



Fifth Sunday of Lent - Year B - 20th / 21st March 2021

The 1<sup>st</sup> Reading from the prophet Jeremiah underscores a fundamental facet of the spiritual journey, and that is one's attention to the 'inner life' or the 'heart' as it is often referred to. Compliance to various laws does not change people, in fact it just shows people up as hypocrites - Jeremiah knew this well. The only place where real change needs to begin is within a person, if it does not happen there, then it is never going to happen. And how you 'meet' this moment now, is how you are going to 'meet' every moment unless there is inner change. While all the work done with the inner life requires honesty about oneself (e.g. motivations, selfish objectives etc), we can only do such work under the gaze of God's face (I am back to prayer again!). We tend to think that God will love us if, and when, we change. No, God loves us already so that we can change. If other words, God is the great enabler, but we must allow God to do his work of enabling.



Talking of allowing God to do his enabling work within us, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading offers Jesus as an example of that very thing. The author (who is thought not to be St Paul), presents Jesus as the model of surrender and letting go; this is the only way we can become our true selves.

In the gospel, Jesus echoes the same sentiment when sharing the reality of his impending death with his disciples, explaining it in a way that will make sense to them. He tells them that "unless a wheat grain falls on the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain". But if it dies, "it yields a rich harvest". Jesus is that grain of wheat, that small, single grain from which the kingdom of God is to grow on earth. Jesus has to die in order for the Father's kingdom of peace, love and justice to flourish. This dying is not easy, and Jesus tells his disciples that his "soul is troubled". Letting go costs Jesus, just as it costs us in our daily lives. Yet, with the Father's word of love written on his heart, Jesus finds the courage to say, "it was for this very reason that I have come to this hour". Jesus is given the grace to see that his sacrifice is necessary to serve the bigger reality of the kingdom of God.

What might this say to us as followers of Christ? There are two elements in this Gospel story which are part of all our lives: love and sacrifice. This same word of the Father's love is written on our hearts too. As we know, when we love someone, it is easier to sacrifice something of ourselves for them. We might ask ourselves: are we to make sacrifices only for those whom we love? Is that what Jesus did? Or are we called to do as he did and to offer our love to all who need it? This can be a real sacrifice which, if we offer it, will trouble our souls. It will involve a great effort but will reveal the greater reality of God's kingdom. Putting it simply, it is loving as Christ did.

Have a good week,

Fr Brett

## 20th MARCH - 28th MARCH 2021

### Fifth Sunday of Lent

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**Saturday 20th**

6pm **Mary Woulds RIP** (D. Woulds)

**Sunday 21st**

Fourth Sunday of Lent  
9am **For All Parishioners**

10.45am **Intentions of Miss Dianne** (Chris and Tom)

**Monday 22nd**

Feria  
9.15am **James Curtis RIP - Anniv.** (Sonja Curtis and Family)

**Tuesday 23rd**

Feria  
9.15am **Mr and Mrs Smyth RIP** (N. Haynes)

**Wednesday 24th**

Feria  
**No Mass**

**Thursday 25th**

The Annunciation of the Lord  
**No Mass**

**Friday 26th**

Feria  
9.15am **Fr. John O'Brien SCA and Sr. Rosemary Savage RIP**  
(Margaret and John Munson)

**Saturday 27th**

6pm **Norman Sach, and Deceased Family and Friends**  
(Pat Sach)

**Sunday 28th**

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord  
9am **Kath Donovan RIP** (J. Hancock)  
10.45am **For All Parishioners**

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## BOOKING FOR MASS

This coming week, the booking system, via the Parish Website, will be open from Monday 22nd March at 9am through to 12 noon on Friday 26th March for Masses on the 27th and 28th March.

***Please note that as Sharon is off on Monday, bookings will not be replied to until Tuesday.***

## MASSES THIS WEEK

Just to let you know that there will be no Mass on Wednesday of this week, due to the funeral of Anne Spratt taking place. Other Masses will be on Monday, Tuesday and Friday as usual.

## OFFICE HOURS THIS WEEK

The office will only be open on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday this week, 8.30am - 2.30pm.

## EASTER BOOKINGS

Everyone who requested seats over Easter should now have received their seat allocation. If you haven't yet received yours, please contact Sharon in the office.

At present we have limited space available at the Maundy Thursday and 10.45am Easter Sunday Masses, and we are fully booked for Good Friday, with people waiting.

There are still spaces available for the Easter Vigil, and at the 9am Mass on Easter Sunday. If you are unable to come to a Mass, and have a place allocated, please tell Fr Brett or Sharon as soon as possible so that we can allocate your place to someone else.

As mentioned previously, you are under no obligation to attend Church due to a dispensation being in place during the current pandemic, but it is important that you receive spiritual Communion by taking part in an online or televised Mass where possible. Please note that many churches locally are streaming their Masses, either over YouTube, Instagram, or Facebook. Included in these are [St. Edwards, Romford](#); [Our Lady of Lourdes, Leigh-on-Sea](#) and [Sacred Heart, Southend](#).



