

GOSPEL REFLECTION FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

When People We Don't Like Get a Lucky Break! There's little doubt, when people we dislike get unexpected and undeserved mercy, it gets right up our nose! When we are children we might have been looking forward to an annoying classmate or sibling getting into trouble, only to see them getting off the hook. Most likely it fuelled our sense of injustice in an unjust world. As adults we see someone getting something for nothing... something that we ourselves have worked long and hard for, and we feel a rush of irritation. Or, we might see someone get a small sentence for an abhorrent crime and immediately we jump onto a moral high ground. The parable of the 'Prodigal Son' perhaps more than any other, lends itself to the heart of Pope Francis's 'Year of Mercy'. It illustrates mercy from the point of view of the father who gives it, from the son who receives it, and from the point of view of the son who bitterly resents his brother's lucky break.



So with which of the sons do you most strongly identify? Do you identify with the wayward son who squandered his father's money then returned home for forgiveness? Or do you identify with the righteous son who stayed at home fondly imagining he hadn't put a foot wrong? If you identify with the younger son this parable is for you. This parable is for anyone who has turned away from God but wants to put his or her life on track again. This parable is for anyone who has made bad decisions, and that's likely to be most of us. Of course, none of us make bad decisions intentionally. Most of us make bad decisions by not giving any thought to the consequences of our actions. Bad decisions take us in the wrong direction and we might only realise it when we finally hit rock bottom. Only then might we admit the truth to ourselves; only then might we confess "I can't carry on like this something has to give ... something must change!" If you identify more with the prodigal son's older brother then this parable is also for you. The parable is for all of us who judge others as unworthy of our respect or companionship. This parable is for all those who are uncompromising and unfeeling. Like the older son who resents his brother's welcome home party, we make God sad when we resent others being given a second chance, or when we are unable to forgive.

At the end of the day we probably have a little of both brothers in us. The one character in the parable that we should strive to emulate is the father. Like God, the father is loving and compassionate. His love enables him to quickly look beyond the transgressions of his younger son and is overjoyed to welcome him back into the family fold. Similarly, the father is patient and understanding with his mean-spirited self-righteous son. Today we can further our Lenten journey in this 'Year of Mercy', by not putting ourselves above others, by not being judgemental and by allowing others their second chance in life just as we may one day need our second chance.

Useful links: Diocesan Website: <http://www.rcdea.org.uk>
Notre Dame High School, Norwich: Website <http://www.ndhs.org.uk>

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6TH MARCH 2016 – 4TH SUNDAY OF LENT (Lætare Sunday)

Sunday Masses – Page 169 of Parish Mass Book

Saturday	6.00 pm	
Sunday	9.00 am	People of the Parish
	11.00 am	Freda Wilkes

Music for Sunday Masses - *Setting: Dom Gregory Murray Mass*

Entry 6pm – *Angelus (said)*; Hymn 202 – Lord Jesus, as we turn from sin ...
Gospel Acclamation – Hymn 184 – Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory
Offertory Hymn 851 – Awake, awake: fling off the night! ...
Communion *Instrumental Interlude/Sacred silence ...*
Recessional 11am – *Angelus (said)*; Hymn 846 – Amazing grace! How sweet the sound ...

CONFESSION/RECONCILIATION - Saturday at 5.30 - 5.55 pm

Weekday Mass Times (4th week in Lent) [Psalter Week 4]

Mon.	10.00 am	- Lent Feria
Tues.	No morning Mass	- St Felix (Second Patron of the Diocese)
	7.00 pm	Deanery Lent Station Mass at the Cathedral, Norwich
Weds.	10.00 am	- Lent Feria
	2.30 pm	Stations of the Cross (Led by UCM)
Thurs.	10.00 am	- Lent Feria
Fri.	10.00 am	- Lent Feria
	5.45 pm	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Silent Prayer
	6.15 pm	Evening Prayer (Vespers)
Sat.	10.30 am	- Lent Feria
	6.00 pm	- 5 th Sunday of Lent

**Fdn. = Foundation Mass*

The Parish Newsletter (incl. back copies) is available to view on the parish website from Friday onward each week.

Anniversaries this week: Esther Rawe, Robert Patrick, Kenneth Gaylard, Elizabeth Mary O'Donnell, Roy Smith, Henry Durham, Ronald Jack Heasman, Catherine Honora Hare, Charles Christie, John Le Milliere, Deidre Brewer and Winifred Wake. *May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace.*

Hospital Visits – If you or family members are admitted to the Norfolk & Norwich Hospital (NNUH) or Queen Elizabeth II Hospital (QEII), King's Lynn, and would like a visit from the Roman Catholic Chaplain, please call either St John's Cathedral, Norwich (01603 624615) for visits to NNUH, or Fr Peter Rollings (01553 772220) for visits to QEII. If you would like to receive the Sacrament of Anointing of the sick before going to hospital, please contact Fr. Brendan on 01362 694066.

