

ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

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2ND WEEK IN LENT – YEAR B

25th February 2024



DATE	TIME	MASS INTENTION & OTHER INFORMATION
Saturday 24 th February	6.00pm 6.30pm	Sacrament of Reconciliation <i>Anne Nicholson RIP</i>
Sunday 25 th February <i>2nd Sunday in Lent</i>	9.00am	<i>People of the Parish</i> Mass book page 151 Preface page 56 Psalter week 2
Monday 26 th February	8.00am 9.00am	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament <i>People of the Parish</i>
Wednesday 28 th February	6.30pm 7.30pm	<i>Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Sacrament of Reconciliation Private intention</i>
Friday 1 st March <i>St David</i>	8.00am 8.30pm 9.00am	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament Stations of the Cross <i>Private intention</i>
Saturday 2 nd March	6.00pm 6.30pm	Sacrament of Reconciliation <i>People of the Parish</i>
Sunday 3 rd March <i>3rd Sunday in Lent</i>	9.00am	<i>People of the Parish</i> Mass book page 154 Preface page 56 Psalter week 3
Monday 4 th March	11.00am	<i>Requiem Mass and interment for Aileen Toole</i> (No Exposition, 9am Mass or coffee morning).
Wednesday 6 th March	6.00pm 6.30pm 7.30pm	<i>Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Sacrament of Reconciliation Private intention</i>
Friday 8 th March	8.00am 8.30am 9.00am	<i>Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament</i> Stations of the Cross <i>Private intention</i>
Saturday 9 th March	6.00pm 6.30pm	<i>Sacrament of Reconciliation People of the Parish</i>
Sunday 10 th March <i>4th Sunday in Lent-Laetare Sunday</i>	9.00am	<i>People of the Parish</i> Mass book page 162, Preface page 56, Psalter week 4



CAFOD REFLECTION – 2nd Sunday – Mark 9:2-10

In today's gospel reading, Jesus goes to the mountain with Peter, James and John, and a wonderful change comes over him. The disciples are able to see him in all his glory as the Son of God. When we face struggles, it can be difficult to see clearly what our next step should be, at sea it can be difficult to navigate and find fish to catch. Let our eyes be opened today then, to the glory of God and the reality of life that so many people face. And let us "listen to him", loving our neighbours and supporting them wherever they are in the world.

Every Monday Coffee after Mass, everyone welcome. Come and have a brew and a chat.

Tuesday – 6.30pm – CCA/Pastoral Committee Meeting.

Friday – 1st Friday – Holy Communion to the Sick and housebound.

Every Friday in Lent join us for the Way of the Cross at 8.30am. **From this week We’re using the shorter Stations in the Simple Prayer Book. If you don’t have one there are a few to borrow at the back of church.**

Please pray for Dorothy Robinson, Shirley Darbyshire, Evelyn Noblet, All the Residents of Catterall House, Mandy Cuff, Christopher Brown and all our sick and housebound parishioners, and anyone you know who needs our prayers.

Let us remember especially in our prayers Rev. J.B. Keegan OCD, George Arrowsmith, Neil Brady, Ann Whittingham, Enid Smith, Norman Thompson, Charles Cardwell, Mary Elizabeth Holt, Alice Johnson, John Nugent, Anne Marie Topping, James Bamber, Vivienne Garner, James Clarkson, Elizabeth Clarkson, Nicholas Bamber, John Fletcher, Barbara Lyon, and all who’s anniversaries occur about this time. *May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen.*



“We have loved the departed during life; let us not abandon them until we have conducted them, by our prayers, into the house of the Lord.” St Ambrose of Milan

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Pope Francis’s Prayer intention for February

For The Terminally Ill

Let us pray that the sick who are in the final stages of life, and their families, receive the necessary medical and human care and accompaniment.

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COLLECTION: 07/01/24 £148.41	14/01/24 £190.51	21/01/24 £185.58
28/01/24 £208.00	White Fathers £210.20	cheques £188.05

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CAFOD Lent Fast Day

This Lent, your donations to CAFOD’s Family Fast Day appeal will help hardworking people like James the fisherman in Liberia with resources, tools and training to feed their families for good. Give today using the envelope or online at cafod.org.uk and please join us in praying with James that our sisters and brothers around the world have what they need to feed their families. Use the envelope in church or give online at <https://cafod.org.uk> You can also donate by scanning the QR code with your phone, being worn round the necks of our stewards Thank you for all your support!

