspended for the time being. Normal service will be resumed as soon as possible.

#### **FOR YOUR DIARY**

##### **1. The Eucharist this week @ASH**

- Wednesday, 25/3; 1000: The Annunciation of the Lord
- Thursday, 26/3; 1830: *Feria* of Lent
- Saturday, 28/3; 1800: Vigil Eucharist of Lent V

##### **2. Friday, 27/3; 1800: Stations of the Cross**

##### **3. NEXT SUNDAY, 29/3: Lent V**

- 0800: Said Eucharist
- 1000: Said Eucharist

#### **FATHER DESMOND'S NOTES THIS WEEK**

- Coronavirus:** The Archbishop of Canterbury and the College of Bishops in London have written to clergy about the present *Coronavirus* situation, during which public worship is suspended. However, they have, very properly, asked that, as far as possible: (a) the life and ministry of our parishes continue; (b) the clergy continue to say their prayers – and encourage others to do the same; (c) the churches continue to be open. In the light of this, I propose to be in church at least at the advertised Service times. For the present, the nave altar will be used and anyone there will be asked to sit well apart from their neighbour. We shall keep our time together short, there will be no music and no-one will be expected to receive Holy Communion, unless they specifically wish to – and then under only one kind. I continue to be available to see parishioners, though I shall do so in church (rather than in their home). I and others also plan to telephone anyone, who for any



reason is isolated. If you wish to telephone me or our Parish Visitor, please do not hesitate to get in touch and encourage others to do the same.

- We were very sorry indeed that last week-end's *Quiz Night* was cancelled. Sadly, other events will have to be cancelled or postponed at the moment. This includes the *Easter Eggstravaganza*, planned for 28 March. Please keep your eye on the *Bulletin*, which can also be read 'on line'.
- As though life were not proving troublesome enough at the moment, we have discovered a serious water leak in the church central heating system. So the pipes buried beneath the floor by the north door have to be dug up and replaced! Please avoid that entrance until further notice.
- Remember: the deadline for items for the April edition of *Saints Alive!* is next Friday, 27 March.
- We understand that Sainsbury's is providing a home delivery service for groceries at a charge of £2.95. It is aimed at those who do not have the *INTERNET*. The number is: 0800 917 8557. (*If you use this service, please let us have feedback.*)
- The Spring edition of *Animal Watch*, the quarterly magazine of the *Anglican Society for the Welfare of Animals*, is on the big table for you to look at.
- Our Lenten offerings this year will go once again to the Salvation Army in Hayes Town. The staff there have provided us with a *Wish List*. This was published in last week-end's *Bulletin*. Donations of dry goods & toiletries continue to be welcome.
- A prayer for the present moment:** *Almighty and most merciful Father, Creator and preserver of mankind, look down with pity upon my troubles and maladies. Heal my body, strengthen my mind, compose my distraction, calm my inquietude and relieve my terrors: that if it please Thee, I may run the race that is set before me with peace, patience, constancy and confidence. Grant this, O Lord, and take not from me Thy Holy Spirit, but pardon and bless me, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.* (Samuel Johnson, +1784)

#### **Parish Priest:**

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To book **Banns of Marriage, Weddings, Baptisms** and so on, please come along to Vestry Hour, which normally takes place in church on Saturdays between 0930 & 1015. (No appointment is needed.)

Parish Website:

[www.allsaintsnorthhilligdon.co.uk](http://www.allsaintsnorthhilligdon.co.uk)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/ASHillingdon](https://www.facebook.com/ASHillingdon)

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