## BCYS NEWS

### **Please pray for all those taking part in the Sponsored Sleepout on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March**

On Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March people from all over the Diocese will be taking part in a sponsored sleepout to support the Brentwood Catholic Youth Service and local homeless charities including Basildon Emergency Night Shelter, The NewWay Project, Caritas Anchor House, Southend Winter Night shelter and others.

We ask you to please pray for all those taking part including groups from Wanstead, Basildon, Romford, Lexden and Colchester; plus some members of our Youth J & P Group, and if you are able to sponsor them you can do this online at

[www.bcys.net/donate](http://www.bcys.net/donate)

If you would still like to be involved in this event or would like to know more, you can visit our website

[www.bcys.net](http://www.bcys.net) or email [gabriellafusi@dioceseofbrentwood.org](mailto:gabriellafusi@dioceseofbrentwood.org)

***PS If any other young people in our Parish wish to take part, please contact the BCYS, but also let Fr Brett or Sharon know.***

***Thanks so much to anyone who has sponsored already.***

## THOUGHT FOR TODAY

Man's highest life does not consist in self-expression but in self-sacrifice.

(R H Benson)


## LIVING FAITH

We now have copies of 'Living Faith' available in the porch. If you would normally receive one, please help yourself.

If you usually have a copy, and are not attending Mass at the moment, please arrange a mutually convenient time to come and pick one up from the Office.

As we normally have a few spares, you are welcome to take a copy if you are not 'on the list' to receive one, but if you want future editions, please let Sharon know.

## GREAT NEWS ON WILLIAM!

Our pussycat William has been found, safe and well after being missing for over 2 weeks. A local person, as a result of a poster on a tree, brought the news we were waiting for, just less than a five minute walk from our home. Unfortunately he was between two gardens which made it more difficult to spot him. I would like to thank everyone for your prayers, support and many kind messages during this worrying time. We are both so happy he is back with us and indeed he is too, plenty of purr-purr -purr 

***Margaret and John Munson***

## SVP NEWS

Recently, we had a father who needed help with clothing for his 16yr old daughter. Through the powers of social media and the kind donations given, we were able to offer the support needed. This family is one of the many casualties of the Covid crisis with the father being ill and unable to work to support his family.

The outpouring of kindness with donations was wonderful, with one lovely lady purchasing brand new underwear and other items. Without this constant support that the community offers, we could never achieve what we do here at St Vincent's Centre, Southend.

### ***Quote from Dad.***

*“To each and everyone of you that has made this happen, thank you from the bottom of my heart, I will have a very happy 16yr old girl”*

Thanks to everyone in our Parish who is supporting the SVP with food items. These can be delivered to the Presbytery and will be collected from here on Friday morning. They are always grateful for the following:-

***Tinned Curry, Chilli, Spaghetti Bolognaise, Beans and Sausages;***

***Tinned Potatoes; Packet Mash;***

***Tinned Fray Bentos Pies;***

***Tinned Hot Dogs;***

***Coffee; Sugar;***

***Packet Pasta and Sauce;***

***UHT Milk;***

***Microwaveable Rice;***

***Nappies Size 4, 4+, 5, 5+ and 6***

***Deodorant (male and female); Shampoo/Conditioner; Wet Wipes;***

***Little Sweetie Treats for the Children;***

***New Underwear for Men and Women in all sizes.***

Please keep an eye on their Facebook page [St Vincent's Centre Southend - Short Street](#) for any urgent requirements.

## FAITH IN POLITICS

Faith in Politics is a Catholic Parliamentary and Public Affairs Internship. The scheme uniquely offers a foundation of Catholic faith and spiritual formation for those who believe they may have a vocation to public service in politics or public affairs.

Interns commit to a varied year exploring the political landscape and the Church's involvement in social action. This occurs first and foremost in their work placements with Members of Parliament and CAFOD, the Church's overseas aid agency.

The Internship journey begins and ends with a retreat, and spiritual guidance is an integral part of the year. The group lives together in a community, and at the end of the year they join a network of over 100 alumni.

During the year, the Faith in Politics team leads the interns on two pilgrimages: to Rome and the Holy Land. The visit to Rome includes a pilgrimage to Assisi, as well as meetings with officials to learn how the Vatican works and how the UK relates to the Holy See. In the Holy Land, the interns will make pilgrimages to holy sites and learn about the history of the Church and the ongoing challenges in the region.

We are looking for current final year undergraduates and postgraduates or recent graduates who:

- Are committed Catholics with integrity, a strong sense of vocation to social action, seeking to bring their faith to life
- Have varied life experiences
- Are academically strong, having achieved or expected to achieve either a good 2:1 or a First
- Have exceptional initiative, drive, flair and creativity
- Are highly responsible with good interpersonal skills and discretion
- Have excellent oral and written communication skills
- Are resident in the UK

If you are interested, please go to the [Faith in Politics](#) website and apply before the beginning of April.

