

GOSPEL REFLECTION FOR THE THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT



The Gardener, the Fig Tree and the Promise - When people die, especially in tragic or premature circumstances, we are left with a sense of injustice. There are some who will question what kind of God we have who can allow such unfairness. But the bottom line is that life simply isn't metered out to us in equal proportions. Death simply happens. There is no intent behind a natural disaster, and because there is no intent there can certainly be no injustice. In biblical days people imagined that fatal disasters and terminal illnesses were sent as some kind of punishment from God. Had the victims brought about their own fate by living sinful lives? What will Jesus' answer be? No, of course untimely death is not sent as a punishment! But whilst we are pondering the fragility of our lives, Jesus reminds us that any one of us could die in similar circumstances. We only have to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. None of us can bank on living to a ripe old age, and so we must consider how well we are prepared to live and how well we are prepared to die.

At first, today's reading feels uncomfortable. The parable of the fig tree reads like a threat. The tree is not bearing any fruit and so the master commands that it should be axed. A compassionate gardener begs that the tree be given a second chance, and so the master grants another year. It feels like a threat... bear fruit or else! But Jesus knows that threats don't bring out the best in us. Like the gardener who tends the tree and nurtures it, so Jesus is there for all who need a second chance. For those of us who make a commitment to live life in a better way, Jesus is there to support and guide us towards our goals. The parable has moved from something that sounds like a threat to something that sounds like a promise.... something inspirational!

Lent is a time to address some begging questions. How many years have we spent making the same old mistakes? What must we do to make life different? It sounds obvious, but to achieve different results, we must do something different. We are invited to ask God for help in setting new priorities, and we must achieve results that reflect God's love for us, and our love for God.



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.

Useful links: Diocesan Safeguarding – <https://www.rcdea.org.uk/safeguarding/>
 Diocesan Website – <http://www.rcdea.org.uk>
 Notre Dame High School, Norwich – <http://www.ndhs.org.uk>
 Daily Liturgy Website – www.universalis.com

PARISH OF THE SACRED HEART AND ST. MARGARET MARY [Registered Charity 278742]

Parish Priest: **Fr. Brendan Moffatt** – Telephone: 01362 694066

Email: Brendan.Moffatt@rcdea.org.uk

Address: **The Presbytery, 35 London Road, Dereham NR19 1AS**

Parish Website: <http://www.sacredheartdereham.org.uk>

Permanent Deacon: Rev. Martin Sanderson: Tel: 01362 822590

Email: martin.sanderson@rcdea.org.uk

Parish Music Leader: Michael King: Email: michaeljwking@gmail.com

Parish Safeguarding Representative: Kathleen Edmunds:

Email: kathleenedmunds@yahoo.com

24TH MARCH 2019 – 3RD SUNDAY OF LENT – Year C

[3rd Week of Lent, Weekday Year I, Psalter Week 3]

Mass Times for the Week			Intentions
Sat. 23 rd Mar.	6.00 pm	3 rd Sunday of Lent [Parish Mass Book p160]	Thanksgiving Bob Shutt (SVP) The People of the Parish
Sun. 24 th Mar.	9.00 am 11.00 am		
Mon. 25 th Mar.	10.00 am	THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD. Solemnity	Bob Shutt (UCM)
Tues. 26 th Mar.	-	Lent Feria	No Mass today – PP's day off
Weds. 27 th Mar.	10.00 am	Lent Feria	Bob Shutt (Pitcher)
Thurs. 28 th Mar.	10.00 am	Lent Feria	Bob Shutt (Monaghan)
Fri. 29 th Mar.	10.00 am 10.30 am	Lent Feria Stations of the Cross	UCM's Intentions
Sat. 30 th Mar.	10.30 am	Lent Feria	Priest's Int.
Sat. 30 th Mar.	6.00 pm	4 th Sunday of Lent (Lætare Sunday)	Priest's Int. The People of the Parish Roger Borthwick
Sun. 31 st Mar.	9.00 am 11.00 am		

Music for 3rd Sunday of Lent – Setting: Belmont Mass (incl. Mem. Acclam. 2)

Entry: 6pm – Angelus (said); Hymn 204 – Lord Jesus, think on me ...

Psalm: R. *The Lord is compassion and love. [The Psalm will be sung at the 6pm Mass.]*

Offertory: Hymn 961 – Lead kindly light ...

Recessional: 11am – Angelus (said); Hymn 941 – There is a longing ...

Confession/Reconciliation: Saturday at 5.30pm, or by request/appointment

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

Anniversaries this week: Alex Siedlecki, Margaret Bowles, Sheelah de Chenu, Basil Howard, Frank Broom, Hazel O'Connor, Helena Josephine Bennett, Michael Casey, Sidney Carter, Antonio Pereira and Patrick Malone. *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, King's Lynn (QEII), 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 call the NNUH Hospital Chaplaincy direct on 01603 287470 for people needing urgent spiritual attention, or for visits to QEII Hospital, call Fr. Peter Rollings on 01553 772220. If you would like to receive the Sacrament or Anointing of the sick before going to hospital, please contact Fr. Brendan on 01362 694066.

