

GRIDIRON

The Newsletter of **St Laurence Long Eaton**

February 21st 2021

First Sunday in Lent (Year B)

The Good News of the Covenant

At the beginning of Lent we renew our response to the Covenant, the pact of love that God made with each of us at our baptism. Imagine what good news it must have been to Noah, alone in a drowned world, when he learned that God's love had not abandoned, nor ever would abandon, the earth and its creatures.

Mass

First Reading: *Genesis 9: 8-15*

Responsorial Psalm 24: 4-9

Your ways, Lord, are faithfulness and love
for those who keep your covenant.

Second Reading: *1 Peter 3: 18-22*

Gospel: *Mark 1: 12-15*

Hymns NEH (Green) except last LON (Blue):

Introit: 440 Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
Gradual: 67 Forty days and forty nights
Offertory 294 Just as I am without one plea
Communion 64 Be thou my guardian and my guide
Recessional: 730 When I needed a neighbour
(All can be heard sung on Youtube.)

About today's Mass readings: First Sunday in Lent

First Reading: *Genesis 9: 8-15*

Lent is a time when the first reading really comes into its own. On the Sundays in Lent, the Church leads us step by step through the preparation of the People of God for the supreme event of Easter, the Resurrection of Christ. In each year of the three-year cycle of readings the first Sunday starts with the Bible-story before Abraham. This year it is the promise to Noah that God will never again let a destructive flood devastate the earth. The first thing Noah does on emerging from the ark is to sacrifice to God in thanksgiving for his deliverance. To this God replies with his promise, guaranteed by the reassuring sign of the rainbow, which binds together earth and heaven, a sort of glorious pathway to heaven. Each of the covenants God makes with his people emerges from evil. There is no pretence that we are not fallible, sinful human beings. Time after time the human partners fail and break the covenant. Time after time God forgives and offers a covenant again, until the new covenant in the blood of Christ. A good way to start Lent, acknowledging our sin and welcoming God's invitation to start again, and perhaps even using Lent as a time to return to the Sacrament of Reconciliation, if we have fallen out of practice.

Second Reading: *1 Peter 3: 18-22*

Lent reaches its climax with the renewal of our baptismal promises at the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday night. This reading begins to prepare for it. Noah's emergence to new life from the waters of the Flood (amid devastation and destruction) is compared to, or made a symbol of, emergence to new life from the waters of baptism. Water is the source of all life. Just look at the way people so often carry a little water-bottle around with them. Though you don't really appreciate water as the source of life until you have been lost in the desert without any water, getting more and more desperately thirsty and weaker. See a drooping flower revive when it is given a few drops of water. The waters of baptism are a symbol not only of washing away sin, but more importantly of new life in Christ. To 'baptise' means to 'dip' in water. By baptism we are 'dipped' into Christ's death. We emerge from the water soaked through with the risen life of Christ, so that henceforth Christ is our life. The reading encourages us to prepare for the renewal of this life at Easter by getting our conscience in order. This needs thought, commitment and prayer, so that we are ready with 'the pledge of a good conscience', and perhaps making use of the assurance of forgiveness given through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Gospel: Mark 1: 12-15

Each year the gospel reading for the first Sunday in Lent is about Jesus' testing in the desert. Mark's emphasis is distinctly different from that of Matthew and Luke. No details of the testing, but rather Jesus' sojourn in the desert is rather almost a return to the peace of the mythical Garden of Eden. The desert of Judaea, between Jerusalem and the Jordan Valley, is a noble and dignified solitude of smooth, sandstone hills. Nothing grows, of course, but wild camels and the occasional leopard prowl around. There Jesus was 'with the wild animals' as, led by the Spirit, he made his preparation for his mission. In what way was he tested? We may presume that in solitude and prayer he was working out the implications of the Voice from Heaven at his Baptism. How was he to run his course as the beloved Servant of the Lord? Precisely how was he to bring the presence of the Kingship of God into people's lives? The 'forty' is often used in biblical accounts for a period of preparation, as Israel's forty years in the desert, or the apostles' forty days of preparation between Easter and Ascension. We may use our forty days to reflect how we may bring God's presence to bear in and through our lives.

