

# THE ORATORY—dedicated to THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

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*Registered as a Charity*

## Parish Weekly Newsletter

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*This newsletter is available in large-print format. Ask at the Sacristy.*

## February 24th 2008: The Third Sunday of Lent



### The Journey to Jerusalem: The Samaritan Woman

Today's Gospel is the first of three long passages taken from St. John's Gospel, dealing with three elements of Baptism: water, light and life. Today's Gospel explores the theme of water. Next Sunday we will hear about light and seeing, and the following Sunday will recount the Raising of Lazarus, which takes us to the heart of life itself. These three Gospels prepare us both for the Passion Gospel according to St. Matthew on Palm Sunday, and for the Easter Vigil when we will once again celebrate the Sacraments of new life, Baptism, Confirmation and First Communion of Adult converts, in the light of the Resurrection.

Today we accompany Our Lord on His journey towards Jerusalem as He stops by a well outside a Samaritan village one day at noon. He sits down, weary from the journey and the heat of the day, when a woman of the village comes to draw water. Being thirsty, our Lord asks her to give Him a drink of water. She is amazed because, as St. John explains, Jews and Samaritans have nothing to do with each other. So for a Jewish man to ask a Samaritan woman for a drink from her vessel is most irregular. But this is only the opening to a conversation in which Our Lord uses the imagery of water to explain to her the gift of faith, which He is offering to give her.

The connection between water and faith, with which we are already familiar in the Sacrament of Baptism, is also the reason why we hear a reading today from the Book of Exodus. We hear how the people of Israel, during their forty-year long journey through the wilderness to the Promised Land, were tormented by thirst and grumbled against Moses and God for bringing them out of Egypt. Moses therefore prayed to God, who instructed him to strike the hard rock with his staff, so that water might flow out to slake the people's thirst. Yet although God saved the people in this way, He was displeased with them because they had not put their trust in Him and in Moses, His chosen leader.

But returning to our Lord's conversation with the Samaritan woman;—this takes place on two "levels". Our Lord is thirsty, both physically and spiritually. On one level He thirsts for a drink of water, and on another He thirsts for the woman's faith. So as on one level He asks her for a drink of water, on another level He also offers her "living water". But she takes His meaning in the literal sense. Our Lord then explains in greater depth the meaning of this "living water", which will spring up inside a person and never dry up. Again the woman takes this literally as she looks forward to never having to take the trouble to come and draw water from this well again. When Our Lord tells her to fetch her husband, she replies that she has no husband. Jesus answers that she is telling the truth, for having had seven husbands already, she is not married to her present "partner". By now, she has begun to realise that Jesus is no ordinary Jew. "I see you are a prophet, sir!", she says, and asks Him about the religious differences between His people and hers. Where is the proper place to worship God? Here in Samaria, or in Jerusalem? Our Lord replies that for the present the Samaritans worship God but do not know God. The time is almost come for a new form of worship; when all who worship God will know Him and when it will no longer be necessary to go to either Jerusalem or Samaria, but that anyone who worships God "in spirit and in truth" may do so anywhere.

The woman now turns to the coming of the Messiah who will make the truth about God known to Samaritans and Jews alike. Now the moment has come. She is now ready to hear the truth, and so our Lord says openly to her: "I who am speaking to you, I am He". Joyfully, she goes off to tell her neighbours about this wonderful man who has told her everything she ever did, and to invite them to meet Him and listen to His teaching. After hearing Jesus they all say to the woman, "It is no longer because of your words that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world." In this wonderful reading, we learn how Jesus wins our faith by means of elements of ordinary human everyday experience such as thirst and water. Just as "man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from God's mouth", so too we do not live by water alone, but by the living spring of faith that alone makes our life worthwhile.

