

BRINDLE St JOSEPH'S

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Palm Sunday

5th April 2020

(Sunday cycle year A, weekday cycle year 2, psalter week 2)



*Blessings on him who comes
 in the name of the Lord*

THIS WEEK

Sat 4 th	10.30am	For the Sick of our Parish	Saturday of Lent 5
	6.00pm	Richard, Monica & John Reid	
Sun 5 th	9.30am	For the Parish	PALM SUNDAY
Mon 6 th	No Mass today		Monday in Holy Week
Tue 7 th	9.30am	Harry & Renie Worsley	Tuesday in Holy Week
Wed 8 th	9.30am	Sheila Cowsley	Wednesday in Holy Week
Thu 9 th	6.00pm	For Doctors & Nurses	MAUNDY THURSDAY
Fri 10 th	3.00pm	Solemn Liturgy	GOOD FRIDAY
Sat 11 th	8.00pm	For the Parish	HOLY SATURDAY
Sun 12 th	9.30am	For the Young of our Parish	EASTER SUNDAY

Lord, you know the fears and anxieties
 that fill our hearts at what today will bring.

Free us from panic and worry.
 Anchor our thoughts and minds
 in your great power and love.

Send us into this day
 with your peace in our hearts
 and sure confidence
 in your fatherly care.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

(Anon, from "Prayers to help you through the week")

PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD

A reflection:

By now, we have all learned at least one thing with regard to our present circumstance...just how much we take for granted and how easy it is to be a people of faith when all goes well for us. Now, unable to gather in the name of our Blessed Lord to remember in our liturgy, His passion, death and resurrection, we may be reminded of the days of St Edmund Arrowsmith, but at least then, they could gather in secret albeit in peril of their lives. Sadly for us, we too imperil ours and other people's lives if we gather at all.

And so we find ourselves in the company of an army of living saints perhaps whom we have also taken for granted: our sick and housebound. The sick and housebound have long been experts in the practice of Spiritual Communion; firstly by accepting the new life situation that they cannot change...and secondly, by making the most of what they do have; a lesson we all need to learn in our new-found confinement. But it is in their prayer life that they unite themselves to the Eucharist which lies at the heart of the spiritual life of the parish and the Universal Church and from which all the graces flow.

From our confinement we too can join them in spiritual communion by following the order of the Mass in our missals or prayer books and the Mass sheets when available on the website along with various links. Or at the time of the Mass as given in the Bulletin to just sit quietly in the presence of God. There are other devotions too that our sick and housebound are faithful to such as the Angelus normally said at midday and 6.00pm. Or we can sanctify different times of the day by saying one of mysteries of the Rosary eg the first early morning, the second later morning, the third midday, the fourth early afternoon and the fifth in the evening not dissimilar to the Divine Office obligatory to religious and clerics.

So then, back to our theme of complacency. When things are going well, it is easy to be among the crowds cheering "Hosanna to the Son of David...Glorious His Holy Name..." as He rides into Jerusalem on a donkey – the expected Messiah. But also, like them, how quickly we can turn from a cheering crowd to a jeering crowd when things are not going so well...as Peter would later find out.

So let us pray for the grace to remain faithful to Christ as so many of our expectations and dreams are dashed during this difficult time, but also to look forward to the resurrection where despair is turned to hope.

A kind soul (long housebound) brought to my attention the following Prayer for Spiritual Communion. You can find it in the CTS 'A Simple Prayer Book':

*My Jesus, I believe that you are truly 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 at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as being already there and unite myself wholly to you.
Never permit me to be separated from you.
(St Alphonsus Liguori)*

I am also grateful to the parishioner who brought to my attention the existence of a 2nd century Saint invoked in time of epidemics called St Corona.

You can Google her for more details but suffice to say she was a young girl married to a Roman soldier and unbeknown to him, a Christian.

On seeing another Roman soldier by the name of Victor, being brutally tortured for being a Christian, St Corona ran to his assistance, praying for him and declaring herself a Christian.

They were both martyred and share the same feast day (14th May).

Through an electron microscope, the Corona virus appears to have crown-like projections around it hence the name. Perhaps I am missing something blindingly obvious but if anyone can tell me why she is the patron Saint of epidemics I would be grateful since we can be sure that there were no such microscopes in the 2nd century.

Anyway, here is a prayer to invoke her intercession during our pandemic:

*Lord Jesus Christ, you came into this world for our salvation. Look kindly on us now we pray, that we and all those who serve you might be kept safe from this epidemic.
Heal those who are sick, comfort the suffering, bring back those who have gone astray and above all, increase our faith O Lord.
Give us the grace to follow you and like your martyr St Corona who gave her life for love of you, may we take up our cross daily without fear or hesitation.
Lord Jesus Christ, son of the living God, have mercy on us and on the whole world.
St Corona, pray for us.*

May God Bless you all.

Fr Raphael

THE PARISH BULLETIN is my primary means of communication to our parishioners and the ideal is that everybody in the parish receives one. It can be found on the parish website (www.brindlestjosephs.org.uk) along with lots of other links and resources.

