

FIRST READING

Genesis 9:8-15

God spoke to Noah and his sons. "See, I establish my Covenant with you, and with your descendants after you; also with every living creature to be found with you, birds, cattle and every wild beast with you : everything that came out of the ark, everything that lives on the earth. I establish my Covenant with you: no thing of flesh shall be swept away again by the waters of the flood. There shall be no flood to destroy the earth again."

God said, "Here is the sign of the Covenant I make between myself and you and every living creature with you for all generations: I set my bow in the clouds and it shall be a sign of the Covenant between me and the earth. When I gather the clouds over the earth and the bow appears in the clouds, I will recall the Covenant between myself and you and every living creature of every kind. And so the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all things of flesh."

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 24

Your ways, Lord, are faithfulness and love for those who keep your covenant.

1. Lord, make me know your ways.
Lord, teach me your paths.
Make me walk in your truth, and teach me:
for you are God my saviour.
2. Remember your mercy, Lord,
and the love you have shown from of old.
In your love remember me,
because of your goodness, O Lord.
3. The Lord is good and upright. He shows the path to those who stray,
he guides the humble in the right path; he teaches his way to the poor.

SECOND READING

1 Peter 3:18-22

Christ himself, innocent though he was, died once for sins, died for the guilty, to lead us to God. In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life, and, in the spirit, he went to preach to the spirits in prison. Now it was long ago, when Noah was still building that ark which saved only a small group of eight people "by water", and when God was still waiting patiently, that these spirits refused to believe. That water is a type of the baptism which saves you now, and which is not the washing off of physical dirt but a pledge made to God from a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has entered heaven and is at God's right hand, now that he has made the angels and Dominations and Powers his subjects.

Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!

Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!

GOSPEL

Mark 1:12-15

The Spirit drove Jesus out into the wilderness and he remained there for forty days, and was tempted by Satan. He was with the wild beasts, and the angels looked after him. After John had been arrested, Jesus went into Galilee. There he proclaimed the Good News from God "The time has come" he said "and the kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent, and believe the Good News."

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St Anthony of Padua

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Rev. Tom Butler (retired - 07853777957)

Sunday Masses: 6.00 (Vigil - Saturday Evening) 9.30am, 5.00pm (Sunday Morning)

Weekday Mass: Mon-Wed, Fri: 9.15am. (Thurs 9.15am at Holy Family)

Confessions: on request

Annexe: 725544

Social Centre: 735963

Primary school: 726621

Playgroup/Preschool 07963 700591

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Be open to transformation

'The last sentences of today's gospel are considered by many as the summary of Jesus' teaching. "The kingdom of God is *at hand*." i.e. *now*. *We don't die into it; we awaken into it*. The Kingdom of Heaven is really a metaphor for a state of consciousness. It is a whole new way of seeing, which happens when we 'repent' which means to change our mind or turn around. Whatever course we are on we may have to do a 180° turn. And this will entail spending time in the wilderness. "The spirit drove Jesus into the desert." We seldom freely choose our times of change, transformation or conversion. We are usually driven towards them. Circumstances change, fall apart and undo 'business as usual'. It's usually only then that we change. We don't change until we have to.' [1]

Today's gospel encourages us to allow that transformation within us. 'So many of our external securities are being dismantled as we go through the traumatic experiences of Covid. We all rely on the constancy of the structures of society so when the structures suddenly break open, we start to break open. That's what trauma is: we can tolerate anything as long as the centre holds, but it's very scary when the centre starts to go. Lent is a time to reground ourselves, a time to deepen our awareness that our centre is God in whom we live, and move, and have our being, and in these moments of realisation we see that fear has no foundations.' [2]

All over the world images of the rainbow have reminded us that there is hope and light to follow these days of chaos. Today's first reading tells us that this good news is grounded in God's covenant of love with all people and all creation. 'This infinite love of God is our origin' [2] On Ash Wednesday we are reminded that "the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground" (Gen 2:7) This is not meant to be a 'doom and gloom' reminder, but a moment of awe and wonder, knowing what God can do with dust.

'So let us be marked not for sorrow. And let us be marked not for shame. Let us be marked not for false humility or for thinking we are less than we are, but for claiming what God can do within the dust, within the dirt, within the stuff of which the world is made.' [3]

"Be open to transformation and trust the good news."

