

Parish of St. Theresa of Lisieux Stansted

The Little Flower Messenger

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT (Year A) - 19th March 2023

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Gospel: John 9:1-41: *The blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored*
Mass book (P. 164)

1st Reading: 1 Samuel 16:1,6-7,10-13

Psalm 22: *The Lord is my Shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.*

2nd Reading: Ephesians 5:8-14

Gospel Acclamation: *Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God! I am the light of the world, says the Lord; anyone who follows me will have the light of life. Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God!*

A thought from Fr Liam...a time to renew our welcome and love of the stranger

'Every stranger who knocks at our door is an opportunity for an encounter with Jesus Christ.'

This past week has seen much protest from almost every Christian denomination in response to the government's proposed legislation on migration that 'treats migrants and refugees as a problem to be solved rather than brothers and sisters towards whom we have responsibilities. Jesus himself is our model for welcoming others, and so it is heartening to witness the voices and actions of solidarity raised by so many faith leaders in support of those seeking asylum and refuge and sanctuary; voices of solidarity that are also asking the government to reshape and change its legislation so that it results not in the punishment and detention of the vulnerable themselves, but in ensuring that the protection and dignity of the 'human person, made in the image and likeness of God, [is] put at the heart of public policy'.

The depth and breadth of this polyphonic coalition of so many Christian voices from faithful women and men, nuns and monks, sisters and deacons, priests and bishops calls us to be deeply attentive to what they are saying in the formation of our own conscientious response to what Pope Francis has called one of the principle moral issues of our generation. Our life of faith is not to be confined within our church walls, but to find active expression in our mission and witness throughout our troubled world, for as the Archbishop of York emphasised, we as Christians are 'morally bound to find ways of welcoming the stranger and feeding the hungry. This *does not mean anything goes, but it does mean everyone counts.*'

It is timely then that on Wednesday our own Catholic Bishops of England and Wales launched a profoundly rich and inspiring document entitled ***Love the Stranger***, that draws together over one hundred years of catholic teaching to unfold the Catholic response to migration. It is a remarkable testament to the prayerful solidarity and just action that we are all called to take in love of the stranger in our midst – our brothers and sisters - in the world we all call home.

I whole heartedly commend this faithful document to inform and enrich our prayer and action during these remaining weeks of Lent (*copies of which are now available in the porch and also linked on our parish website*). As Cardinal Vincent Nichols underlined, ***Love the stranger*** 'guides our response to migration in England and Wales today. While it does not propose detailed solutions to complex problems,



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it clearly calls for procedures which permit safe and controlled access, and a fair hearing to those seeking asylum. Present arrangements in this country are dramatically lacking in both of these requirements.' May God grant us the wisdom not to be bystanders, and the courage to uphold the dignity of each human person in the ongoing profession of our faith - in both words and action, through welcome and hospitality, advocacy and solidarity, prayer and worship - as we strive together to bear witness to the gospel of the risen Lord. 'I was a stranger and you welcomed me.'

I wish you and yours a blessed and peaceful fourth week of Lent.

Liam

Prayer of the week from CAFOD

God of all humanity,
in a world full of fear, open our hearts to your love.
Though we walk in desolate valleys,
Open our minds to your hope.
We turn from hatred, towards love.
We turn from intolerance, Towards understanding.
We commit ourselves to compassion.
Together, not alone, we pray for peace.
Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Linda Jones/ CAFOD.

This Week's Good News

Dear Friends,

The Fourth Sunday of Lent is known as "Laetare (Rejoice) Sunday," expressing the Church's joy in anticipation of the Resurrection of our Lord. Today's readings remind us that it is God Who both gives us proper vision in body as well as in soul and instructs us that we should be constantly on our guard against spiritual blindness.

In our first reading, taken from the First book of Samuel, we are reminded how blind we can be when making judgements and how we need to ask God for help in making decisions. God looks at the heart whilst we are more concerned with appearances, which can be deceptive, even when we see what we believe is real spirituality. It is the heart that God knows and cares about, not fine words. The Responsorial Psalm. (Ps 23), offers us great hope when we face trials and even the last moments in our lives. 'your crook and your staff give me courage.' The Second reading has Paul reminding the Ephesians that as Children of the light they have a responsibility to act in truth and right living.

In the Gospel Jesus gives sight to a blind man. The Gospel account reveals that those who assume that they see the truth are often blind without knowing it. The beggar born blind receives the gift of sight and the gift of faith in Jesus, whilst the traditional upholders of the law and religion, the Pharisees remain spiritually blind. 'There are none so blind, as those who will not see.' The message for us is that we are called to live as children of the light, always seeking the truth and what is right, asking that our own spiritual blindness is cured so that we can see others with the eyes of Christ.