For the children as well as adults, we have 'The Wednesday Word' which seeks to present the Sunday readings in a way more suited to the young as the children's liturgy seeks to do and 'With you always' sacramental worksheets so that the children can continue preparing for First Holy Communion.

It is through the bulletin that I can share my thoughts and reflections with you as we journey through this difficult time together. The bulletin continues to publish the times when I am saying Mass so that you can be spiritually present though you may prefer to 'live stream' through the links published on the parish website. (Mass intentions are still gratefully received through the letter box if you are able).

It is really important however, that those who have the computer facilities consider those, perhaps of their own families, who do not and that they print off a copy of the bulletin and post it through their letter box. This would all be in the spirit of keeping an eye on the needs of others during this difficult time.

I mention all of this because I am discovering that even parishioners with internet do not realise the parish resources available through it.

We are blessed with Mick who has a gift for this kind of technology and is only too happy to put it at the service of the parish for which I am very grateful and as I am sure you will be, once you get used to clicking onto the parish website and seeing what's there.

A FINAL THOUGHT: "It isn't what you have or who you are or where you are or what you are doing that makes you happy or unhappy; It is what you think about it." (*D Carnegie: How to Win Friends and Influence People*) and "There is nothing either good or bad – but thinking makes it so." (*W Shakespeare: Hamlet*)

PS: As usual, I will be offering the Mass (for the Parish) at which I do hope you will in some way be spiritually present. It being Palm Sunday, one of the ways of being spiritually present is to find last year's palm and just after 9.30am hold it up so that I can bless it (the way I bless your cribs at home at the Christmas eve Mass) with the following prayer:
Increase the faith of those who place their hope in you, O God and graciously hear the prayers of those who call on you, that we, who today hold high these branches to hail Christ in His triumph, may bear fruit for you by good works accomplished in Him who live and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

The **CHILDREN'S LITURGY GROUP** have created **activity sheets for Holy Week & Easter** which can be downloaded from the website – the link is on the home page.

PLEASE PRAY for Barbara Phelan, Fr Cassian Dickie OSB & all who are sick or housebound as well as for all those whose anniversaries occur about this time.

IF YOU REQUIRE A PRIEST IN AN EMERGENCY & cannot contact me, please ring St Gregory's, Chorley – 01257 262462.

IF ANYONE IS ADMITTED into Chorley hospital and needs a visit, then please phone St Joseph's, Harpers Lane: 01257-262713, for Preston Royal Infirmary: 01772-522435, for Wigan Infirmary 01942-822324.

SOME ANXIETY HELP LINES: Anxiety UK 08444775/774, OCD Action 08453906232 (to Skype 03030401112).

100 CLUB: The winner for week 17 is number 30, Sue Schofield. We will continue to distribute winnings until week 20 (26th April) after which the 100 Club will be suspended.

DURING LENT WE ARE ASKED TO PRAY FOR: Candidates for the Sacraments, women, the needy & hungry of the world, penitents & wanderers.

There should have been a **FOODBANK COLLECTION** this weekend but, clearly, this can't happen now. If you are able to get out, donations can be left in Clayfields chemist's shop on Alder Drive.

FRIDAY OF THIS WEEK IS GOOD FRIDAY – a day of Fasting & Abstinence.

FASTING means that the amount of food we eat is considerably reduced.

ABSTINENCE means that we give up a particular kind of food or drink or some form of amusement.

In place of abstinence, other forms of penance may be substituted eg making the special effort involved in family prayer, taking part in Mass through Spiritual Communion, praying the Stations of the Cross, making a special effort to help someone who is poor, sick, elderly or lonely & so on.

"The law of abstinence binds those who have completed their 14th year. The law of fasting binds those who have obtained their majority, until the beginning of their 60th year." (Canon 1252)

EASTER DUTIES: This is the traditional obligation to receive Holy Communion which also implies Confession at this time of year. **All Catholics have been released from this obligation for this year** for the same reason that we have been released from our Sunday obligation to attend Sunday Mass. If we are aware of serious sin, then we are obliged to name it the next time we are able to attend confession in order to more completely take ownership of it. But for now, a serious & heart-felt prayer for forgiveness focussing on God's love & mercy is sufficient to be assured of His forgiveness. Cardinal Vincent Nicholls speaks of this on the Bishops Conference of England & Wales website (<https://youtu.be/jMqeXLKT8hE>). He assures us that this is in keeping with Church tradition.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION WITH YOUR PARISH MASS: I know that some of you find comfort in bringing Mass into your homes through live streaming. But for those who do not, please be in Communion with me Tuesday to Sunday as I offer Mass here for you & your intentions. It would be a comfort to know you are with me, albeit in spirit.

The **COLLECTION ENVELOPES** have arrived but getting them to you will take some time. During these difficult times, if you are able, then Easter Offerings, Collections & Mass Intentions are always gratefully received through the letter box in envelopes marked with what it is for. Or you may just want to set them aside until better days. If in the meantime, or indeed permanently, people would prefer to set up a standing order to maintain the upkeep of the Church, then please phone & I will give you the bank details. If setting up a Standing Order or any other online banking & you are asked to give your PIN or asked to transfer money to a different account, stop everything immediately – your bank will send you an activation code, usually by phone to confirm your identity – you won't be able to get started until you receive this.