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DAY BY DAY BOOKS – There are still one or two left for sale in the porch. Price £1. Please put money in candle boxes.

CTS BOOK RACK in the porch you will find a good selection of booklets to help you on your Lenten journey. Priced on the back cover.

BOOK BOX in porch please feel free to borrow and take away any of the books.

LOST PROPERTY - There is a box under the shelf in the back porch, at present we have 4 pairs of gloves mainly leather, one gold earring and a water bottle. Please feel free to have a root.

A Homily for the 4th Sunday in Lent

Genesis 22:1-2, 9-13, 15-18; Romans 8:31-34; Mark 9:2-10

We have three very powerful readings today. I want to begin by considering the second of them, from St. Paul's letter to the Christians at Rome, because this links the other two together.

Paul starts with a remarkable question: "With God on our side, who can be against us?" Do you believe that God is on your side? It is easy to envisage God as stern, if not hostile, yet Paul kicks such a notion firmly into touch. Notice something else: God is on our side, not against anyone else, but in a totally positive way.

Too often in history, and still today, various groups have claimed to have God on their side as a justification for war, aggression, terrorism, violence of every kind. The Crusades, the Wars of Religion in Europe, the anti-Jewish pogroms, have all seen one side pitted against another, with at least one side carrying out atrocities in the name of God. The folk singer Bob Dylan commented wryly on this outlook in the 1960s, with his song "(With) God on our side", concluding with the lines "I can't think for you, you've got to decide, if Judas Iscariot had God on his side".

Today, Islamic fundamentalists in many parts of the world carry out massacres and inhuman punishments in the name of God; fundamentalist Christians use God's name to justify the death penalty and the persecution of marginalised groups. Here in Europe, Putin has the backing of the Patriarch of Moscow in claiming that his invasion and attempted takeover of Ukraine constitute a sacred mission.

None of this is compatible with St. Paul's question. God is for us, and not against anybody. His sacrifice of His Son was, as far as humanity is concerned, a totally positive action, securing redemption for the whole human race.

It is noticeable that God has done what, ultimately, He did not require Abraham to do. I recall a priest complaining forcefully that we should not use the story of Abraham's surrender of Isaac in the liturgy, because it accepts the concept of human sacrifice. Admittedly, it was written in a setting in which human sacrifice was accepted. We would have to say that God never calls us to do evil, and would not ask anyone to kill another person, let alone their own child. We might add that God's sacrifice of His own Son is the sacrifice to put an end to all sacrifices, other than the making present of that one ultimate sacrifice in the Mass.

There are two things to notice. Firstly, Abraham is, in the end, prevented from carrying out the planned sacrifice: secondly, what is actually demanded of him is total trust in God, the faith which justifies, and a willingness to let go, not to cling even to God's greatest gifts: a son, and, apparently, the promise of an inheritance.

Abraham had been led to believe that his son Isaac was to be the guarantee of that inheritance. Now he is seemingly being asked to surrender that hope, and to trust that God will fulfil His promise in a previously unseen way. Finally, the fulfilment did come through Isaac, but only after Abraham had demonstrated his willingness to let go.

Letting go is an important feature of the Christian life. Peter did not want to let go of the vision on the mountain of Transfiguration. That was hardly surprising: it was an experience, far surpassing anything that he could have imagined. To see his Lord transfigured, shining with divine glory, and to see as well, Moses, the giver of the Law, and Elijah, the greatest of the prophets: why would he not wish to hold onto this? Hence his perfectly reasonable suggestion: "It is wonderful for us to be here, so let us make three tents" ...and then we can stay here forever.

It cannot and must not happen. He must allow the vision to fade and must make his way back down the mountain of Transfiguration to the valley of mediocrity, and eventually to the Garden of the Agony and the courtyard of panic and denial, if the vision is to be fulfilled in the Resurrection.

What about us? How ready are we to let go of everything in order to receive God's greatest gift, that of eternal life? Our Lenten self-denial prepares us, and we should not be afraid or unwilling to give up everything, including eventually our earthly existence because, as St. Paul has reminded us, God IS on our side.