Deacon Des



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Our Parish

St Theresa Big Sing Music Event: Taking place on Saturday 25th March from 11am in our Parish Church, all are warmly invited to join us at our Musical event. Bring your voices, musical instruments, and enthusiasm as well as a packed lunch and come together to support and enrich the wonder of music in our Parish. We look forward to seeing you.

Extra Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion: Extra Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are a vitally important part of the liturgical life of a parish. It is a very important undertaking as it involves assisting the Priest/Deacon at Mass in distributing the Blessed Sacrament when necessary. Another important part of this ministry is the visiting of the sick in bringing Holy Communion to those who are unwell or unable to attend Mass.

We are looking for people who feel that they may be called to carrying out this ministry. If you are interested, in the first instance please make yourself known to Deacon Des and Fr Liam after Mass to chat things through.

A day of introduction and registering will be announced shortly, when those who wish to be considered will receive training and be put forward for commissioning by the Diocese. If chosen, and you feel that you would like to visit the sick to bring Holy Communion in their homes, then we will arrange for a DBS check to be completed which is mandatory for any ministers who visit people in their homes etc.

Collection for Deacon Des: We will be having a retiring collection for Deacon Des this weekend (18th & 19th March) after our Masses to express our thanks for Des' ministry here in Stansted.

Easter Flowers: We shall be holding a collection over the next couple of weekends for our Easter flowers. Should you wish to donate please put your donation into an envelope marked 'Easter Flowers' and place into the basket when leaving the church or through the Presbytery door. Thank you.

Message from Deacon Des

Dear All,

After 17 years in this parish, a parish where my daughter made her first holy communion and then confirmation and where I was ordained to the Diaconate, it is time to move on. My wife has been appointed as the Deputy Chief Constable of Police Scotland and so we will be relocating to Scotland.

I will be here in the parish until my last Sunday which will be Easter Sunday. After that mass, there will be tea and cake in the parish centre so that I can get a chance to say goodbye to you all and thank you all for your love and support over the years. This parish will always be 'home' as far as I and my family are concerned and I hope to see you all again in the future, God willing.

Des

Baptism at St Theresa's: You are welcome to Baptise your child here at St Theresa's. As part of our preparation for baptism here at St. Theresa's Fr Liam will come to visit you at home to set you at ease, answer any questions that you might have and to begin to get to know you.

Each family is also invited to attend the necessary baptism meeting in Church before their child's baptism, during which they have a chance to meet other families preparing for baptism



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and to explore the rite of baptism together. Clair, our parish administrator, can let you know the date of the next baptism meeting, and the date is always published in advance in our parish newsletter.

Baptisms in our parish are celebrated once a month during the parish Mass at 6 pm on Saturday or 10am on Sunday - Fr Liam can confirm the available upcoming dates when you meet with him.

As a first step we look forward to welcoming you to Mass at the weekend and please introduce yourself to Fr Liam and our parishioners after Mass.

Parish Census 2023: For those of you that are yet to complete our Census forms, they are available at the Church entrance.

Stations of the Cross: Stations will be held at 7.00pm every Friday during Lent (24th and 31st March).

Lenten Reflections: Everyone is warmly welcome to our St Theresa's Lenten Reflections in our Parish Centre. These will be based on the Events of Holy Week taken from the Series "Jesus of Nazareth". We will meet on four consecutive Wednesdays 7.30 - 8.30pm on March 22nd and 29th and 5th April. Please join us as we journey with the Lord from Palm to Easter Sunday

Encounter: The next meeting takes place on Friday 24th March here in the Parish Centre from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. The talk and discussion topic is 'Life as an ordained Deacon' led by Deacon Des Connors, followed by a shared lunch at 12.30p.m. All welcome for all or part of the event.

Offertory 12th March 2023: Thank you very much for your generous financial support for our parish.

Gift Aided	Loose Cash	Standing Orders	Total
£94.20	£ 255.52	£ 391.25	£740.97

If you pay tax and would like any donations you make to our Parish to be Gift Aided, please email Angelo at stansted-giftaid@dioceseofbrentwood.org for details.

