

Lenten Journey

2022

St John Vianney & St Thomas Becket

THE SEASON OF LENT



From the earliest days, Easter - The feast of the Resurrection was celebrated as the climax of the Church's calendar and it was set aside as the day when new converts were received into the family of believers. But adult baptism didn't happen overnight. After several years of training, the candidate entered into an intense period of preparation. A time of **Prayer** (learning secret prayers i.e. Creed, Our Father), **Fasting** and **Charity** - all aimed at preparing the candidate for baptism at the Easter Vigil. It lasted for six weeks (36 days, Sunday's weren't included)

As the Church grew, Lent took on a new aspect - rather than preparing people for baptism, it was seen as a time of renewal, preparing to renew one's baptismal promises at the celebration of the resurrection. It took on a penitential aspect. It was increased to 40 days in length, to reflect Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness, hence Lent begins midweek on Wednesday and the custom grew that everyone was marked with ashes, a sign of repentance. Although the emphasis had shifted, it remained & still remains, a time of Prayer, Fasting & Charity.

Do you see how closely Lent & Easter are linked? True to say, that the way we spend the next 40 days will determine how we celebrate the Easter festival. Lent shouldn't be a sad time, a time of trial, to punish & test ourselves, but through Prayer, Fasting & Charity it should be a season which enriches, nourishes and liberates us; a time when we actively grow in our relationship with God and with our brothers & sisters.

PRAYER

“There is nothing more worthwhile than to converse with God, for prayer unites us with God as his companions... Our soul should be directed in God, not merely when we suddenly think of prayer, but even when we are concerned with something else... Prayer is the light of the soul, giving true knowledge of God... Prayer is a precious way of communicating with God, it gladdens the soul... It is more than words. It is a desire for God... the gift of God’s grace... Once we have tasted this food, we are set alight by an eternal desire for the Lord, the fiercest of fires lighting up our soul.”

St. John Chrysostom

DOWNLOAD ~ The Cafod Lent Calendar – www.cafod.org.uk/pray

LENTEN HOUSE MASSES ~ Please speak to Fr. Paul if you would like Mass to be celebrated in your own homes this Lent with family, friends, neighbours. Contact the Parish Office.

HEROES OF FAITH ~ Join us this Lent to be strengthened & inspired by the lives of the Saints. We will be gathering each Tuesday at St Bede's 7.00pm for a short film, followed by a time of prayer & discussion.

THURSDAY EVENING MASS ~ Please note that during Lent there will be an evening Mass at St Wilfrid's 7.30pm. Prior to Mass, from 6.30pm, there will be the opportunity for silent prayer before the Blessed Sacrament.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS ~ Will be prayed at St Wilfrid's on Sunday afternoon 4.00pm; at Our Lady's on Wednesdays 12.30pm and at St Bede's on Fridays at 7.30pm.

LENT WITH MISSIO ~ Each Friday during Lent, **Missio** invites you to join them for a short time of prayer and reflection, led by people from across the world. Go to: <https://www.youtube.com/MissioUK>

A LENT DAY RETREAT ~ Will be held at Wistaston Hall, Crewe on Wednesday 30th March.
A day of Scripture, Reflection, Adoration and Prayer.
For further details: www.orc-crewe.org or ring: 01270 568653.

THE SUNDAY WORD ~ Join Mario at St Wilfrid's on Fridays after 9.30am Mass to read and reflect on the Sunday Scriptures.

FR DENIS McBRIDE ~ Invites you to join him on Sundays throughout Lent for prayer & reflection (online). If you can't join in on Sunday, don't worry, material will be available online.
For further details go to: www.rpbooks.co.uk / free resources

RECONCILIATION

“The special feature of Easter is that it is the occasion when the whole Church rejoices over the forgiveness of sin... All of us must strive hard and so on Easter day no one should remain bound by the vices of his former nature.”

St Leo the Great

As well as the regular Saturday Confessions at St Wilfrid's 11.00 – 11.50am; there will also be three Parish Reconciliation Services during Lent. These will be celebrated on the following dates:

Monday 4th April 7.00pm ~ St Thomas Becket

Friday 8th April 7.00pm ~ St Bede's

Monday 11th April 7.00pm ~ St Wilfrid's

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is also available on request.

FASTING

“These 40 days should be given over to fasting which means, not simply a reduction in our food, but the elimination of our evil habits.”