### Sunday February 24th: The Third Sunday of Lent (Purple)

*Year 1 or A of the Lectionary at Mass*

- 8.30 a.m. **Low Mass**
- 9.30 a.m. **1962 rite Mass (in the church)**
- 10.30 a.m. **Solemn High Mass**
- 12.00 p.m. **(Families with young children)**
- 5.30 p.m. **Sung Congregational Mass**
- **Vespers and Benediction at 7.30 p.m.**

### Liturgical Calendar

*Monday to Friday: Masses at 7.30 a.m., 12.45 p.m. and 5.45 p.m.*

*Rosary at 7.45 p.m. STATIONS OF THE CROSS ON FRIDAYS IN LENT: 1.10 & 8 p.m.*

*Confessions are heard from 12.30 p.m. and from 5.30 p.m. until the end of Mass*

**Monday February 25th: Monday of Lent Week 3. (Purple)**

- **Blessing with St Philip's relic at 8 p.m.**

**Tuesday February 26th: Tuesday of Lent Week 3. (Purple)**

- **Benediction at 8 p.m.** Brothers of the Little Oratory meet after Benediction in St Philip's Chapel.

**Wednesday February 27th: Wednesday of Lent Week 3. (Purple)**

**Thursday February 28th: Thursday of Lent Week 3. (Purple)** Optional commemoration of St Oswald, Bishop

**St Oswald** Born in England of Danish nobility, and a nephew of St Odo, he put aside his wealth to join the Benedictines, studying under his uncle in France where he was ordained. He returned to England and only three years later was appointed Bishop of Worcester by (St) Dunstan. He identified himself with St Dunstan and St Ethelwold in working hard to eliminate the abuses, and to revive monastic life and ecclesiastical discipline in England. Retaining his see at Worcester, he was appointed Archbishop of York. In addition to striving to improve the morals of his clergy, he worked to increase their theological knowledge, writing two treatises and several synodal decrees. With St Dunstan and St Ethelwold, he has been revered since his death in 992, as one of the three saints who revived English monasticism.

**Friday February 29th: Friday of Lent Week 3. (Purple).** Stations of the Cross at 1.10 and 8 p.m.

**Saturday March 1st: St David, Bishop & Patron of Wales. Feast. (White)**

- **Masses at 8 a.m. and 11 a.m.**
- **Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 8.30 to 10.45 a.m.**
- **Benediction at 10.45 a.m.**
- **Confessions from 10.55 a.m. to 12 noon & from 5.30 p.m. until the end of Mass**
- **Vigil Mass of THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT at 5.45 p.m.**

**St David:** According to tradition, he was the son of King Sant of South Wales and St. Non. He was ordained a priest and later studied under St. Paulinus. He became involved in missionary work and founded a number of monasteries, including the monastery at Menevia, which was noted for its asceticism. In 550, he attended a synod at Brevi in Cardiganshire and his contributions at the synod are said to have been the major cause for his election as Bishop. He was reportedly consecrated archbishop by the patriarch of Jerusalem while on a visit to the Holy Land. He also is said to have invoked a council that ended the last vestiges of Pelagianism. He was known for his extraordinary spiritual leadership and many monasteries flourished as a result of his leadership and example. He was said to have performed miracles in his life-time. He died at his monastery in Menevia around the year 589.

**Sunday March 2nd: The FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT: "Laetare" (Rose)**

**Mass & Service Times:**

- **8.30 a.m. Low Mass**
- **9.30 a.m. Latin Mass 1962 Missal**
- **10.30 a.m. Solemn High Mass**
- **12.00 p.m. (Families with young children)**
- **5.30 p.m. Sung Congregational Mass in English**
- **Vespers and Benediction: 7.30 p.m.**

**Please pray for the sick:** Derek Botowski, Marie-Thérèse Jones, Dorothy Price, Ellen Westwood, Tommy Smyth, Margaret Casey, Jacqueline Griffiths, Frank McGuinness, George Saunders, Patrick Hurley, Margaret Ginely and Desmond Williams. **Of your charity please pray for the repose of the souls of those who have died recently:** Luke Reid and Theresa Dunn; **and of the souls of those whose anniversaries occur about now:** Fr Edward Pereira of this Oratory, Bishop Cleary, Josephine Hawkins, Charles Slammon, Charles Baker, Dorothy Miller, Marie-Louise Jones, Denis Minihane, Paul Ahern, and Mary McNamara.

