



## SEPTUAGESIMA NEWSLETTER

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2011

Our observance of Lent and Easter

Important dates in the Calendar

Finance and Stewardship update

Revision of the Electoral Roll

30 Bourne St, SW1W 8JJ

Dear Parishioners and Friends

The season of LENT which begins on **Ash Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> March** is a season of opportunity for personal and corporate renewal as a Community of Faith.

Jesus said to the Samaritan woman at the well: If you only knew the gift that God is offering you.

Lent is a time to avail ourselves of what God is always offering us: new life, true freedom and fulfilment.

### PERSONAL RENEWAL

One question to ask ourselves could be: *Where am I at?* An odd question!

You might want to review your life, the stage of life you find yourself 'at'. What has brought you to this point and where is your life leading? And this is in relation to God.

Jesus asks the disciples : *Who do you say that I am?* Who is God to you now? We change. Our understanding and images of God change. Old ones wear out and we can't believe in them anymore. This is growth. Who is God now for you? Where do you find meaning?

*Where am I at? Who is God to me?* What is my spiritual life, my relationship with God, my relationship with others, my disciplined Church belonging and commitment, my understanding of the Christian faith - like?

This is an honest reappraisal of our lives as followers of Christ – those who are coming to trust more and more in him rather than ourselves and our own efforts. We have to start from where we are and who we are. This is where God meets us. Do not be afraid.

So in suggesting reading for Lent, I do so tentatively. The list includes books I have found helpful in recent years and you may not find them so. Some people already know some theology while others may not. From my experience, the fundamental (and difficult) question is : what do I want? For what am I seeking? Where's my starting point? (You can't start from where others start, but you may need to start reading in order to find what you find meaningful, what has resonance and what doesn't. And there's no right or wrong, simply what is appropriate for you now.)

And there is all the difference between understanding and engaging with the mind and entering into the relationship that God has with you through dedicated time spent in prayer. Here lies an interior landscape to explore: how *you* pray best. Thinking and reading about God may be a start to prayer, but it is not a substitute. (Neither is church politics and all the necessary stuff of organisation that enables us to function as a community). *Heart speaks unto heart*. It involves our felt experience, a relationship, person to Person.

#### CORPORATE RENEWAL

Person to person also means 'with one another.' The Body of Christ is incarnate (enfleshed) in you and me and so we have institutional and organisational matters to attend to, which involves our finance, responsibilities and election of officers. The institutional, organisational life must not be the end product, but rather be there to serve the mission of the Church.

How can I benefit more from what is on offer? Joining in the prayer of the Church at Morning and/or Evening Prayer; coming to a weekday mass before or after work.

What is my commitment to my Community of Faith financially?

How much do I want to give of myself, my time, my money, my talents?

May you and I be blessed this coming Season of Lent as we journey to Easter. May we find our heart's desire, our lives more and more enriched through the practice of our faith and our hopes fulfilled in knowing Jesus Christ our Lord.

Fr David Cherry  
*Vicar and Parish Priest*

#### PERSONAL PRAYER

1. <http://sacredspace.ie> (also available as a book for the year)
2. MAGNIFICAT, a booklet to subscribe to. Short forms of morning and evening prayer with a meditation with the daily texts for mass, for use at home or in church. See: [www.magnifact.net](http://www.magnifact.net)

#### LENTEN READING

1. Abbot Christopher Jamison's two books : **Finding Sanctuary** and **Finding Happiness**. 'In seeking happiness we need to keep in mind as a cautionary image the perils that await those prospecting for gold. We must be aware of 'fool's gold'.
2. Timothy Radcliffe's two books : **What's the point of Being a Christian?** and **Why go to Church** are excellent and readable. The first (I think) better than the second.

3. Rowan Williams : **Tokens of Trust**. Lenten Lectures on the Apostles Creed at Canterbury Cathedral, 2005. Not light reading, but rewarding if you take it slowly and thoughtfully.
4. Rowan Williams : **Silence and Honeycakes** – spiritual wisdom of the Desert Fathers and Mothers.
5. Herbert McCabe OP : **The New Creation** (1964). Definitely theological "... the most sustained essay in biblical theology. Its focus is the sacraments of the Church, but, working on the principle that to theologize well depends on understanding the theology of the past, the book ranges copiously over Old and New Testament passages while trying to indicate what sacraments mean today. In terms of its insights and sheer readability, *The New Creation* is a truly excellent book. Continuum 2010 (My choice this Lent)
6. **Introduction to Christianity**, 1968, Joseph Ratzinger. *The* text book. An exposition of the Creed. Ignatius Press, 2004
7. **The Spirit of the Liturgy**: Joseph Ratzinger. Important for understanding the Catholic tradition of worship. Ignatius Press, 2008
8. **Knowing Jesus** : James Alison – reimagining believing in Jesus. "The most lucid and imaginative presentation of a theology of redemption that I have read in many years." Rowan Williams.
9. **Verbum Domini: The Word of God**. Pope Benedict XVI's short Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation. What is the Word of God? Good for those who come from a background of believing in the Bible rather than the Word made flesh! Short, readable (after the intro contextualising it) and cheap at £3.95 (My choice)
10. Other books on Lent reading tables in Bookshops include:
  - a. **Lent for Everyone with Matthew** – Tom Wright
  - b. **Barefoot Disciples: Walking the way of Passionate Humility** by Stephen Cherry (the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book 2011)
  - c. **The Transforming Power of Prayer: From Illusion to Reality** by Bishop Michael Marshal