Our Diocese

Brentwood Catholic Children's Society: BCCS are delighted to announce that the Northern Irish classical singing trio 'The Priests' have agreed to hold a second charity concert for us on Friday 30th June 2023 at the Brentwood Cathedral at 7.30pm. All tickets can be purchased directly through Eventbrite and are £30 per person plus booking fee: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/528414691567> This is expected to be a sell-out event and would encourage you to book early in order to avoid disappointment. Full details are available on the BCCS website: www.bccs.org.uk/get-involved/events/

Caritas Social Action Network: Caritas Social Action Network, in partnership with St John of God Hospitaller Services, an international Catholic charity with many services for the vulnerable in the UK and Ireland, is matching Ukrainian people displaced by war with people in the Catholic community, willing to host them in their homes for six months. **If you have room in your home and heart to consider welcoming a stranger, then we'd love to hear from you.** Please visit <https://sjog-homesforukraine.uk/>

Pilgrimage to Knock Shrine: Last Few Places on Escorted Pilgrimage to Knock Shrine, Ireland, 29th May 2023, led by Bishop Alan Williams. £699.00 per person sharing. Price



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includes flight, all transfers, 4 nights in Knock House Hotel with full board. All entertainment and excursions included. Day trips to Westport, Ballintubber Abbey, Croagh Patrick, Fr. Peyton Centre & National Museum. Single supplement £150.00. Contact Patricia on 01268 762 278 or 07740 175557 or email knockpilgrimages@gmail.com.

Diocesan Pilgrimage to Walsingham – Saturday 27th May 2023: Join Bishop Alan and other parishes around the Diocese of Brentwood in Walsingham. We will celebrate Mass at the Basilica before walking the Holy Mile to the grounds of Walsingham Abbey to celebrate Vespers and Benediction on the site of the Holy House. If you would like to join the trip, please email Clair (admin@dioceseofbrentwood.org) with your contact details and indicate if you are driving and willing to offer a lift to other parishioners or if you require a lift to get there. Thank you.

Pilgrimage to Lourdes: Bishop Alan will lead the diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes from 24th – 29th July; a time to pray at the Grotto of Our Lady and enjoy the opportunities of this experience. You can book now on-line: www.tangney-tours.com/brentwood For further information, please phone Cathy O'Connor, the Administrative Director: 01206 735 623.

Our Wider Community

Migrants and refugees are human beings, not just statistics says Bishop.

In 2023, people making dangerous journeys across the Channel to reach the UK are called by various names: 'refugees', 'asylum seekers', 'migrants', and often by more derogatory terms.

Love the Stranger is a new publication by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, Department for International Affairs that articulates our Christian duty to look beyond such labels and see the person who has left their homeland in search of a better life. You can download the document here: cbcew.org.uk/love-the-stranger

Bishop Paul McAleenan, Lead Bishop for Migrants and Refugees for the Bishops' Conference, emphasises the need to uphold their innate human dignity: "Our starting point as a society must be to recognise migrants and refugees as people. We need to understand their stories, their reasons for leaving their homelands and hopes for building a future here.

"We should never view people arriving from elsewhere as a political problem to be solved, but rather as brothers and sisters who we have a responsibility towards, and who greatly enrich our communities.

"People are driven to leave their countries, sometimes making dangerous journeys or risking exploitation, because of conflict, poverty, oppression, or lack of opportunities. Looking beyond our own borders, we have a duty to help people flourish in their homelands, as well as welcoming those who leave in search of a better life."

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, President of the Bishops' Conference, welcomed the publication: "Love the Stranger draws together more than one hundred years of Catholic teaching to guide our response to migration in England and Wales today. While it does not propose detailed solutions to complex problems, it clearly calls for procedures which permit safe and controlled access and a fair hearing to those seeking asylum. Present arrangements in this country are dramatically lacking in both of these requirements."



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Vatican endorsement: Father Fabio Baggio CS, the Undersecretary of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, praised Love the Stranger's rich review of, and reflection on, Catholic social teaching: "The text promotes an authentic culture of encounter at all levels and among all the actors involved. As we live in times in which the defence of the dignity of each human person may seem under threat, Love the Stranger invites us to not give up on the opportunity to live our catholicity ever more fully, to build more just and equal societies for the benefit of each and every person, and to be open to the contribution that strangers can offer as we care for their integral human development and ours."

Protection of migrants and refugees is a shared goal: Fr Manuel Barrios Prieto, the Secretary General of COMECE (Commission of Catholic Episcopal Conferences of the European Union) welcomes the publication as an important step forward towards the promotion and protection of migrants: "This advocacy document on the Catholic response to migrants and refugees is a timely reference and guidance in our polarised European societies. It offers sound orientations on migration and asylum not only for Catholics but for any person of good who considers human dignity as the basis for harmonious social coexistence. It is not a mere compilation of principles of the Social Doctrine of the Church on the matter, but a reflection on how these principles should be applied to the current challenges faced by our states and societies."

