

# THE ORATORY—dedicated to THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

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Registered as a Charity

## Parish Weekly Newsletter

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*This newsletter is available in large-print format. Ask at the Sacristy.*



## March 9th 2008: The Fifth Sunday of Lent



### Near Jerusalem: The Raising to Life of Lazarus

The last of the three Sunday Gospel readings from St. John brings us to the brink of Our Lord's Passion and death on the very outskirts of Jerusalem, the holy city where He is to suffer, die and rise again. On the third Sunday of Lent we heard about the Samaritan woman at the well and Our Lord's promise of living water. On the fourth Sunday we heard about the man who was born blind receiving his sight and the gift of faith in Jesus. Today we hear about Our Lord's last great miracle before His Passion: the raising to life of His friend, Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha of Bethany, a village two miles from Jerusalem.

What makes this miracle different from the other miracles of the raising of the dead to life is that this is the only one which involved raising someone who had been dead and buried for several days already. When Our Lord raised Jairus's daughter and the widow's son of Naim, these were but lately dead. In Lazarus's case, however, death had taken place long enough beforehand for irreversible bodily decay to have begun.

But this was intentional on Our Lord's part. St. John makes it clear to us that, on hearing of Lazarus's mortal illness, Jesus deliberately delayed His coming to Bethany until Lazarus should have already died, saying, *"This sickness will not end in death, but in God's glory and through it the Son of God will be glorified"*. As in the previous Gospel readings, Our Lord deliberately uses language in an unfamiliar way, in order to prompt the disciples to reflect more deeply: *"Lazarus is resting, let us go and wake him"*, He says, to which they respond, *"If*

*he can rest he may recover."* So Jesus tells them plainly that *"Lazarus is dead; and for your sake I am glad I was not there because now you will believe"*. This is the real purpose of the entire event—that through the raising of Lazarus, the disciples and many others will come to believe in Jesus. So as He finally sets out for Jerusalem, His disciples warn Him, saying, *"It is not long since the Jews (i.e. the religious authorities) wanted to stone you; are you going back to Jerusalem again?"*

So when at last He does reach Bethany, Jesus is reproached by Martha, who says that *"if you had been here my brother would not have died."* Yet even so she professes her faith that Lazarus will rise again on the last day. Jesus replies that He *is* the Resurrection and the Life—not simply the *bringer* of resurrection and life. The drama of what follows is heightened by the Evangelist's dwelling on Our Lord's sorrow. He is *"in great distress"*, and *"sighs from the heart"* before weeping openly before all the bystanders. Even though He knows what He is about to do for Lazarus, He nonetheless feels the pain of bereavement. This shows us that death is a part of our human condition that even Our Divine Lord allowed Himself to experience, both as loss of a loved one and in His own Passion and Crucifixion. So for us Christians, too, the pain and sorrow caused by death and bereavement is not a denial of God's love and power, any more than it could be for Christ. He who raised Lazarus from the dead also wept for him dead.

So, finally, Our Lord prepares to summon Lazarus from his four-day old tomb by praying to His heavenly Father in full presence of the many witnesses, *"Father, I know that You always hear me, but I speak for the sake of all these who stand round me, so that they may believe that it was You who sent Me"*. After calling Lazarus to *"come forth!"* in a loud voice, the bystanders are astonished to see the dead man walk out from the tomb, still bound with cloths and bands *"according to the burial custom of the Jews"*, as St. John will explain when He describes Our Lord's own burial a few days hence. Our Lord's last words on this momentous occasion are to tell the onlookers to *"unbind Lazarus; let him go free!"* This symbolises the truth that death is the state of bondage due to sin, from which Our Lord has come to release us, and from which *only* He can release us. True, Lazarus will die again after this, but his rising here gives us hope—because the Resurrection of Jesus Christ on Easter Day is the beginning of the true and everlasting Resurrection on the Last Day promised to all who believe in Him.

