

BRINDLE St JOSEPH'S

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Third Sunday of Lent 23rd March 2025

(Sunday cycle year C, weekday cycle year 1, psalter week 3)



*“If it should bear fruit next year, well and good;
but if not, you can cut it down”*

God of infinite goodness, throughout the ages you have persevered in claiming and reclaiming your people. Renew for us your call to repentance, surround us with witnesses to aid us in our journey, and grant us the time to fashion our lives anew, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

THIS WEEK

| | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| Sat 22 nd | 10.30am | Edmund Noblet | Third Sunday of Lent |
| | SECOND COLLECTION: LENTEN ALMS | | |
| 6.00pm | Christine Jamieson | | |
| Sun 23 rd | 9.30am | For the Parish | |
| Mon 24 th | No Mass today | | Monday of Lent 3 |
| Tue 25 th | 9.30am | Overseas missions | The Annunciation of the Lord (solemnity) |
| Wed 26 th | 9.30am | EBC | Wednesday of Lent 3 |
| Thu 27 th | 9.30am | Vocations | Thursday of Lent 3 |
| Fri 28 th | 10.30am | Requiem Mass: Anne Haydock | Friday of Lent 3 |
| | 5.00pm | Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament | |
| | 5.30pm | Stations of the Cross followed by Benediction | |
| Sat 29 th | 10.30am | Edmund Noblett | Saturday of Lent 3 |
| | SECOND COLLECTION: NUGENT CARE | | Fourth Sunday of Lent |
| | 6.00pm | For the Parish | |
| Sun 30 th | 9.30am | Peace in the world | |

First Saturday of the month: Confessions at 10.00am, Anointing of the sick during 10.30am Mass

| This week | | Reader | | Eucharistic Minister | | Bookshop | |
|------------------------|-------------|---------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Sat 22 nd | | M Sherry | | P Fawcett | | L Lomax | |
| Sun 23 rd | | B Cook | | J Kitchen | | K Slater | |
| Bidding prayers | G Hopkinson | Children's Liturgy | A Fowler, B Gorrell | | Collection counters | L & M Gardner | |
| Next week | | Reader | | Eucharistic Minister | | Bookshop | |
| Sat 29 th | | C Williamson | | L Gardner | | P Hothersall | |
| Sun 30 th | | R Conboy | | J Slater | | C Snape | |
| Bidding prayers | L Lomax | Children's Liturgy | L Rigbye, J Kitchen | | Collection counters | B Kellett & M Russell | |

Last weekend – attendance: 122, collection £304.50 – thank you!

Readings: Exodus 3:1-8,13-15, 1 Corinthians 10:1-6,10-12, Luke 13:1-9.

In the Gospel of Matthew, the first words of Jesus' preaching is a call to *Repentance* or metanoia; a call to conversion, a change of direction from a life of going against God's will for us.

In our 2nd reading, St Paul warns the Corinthians that disaster befell the people whom Moses was leading in the desert; because they had never really repented to follow God even though he had freed them from slavery to evil, through the baptismal waters of the (*Red*) Sea and fed them with the spiritual food and drink of Christ.

St Paul warns the Corinthians against a kind of complacency, which was to think that with God in their midst, what could go wrong; but their adherence to God was only half-hearted.

In the Gospel, Jesus speaks of the dangers of complacency as well, when he refers to the Galileans whose blood Pilate mingled with that of their sacrifices and the eighteen upon whom the tower of Siloam fell and killed.

He asks the people whether they supposed that those who died in these unexpected tragedies were any more guilty than the rest of the people living in Jerusalem.

He answers his own question: *They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they* – making the point that sin is not necessarily the immediate cause of *this* or *that* calamity as was thought, for example; as in the story of *Job*.

He seems to imply that disasters such as these may serve as providential invitations to repentance.

