

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.



February 17th 2008: The Second Sunday of Lent



The Journey to Jerusalem: Transfiguration

Just as the Gospel of the First Sunday of Lent always relates Our Lord's Temptations in the Wilderness, so the Gospel of the Second Sunday is always an account of the Transfiguration of Our Lord on Mount Tabor. The elements of the event are familiar to us all. Jesus took Peter, James and John to the top of a high mountain and while He was praying there in their presence He was transformed into light and was seen to be conversing with Moses and Elijah.

But why do we hear this Gospel of glory so early on in the penitential season of Lent? What is the reason? The clue is contained in the first three words of the passage we hear this morning: St. Matthew tells us that all this took place "Six days later". So you will ask: "what happened six days before this, then?" The event that took place before this, which St. Matthew recounts in chapter 16 of his Gospel, is St. Peter's profession of faith in Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of the Living God", which took place at Caesarea Philippi. It was in response to Peter's exclamation that our Lord replied: "You are Peter (Rock), and on this Rock I will build my Church". But that was not all, for Jesus went on immediately to say that He "must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and the chief priests and scribes and be put to death, and on the third day be raised." Then, in response, Peter who had just been named "rock" for his faith in Christ, remonstrated with Jesus and said, "God forbid, Lord. This must never happen to You!". But Jesus sternly rebuked him, saying, "get behind me, Satan!" What did Our Lord mean by these hard words? "Satan" is the word for "adversary", one who stands in opposition. The devil is of course the great adversary of God and of mankind, hence he is above all others, *the* "Satan". But anyone who stands in the way of God's will thereby makes himself into a "satan", too. But what does our Lord mean by saying "Get behind me"? The answer is revealed in His next words: "If any man would *come after me*, let him deny himself and take up his cross and *follow me*." "Get behind me" is to be understood as "follow behind me", instead of standing as an obstacle in my path. Peter wanted to prevent our Lord from going to His suffering and death, from human motives of love and fear for Jesus. But Our Lord would not allow that to impede His journey to Jerusalem, for only through His Passion and Death would He attain the Resurrection and so redeem mankind from sin and death.

This brings us back full circle to the Transfiguration. After that exchange at Caesarea Philippi between Jesus and Peter, the next event was here on Mount Tabor, a brief stop on the journey to Jerusalem which Our Lord had already begun. For us, too, our Lenten journey to Jerusalem began in earnest on Ash Wednesday, when we took up our cross to follow Him. This journey will continue until we reach Jerusalem on Palm Sunday when we will unite ourselves with Our Lord in His sufferings and death so as to share in the joy and new life of His resurrection at Easter. For it will be on Easter night that we will once again experience the joy of the baptism of our catechumens who are even now preparing for that new birth. In the transfiguring light of that holy night we, too, will renew our baptismal faith and promises.

This reminds us, of course that even though Easter is the high point of the whole year—the time towards which we strive through fasting and penance, and from which we continue to celebrate the joy of new life and freedom from sin—nonetheless, each yearly celebration of Easter itself is but an anticipation of the eternal and unimaginably great joys of heaven. This whole earthly life of ours is like a "great Lent", in which we do not yet enjoy all that we look forward to at Easter, but through our penances we prepare ourselves to receive that joy when Christ will have made us ready to receive it. The Gospel of the Transfiguration on the Second Sunday reminds us that, even in this life of trial and testing, God graciously gives us moments and seasons of joy and refreshment, of light and encouragement to keep us going on our way with confidence in Him. The presence of Moses and Elijah reminds us that in the teachings of Scripture which reveal to us the true meaning of Christ's mystical Body, the Church, we are granted the gift of God's truth to enlighten our path towards Him.

Sunday February 17th: The Second 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 February 18th: Monday of Lent Week 2. (Purple)

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

Tuesday February 19th: Tuesday of Lent Week 2. (Purple)

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

Wednesday February 20th: Wednesday of Lent Week 2. (Purple)

Thursday February 21st: Thursday of Lent Week 2. (Purple). St Valentine, Martyr. (207th Anniversary of Cardinal Newman's birth)

- **Sung Mass at 5.45 p.m. for the Memorial of St. Valentine**
- **MUSICAL ORATORY AT 7.30 P.M. (See below)**

St Valentine (3rd century?) When Fr John Newman was returning from Rome to England to found the English Oratory, Blessed Pope Pius IX presented him with the bodily remains of St Valentine, an early Christian martyr buried in the catacombs. We know little of his life; Valentine was a common Roman name, but we know he was a martyr from the way he was buried. Both St Philip Neri and Cardinal Newman were devoted to the "primitive times" of the Roman Church and the remains of St Valentine, which lie beneath the altar of St Athanasius (near the pulpit) provide a true bond with those early days of the Church. The Pope gave Fr Newman permission to keep the feast of our St Valentine on his own birthday. Please note that this saint has nothing to do with the one formerly commemorated on 14th February.

