

GRIDIRON

The Newsletter of **St Laurence Long Eaton**

February 14th 2021

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year B)

Jesus, Friend of Outcasts

To bring help to outcasts, Jesus himself had to become an outcast, and 'stay outside in places where nobody lived.'

Mass

First Reading: *Leviticus 13: 1-2, 44-46*

Responsorial Psalm 31: 1-2, 5, 11

**You are my refuge, O Lord;
you fill me with the joy of salvation.**

Second Reading: *1 Corinthians 10: 31 - 11: 1*

Gospel: *Mark 1: 40-45*

Hymns All NEH (Green):

Introit: 334 All people that on earth do dwell
Gradual: 357 Father, hear the prayer we offer
Offertory 310 We hail thy presence glorious
Communion 295 Let all mortal flesh keep silence
Recessional: 392 Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom
(All can be heard sung on Youtube.)

About today's Mass readings: Sixth Sunday in OT

First Reading: *Leviticus 13: 1-2, 44-46*

This reading from the Law sets the scene for Jesus' healing in the gospel reading. Leprosy in its modern medical sense (*Mycobacterium leprae*) is a devastating disease, leading to the loss of fingers, and then even whole hands and feet. These biblical regulations were, with good reason, designed to prevent contagion. In biblical times lack of precise diagnosis led to other skin diseases, such as psoriasis and even acne, being lumped together with it. So the worst thing about many of the lesser forms of 'leprosy' would have been the isolation, for 'lepers' were cut off from all human society. The priests were involved not so much as sacred ministers but as reliable persons to judge the symptoms, though of course the sacrifice of thanks for disappearance of the disease was a genuine religious thanksgiving. (Father David, needless to say, is greatly relieved that priests are no longer called upon to offer medical diagnosis ...)

Second Reading: *1 Corinthians 10: 31 - 11: 1*

St Paul has just quoted a slogan which that difficult community, the Corinthians, threw in his face, 'Everything is permissible'. This was the conclusion they drew from the abolition of the restrictions of the Jewish Law. Paul's principle was that the Spirit was an inner guide, so that no external restrictions were necessary. With their slogan the Corinthians jumped to the conclusion that there were no limits, so Paul now adds various pieces of guidance: 'Do everything you do for the glory of God'. If the glory of God is always before our minds, we can hardly go wrong. 'Never be the cause of offence', that is, never lead anyone else into sin. It is easy sometimes to put people in a situation in which they are bound to fail, through fear or anger or frustration, or just because they are unequal to the task. 'Take me as your pattern, as I take Christ for mine.' To us this may sound arrogant, but Paul regarded himself as the Servant of the Lord Jesus, just as Jesus regarded himself as the Servant of the Lord God. And so Paul is encouraging the self-confident Corinthians to put themselves in a position of servants, serving the community for the glory of God. No matter what our position, we can always do something more for the community – the community of faith and the wider community in which the faith community is set.

Gospel: *Mark 1: 40-45*

Mark here shows the warmth of Jesus' humanity and his concern for the leper. The leper had no right even to approach Jesus, but must have felt that he would get a favourable response, no word of reproach. 'Jesus felt sorry for him' is a weak expression; the Greek is far stronger: colloquially, to use a dreadful modern phrase, it could almost be literally translated 'was gutted'; in other words, Jesus felt it to the depths of his being. Then Jesus touched him, both

touching someone ritually impure and risking the infection. There have been famous repetitions of this brave and heartfelt gesture, such as St Francis of Assisi kissing a leper. One can imagine the awestruck horror of the bystanders at this outrageous expression of love and sympathy. Why, then, does Jesus 'sternly send him away'? A more faithful rendering would be not 'sternly' but 'in anger'. It is possible that the anger is directed at the leprosy, considered as an exterior invasion, so 'sent it away'. At least Jesus' whole-hearted emotional involvement with the sufferer is palpable. Of course, we must ask the question, 'What lessons must we learn from this act of Jesus?'

Collect:

O God who teach us that you abide in hearts that are just and true, grant that we may be so fashioned by your grace as to become a dwelling pleasing to you. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Notices:

Access to Zoom Services by telephone -no internet required.

For anyone without an internet connection, you only need a telephone to listen in to any of our Zoom services, and even say Hello if you wish. This can be achieved by dialling in on any of these numbers: 0203 051 2874 0203 481 5237 0203 481 5240 0131 460 1196, entering the 11-digit Meeting ID plus #, then ignoring the request for a participant code but simply pressing the # sign again.