But then doesn't Jesus give us the wonderful parable about the fig tree due to be cut down for failing to produce fruit: *Give me another year to dig around it and manure it and then if it doesn't produce fruit, cut it down.*

A parable of hope: for through his Son's intercession on our behalf, God gives **us** more time to produce fruit.

What kind of fruit?

Charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, chastity – these are the fruits of the Spirit, so not a bad place to start and we find them listed in the *CTS Simple Prayer Book*.

Indeed, God's passionate and burning love for his people is depicted in our first reading in the flaming bush which teaches us important lessons about God.

We learn that he is not a remote bystander watching creation's plight from a distance; he cares and he intervenes: *I have seen the miserable state of my people in Egypt, he says to Moses, and I have heard their cries for freedom and this is what I am going to do about it.*

Being God, he could have freed the people without any help and in the blink of an eye.

But no, he calls Moses from the mundane task of looking after the sheep of his father-in-law, to his assist him in leading his people from slavery to sin, to freedom and to the *Promised Land*; thus, Moses becomes a major and highly revered figure in our salvation history.

As with Moses, he calls out to each one of us – from the seemingly mundane in our lives – to turn away from all that holds us back from his love and to assist him in big ways or small, with his saving work of salvation.

So let us pause for a moment and ask: how might God be calling me to participate in his work of salvation? Do I seek distractions for fear of what he might be asking me to give up or do?

Well, let us draw strength from Moses who also doubted his own strength and ability for such a task; and remember that if we put our faith in God alone, he will give us both the ability and the strength for whatever he may ask us to do for him.

A cheerful Lenten reflection

Fear and honour, praise and bless, thank and adore the Lord God Almighty, in Trinity and Unity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Creator of all things.

Do not put off any longer confessing your sins, for death will soon come. Give and it will be given to you; forgive and you will be forgiven ... Blessed are they who die repentant, for they shall go to the Kingdom of Heaven! But woe to those who are not converted; for these children of the devil will go with their father into everlasting fire. Be watchful, therefore; shun evil and persevere in well-doing until the end.

(St Francis of Assisi)

With prayers, Fr Raphael.

This week's solemnity

The Annunciation of the Lord celebrates his great intervention when, through the Archangel Gabriel, he announces to Mary that she had found favour with the Lord and that through the power of the Holy Spirit she was to give birth to Jesus who will be called Son of the Most High. The future salvation of humankind rested upon her answer freely given: 'I am the handmaid of the Lord; let what you have said be done to me'. And the rest, as they say...!

MASS ON FRIDAY is at **10.30am** – Requiem Mass for Anne Haydock.

As most are aware, there are changes ahead for the parish and there are discussions going on between Ampleforth Abbey and the Archdiocese of Liverpool. These discussions are about the various elements of the parish and what will happen going into the future. It has been suggested that prayer should be part of the process. We could organise prayer gathering or other events which may or may not be attended. Instead we are proposing that everyone in the parish engages in their own prayer practice throughout the week with, perhaps, a focus on the future of the parish and God's will for us. To help, a **PRAYER CARD** has been produced which offers a simple structure to help with that focus. It's not meant to be a rigid or prescriptive thing, but rather a jumping-off point into standing before the Holy Spirit (Adsumus Sancte Spiritus) and seeking the kingdom of God. Help yourself to a copy from the back of the church.

FRIDAY PENANCE: The form of penance we adopt each Friday is a matter of personal choice and does not have to take the same form each Friday. Failure to undertake this penance on a particular Friday would not constitute a sin. However, penance is part of the life of every Christian and the intention to do penance is of obligation.

"The days and times of penance for the Universal Church are each Friday of the full year and the season of Lent." (*Canon 1250*)

LENT: Each **FRIDAY** there will be Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 5.00pm, Stations of the Cross at 5.30pm, followed by Benediction.

THIS SUNDAY there will be a **SECOND COLLECTION** for Lenten Alms.

