



PARISH NEWS FOR THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, ANDOVER

NORTH WEST HAMPSHIRE PASTORAL AREA

St John the Baptist, Andover and St John Fisher, Whitchurch

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Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday: 9.00am - 3.00pm. NB: CLOSED on Wed.

9th and 10th March - The First Sunday in Lent - YEAR C

Thought for the Week - Setting Captives Free

In many ancient civilizations, the interactions of their gods with human beings were often characterized by caprice and inconsistency as well as distance. By contrast the God revealed to our ancestors was known for intervening faithfully in human history by specific events with an astonishing attentiveness to human need. What is more, the quality of these events can be summed up by the words, "delivering, saving, rescuing, freeing."

The book of Deuteronomy recites in a tight narrative the wonders of God's intervention to free our Hebrew ancestors from slavery. The experience was not only a wondrous event but marked a decisive revelation of God: this is who God is, God is one who saves!

Jesus, whose very name means, "God saves," breaks into human history in a way never foreseen by our ancestors. He comes to do battle with all that continues to enslave those whom God has created out of love: the power of sin, the power of Satan and the power of death itself.

The temptation of Jesus, then, marks not an isolated experience of Jesus' early public life, but rather a revelation of God who has come daringly close, to deliver in his very person, the people whom he loves: "For God so loved the world, that he sent his only Son" (John 3, 16).

We may see in the specific temptations which Jesus undergoes a battle with temptations to which every human heart is vulnerable: "Turn these stones into bread" – the temptation to live only "on bread alone," to live as though material things are the only source of life. "I shall give you all this power and glory" – the temptation to amass reputation and wealth as false gods in an attempt to escape human vulnerability. "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down . . ." – the very subtle temptation for believers: to presume no responsibility for our actions, since "God will take care of everything."

Our Lenten journey begins, then, with an invitation to bring our hearts and lives before the Lord, especially those places where we are still held captive. We trust that Jesus remains the God who saves, who continues to do battle on our behalf so that Easter might find as slaves who have been set free.

DIOCESAN PRAYER INTENTIONS: 10TH MARCH - 16TH MARCH

*These are arranged so that in the course of a year we pray for each parish of our Diocese and the Catholic organisations within it. **Sunday:** Parish of St Edward the Confessor, Chandler's Ford. **Monday:** All religious novices.*

***Tuesday:** The "Beginning Experience", for the widowed and divorced.*

***Wednesday:** The Holy Father (elected 13.3.2013); Cold Ash Centre, Thatcham. **Thursday:** Community of St Patrick, E. Ilsley.*

***Friday:** Community of St Patrick, Samarès, Jersey. **Saturday:** Community of St Joseph, Gosport.*

CAFOD SOUP LUNCHES - remember that during Lent, FRIDAY Mass will be at 12 noon. (Friday 15th, 22nd and 29th March and 5th and 12th April) Mass will be followed by home made SOUP LUNCH in the hall with donations for CAFOD. - so mark the FRIDAYS in your diary and come along! We have some new soup recipes to try out on you and some old favourites too!

CAFOD Lent family fast day Friday 15th March. CAFOD envelopes will be given out this weekend.

CHANGES OF MASS TIMES

Please note that on Tuesday 12th March and Tuesday 19th March Mass will be at 9.00am in Andover .

This is because we are having a completely new sound system installed (long overdue) with a new loop system and the company need to work in the Church from 9.30am on those days. For health and safety reasons there will be no access into the Church from Tuesday morning through to Thursday afternoon each week.

ANDOVER FOODBANK.

Thank you so much for all your donations and continued support. They are, as always, greatly appreciated. This week we are in need of the following items: **FOOD ITEMS: Tinned Meat and Tinned Rice Pudding. NON-FOOD ITEMS: Deodorant; Small bottles of Shampoo/Conditioner and Razors**

EASTER EGGS! We are now taking donations of **Easter Eggs** for this year's Easter Egg Appeal. The eggs will be sorted and distributed to local children in time for the Easter holidays. With a late Easter and most schools breaking up two weeks ahead of the Easter weekend we need your eggs in plenty of time this year. Any donations can be delivered to the Andover foodbank office during our normal office hours (Mon-Fri 9.30-12.30) until 1st April 2019.

LENTEN HEALING MASS



There will be a **Healing Mass** at **2.30pm on Saturday 16th March** when we can pray for ourselves and for others whom we know to be in need of healing. There may be people you know who would like to attend this special Mass but have no means of transport, so if you, as a friend, can help them then please do so. The Mass might also be a good opportunity to invite someone who has not been to Mass for some time. There will be an opportunity to chat and enjoy a tea in the hall after the Mass.