Father David writes:

THE 6TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

9.30am THE PARISH MASS at St Laurence *Presider: Father David*
11.15am THE PARISH MASS at Holy Trinity *Presider: Father David*

LOCKDOWN MARK 3 ... A REMINDER

Thankfully worship hasn't been suspended during the current Lockdown, but we **MUST** adhere to the strict guidelines. You should only mix with others from your household in church, and there should be no social activity either before or after Mass. You should leave church quickly and orderly, avoiding any unnecessary interaction with anyone. Should you need to speak to Father David, for example, please stand aside, socially distanced from others. These instructions may appear

difficult but, unlike the previous lockdowns, we are allowed to gather for worship, although many people, understandably, will decide to stay away.

Hand sanitiser is provided in both churches, but **do feel free to use your own if you would prefer.** At St Laurence there is an automated dispenser for use on entry, but please sign the Track and Trace sheet before use.

This week

Monday 6.30pm Mass at St Laurence
Tuesday 9.30am 'Zoom' Morning Prayer
Ash Wednesday 10.00am and 6.30pm Mass at St Laurence
Thursday 7.00pm 'Zoom' Mass with Father Giles
Friday 12noon Mass at St Laurence

Tuesdays 9.30 am Morning Prayer on Zoom

Conscious of the fact that a large number of people from Holy Trinity are uncomfortable about coming to church at the moment, we have introduced this short service of Morning Prayer from the Divine Office. This consists of psalms, readings and prayers and is led by Paul Smith but there will be wider participation in future weeks. Please do come along to this. The Zoom link is the same as for the Tuesday morning Masses which were previously held.

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/77292790737>

Meeting ID: 772 9279 0737

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Until Covid restrictions are lifted there will be no set times for confession; please contact Father David for socially distanced appointments.

Father David's rest day this week is Thursday.

Next Sunday 21st February

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

9.30am THE PARISH MASS at St Laurence
11.15am THE PARISH MASS at Holy Trinity

Today is also the commercial celebration of Valentine's Day (NOT in the calendar of the Church) and, although not something to usually bother about (ask Father David why he thinks 'Valentine's Day' is an aberration ...), at the this time of Pandemic it has been suggested that it would be a good opportunity to send extra greetings to anyone whom we might know is suffering loneliness and isolation. Not a soppy 'Roses are red ...' card but an assurance of friendship and concern.

LENT begins on Wednesday and this year copies of a special magazine, *Lent Extra*, will be available, one for each household. We are asking for a donation of £2 to help cover the cost. If you feel able to give a little more that would be appreciated as Father David is hoping to provide copies gratis for those who are self-isolating. Thanks to those who have already contributed.

*Also for Lent – an excellent Christian website, **New Pilgrim Path**:*

The season of Lent gives us a heaven-sent opportunity to reflect prayerfully on the unprecedented events of the last twelve months. We have been challenged, individually and collectively, in ways no-one could have imagined. Successive lockdowns have confronted us with the question of whether we want to go back to how things were, or to 'grow back better'.

Starting on Ash Wednesday, Pray-As-Your Go – in partnership with the global online prayer phenomenon, Sacred Space – offers a Lenten online retreat. 'Growing Back Better' encourages us to reflect on what kind of people we truly desire to become and what kind of world we hope to pass on to future generations. There is a new session for each of the seven weeks of Lent. For this, and other excellent online Lenten resources, visit: www.newpilgrimpath.ie. good works, especially in the service of the poor and the sick.

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Please remember in your prayers:

Those who are sick, especially: Kath Green, Jean & Alan Smith, Peter Wrathall, twins Cosima and Tiadora and their mother Leigh Anne, Syd Warren, Maria Perkins, Dawn, Grace Fouracres, Emma Gallagah, Dexter, Vanessa Jackson, Jean Jarvis, and Mike and Nelly with cancer and Jemima with leukemia.

Those who have recently died : and also those whose anniversary of death falls this week: Audrey Smith, Theo Holmes. (p), Mary Anne Guise, Margaret Medlock,

Mildred May Beswick, Eunice Thomas.

Contacts at St. Laurence

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Churchwardens

Mr Simon Dew: 07970 397711

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Parish Safeguarding Link Mrs Nicky Bailey 07809 680034, Email:

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Temporary Contact: Chris Ellis 07984 973983

Website

For more about St Laurence, visit our website:-www.st-laurence.net

Contact us at: simondew.46@gmail.com