Adapted: [1] Richard Rohr [2] James Finley [3] Jan Richardson: Blessing the Dust

First Sunday in Lent Year B

21st February 2021

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DIARY AND MASS INTENTIONS

for the week beginning Saturday 20th February 2021

Sat 6.00pm	<i>St. Ant</i>	Private intention	
Sun 9.30am 11.00am 5.00pm	<i>St. Ant</i> <i>H.Family</i> <i>St. Ant</i>	Brian Newsham Lancs Infirm Clergy For our parish	<i>First Sunday in Lent</i>
Mon 9.15am	<i>St. Ant</i>	Fr. Fred Hamer	<i>Feast: Chair of St. Peter</i>
Tue 9.15am	<i>St. Ant</i>	Winnie Gildea	
Wed 9.15am	<i>St. Ant</i>	Special Intention (MD)	
Thur 9.15am	<i>H.Family</i>	Private intention	
Fri 9.15am	<i>St. Ant</i>	President Biden	
Sat 6.00pm	<i>St. Ant</i>	Bill Ellis	
Sun 9.30am 11.00am 5.00pm	<i>St. Ant</i> <i>H.Family</i> <i>St. Ant</i>	Philip Kramer For our parish Private intention	<i>Second Sunday in Lent</i>

Masses received this week: Nita Duggan, Philip Kramer, Pauline Harvey

BIDDING PRAYER INTENTIONS

Let us pray for our Catholic family; for Bishop Paul, for all the people of our Diocese. May we draw ever closer to Christ and let our faith show in all we do and say.

For ourselves that, through prayer, fasting and almsgiving, this Lent may be an opportunity to move away from selfishness and pride to a deepening love of God and neighbour.

For the needy and hungry of the world and for the development and relief work of CAFOD. May this Friday's Fast Day serve to remind us of the call to live more simply and put our faith into action.

We remember in our prayers those of the parish who are suffering ill-health just now, and those who care for them, particularly: Harold Slack, Bill O'Shaughnessy, Malaya, Lawrence Dunnagan, Ray Mannion, Bill York, Vera, Trevor Hughes, Claire, Joyce Hilton, Rev John Kilshaw;

those who have died recently: Margaret McKeown, Margaret Nugent, Agnes Long, Thomas Newsham;

and those whose anniversaries occur around this time: Fr. Fred Hamer, Joseph Slater, Eileen Bamber, Kathleen Gielty, Arnold Horner, Phebe Billington, John Rawcliffe, Jim Whiteside, Stephen & Clare Cummings, David Walker, Gervase Bamber, Bill Ellis, John Hanlon, Francis Smith. May they rest in peace.

LENT

Stations of the Cross.

We are not able to have the Stations in church as usual but some members of the parish will present them on zoom every Friday. 'Doors open' at 5.45. Session starts 6.00pm prompt. Meeting ID: 860 7625 5774 Passcode: 068559

CAFOD Lent Fast Day—this Friday

Our parish CAFOD Group have produced a video for this. It will be available on Youtube from 10.15am this Sunday. See <https://youtu.be/bxWgyBI7svE>

Please take an envelope today. You can donate online at cafod.org.uk/lent, or by texting LENT 10 to 70460 to give £10, (or substitute any other amount e.g. LENT 20).NB If you do not wish to receive marketing communications text LENTNOINFO. You may also telephone 0303 303 3030 or send to CAFOD, Romero House, 55 Westminster Bridge Rd, London SE1 7JB. Thank you.

Livestreaming Mass

As well as normal Mass in church we are now able to livestream the 9.30am Sunday Mass from St. Anthony's church. Go to the St. Anthony of Padua YouTube page and look for the link there. Although you cannot obviously receive holy communion while watching this streaming you could make your own spiritual communion at this time, as follows:

My Jesus, I believe You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since at this moment I cannot receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen

First Holy Communions

We're looking at using Zoom or Microsoft Teams to set up preparation for the sacraments of reconciliation and first holy communion. Its not ideal and no preparation can ever be as good as being at Mass each week gathering with the parish community around the altar of the Lord. But it's a shame to keep the children waiting to take this great step forward in their faith. Please keep them and their families in your prayers.

Virtual Coffee Morning

Join your fellow parishioners at the Zoom Coffee Morning at 11.00 am this Sunday Meeting ID: 898 4267 4110 Passcode: 229935

A National Novena to St. Joseph

- will take place 10th-18th March at St Joseph's Church, Maidenhead. Masses are 7.30 pm 10th-12th March, 10am 13th March, 11am 14th March, 7.30 pm 15th-18th March. If you would like to join in from home you can follow the Masses on Zoom and YouTube via the website: stjosephsparish.co.uk and www.millhillmissionaries.com/novena where you will also find the Novena prayer leaflet or email novenamhm@gmail.com for a copy.

Mass Cards

The Repository at the back of church has been closed since the beginning of lockdown almost a year ago. However we now have a selection of Mass cards available.