If you can help by baking some 'goodies' there is a 'sign up' list up in the porch of things that are needed, or, if you intend to make a donation of cakes/sandwiches on the day etc. please make a note on the list so we don't end up with too much of one type of food. Thank you!

Wednesday Joint Lenten Services in Whitchurch - Whitchurch Churches Together All Services begin at 7.30pm

March 13th – Joth Hunt, Baptist Regional Minister, will be leading at the Methodist Church

March 20th – Deacon Michael will be leading Stations of the Cross at St John Fisher RC Church at 7.30pm

March 27th – Bishop David, Bishop of Basingstoke, will be leading at All Hallows

April 3rd – Andrew Wood, the Methodist District Chair, will be leading at the Baptist Church;

April 10th – Compline at Tufton

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTER'S DAY RETREAT AND RE-COMMISSIONING.

Advance notice for your diaries! There will be a retreat for ALL Eucharistic Ministers on **SATURDAY 30th March** in the Parish Hall, beginning with Mass at 10.00am, when all Ministers (apart from those commissioned last December) will be re-commissioned. **Mass at 10.00am followed by refreshments. Retreat session: 11.00am - 12.30pm. Lunch 12.30pm to 1.30pm. Final session 1.30pm to 3.00pm. Please bring a packed lunch, refreshments will be provided.**

The theme of the retreat will be based on the connection of the Bible to Holy Mass.

This day is open to all parishioners who would like to spend some time exploring an aspect of their faith.

SIGNIFICANT WEDDING ANNIVERSARY MASS

Are you celebrating a 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th, 60th or anniversary over 60 years?

If so Bishop Philip would like to invite you to a Mass of celebration. This will take place at **St Bede's** church in Basingstoke on **Saturday 6th July 2019 at 11.00am**. It is a wonderful occasion to celebrate and witness to Marriage. If you would like to come, please visit the Cathedral website <http://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/anniversaries/> and complete the on-line form, or send an email to anniversaries@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk (Please note this address is not monitored daily and you may have to wait for a reply, so please be patient.)

If you do not have access to the internet, please contact the Parish office, who will have the form you need to complete. To help celebrate the occasion please could you provide a **COPY** of your Wedding photograph, you can upload it when you complete the form online. Alternatively scan and send via email to above email address. Again if you have no access to the internet you can post a **COPY** along with completed form by post to the following address: St Bede's Parish Office, Popley Way, Basingstoke, RG24 9DX Please mark envelope 'Significant Wedding Mass'

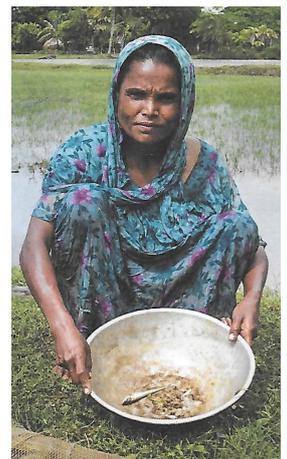
Any problem with any of this, please come to the Parish Office and I will help you complete the form, scan the photo to send etc. etc. Teresa.

CAFOD Lent Family Fast Day - Friday 15th March 2019.

Bangladesh - Mahinur's story by Sally Kitchener

When Mahinur moved into her new home, she was elated. She had worked for months digging foundations for a local road and had saved £300 – enough to buy a plot of land. 40 years old and a fisherwoman by trade, a first home on the edge of a river was the perfect location. What Mahinur didn't know was that one year later, the river would run dry. The drought came suddenly and by March 2018, not a drop of water remained. Mahinur left her boat and simply walked across the riverbed. The fish lay rotting around her.

When I meet Mahinur, the fish have been gone for four months. "We had heavy rainfall and the river filled again overnight," Mahinur explains. "But there are still no fish." She wraps her turquoise headscarf tighter round her face and balances the heavy wooden stave of the fishing net on her shoulder as she carries it to the riverbank. Then, fully clothed, she climbs into the river. The next 20 minutes, she drags the net back and forth, occasionally reaching out a hand to steady herself against the current. Just her head protrudes from the water. When she climbs out, she silently shakes out the contents of the net – one eel the size of a pencil and two fish no bigger than a penny. "At least there's this!" she exclaims, as she finds a larger fish among the weeds. The fish flips around as she drops it in the metal bowl. It's barely two mouthfuls.