## REFUGEE NEWS

**'Will we survive or drown?'** Calais Light is a small refugee charity group that is still caring for refugees here & in N France. Watch & listen to the desperate thoughts of a refugee mother adrift in the dark in their Guided Meditation: **"A minute on the Aegean Sea"**. **Imagine the terrible decisions she has to make. Watch on their website: [www.calaislight.com](http://www.calaislight.com) & please donate if you can. Thank you.**

Calais Light support three charities, Choose Love, Refugee Community Kitchen and Care4Calais.

Those of you who read our parish Facebook page will have seen the post from Care4Calais about Majdi Ahmed Bilal, in his late twenties, who lost his life trying to cross the Channel in a small boat at the beginning of March.

Majdi left Sudan in search of safety and dreamed of reaching the UK to start a better life. He had been sleeping outside in Calais since January this year and had already survived incredibly harsh and cold conditions. He was well respected amongst the friends he made here and they all said their best memories were playing cards and chatting together. He was just someone looking forward to a better life, without war and persecution. No one should need to risk their life to claim asylum in the UK.

## PRAY AND FAST FOR THE END OF DIY ABORTIONS

On Wednesday 24th March, the Vigil of The Annunciation, please pray and fast for the end of abortion and euthanasia in this Country. On this month's Day of Prayer and Fasting for Life, we are especially asking you to fast and pray for the end of DIY abortions at home. Please join in and invite others to join as well. <https://www.facebook.com/events/725021905067267>

### MARRIAGE MATTERS

([www.twainoneflesh.org.uk](http://www.twainoneflesh.org.uk))

#### Fifth Sunday of Lent

**(Jeremiah 31:31-34 Hebrews 5:7**

**-9 John 12:20-33)**

#### Unconditional love

Love is called to be unconditional, not 'counting the cost', not 50/50, but both giving 100%. Today's Gospel reminds us a rich harvest is only possible when a single wheat grain falls on the ground and dies. Our loving efforts, trials and difficulties in marriage are ways of 'dying' to a lifestyle contrary to what God is calling us to.

## ANNIVERSARIES IN MARCH

Please remember the following :

† Joseph Bryan, Genevieve Britto, Florence Meager, Edith Humphreys, Kathleen Davies, Kathleen Gooding, Tony Mander, Louisa Bruce, John Roberts, Peter Zuelchaur, Leonard Carlile, Linda Conroy, Arthur Bann, James Rockell, James Coughlan, Thomas Spalding, Bill Wisbey, Kenneth Dawson, Edith Timmermans, Edward Dean, May Mills, Carmen Kelly, Stephen Dowie, Jim Dixon, Pat McKelvie, Mary d'Eca, Catherine Harman, Jenny Adamson, Michael Sheaf, Maria Coleman, Joan Pollock, Sean O'Sullivan, Barbara Neagle, Brian Hanley, Marion and Alistair Plant, Monica Winn, James Curtis, Barbara McKelvie, Robert Stone, Teresa Pitcher, Shirley Sharrad, Joan James, Manuel Sufredo, Gabby Millar, Barbara Devereux, Maureen Cooke, Angela Skinner, Maureen Hare, Philip Borthwick †

### ARE YOU GOING INTO HOSPITAL?

If you go to hospital, make sure you tell the staff that you are Catholic and that you would like a priest to visit, otherwise the Chaplain has no way of knowing that you wish a visit. If you know of a relative or friend who is in hospital, make sure your parish priest knows, and he can arrange for the Chaplain to visit. The Chaplain for Southend Hospital is Fr Gerry Drummond, who can be reached through the hospital switchboard at 01702 435555.

**New to the Parish? Please go to our website and fill in your details and Fr. Brett will contact you in due course.**

**Parish Priest: Fr. Brett Adams**

96 Ness Road, Shoeburyness, SS3 9DH

**Telephone:** 01702 292726

**Website:** [www.saintgeorgeschurch.co.uk](http://www.saintgeorgeschurch.co.uk)

**Facebook:** @stgeorgeandtheenglishmartyrs

**Instagram:** saintgeorgeschurch

**School: St. George's Catholic Primary**

**Headteacher:** Mrs A. Delgado

**Telephone:** 01702 293522

## PRAYERS FOR THE SICK

**Please pray for all those who are sick or housebound in our parish, as well as our friends and family.**

Father of goodness and love, hear our prayers for the sick members of our community and for all who are in need.

Amid mental and physical suffering may they find consolation in your healing presence.

Show your mercy as you close wounds, cure illness, make broken bodies whole and free downcast spirits.

May these special people find lasting health and deliverance, and so join us in thanking you for all your gifts.

We ask this through the Lord Jesus who healed those who believed.

Amen.

**Parish Administrator: Sharon Chambers**

**Office Hours** - Tues, Thurs and Friday 8.30am - 2.30pm

Office Closed - Monday and Wednesday

**Hall Bookings:** 292726 in office hours

**Gift Aid:** Jim Filmer. Tel. 07775 898409

**Church Email:** -

**[stgeorgesrcchurch@outlook.com](mailto:stgeorgesrcchurch@outlook.com)**