### Sunday March 9th: the Fifth Sunday of Lent (Purple)

*Year 1 or A of the Lectionary at Mass*

- 8.30 a.m. **Low Mass**
- 9.30 a.m. **1962 rite Mass (in the church)**
- 10.30 a.m. **Solemn High Mass**
- 12.00 p.m. **(Families with young children)**
- 5.30 p.m. **Sung Congregational Mass**
- **Vespers and Benediction at 7.30 p.m.**

### Liturgical Calendar

*Monday to Friday: Masses at 7.30 a.m., 12.45 p.m. and 5.45 p.m.*

*Rosary at 7.45 p.m. STATIONS OF THE CROSS ON FRIDAYS IN LENT: 1.10 & 8 p.m.*

*Confessions are heard from 12.30 p.m. and from 5.30 p.m. until the end of Mass*

**Monday March 10th: Monday of Lent Week 5. (Purple)**

- **Blessing with St Philip's relic at 8 p.m.**

**Tuesday March 11th: Tuesday of Lent Week 5. (Purple)**

- **Benediction at 8 p.m.** Brothers of the Little Oratory meet after Benediction in St Philip's Chapel.

**Wednesday March 12th: Wednesday of Lent Week 5. (Purple)**

**Thursday March 13th: Thursday of Lent Week 5. (Purple)**

**Friday March 14th: Friday of Lent Week 5. (Purple)**

- **Stations of the Cross at 1.10 and 8 p.m.**

**Saturday March 15th: Solemnity of St Joseph, Husband of Our Lady. (White)**

- **Masses at 8 a.m. and 11 a.m.**
- **Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 8.30 to 10.45 a.m.**
- **Benediction at 10.45 a.m.**
- **Confessions from 10.55 a.m. to 12 noon & from 5.30 p.m. until the end of Mass**
- **Vigil Mass of Palm Sunday at 5.45 p.m.**

**St Joseph:** Everything we know of St Joseph is taken from Scripture. We know he was a carpenter: the sceptical Nazarenes ask about Our Lord, "Is this not the carpenter's son?" (Matthew 13:55). He was not rich: we are told that when he took Jesus to the Temple to be circumcised, the sacrifice they took was of two turtledoves or a pair of pigeons, allowed only for those who could not afford a lamb (Luke 2:24). Despite his humble work and means, Joseph came from the royal house of David, the greatest king of Israel (Matthew 1:1-16 and Luke 3:23-38). He was a compassionate, caring man. We are told how he was concerned for Our Lady's safety when he discovered her pregnancy and so resolved to divorce her quietly. (Matthew 1:19-25). He was a man of faith, obedient to whatever God asked of him: When the angel came to Joseph in a dream he immediately took Our Lady as his wife. Similarly, at the angel's bidding, he immediately left everything to flee to a strange country and waited there in Egypt until the angel told him to return (Matthew 2:13-23). Scripture has also left us with the most important knowledge: he was -- "a righteous man" (Matthew 1:18).

**The following are requested to read next weekend, March 15th/16th: Palm Sunday**

**Saturday 5.45 p.m.:** Brigid Hogan

**Sunday 8.30 a.m.:** Paddy Martin

**12.00 p.m.:** Sr Hilary

**5.30 p.m.:** Jason Mahoney

**Sunday March 16th: PALM SUNDAY (Red)**

**Mass & Service Times:**

- **8.30 a.m. Low Mass**
- **9.30 a.m. Latin Mass 1962 Missal**
- **10.15 a.m. Blessing of Palms and Procession (commencing in the college Sports Hall)**
- **10.30 a.m. Solemn High Mass**
- **12.00 p.m. (Families with young children)**
- **5.30 p.m. Sung Congregational Mass in English**
- **Vespers and Benediction: 7.30 p.m.**

**Please pray for the sick:** Wyn Xenaky, Bridget Genockey, Derek Butowski, Marie-Thérèse Jones, Dorothy Price, Ellen Westwood, Margaret Casey, Jacqueline Griffiths, and Desmond Williams. **Of your charity please pray for the repose of the souls of those who have died recently:** Kathleen Deveney, John Hughes and Michael Ashwell; **and of the souls of those whose anniversaries occur about now:** Fr William Neville of this Oratory, Fr Thomas Fullerton, Frank Hayward, Alice Theresa Chavasse, Agnes Howell, Mary Peyton, Mike Brewer, William Jones, Lucille Ahee and Mandy Lloyd.