Once she has changed into dry clothes, she borrows two plastic chairs from a neighbour and we sit a little way from her home. I presume to protect her husband and son from hearing our conversation. "It's terrible," she confesses. "There should be fish in the river now - it's the right time of year - but there's nothing. I have no food and no money." Mahinur tells me that she frequently forgoes meals so her 12-year-old son can eat. "I'm worried that Rabiul will ask me for fish and I have nothing to give him," she explains, wrapping her arms around herself. "When he demands something, it has to happen at once or he will start crying or break something. He'll shout, 'Give me this!' Sometimes he hits."

It's not bad behaviour that makes her son so impatient, but a learning disability he's had since birth. The right side of his body is also weakened by a kind of partial paralysis. No one seems exactly sure why. His father has a physical disability too, and walks with difficulty using crutches. It explains why Mahinur takes responsibility for the household. Since the fish went, Mahinur has been doing whatever jobs she can find in return for food. She cooks and cleans for a teacher at the local school and takes another neighbour's cattle to graze. Her eight remaining ducks that survived the drought occasionally lay eggs the family can eat. Other women in Mahinur's village also work, but it's not the norm and it's generally frowned upon.

"I'm the sole earner for the family," she confirms. "My neighbours think I'm not a nice woman because I shouldn't be going out earning money. It's not what women do. I don't care what they think." She shakes her head in defiance. But there's a sadness in her eyes that contradicts her words. "I know there's no other way," she continues. "I have to earn something to keep my family alive. Anybody can say anything about me, good or bad, but it won't hamper my efforts or affect me. I have to earn for my family, so that's what I do, happily." The last day of Eid is a day of great celebration and enjoyment for Muslims." Mahinur explains, as her voice becomes louder, more urgent. "Everyone made delicious food to share but our neighbours didn't invite me. They didn't invite me." Her eyes begin to water and she mutters to herself and goes to arrange something in the house.

She later tells me her neighbours don't just disapprove of her working, but they have little compassion for disability either. Some are fearful it might be contagious or being nearby might bring bad luck. With no medical care in the village, traditional herbalists and healers are often consulted for disabilities and mental health problems. Rabiul has metal toggles and padlocks tied with a piece of string around his neck. His dad says they stop him from falling over so often. But dark marks linger on Rabiul's cheekbone - a reminder of recent falls. Earlier, I'd watched Rabiul cook an egg for his dad's breakfast. His right arm hung awkwardly by his side, but he had no difficulties unscrewing the lid of a bottle of cooking oil with his left hand - steadying the bottle between his knees. "He has to write with his left hand," his dad kept repeating to me. As though the social implications of this are harder to bear than Rabiul's frequent falls.

"Year after year, the weather has been changing," explains Jamal Hosen, a local agricultural expert. "When I was a young boy, my experience was that we had six seasons. Different, distinct seasons. Now we can't differentiate. In winter, we have some rain. In the summer, it can be cold." Jamal is part of the Caritas aid network, which is known as CAFOD in England and Wales. He's been working with families like Mahinur's for nearly a decade - helping them find ways to cope with the changes in the weather. He comes to meet me at Mahinur's home and explains that cyclones, floods and droughts are all becoming more common and more destructive. Now, it's likely that every three years a severe cyclone will hit and each year a quarter of the country will flood. In this community, so close to the Bay of Bengal, when the rivers flood, the fields fill with salt.

"It lowers crop production," Jamal explains. "Livestock drink the saline water and they get ill. It upsets their stomachs. We see increased diseases in people, too. Sometimes people have itchy skin or diarrhoea." In Mahinur's village, people now have to wait for four months after each rainy season for the soil to regain its fertility. It's precious time they can't afford to lose. To help local farmers, Jamal and his colleagues have been providing saline-resistant rice seeds and vegetable seeds. The varieties are specially-designed to withstand the salty conditions and Jamal explains that the vegetable seeds are even more likely to thrive if they're planted up on a raised bed, away from potential floods. It's these kinds of tips that are helping people survive.

For families like Mahinur's who don't own any land for growing crops, Jamal suggests rearing livestock could lead to a reliable income. Or learning a trade that isn't reliant on the weather - something like tailoring or mechanics. Once trained, a grant could help families with very little income to set themselves up with their own sewing machine or repair tools. Jamal and his colleagues have already trained up 16 mechanics and 24 tailors in other communities. They're desirable skills and can earn as much as a primary school teacher.