Collect:

Grant, almighty God, through the yearly observances of holy Lent, that we may grow in understanding of the riches hidden in Christ and by worthy conduct pursue their effects. 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:

Walsingham Pilgrimage 2021

The Annual weekend Pilgrimage to Walsingham from Holy Trinity has been postponed from its original date in April, due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

A revised date has been agreed with the Shrine and the Pilgrimage is now programmed for 18th, 19th & 20th June 2021. This is of course subject to any restrictions applicable at that time.

There are a few places available and anyone who may be interested and requires further details please contact David Hudson on 07470 503680.

Access to Zoom Services by telephone -no internet required.

1. 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 touching someone 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 FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

9.30am THE PARISH MASS at St Laurence

Presider: Father David

11.15am THE PARISH MASS at Holy Trinity

Presider: Father Giles

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.

Please also remember ... that the communion greeting 'The Body of Christ', is said only once, and we all respond together, **Amen**. The instructions are that Holy Communion is then given in silence. **Please do not say anything when the priest gives you the host.**

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

Wednesday 10.00am 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

The Zoom link is ...

<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 28th February **THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT**

9.30am THE PARISH MASS at St Laurence

11.15am THE PARISH MASS at Holy Trinity

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: June Grocock.

Contacts at St. Laurence

Parish Priest Fr David Lawrence-March, Tel. 0115 946 4060

Email. fatherdlm@icloud.com (Fr David's preferred means of contact is email if possible).

Churchwardens

Mr Simon Dew: 07970 397711

Mrs Jennifer Hulls 07971 478765

Parish Safeguarding Link Mrs Nicky Bailey 07809 680034, Email:

nickybailey1938@gmail.co

Hall Bookings:

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

A spiritual reading for the first Sunday in Lent

A commentary of Saint Augustine on Psalm 60

In Christ we suffered temptation and in him we overcame the Devil

Hear, O God, my petition, listen to my prayer. Who is speaking? An individual, it seems. See if it is an individual: *I cried out to you from the ends of the earth while my heart was in anguish.* Now it is no longer one person; rather, it is one in the sense that Christ is one, and we are all his members. What single individual can cry from the ends of the earth? The one who cries from the ends of the earth is none other than the Son's inheritance. It was said to him: *Ask of me, and I shall give you the nations as your inheritance, and the ends of the earth as your possession.* This possession of Christ, this inheritance of Christ, this body of Christ, this one Church of Christ, this unity that we are, cries from the ends of the earth. What does it cry? What I said before: *Hear, O God, my petition, listen to my prayer; I cried out to you from the ends of the earth.'* That is, I made this cry to you *from the ends of the earth*; that is, on all sides.

Why did I make this cry? *While my heart was in anguish.* The speaker shows that he is present among all the nations of the earth in a condition, not of exalted glory but of severe trial.

Our pilgrimage on earth cannot be exempt from trial. We progress by means of trial. No one knows himself except through trial, or receives a crown except after victory, or strives except against an enemy or temptations.

The one who cries from the ends of the earth is in anguish, but is not left on his own. Christ chose to foreshadow us, who are his body, by means of his body, in which he has died, risen and ascended into heaven, so that the members of his body may hope to follow where their head has gone before.

He made us one with him when he chose to be tempted by Satan. We have heard in the gospel how the Lord Jesus Christ was tempted by the devil in the wilderness. Certainly Christ was tempted by the devil. In Christ you were tempted, for Christ received his flesh from your nature, but by his own power gained salvation for you; he suffered death in your nature, but by his own power gained glory for you; therefore, he suffered temptation in your nature, but by his own power gained victory for you.

If in Christ we have been tempted, in him we overcome the devil. Do you think only of Christ's temptations and fail to think of his victory? See yourself as tempted in him, and see yourself as victorious in him. He could have kept the devil from himself; but if he were not tempted he could not teach you how to triumph over temptation.