BOOKSHOPS – take time to browse through the Lenten Books on offer at:

1. The Centre Bookshop : London Centre for Spirituality in the Church of St Edmund the King, Lombard St EC4V 9EA (Bank tube)
2. Westminster Cathedral bookshop, Victoria St
3. St Paul's Bookshop next to Westminster Cathedral, Victoria St
4. Church House Bookshop, 31 Great Smith St, SW1P 3NP  
[www.chbookshop.co.uk](http://www.chbookshop.co.uk)
5. As well as Amazon you can try ABE Books ([www.abebooks.co.uk](http://www.abebooks.co.uk)) for second hand copies of books at good prices.

## OUR OBSERVANCE OF LENT

**Ash Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> March** : come to Mass to begin this holy season of renewal.  
8.15am at St Mary's, 12.45pm at St Barnabas, 7pm High Mass at St Mary's

In addition to the daily offices (Morning and Evening Prayer) and daily masses there are extra devotions:

**Thursdays in Lent from 5pm** : Holy Hour with the Blessed Sacrament exposed, Silent prayer in the presence of the Lord with simple Benediction (then Evening Prayer at 6pm and Mass at 6.30pm)

**Saturdays at 11am** : Stations of the Cross, preceded by Morning Prayer at 10.30am and followed by Mass at 11.30am and Angelus at noon.

**Confessions** (the Sacrament of Reconciliation) are at 12noon on Saturdays or by appointment. Come and talk about this in advance if you wish. Please don't think 'he's too busy'. I shouldn't be. I was ordained for this (not to sit in front of a computer!)

The **Feast of the Annunciation of the Lord (25<sup>th</sup> March)** falls on Friday this year, in Lent. There will be a 12.45pm Sung Mass at St Barnabas and 7pm High Mass at St Mary's.

### **LENT COURSE : IT AIN'T NECESSARILY SO : Reimagining Christianity**

Thursdays 7-8pm beginning 17 March: 5 LENT TALKS by Fr David Cherry  
*Please sign up so we know how many to expect and this will determine the venue (church or presbytery)*

These will not be academic lectures. Rather, how do we think Christianity, what assumptions need to be subverted, enlarged? Using a flipchart and allowing discussion, with handouts, I hope we can engage heart and mind.

## THE IMPORTANT LITURGIES OF HOLY WEEK

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> April**

### **PALM SUNDAY 17<sup>th</sup> April**

*(No 9am Low Mass at St Mary's)*

9.30am Low Mass at St Barnabas

10.30am Commemoration of the Lord's Entry into Jerusalem at St Barnabas with Homily, followed by a Procession to St Mary's for High Mass of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

## THE SACRED TRIDUUM

(Three Holy Days)

### **MAUNDY THURSDAY 21<sup>st</sup> April**

10am(tbc) Chrism Mass in St Paul's Cathedral. The Bishop blesses the three Oils (Chrism) for Baptism, Confirmation and the Anointing of the Sick. (These oils are brought back to Church and stored behind the High Altar for our use.) Priests renew their ordination vows.

7.00pm Sung Mass at St Barnabas & Watch of Prayer before the Blessed Sacrament until midnight

7.00pm High Mass at St Mary's, Washing of Feet and Watch of Prayer before the Blessed Sacrament until midnight

### **GOOD FRIDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> April**

10am Morning Prayer and Litany at St Barnabas

11am Stations of the Cross at St Barnabas

12noon The Preaching of the Passion (preacher to be announced) St Mary's

2pm Solemn Liturgy of the Day at St Mary's

### **HOLY SATURDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> April**

10am Morning Prayer and preparation of the Church – St Mary's

8.30pm EASTER VIGIL AND FIRST MASS OF EASTER – St Mary's

### **EASTER SUNDAY 24<sup>th</sup> April**

9am Low Mass at St Mary's

9.30am Sung Mass of Easter Day at St Barnabas

11am High Mass of Easter Day at St Mary's

6pm Solemn Evensong and Benediction

7pm Low Mass

## DATES FROM THE CALENDAR 2011

### MEETINGS

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> April Passion Sunday (Lent V) : After Mass at St Mary's