Sick List - Please pray for: Joan Blakiston, David Peek, Michael Reavey, Robert Nicol, Doreen Kanssen, Shirley Liebenhals, Sarah Chaudri, Anne & Derek Williams, David & Anna Thompkins, Michelle Smith, Rita Smith, Rhonda Darby, Collette Barrow-Nessian, Eileen Brockleby, Pat Howe, Kathleen (Jenny) Rudd and Pat Grout.

Money Matters – The collection last weekend was £396.65 and the retiring collection for the Holy Ghost (Spiritans) Mission Appeal was £549.72. A further donation of £30 was also received for the CAFOD Lent Fast Day, bringing that total to £592.22. Thank you for your generous compassion for those living in poverty and for fasting in solidarity with them.

130 Club - Would members please collect their renewal envelopes from the back of church. Patrick Monaghan will be on hand at all Masses over the next three weekends. There are still a few unallocated numbers and if anyone would like to take up one or more of these numbers, please see Patrick who can explain about the Club, which is a worthwhile fundraiser for the Parish.

Diary Dates for this week –

- **Mon. 7th Mar** – Co-Workers of Mother Teresa meet at 2pm in the Emmaus Room. New members to join this friendly knitting group are always welcome.
- **Tues. 8th Mar** – Deanery Lent Station **Mass – 7pm at St John's Cathedral**, Norwich, preceded by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Confessions from 6.00pm and ending with refreshments from 8.00pm. **Please note that due to this Mass, there is no meeting of the Queen of Peace Prayer Group this evening.**
- **Weds. 9th Mar** – UCM meeting – 2pm in Emmaus Room, and UCM will lead Stations of the Cross commencing at 2.30pm.
- **Fri. 11th Mar** – Altar Servers meet – 7.15pm in Emmaus Room
- **Sat. 12th Mar** – Saturday Club meets - 11.00am in Emmaus Room

Forthcoming Dates for your Diary –

- Sun. 13th Mar – 5.00pm – Stations of the Cross (led by SVP)
- Sun. 20th Mar – 5.00pm – Stations of the Cross (led by the Prayer Group)
- Tues. 22nd Mar – Chrism Mass – 7pm at St John's Cathedral. There will be a list put up for names for travel by coach to the Cathedral. Please note – due to the Chrism

Mass, there will be no meeting of the Queen of Peace Prayer Group.

Lætare Sunday – 6th March - *"Rejoice, Jerusalem! Be glad for her, you who love her; rejoice with her, you who mourned for her, and you will find contentment at her consoling breasts."* This Sunday is known as Lætare Sunday and is a Sunday of joy. Lent is half over, and Easter is enticingly near. This Sunday was formerly called "Lætare Sunday" since its mood and theme was one of hope and rejoicing that Easter was near. In the reformed calendar this Sunday is not different from the other Sundays of Lent even though the entrance antiphon for the day still begins with the Latin word "lætare" and the vestments worn by the celebrant are rose-colored, not violet. The day is important because it is the day of the second scrutiny in preparation for the baptism of adults at the Easter Vigil.



Happy Mothering Sunday - For centuries it was custom for people to return home to their 'mother' church on Lætare Sunday – the middle of Lent. Those who did so were said to have gone 'a-mothering'. The day often turned into a family reunion and a chance for children working away from home – often domestic servants - to spend time with their mothers. Nowadays, a great opportunity to let our own mothers know how much they are appreciated and loved. Happy 'Mothering Sunday'.

St. George's Catholic Church, Norwich – 50th Anniversary – As part of their 50th Anniversary Year celebrations marking the consecration of St George's church, Norwich Cathedral Organist David Dunnett will be performing *Le Chemin de la Croix* by Marcel Duprés on **Sunday, 13th March at 6.00pm**. This is a meditation on the Stations of the Cross and perfect for Lent. Entry is free and there will be refreshments in the parish hall following the organ recital. Please see the poster at the back of church for more information.

Pope Francis's Prayer Intention for March 2016 - For Families in Difficulty - Lent and Holy Week during this Jubilee Year of Mercy present a good opportunity for us to practice mercy toward families and children. We can begin to do so with our prayerful support for all families experiencing difficulties, both at home and abroad. We are invited to join in Pope Francis's prayer intention for March, *"...That families in need may receive the necessary support and that children may grow up in healthy and peaceful environments."*

Bite Size - "The confessional is not a torture chamber, but the place in which the Lord's mercy motivates us to do better." - *Pope Francis*

PARISH PRAYER – Father, pour out your Spirit upon our parish. Grant us a new vision of your glory, a new faithfulness to your Word, and a new consecration to your service; that your love might grow among us and your Kingdom come. Through Christ our Lord. Amen