St Leo the Great

“Fasting in Lent is intended to direct our minds, hearts, bodies back to a deeper love for Jesus Christ crucified... The practice of bodily mortification is a way to remember, a chance to acknowledge by penitence our own contribution to Christ's suffering. Nonetheless fasting has a more important reason... We all have the experience at times of drifting away from God, of allowing worldly concerns to replace an essential need for God. Fasting from food, from indulgent behaviours, from unnecessary enjoyments, is a way to make room for God to occupy again the centre of our lives”

Fr. Donald Haggerty

A FRUGAL LUNCH ~ (Soup & Bread) Will be held in St Wilfrid's Hall each Saturday throughout Lent after the Midday Mass 12.30pm – 1.30pm. Proceeds to Cafod, Mary's Meals & Aid to the Church in Need. All Welcome.

CHARITY

“What you do yourself, will be done to you; what you give, will be given to you; as you judge, so you will be judged; as you show kindness, so it will be shown to you. Your portion will be weighed out for you in your own scales.”

St Clement 1

'WALK AGAINST HUNGER' ~ After your great generosity last year, I am putting on my walking boots again for the poor of our world. I am aiming to walk five miles each day throughout Lent, with all proceeds going to: Cafod, Mary's Meals & Aid to the Church in Need. Thanks to those who have already paid up in advance. If you can sponsor me, it would be greatly appreciated.

As part of this venture, I invite you to join me on **Saturday 26th March** (departing 9.30am) for a joint **Sponsored Walk** between our three churches (approx 10 miles).

Please contact the Parish Office for further details. ~ **Fr Paul**

UKRAINIAN CRISIS ~ Both Cafod and Aid to the Church in Need are currently working with other Aid Agencies in supporting the Ukrainian refugees fleeing their homeland. A percentage of all the money raised this Lent will go to support them. Further details can be found on their websites.

CHESHIRE FOODBANK ~ Donations of tins, dry foods, soap etc., can be left at the back of church. These will be forwarded to the Cheshire Foodbank for local distribution.

CAFOD ENVELOPES ~ Are available at the back of our churches. These can be returned anytime throughout Lent. With these envelopes it is easy to *Gift Aid* any donations that you make, thus increasing your gift to the needy of the world.

VOLUNTEER ~ To litter pick & help manage our local, natural beauty spots. Contact Tim Kirwin for further details: 07543406968.

CHURCH CLEANING ~ Thanks to all who already volunteer to help clean our churches and help look after our gardens. If you can spare 30 minutes or more each week / month to help them, please contact the Parish Office. St Bede's Calvary is looking very sad at the moment, can anyone help to tidy it up?

LENTEN WEEKLY PROGRAMME

SUNDAY

- 9.15am** ~ Mass (*St Wilfrid's*)
11.00am ~ Mass (*St Thomas Becket*)
11.15am ~ Mass (*St Bede's*)
4.00pm – 5.00pm ~ Stations of the Cross followed by Benediction (*St Wilfrid's*)
5.30pm ~ Mass (*St Wilfrid's*)

MONDAY

- 9.10am** ~ Morning Prayer followed by Mass (*St Wilfrid's*)

TUESDAY

- 9.10am** ~ Morning Prayer followed by Mass (*St Wilfrid's*)
11.00 – 11.55am ~ Prayer before the Blessed Sacrament (*St Bede's*)
12.00pm ~ Midday Mass (*St Bede's*)
7.00 – 8.30pm ~ Heroes of Faith (*St Bede's*)

WEDNESDAY

- 12.00pm** ~ Midday Mass (*Our Lady's*)
12.30pm ~ Stations of the Cross (*Our Lady's*)

THURSDAY

- 9.10am** ~ Morning Prayer followed by Mass (*St Wilfrid's*)
12.00pm ~ Midday Mass (*St Bede's*)
6.30 – 7.25pm ~ Prayer before the Blessed Sacrament (*St Wilfrid's*)
7.30pm ~ Evening Mass (*St Wilfrid's*)

FRIDAY

- 9.10am** ~ Morning Prayer followed by Mass (*St Wilfrid's*)
10.00am ~ Reflection on the Sunday Word (*St Wilfrid's*)
12.00pm ~ Midday Mass (*St Bede's*)
7.30pm ~ Stations of the Cross (*St. Bede's*)

SATURDAY

- 11.00 – 11.50am** ~ Exposition with the opportunity of Reconciliation (*St Wilfrid's*)
12.00pm ~ Midday Mass (*St. Wilfrid's*)
12.30pm ~ Frugal Lunch (*St. Wilfrid's Hall*)
5.30pm ~ Vigil Mass (*Our Lady's*)
6.00pm ~ Vigil Mass (*St Bede's*)

RESOURCES & AIDS FOR LENT

There are many excellent web sites, these are just a few:

www.justice-and-peace.org.uk

www.acnuk.org

www.cafod.org.uk

www.marysmeals.org

Heavenly Father, As we begin the discipline of Lent, protect us in our struggle against evil. Make this season holy by our self-denial, that we may be cleansed from sin, renewed in spirit, ready to celebrate the death and resurrection of Christ our Saviour.

Amen.