

BRINDLE St JOSEPH'S

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Ampleforth Abbey Trust – Registered Charity no: 1026493

Fourth Sunday of Lent 30th March 2025

(Sunday cycle year C, weekday cycle year 1, psalter week 4)

Lætare Sunday/Mothers' Day



*“For this, my son, was dead and is alive again;
he was lost, and is found”*

God of patient love, you await the return of the wayward and wandering and eagerly embrace them in pardon. Through baptism you have clothed us with the glory of Christ and restored our inheritance: give us generous hearts to welcome all who seek a place at the table of your unconditional love. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THIS WEEK

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	
Mon 31 st	No Mass today		Monday of Lent 4
Tue 1 st April	9.30am	Abbot's intentions	Tuesday of Lent 4
Wed 2 nd	9.30am	EBC	Wednesday of Lent 4
Thu 3 rd	9.30am	Vocations	Thursday of Lent 4
Fri 4 th	9.30am	Holy Souls	Friday of Lent 4
	5.00pm	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	
	5.30pm	Stations of the Cross followed by Benediction	
Sat 5 th	10.30am	Edmund Noblett	Saturday of Lent 4
	SECOND COLLECTION: EASTER FLOWERS		Fifth Sunday of Lent
	6.00pm	For the Parish	
Sun 6 th	9.30am	Monica Chatburn	
	11.00am	Baptism: Joseph Bateson	

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

This 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	
Next week		Reader		Eucharistic Minister			
Sat 5 th		G Hopkinson		J Hothersall			
Sun 6 th		F Fordyce		L Rigbye			
Bidding prayers	Fr Raphael	Children's Liturgy	L Worswick, C Curwen		Collection counters	C Moffatt & C Williamson	

**Last weekend – attendance: 101, collection £281.76 – thank you!
Thank you also for the Lenten Alms collection of £82.75**

Readings: Joshua 5: 9-12, 2 Corinthians 5:17-21, Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

Today we have one of the most powerful Gospel parables on mercy and forgiveness, found only in Luke, in the *Prodigal (wasteful) Son*.

It makes us think twice before we utter such comments as *he was never any good and never will be* or *she has made her own bed, now let her lie in it*.

We are familiar with today's gospel of the man with two sons; the elder remains on the land working for his father while the younger asks for his inheritance and goes off on a binge only returning when he has spent everything and realizes that even his father's servants were eating better than himself.

He plans to return with a not very heartfelt apology: *I will leave this place and go to my father and say; I no longer deserve to be called your son, treat me as one of your paid servants*.

His father appears to have been looking out for him and while still a long way off, sees his son and, moved with pity, runs to him clasping him in his arms and kisses him tenderly before his son can get a word of apology out.

He adorns his son in the finest robe and sandals, puts a ring on his finger and calls for a celebration because *this son of mine was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and is found*.

Of course, this parable is about the forgiveness and mercy of God who waits with patient love and yearning for us his children (like the younger son) to turn back from the false promises of the devil that true happiness can be found apart from God.

But perhaps most importantly: the father, running out to meet his son *while he was still a long way off*, reveals a God who reaches out to meet us where we are.

Perhaps that last image sheds a chink of light on what St Paul is saying to the *Corinthians* in our second reading when he says that: *for our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

For God meets us where we are in his becoming one with us, in his own Son: *for God has dealt with sin by sending his own Son in a body as physical as any sinful body and in that body, God condemned sin.* (Rom 8:3ff & Gal 3:13)

On this account, the younger son could represent Jesus who, in extending his arms on the cross, embraced humanity's sin and put it to death, only after which he was able to return to the joyful embrace of his own heavenly Father and, in his own body, present a new and reborn humanity to him in his resurrection and ascension.

St Paul asks: does this mean that we can just sit back and enjoy the benefits won for us by Christ's death and resurrection?

No, because what our Lord did for us was a gift, and a gift needs to be accepted, and the acceptance of that gift began with our baptism – when we were immersed into Christ's death and resurrection and it continues when, as members of his body, we share in his life through the sacraments.