Friday February 22nd: The Chair of St Peter, Feast. (White)

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

The Chair of St Peter: We celebrate the unity of the Roman Catholic Church around the primacy of St Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, and his successors. We recall that Our Lord gave St Peter authority among the Apostles to "strengthen his brothers in faith." (St Luke's Gospel, ch. 22 v. 32). The "Chair" is a symbol of teaching authority (as with professors at universities).

Saturday February 23rd: Saturday of Lent Week 2 (Purple) Commemoration of St Polycarp, Bishop & Martyr.

- **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 THE THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT at 5.45 p.m.**

St Polycarp: He was a disciple of St. John, who appointed him bishop of Smyrna in Asia Minor (modern Turkey), thus he is an important historical figure, linking the early Church with the time of the Apostles and Our Lord Himself, and Polycarp was a close friend of St. Ignatius of Antioch. He was martyred at Smyrna by being burnt at the stake.

Sunday February 24th: The THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT (Purple)

Mass & Service Times:

- **8.30 a.m. Low Mass**
- **9.30 a.m. Latin Mass 1962 Missal**
- **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: Jeanette Dunkley, Angela Cartledge, May Owens, Isaac Brown, Michael Miller, Marie-Thérèse Jones, Dorothy Price, Ellen Westwood, Tommy Smyth, Margaret Casey, Jacqueline Griffiths, Frank McGuinness, George Saunders, and Desmond Williams

Of your charity please pray for the repose of the souls of those who have died recently:

Marianne Jarvis and Con Driscoll;

and of the souls of those whose anniversaries occur about now:

Martin Ford, Maureen Fenton, Alfredo Testa, Bolek Kuzminski and Denis Arnott-Job.

The following are requested to read next weekend, February 23rd/24th: The 3rd Sunday of Lent

Saturday 5.45 p.m.: Jenni Hardwick

Sunday 8.30 a.m.: Paddy Martin

12.00 p.m.: Peter Laether

5.30 p.m.: Simon Stacey

Collections

The 1st Sunday of Lent, 10th February:

Offertery: £1,564

Second: diocesan development Fund: £477

Thank you

The second Collection today will be for last Friday's Lenten Fast Day.

Next Sunday it will be for the DDF

TODAY

STOP PRESS* In the Human Fertilisation and Embryology bill the Government is pressing for further liberalisation of the Abortion Laws, the creation of human/animal hybrids, the removal from law of the need for a father, and the increased exploitation of embryos in stem-cell research where other means are available. Against all precedent in a moral matter, they have already denied a free vote on this in the Lords. Please support the All Party Parliamentary Pro-Life Group's campaign to stop this evil bill. Write to your MP now. There are post-cards available at the Church Doors. **PLEASE TAKE ONE, FILL IT IN AND SEND IT TO YOUR MP.*

'WALK WITH ME', The Archbishop's companion to Lent Books are by the back door: cost £1. There is also a Calendar, (30p) designed for children. We encourage you to buy these aids to prayer life during this holy season, and for those who you know who are housebound, and perhaps for members of your family who no longer go to church. **PIETY STALL** a good selection of Easter cards is now available.

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

The ANNIVERSARY of CARDINAL NEWMAN'S BIRTH: Thursday, 21st February: There will be a service of music, preaching and prayer at 7.30 p.m. The subject will be **Newman on Lent**. In addition to music by the choir, Dr Francis Jackson, CBE will be the guest organist.

ORATORY PRIMARY SCHOOL TALKS FOR PARENTS / Carers: The fourth in this important series of talks is on **Wednesday** (instead of

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: **"Hot Topics: Contraception, Abortion, Teenage Pregnancy"**. The talk will be given by Dr. Greg Gardner who is a GP in Handsworth who has written extensively on matters of sex education, abortion and contraception in the Press. We hope that, if at all possible, parents will attend these very important talks.

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

LENTEN TALKS: The second talk will be on Saturday, in the Lower Cloister Hall after the 11 a.m. Mass, on **"Conscience"**. The talk: **"Conscience and Faith"** will be given by Fr. Gregory.

ELCT ECUMENICAL LENT DISCUSSIONS on characters in the Passion story begin on Tuesday 19th February with coffee at 7.15 for 7.30 p.m. at the Church of the Redeemer, Monument Road. First topic: **"Mary Magdalene"**.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

BISHOP PARGETER will preach at every Mass here on Sunday 24th March (including Saturday evening Mass). He will celebrate the 12 noon Mass that day. Over that weekend His Lordship will conduct the Deanery Visitation of our Parish.

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 £8.50). All women are welcome. Please contact Jackie Parkes: 688 4154