Sick & Housebound [with GDPR Permissions] – Please pray for: David Peek, Janet Yardley, Jenny Rudd, Peter Gormans, Sarah Chaudri, Rita Smith, Carol Whitesides, Catherine (Kay) Garrard, Robert Nicol, Eileen Brocklesby, Neville Hibberd, Shirley Liebenhals and Brenda May.

Money Matters: Thank you for your offering of £559.65 last weekend for the day-to-day running of our parish. Thank you also for your very generous collection for **CAFOD** last weekend, which amounted to £564.20. The need is always greater than the means to alleviate poverty. CAFOD is a charity that people trust and rest assured that their donations reach the people in need.

Offertory Envelopes - All those who use envelopes for their weekly offertory please find them at the back of church. Those who pay by Standing Order please pick up your white envelope, also at the back of the church, which contains the offertory envelopes for the Easter and Christmas offering to enable us to claim the gift aid.

Parish Gift Aid Scheme - Please would parishioners who are members of the parish gift aid scheme let Rex Baker know if there have been any changes in your personal circumstances regarding the payment of income tax (or change of address) for the financial year 2018-2019. In the absence of any such information, it will be assumed that you are still a tax payer and the parish will reclaim tax from HMRC on the offertory donations you have made during this financial year.

If there are any parishioners who pay tax and are not part of the gift aid scheme and are willing to sign up again please let Rex know or ask Fr Brendan. This is a great way for the parish to get additional funds from the tax reclaim benefits; Last year the parish reclaimed circa £5,000. With this scheme you do not need to commit to a fixed amount as it will just be based on your total annual contribution.

Contact details for Rex Baker are telephone number: 01362 694801 or [email rexbaker27@btinternet.com](mailto:rexbaker27@btinternet.com)

130 Club Draw for February 2019 - 1st Prize £20 – Ticket No. 99; 2nd Prize £15 – Ticket No. 51; 3rd Prize £10 – Ticket No. 78; 4th Prize £10 – Ticket No. 8; 5th Prize £10 – Ticket No. 68.

Diary Dates for this week -		
Tues. 26 th Mar.	7.30pm	Queen of Peace Prayer Group - Emmaus Room
Thurs. 28 th Mar.	6.30pm	Music selection & practice – Presbytery & Church. All volunteers welcome to sing or play.
Fri. 29 th Mar.	7.15-8.15pm	Altar Servers meet – Emmaus Room
Sat. 30 th Mar.	11.00am	Saturday Club - Emmaus Room

Coach to **Norwich for the Chrism Mass.** We will depart from Dereham at 5.00pm for Norwich on **Tuesday, 16th April.** The list for names is at the back of the church. I have also booked a coach to go to Norwich for **Mike Brookes' Ordination.** Another list will appear for that in due course.

The Feast of the Annunciation, 25th March - On March 25th, nine months before Christmas, we celebrate one of the Church's most important feast days, the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord. It is interesting to reflect that God did not need any human being in order to do his work, however, he chose to redeem us in a way that included human participation through a humble young woman's consent.

The Ignatian Workout for Lent: An Online Retreat - Tim Muldoon writes that, "Life in Christ demands the same kind of vigilance, preparation, and training that a person undertakes as an athlete. This Lent, we are invited to become spiritual athletes and join Tim for **The Ignatian Workout for Lent.** Each week throughout Lent and Easter he'll share audio reflections accompanied by suggestions for prayer and action. You can find this collection of sound files at www.ignatianspirituality.com/len/the-ignatian-workout-for-lent-an-online-retreat

A Different Type of Fasting: 'Praying Lent' - There are many ways to fast. Why not fast from criticism, gossip, judging others, or passing on rumours? Why not abstain from unwarranted fear and anxiety? You can also tell that inner voice inside your head that criticizes you to abstain from eroding your ability to be the confident, blessed person God calls you to be. These are beautiful ways to observe the Lenten call to fasting and abstinence. In the book, *Praying Lent*, the authors offer suggestions on different ways to fast during Lent. *'Praying Lent: Renewing Our Lives on the Lenten Journey'* by Andy Alexander, SJ, Maureen McCann Waldron

Lent Prayer: We pray for the Church throughout the world, that she may be a sign of God's love for all people and a beacon of hope for all who are in need. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Lenten Alms Box - There will be a box at the back of the church throughout Lent to receive your Lenten Alms. This year the proceeds from across the Diocese will be divided equally between Aid to the Church in Need and The Cambridge Nazareth Trust.



A reminder that British Summer Time begins next Sunday (31st March) - clocks go forward one hour.