So, reflecting this idea, St Paul could say: *it makes me happy to suffer for you as I am suffering now and in my own body, to do what I can to make up all that has still to be undergone by Christ for the sake of his body the church ...* (Col. 1:24)

So, let us ask ourselves: how do I share in Christ's suffering and death as a member of his body?

Do I have the waywardness of the younger son who believed he had no need of a loving family or obligations to others, or have I unresolved resentments and uncharitable thoughts towards others, perhaps within my own family, as did the older son?

Whatever burden it is that weighs us down or remains unresolved, we have only to turn to our Heavenly Father who, in the end, is only interested in where our heart is: for *where your heart is, there too is your treasure* which is why Jesus can also say: *there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one repentant sinner than over ninety-nine virtuous men who have no need of repentance.*

In the parable of the *Prodigal Son*, Jesus tells us a story of a father's love and forgiveness for his wayward son, but only to show us, by comparison, the infinite love his Father has for his wayward children ... you and me.

What a cause for celebration on this Lætare Rejoice Sunday.

Reflection

In all other religions, one has to be good to come to God – in Christianity, one does not. Christianity might be described as a 'Come as you are' party. It bids us stop worrying about ourselves, stop concentrating on our faults and failings but to thrust them upon our Saviour with a firm resolve of amendment. The examination of conscience never induces despair, always hope. (Ven Fulton Sheen)

With prayers,

Fr Raphael.

A message from Julia Brooke, PA to the Abbot of Ampleforth: "Thank you for your patience in waiting for news about the **FUTURE OF BRINDLE PARISH**. The Archdiocesan Trustees met last week and the Archbishop and Abbot Robert have subsequently been in discussions and have agreed that an announcement about the next steps will be made at St Joseph's after Easter. I will be in contact in due course to confirm the date of the announcement. In the meanwhile, I wish you all a blessed Lent and thank you again for your continued support and patience. Julia"

Next Sunday (6th April) there is a **SERVICE OF RECONCILIATION** at St Gregory's, Weldbank, Chorley at 3.00pm.

A half-day session for those involved in supporting **CHILDREN'S LITURGY**. Led by Margaret Wright, former headteacher, currently RE advisor for the Diocese of Lancaster and catechist. An opportunity to share good practice already taking place and explore alternative ways of 'Unlocking the Word' with children; for example, through a 'Godly Play' style approach, imaginative prayer and praying with pictures. Those attending will also have the opportunity to hear some of the key messages of "To love you more dearly", the Prayer and Liturgy Directory from the Bishops' Conference. Saturday 31st May, 10.00 (for a 10.30 start) 'til 12.30 at St Teresa's Church, Queensway, Penwortham PR1 0DS. Email penwortham@rcaol.org.uk by Wednesday 28th May.

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 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/>.

NEXT SUNDAY there will be a **SECOND COLLECTION** for Easter flowers for the church.

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

PLEASE PRAY 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.

100 CLUB: The winner for week 16 is number 59, Marjorie Hardman.

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 envelopes can be handed in with the collections over the remaining 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](#).

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 Sunday, 30th March 2025 – 4th Sunday of Lent year C

Priest Father I have sinned against heaven and before you, I am no longer worthy to be called your son.

Reader We pray for the whole church that the spirit of God is upon it so we can also proclaim the good news. Lord hear us...

We pray for the Pope, that he continues to convalesce so that he can continue to guide the church. Lord hear us...

We pray for those who are displaced, affected by war, hunger or suffering, that justice will prevail. Lord hear us...

We pray for those of our Parish who are unwell and for all who are caring for them. Lord hear us...

We pray for understanding and the acceptance of the changes that are coming to our Parish. Lord hear us...

We now turn Our Lady, mother of the church, to help us with our petitions as we say: Hail Mary...

Let us now in a moment of silence pray for our own needs.

Priest Son you are always with me and all that is mine is yours. Your brother was dead and is alive. He was lost and is found. We make these and all our prayers through Jesus 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.