Christine Allen, Director of CAFOD, the official aid agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, stresses that people have a right to flourish in their homelands:

"People around the world continue to be tormented by conflict, which drives them from their homes as they seek safety. Communities are also losing their homes and their livelihoods to a climate crisis they did not cause.

"Working toward peace and tackling the climate crisis are the defining challenges of our time and we must show solidarity to those in need. The UK government can rise to these shared global challenges by reversing the counter-productive cuts to the aid budget, and prioritising countries impacted by conflict and climate change.

"Failure to act will mean people around the world continue to see their lives turned upside down and their homes destroyed by conflict and climate change."

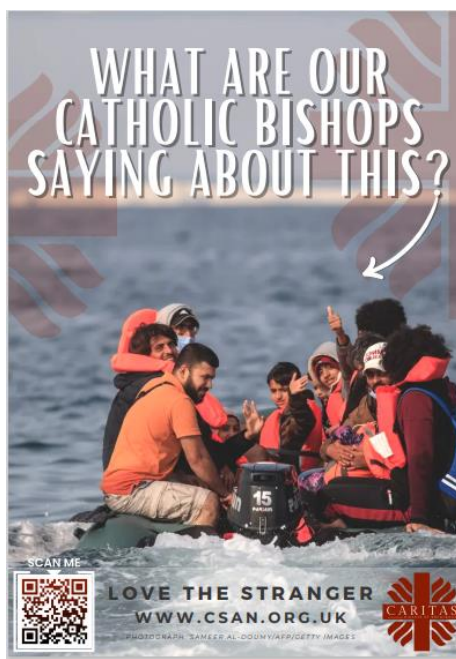
Notes: This is a publication of the Department for International Affairs of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

- Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster, is President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. He is also President of the Santa Marta Group, the Church's response to the evils of human trafficking and modern slavery.
- Bishop Declan Lang, Bishop of Clifton, is the Chair of the Department for International Affairs.
- Bishop Paul McAleenan is the Lead Bishop for Migrants and Refugees for the Bishops' Conference. He is an auxiliary Bishop for the Diocese of Westminster.

Contact: You can contact the Bishops' Conference COMMS team on 020 7901 or email: communications@cbcew.org.uk



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Mass Times and Intentions

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT - YEAR A		
Saturday 18 th March	Confessions: 5:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. Mass: 6:00 p.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	Holy Souls R.I.P (J&C Welsh)
Sunday 19 th March	Mass: 10:00 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	People of the Parish
FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT - YEAR A		
Saturday 18 th March	Confessions: 5:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. Mass: 6:00 p.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	Deceased members of the Braeckman Family R.I.P (F.Braeckman)
Sunday 19 th March	Mass: 10:00 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	People of the Parish



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HOLY WEEK AND EASTER 2023

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

Saturday 1st April, 6.00 pm Blessing of Palms and Vigil Mass of Palm Sunday
Sunday 2nd April, 10.00 am Blessing of Palms and Celebration of Mass

Monday of Holy Week

Monday 4th April, 7.30 pm Lent Reconciliation Service

Tuesday of Holy Week

Tuesday 5th April, 10.00 am Holy hour

Wednesday of Holy Week

Wednesday 5th April, 11.00 am Mass of Chrism, Brentwood Cathedral

THE EASTER TRIDUUM

Holy Thursday

Thursday 6th April, 7.30 pm *Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper*
Watching at the Altar of repose...
...concluding with Night prayer at 10.00 pm

Good Friday

Friday 7th April, 3.00 pm *Solemn Liturgy of the Lord's Passion*
Friday 7th April, 7.30 pm Prayer round the Cross

Holy Saturday

Saturday 8th April, 10.00 am The Office of Readings and Morning Prayer
Saturday 8th April, 8.00 pm *Celebration of the Easter Vigil and the first Mass of Easter*

THE SEASON OF EASTER

Easter Sunday – Solemnity of the Resurrection of the Lord

Sunday 9th April, 10.00 am Celebration of Easter Sunday Mass

Second Sunday of Easter

Saturday 15th April, 6.00 pm Vigil Mass of Sunday in the Octave of Easter
Sunday 16th April, 10.00 am Celebration of Sunday Mass in the Octave of Easter

