



Sacred Heart Church, Oxford

Fifth Sunday of Lent

21st March, 2021

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Parish Priest: Fr. Harry Curtis

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Sunday, 21 st March Fifth Sunday of Lent <i>Day of Prayer for Candidates for the Sacraments</i>	9.00 am 5.15 pm <i>Stations of the Cross</i> 6.00 pm	<i>The People of the Parish</i> <i>Ernesto Francisco Pinto Madeira & 10 others-RIP</i>
Monday, 22 nd March	No Public Mass Today	
Tuesday, 23 rd March <i>Op. Comm. of St. Turibius of Mongrovejo, Bishop</i>	9.15 am	<i>Regina Mihailova (Anniversary)</i>
Wednesday, 24 th March	No Public Mass Today	
Thursday, 25 th March Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord	6.00 pm <i>Exposition & Confessions</i> 7.00 pm Mass	<i>Sarah McVeigh (Anniversary)</i>
Friday, 26 th March	No Public Mass Today	
Saturday, 27 th March	No Public Mass Today	
Sunday, 28 th March Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord <i>Day of Prayer for Candidates for the Sacraments</i>	9.00 am 5.15 pm <i>Stations of the Cross</i> 6.00 pm	<i>Ellen McGarry (Anniversary)</i> <i>Adoio & 10 others-RIP</i>
Sacrament of Reconciliation: Thursday, 5.00-6.45 pm		

Welcome to Sacred Heart Church for Mass today.

Please pray for those we know who are sick, including Domenico Mirto. If you or any family members are ill and you would like to ask for prayers on this newsletter, let me know (in writing, please). Thank you.

Please pray for the repose of the souls of John Flanagan, Bridget Willoughby, Sheila Evans, Fr Michael Crumpton and Deacon Pat Duffy and for the souls of all who have died recently, and for all whose anniversaries occur at this time: Archbishop Bernard Ullathorne, OSB, Archbishop Francis Joseph Grimshaw, Bishop Humphrey Bright, Mgr. Canon John Joseph Welch, Mgr. Henry Francis Davis, Frs. John Joseph Donnelly, John McManus and Deacon Louis Joseph Livesey, and also Sarah McVeigh and Paddy McLoughlin. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace.

Bridget Willoughby's funeral will be at Our Lady's on Monday, 22nd March, at 10.00 am. John Flanagan's funeral will be at Our Lady's on Tuesday, 30th March. Because of the pandemic not many may attend either funeral Mass, although I know that many parishioners would like to be there. As usual the Masses will be streamed and, if you can, I invite you to attend virtually and to pray for Bridie and her family, and for John and his family. There will be no Mass here at Sacred Heart tomorrow morning – it will be on Tuesday instead.

Mass at Home. You are welcome to Sacred Heart for Mass, but if you wish to join us for Mass from your home, we can Zoom the Mass to you. Alternatively, you could watch the Mass on Saturday, 5.30 pm, and/or Sunday, 11.00 am from Our Lady's where we are now live and can be viewed at <https://www.mcnmedia.tv/camera/our-lady-help-of-christians>

Here is a prayer, **an Act of Spiritual Communion**, which you can say as you watch the Mass at home:

"My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You."

Prayer at the end of Mass:

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy, hail, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve: to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn then, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us, and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus, O merciful, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary! *Pray for us, O holy Mother of God*, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Praying together in a time of Pandemic. You can join me for *Lectio Divina* by Zoom each Monday evening, 7.00–7.30 pm (please let me have your email address and I shall send you a link), and for *Morning Prayer* through Our Lady's livestreaming each morning (except Wednesdays and Thursdays) at 8.00.

The Solemnity of the Annunciation. This Thursday is the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord. Although it is not a Holyday of Obligation, it is a major feast marking the start of Our Lord's earthly life.

Induction. Thank you very much to everyone who came to celebrate my induction as Parish Priest yesterday or who joined in through the webcam. I am very grateful to you all for your warm welcome, for your messages of encouragement, for those who helped in the sacristy or as stewards and cleaners, and for your prayers and gifts. It was a lovely occasion and I look forward to serving you all.

Holy Week and Easter

I wish I could say that Holy Week and the Easter Triduum will be back to normal this year, but sadly they won't. We are in a much better position than last Easter, but our Holy Week and Easter liturgies will reflect the fact that we are still living through a pandemic.

The most important week in the Church's year – indeed, the most important week in the history of the world – is Holy Week. It begins on Palm Sunday, when we celebrate the triumphant entry of Jesus into the Holy City. On Maundy Thursday we remember the Last Supper and the commandment of Jesus to love one another, and the Institution of the Eucharist. On Good Friday we solemnly celebrate the Passion of our Lord. On Holy Saturday we join Him in the Sabbath Rest until the Easter Vigil when we begin to celebrate The Resurrection. The services will be shorter and more simple than usual. Attached to this newsletter is a sheet giving the times of services during the Holy Week and outlining the main changes that we have to make to the normal liturgy.

Gift Aid Envelopes. The new envelopes are available. Please take your box from the hall as you leave the church today, and if you have neighbours who are not here today, please do take their box and deliver it to them. If your circumstances have changed in a way that affects your income tax please let Sally know (01865 779078). Similarly, if you wish to start gift aiding your weekly donations to the church, please give Sally a call.

National Day of Reflection to mark the anniversary of the first national lockdown

The Prime Minister has asked for a National Day of Reflection on the first anniversary of the first lockdown this coming Tuesday. The President and Vice President of the Bishops' Conference have developed this theme, asking all Catholics to hold this day not only as one of Reflection but of Prayer, with an encouragement for all our people to pay a visit to a church and pray for the many needs, hopes and sorrows that have emerged over the last year.

"March 2020 was the first time our churches had to be closed. It is our hope that on this day, every one of our churches will be open. We invite everyone to enter a church on this day, to reflect and pray in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. ... There is so much on which to reflect and include in our prayer. ... May Tuesday 23rd March be a great day of prayer that this pandemic comes to an end and that the gift of God's Holy Spirit will carry us all forward to a new and better life, both here and in the world to come."

We shall have Mass at 9.15 am on Tuesday, and then the church will be open for private prayer until 11.00 am.

Stations of the Cross each Sunday afternoon in Lent, at 5.15, before the evening Mass.

Census 2021 is here! The census is a once-in-a-decade survey which ensures everyone from local government to charities can put services and funding in the places where they are most needed such as doctors' surgeries, schools and new transport routes. Census day is today, **Sunday, 21st March**, and you should have now received letters with online codes explaining how to complete the forms. There's a wide range of support services such as language support and accessible census guidance. You can also get help from census staff in the contact centre over the phone, in a web chat or on social media. For more information and to find out how to get help visit census.gov.uk or call the contact centre 0800 1412021.

Tailpiece: About two hundred years ago a famous religious wit was asked to make a comment about a sloth. He said, "What is most extraordinary is that he lives not upon the branches but beneath them. He moves slowly and passes his life in suspense – like a young clergyman distantly related to a bishop."

May God bless you throughout the Season of Lent and all those who are dear to you. Fr. Harry

P.S. Don't forget to put your clocks forward an hour next Saturday night as British Summer Time begins. Don't get caught out on Palm Sunday morning!