#### Collections

*The 4th Sunday of Lent, 24th February:*

Offertory: £1,302

Second: Provision of Music in Holy Week: £839

*Many thanks*

**The second Collection today will be for the maintenance of St Chad's Cathedral**

#### TODAY

**PIETY STALL:** *Easter cards are on sale and also cards and gifts for Confirmation and First Holy Communion in addition to a large selection of books, rosaries, DVDs, CDs, statues etc.*

**LENTEN ALMS:** The box for your Lenten alms-giving is near the Plough and Harrow Door. Proceeds are for Father Hudson's Society.

#### THIS WEEK

**ORATORY PRIMARY SCHOOL TALKS FOR PARENTS / Carers:** The sixth and last in this important series of talks is on **Monday** from 2.00— 3.15 p.m. in the Oratory School Hall, on the subject of **Sex Education**, and is open to all parents of children in the school. The title of the talk is: **"Moral Development in the home; How can we make this work?"**. The talk will be given by Fr. Guy, the Parish Priest and School Chaplain, and Fr. Philip, Foundation Governor of the School. We hope that, if at all possible, parents will attend these very important talks.

**CLOSE OF THE DEANERY VISITATION:** now that all the Parishes of the Cathedral Deanery have been visited by the Archbishop or Bishop Pargeter, the closing ceremony and summary of the outcome will take place at St. Chad's Cathedral on Tuesday evening at 7.30 p.m., ending with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. All are welcome.

**CATHOLIC WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB** will next meet on 11th March when Joanna Bogle will be there to discuss her new book: "A Year-book of Seasons & Celebrations". On the day, she will be happy to sign copies of her book (available on the piety stall, now £7.50). All women are welcome. Please contact Jackie Parkes: 688 4154

**ADORATION AT REDNAL** will take place this week on Wednesday commencing with Mass at 2.30 p.m.

**BISHOP DUNN'S REQUIEM.** Bishop Dunn of Hexham & Newcastle, who died last week, was formerly a priest and Vicar Episcopal in this Diocese, and well known to many people here and in his native Staffordshire. His funeral takes place in Newcastle next Tuesday, but for

those unable to go so far yet who wish to join in the offering of Holy Mass for the repose of his soul, there is a Requiem Mass at St. Chad's Cathedral on Wednesday 12th March at 11.30 a.m.

**FEASTS OF THE WEEK:** please note that since Easter is unusually early, and as St. Patrick's Feast Day and St. Joseph's Solemnity fall in Holy Week, they cannot be observed on their proper days this year. Therefore St. Patrick's feast is not being observed liturgically this year, while St. Joseph's Solemnity is being kept on Saturday 15th March.

**LENTEN TALKS:** The fifth talk will be on Saturday, in the Lower Cloister Hall after the 11 a.m. Mass, on "Conscience". The talk: "Conscience and the Contemporary World" will be given by Fr. Philip. **ELCT ECUMENICAL LENT DISCUSSIONS** on characters in the Passion story continue on Tuesday 11th March with coffee at 7.15 for 7.30 p.m. at the Church of the Redeemer, Monument Road. next topic: "Pontius Pilate".

**THE LEGION OF MARY** are hosting a "Welcome Home" Talk for lapsed Catholics, with a cup of tea, at 11.45 a.m. (after 11 a.m. Mass) next Saturday, 8th March at St. Francis, Handsworth

#### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**Dates for your Diary:-**

**SEVEN CHURCHES WALK:** Monday 17th March, from 2 pm. to 5.45 approx. You are welcome to join for one or more "legs" of the journey, and details of the itinerary will be included in next week's Newsletter.

**However,** please remember that you need to be mobile: **the walk is unsuitable for anyone who has difficulty walking.**

**PRO-LIFE MORNING OF PRAYER AND WITNESS on GOOD FRIDAY:** Walking commences from here after Tenebrae (8.30 a.m.), so at approximately 10 a.m., to pray outside the Calthorpe Clinic, Arthur Rd, returning to the Oratory at 11.45 a.m. Please see the notice board for full details.

**DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY AFTERNOON:** March 30th. Adoration and Confessions from 2.30 p.m. ending with Mass at 4.30 p.m.