**The following are requested to read next weekend, March 1st/2nd: The 4th Sunday of Lent**  
Saturday 5.45 p.m.: Brigid Hogan  
Sunday 8.30 a.m.: Murray Wilson-Browne  
12.00 p.m.: Eamon Grant  
5.30 p.m.: Jason Mahoney

**Collections**  
*The 2nd Sunday of Lent*, 17th February:  
Offertory: £1,169  
Second: Lenten Fast Day: £901  
*Thank you*

**The second Collection today will be for the DDF**  
**Next Sunday it will be for the Music in Holy Week**

### **TODAY**

**BISHOP PARGETER** is preaching at every Mass here today (including Saturday evening Mass). He will celebrate the 12 noon Mass. Over the weekend His Lordship will conduct the Deanery Visitation of our Parish.

**HUMAN FERTILISATION AND EMBRYOLOGY BILL** If you haven't yet sent a letter or a postcard to your MP, please do so, it only takes a moment to fill in the card and stick a stamp on it. Also, please sign the **Petition at the Church Doors. That only takes a moment!**

**'WALK WITH ME', The Archbishop's companion to Lent Books** are by the back door: cost £1. There is also a Calendar, (30p) designed for children. We encourage you to buy these aids to prayer life during this holy season, and for those who you know who are housebound, and perhaps for members of your family who no longer go to church.

**PIETY STALL:** Easter cards are on sale and also cards and gifts for Confirmation and First Holy Communion.

**PRO LIFE TIMES:** The latest edition is now available FREE at the Church doors.

**LENTEN ALMS:** The box for your Lenten alms-giving is near the Plough and Harrow Door. Proceeds are for Father Hudson's Society.

### **THIS WEEK**

**ORATORY PRIMARY SCHOOL TALKS FOR PARENTS / Carers:** The fourth in this important series of talks is on **Monday** from 2.00— 3.15 p.m. in the Oratory School Hall, on the subject of **Sex Education**, and is open to all parents of children in the school. The title of the talk is: **"The Impact of Sex Education in Catholic Education."** The talk will be given by James Caffrey, a retired head-teacher. We hope that, if at all possible, parents will attend these very important talks.

**ADORATION AT REDNAL** will take place this week on Wednesday

commencing with Mass at 2.30 p.m.

**LENTEN TALKS:** The third talk will be on Saturday, in the Lower Cloister Hall after the 11 a.m. Mass, on **"Conscience"**. The talk: "Conscience and the Papacy" will be given by Fr. Dermot.

**The SOCIETY OF ST HUGH** will meet on Saturday, 1st March, at 10.15 a.m. in the Oratory House. **All are welcome.**

**ST. CHAD'S DAY PROCESSION:** Since St. Chad's Day (2nd March) falls on Sunday, this year's outdoor Procession with St. Chad's relics will take place on Saturday, 1st March, at 12 noon at St. Chad's Cathedral.

**ELCT ECUMENICAL LENT DISCUSSIONS** on characters in the Passion story continue on Tuesday 26th February with coffee at 7.15 for 7.30 p.m. at the Church of the Redeemer, Monument Road. next topic: "Judas Iscariot".

**MOTHERING SUNDAY** next Sunday, also known as "Laetare" (Rejoice), or "Refreshment" Sunday, is the one day in Lent when we are allowed to relax our Lenten penances, especially to celebrate with our Mothers, if we are fortunate enough to be able to do so, and to thank God for them and all they have done for us!

### **FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

**CATHOLIC WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB** will next meet on 11th March when Joanna Bogle will be there to discuss her new book: "A Year-book of Seasons & Celebrations". On the day, she will be happy to sign copies of her book (available on the piety stall, now £7.50). All women are welcome. Please contact Jackie Parkes: 688 4154

**EX CATHEDRA** are giving performances of two major choral classics in the near future. Bach's "Passion according to St. John", at the Town Hall next Saturday, March 1st and Handel's "Messiah" on Saturday April 5th in Symphony Hall. For tickets telephone 0121 780 3333