NEXT SUNDAY there will be a **SECOND COLLECTION** for Nugent Care. Allied to the Archdiocese of Liverpool, Nugent has provided care and support for those in need since 1881. Find out more about their work at: <https://wearenugent.org/>.

BOOKSHOP: It is with regret that the shop will be closing after next weekend due to a lack of sales over the last two years. All stock is half price.

PLEASE PRAY for Anne Haydock who has died, for those who are sick or housebound including Ed Snape, Pope Francis, Ann Green, Fr Laurence Mayne and Bill Warbrick, as well as for those who have died and whose anniversaries occur about this time.

ED SNAPE is improving – he's out of ICU and sat up but your prayers are still needed.

100 CLUB: The winner for week 15 is number 29, Helen and Tony Walmsley.

GRAVEYARD: We'll be starting mowing in the near future so could you please remove any items which would get in the way of the mowers. Thank you.

CYCLE OF PRAYER: During Lent we are asked to pray for: Candidates for the Sacraments; Women; The Needy and Hungry of the World; Penitents and Wanderers.

CAFOD Lenten Appeal Lent is with us again, a time of year when CAFOD asks us to be generous in our support for some of those in great need, living overseas. Recent government decisions have cut the amount of aid coming from this country, so the need for contributions from private individuals is all the greater.

CAFOD envelopes can be handed in with the collections over the next weeks of Lent. Please consider filling in the Gift Aid form attached to the envelope; we can send these to CAFOD who will claim an extra benefit. Alternatively donations can be made via [the CAFOD website](#).

Another initiative is the [Big Lent Walk](#), The link gives detail of how to join in. The aim is to walk 200km during lent, individually or collectively as part of a team, and to raise sponsorship for so doing.

This Friday (28th) our Primary School PTFA have an **EASTER BINGO** in Gregson Green Community Centre. Doors open at 6.00pm, eyes down at 6.30pm. Adults £1, children 50p. Tickets available from the school office.

BRITISH SUMMER TIME starts **next Sunday** so clocks go **forward** one hour overnight Saturday/Sunday.

SONGS FOR YOUR SPIRIT: In the Living Room are offering an evening of songs that have been meaningful to the band and friends. Just the evening to complement the beginning of Holy Week a few days later. It will be in the church here at St Joseph's on Friday 11th April starting at 7.00pm. It's free to come along and there will be a collection with all proceeds going to CAFOD and GiveDirectly. After the concert, there will be tea or coffee in the parish rooms. The mixture of music includes original songs, songs from Godspell, Bob Dylan, Cat Stevens plus music from Taizé. Join us for what will be an inspirational night.

Bidding Prayers for the weekend of 22nd/23rd March 2025

Priest: Let us ask Our Father, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to look kindly upon the needs of His Church.

Reader: Let us pray for the church, her priests, elders and members, that in good times and bad, we may be found worthy of the calling we have received. Lord, hear us...

Let us pray for the church of this Parish, during and after the transfer to the Liverpool Archdiocese, that we will continue to be strengthened by the Holy Spirit through our faith in Jesus Christ, who walks with us. Lord, hear us...

Let us pray for those around the world who are suffering for their faith, that they will be encouraged by our prayers and the assurance of salvation in that faith. Lord, hear us...

Let us pray for our neighbours who are suffering in any way. May we show them our love in meaningful and practical ways. Lord, hear us...

Let us ask Mary, the mother of Jesus to join us in prayer as we say: Hail Mary, ...

Let us now spend a moment in silent prayer for our own, personal needs...

Priest: Abba, Father, you hear the prayers of all your children which are asked according to your will; be gracious to us that we may see your glory and love. We ask this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen

PRAYER FOR THE SICK

Priest: As we thank God for the gift of his Son in Holy Communion, let us remember those of our Parish who are sick or housebound.

All: May the body and blood of your Son, which we now send to them through our Eucharistic Ministers, bring them consolation and peace. We ask this in the name of Jesus, Our Lord. Amen.