Jamal is a regular visitor to Mahinur's village and has known the family for a few months. So far, there hasn't been enough money to help Mahinur but Jamal keeps visiting regardless. Taking time to pray together and talk through their problems. He's confident that with a bit of support, the family could see real change. I realise Mahinur has talked very little about the future. Perhaps because it's so uncertain. She hopes her son might get better at maths and calculations, and could one day get a job doing the accounts for a shop. But she confesses she finds it hard to imagine.

When I ask her about her own future, she takes a moment to think, then replies: "I wish I could work to earn more money and feed myself properly and die peacefully. That is all."

Your donation is a lifeline. An outstretched hand to a friend in danger. Together, we can reach out to children, women and men in God's family with love. Together, we can change the ending of more stories like Mahinur's. Please fill in your details on the envelope to make your donation. Or you can donate online

MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS FROM 9TH MARCH - 22ND MARCH

Reconciliations each Saturday in Andover from 5.15pm - 5.45pm, and in Whitchurch before Sunday Mass.

Sat. 9th Andover Mass 6.00pm *El Shaddai Community - 3rd Anniversary Blessings*

Sunday 10th March - First Sunday in Lent

Whitchurch Mass 9.00am *Deceased Members of the Stockley Family*

Farleigh School Mass 10.00am -

Andover Mass 10.30am *Kathleen and Tony Stefano; Irene and Alfred Coveney RIP*

Andover Polish Mass at 6.00pm. Confessions (Polish) form 5.00pm



Mon. 11th Andover Mass 10.00am *Leo Bühler RIP*

Tue. 12th Andover Mass *9.00am *Lilian and John Creaven RIP - Anniversary*

Andover Healing Prayers 7.00pm - 7.30pm

Wed. 13th Andover No Mass or Service -

Thur. 14th Whitchurch Mass 10.00am

Fri. 15th Funeral Service at Basingstoke Crematorium at 10.15am for Peter Murphy RIP



Andover Mass 12 noon *Henry and Tina Rachwalski RIP - Anniversary*

Mass followed by CAFOD Soup Lunch in the Hall – all welcome!

Sat. 16th Andover Mass 6.00pm *Dorothea Fox and Anastasia Cullen RIP - Anniversary*

Andover Healing Mass at 2.30pm *followed by a tea in the Parish Hall.*

Sunday 17th March - Second Sunday in Lent

Whitchurch Mass 9.00am *Mary O'Neill RIP*

Farleigh School Mass 10.00am -

Andover Mass 10.30am *Tim Sellors RIP*

CAFOD LENT APPEAL
Let's eat simply so others
can simply eat!



Mon. 18th Andover Mass 10.00am *Adolfo Saldanha RIP*

Tue. 19th Andover Mass *9.00am *Michael Scicluna RIP - Anniversary*

Andover Healing Prayers 7.00pm - 7.30pm

Wed. 20th Andover No Mass or Service -

Whitchurch Stations of the Cross at 7.30pm

Thur. 21st Whitchurch Mass 10.00am *Audrey and Jo - for health and strength.*

Fri. 22nd Andover Mass 12 noon *Jean Murphy - for health and strength.*

Mass followed by CAFOD Soup Lunch in the Hall – all welcome!

Please pray for: Patrick Pacini, Daphne Channing, Audrey Francis, Audrey Stephenson, Jo Parker, Nan Mundy, Esmé Coveney, Doreen Burke, Rita Lane, Valerie Muir, Mary and Alan Daws, Tom Wilkins, Fr Gerry Mackrell SMM, Mary Bullough, Margaret Williams, Patrick Arnold, Ann Scicluna, Christopher Walter, Allan Wickens, Di Mussert, Lisa Ramage, Sam Hearn, Elaine Demptser, Christine Budden, Derek Moss, Diane Banks, Barbara Long, Myra Thompson, John Mills, Jean Murphy, Rollin Thomas, Jo Hibberd, Therese Ayres, Lewis Theodoropoulos, Sheila Roberts and Cecile Godfrey.



Please pray for the repose of the soul of Katherine Flood, Cynthia LeRoy-Lewis and Peter Murphy RIP
May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, rest in peace.

Healing Prayers Join us on **Tuesday evenings between 7.00pm and 7.30pm**. If you would like to choose a theme, scripture reading and music, have a copy of the El Shaddai Healing Prayer or further info., contact Frank Saunders on 01264 365764

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL. Find out about our parish school, the exciting learning that takes place and upcoming liturgy and Mass dates by visiting the school website and reading our newsletter - www.sjbschool.co.uk