- Annual Meeting of Parishioners to elect Churchwardens.
- Annual Parochial Church Meeting
- First Meeting of the new PCC to elect officers

### FEAST DAYS

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> May Second Sunday after Easter  
May Procession of Our Lady after High Mass

Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> May 7pm High Mass for the feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary : St Mary's Patronal Feast.

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> June 7pm High Mass for St Barnabas's Patronal and Anniversary of the Dedication of the Church

Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> June First Sunday after Trinity and Sunday within the Octave of Corpus Christi.  
Fr Stuart Leamy's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Ordination to the Sacred Priesthood (27<sup>th</sup> June 1971) & Corpus Christi Celebration in the evening at 6pm

### FINANCE AND STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

1. You have been generous in supporting appeals. The Churchwardens' appeal last year was very successful raising £19k to meet an emergency shortfall. Thank you for your generosity.
2. St Mary's is not a wealthy Church. We need to pay for what we receive and for the liturgical and priestly ministry to others. Our mission is beyond ourselves to the diocese and further afield.
3. It is quite natural to give for particular projects, the repair of the organ, something new, something we can see. But we need to take seriously how we meet our every day running costs, which amount to £2700 a week.
4. A priest costs about £40k (stipend, pension, housing) to which is added Ministerial Costs to the diocese for the training of priests, supporting chaplains and other dioceses, less wealthy than London diocese, are set at nearly £25k.
5. Our Music Budget is just under £40k a year
6. And there are many other bills as you will see on the spreadsheet.
7. We are looking at a Provisional Budget for 2011 of £140k with a forecast deficit of over £22k. This is to maintain what we have and enjoy.
8. Out of about 190 people on the Electoral Roll, just over 70 people plan their giving. Please see the table for this.
9. Last year, average giving per electoral roll member was £42 per month. If we do nothing, we expect that to fall to £36 a month. It needs to be £44 if we are to pay our way.
10. Putting it another way, we need an average of £17.60 from every member of the Sunday congregation.
11. We shall continue to reduce expenditure wherever we can.
12. We may need to change our thinking - rather than giving when we're at Church (like the cinema) we need to give regularly so that our Church continues to be there when we want it to be there.
13. We may also like to consider that we aren't just paying for what we receive or to maintain ourselves. We are not a club with a subscription fee. We seek to pay beyond ourselves for the mission of the Church to others.
14. Just think : 100 people paying £100 a month will mean we are well on the way to covering our costs. 200 people paying £100 will mean we are seriously into mission to our neighbourhood; and may it please God, soon paying for and housing another fulltime priest for our two sister parishes.

15. I am giving 8% of my take home pay to St Mary's and a further 3% to charities.
16. Giving monthly by Standing Order and Gift Aiding is the most desirable way for the Church.
17. Please consider prayerfully our Income and Expenditure and what you give and can give.
18. Planned Giving is confidential between you and the Stewardship Recorder and Treasurer (if you give by SO your name will appear on the Bank Statement which is also confidential.)
19. Jesus said : Where you treasure is, there will your heart be also. Our giving affects our commitment to the Church and to God's work. It is a matter of spiritual well-being.

### CHURCH ELECTORAL ROLL

1. The Electoral Roll is a list of those who are entitled to vote for and be elected as officers of the Church. It is not a list of members, but it is an indication of your commitment to the mission and ministry of the Church and its practical and financial support.
2. The list is annually revised and every six years a new roll is started from scratch i.e. everyone has to apply and fill in a form.
3. This year those who are on the ER need not do anything.
4. Those who have habitually attended worship here in the past six months are eligible to be included on the Roll.
5. If you would like to be put on it please fill in the application form and hand it to Lisa Proctor, the Electoral Roll Officer, by Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> March. Forms are available at the back of Church.
6. The Electoral Roll will be approved at a meeting of PCC after High Mass on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> March. It will then be displayed at the back of Church. Changes or corrections – that is, corrections of mis-spellings, address updates or inclusion of a Christian name – should be notified to Lisa Proctor by Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> April.
7. This year the **Annual Parochial Church Meeting is on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> April** after the High Mass in church.

Send forth thy Spirit and our hearts shall be created  
And thou shalt renew the face of the earth  
*Veni Creator Spiritus*