

GOSPEL REFLECTION FOR THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT



The Inwards Looking Glass

It's easy to list other people's faults; we do it all the time. But if we were to list our own faults, we could probably come up with only a few. We might be surprised and hurt to see ourselves as others see us. Obviously it is easier to see the faults of others because we are looking outwards at the world, but if we are to become good at forgiving others, we must first hold up an inwards looking glass to our own faults. Once we can see ourselves as needing God's forgiveness, it is so much easier for us to forgive others.

Today Jesus orders us to step away from our moral high ground. Are we really in any position to judge others? In today's reading, the Scribes and Pharisees, filled with self-righteous contempt, drag an adulteress before Jesus. She has been caught in the act and by the Law of Moses must be stoned. What does Jesus have to say on the matter? It's a trap of course! If Jesus is not seen to uphold the Law of Moses he will be accused of heresy. But Jesus tactically avoids any discussion on the law altogether by saying "Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone...." One by one the crowd disperses. Then Jesus gives the woman God's forgiveness and tells her not to sin again.

We have a problem with forgiveness. When someone has hurt us, forgiveness is the last thing on our mind. We equate forgiveness with letting someone off the hook. Even when someone fully repents, we still imagine that only their punishment will make us feel any better. Somewhere deep down we still have a thirst for our human agenda for justice rather than God's. Similarly we have a problem with being forgiven. Has God really forgiven the sins of our past? Perhaps because we are so bad at giving out forgiveness ourselves, do we carry the sins of our past round like excess baggage, allowing shame to cloud our self-perception.

There are two challenges in today's gospel reading. The first is to accept that we are really forgiven by God and to feel the joy of going through life without the burden of our past. The second is to afford others their forgiveness. This doesn't have to mean letting our criminal element off the hook, but it does mean judging others through Jesus' eyes and administering justice with reconciliation and second chances in mind rather than punishment and revenge.

PARISH PRAYER - Father, pour out your Spirit upon our parish. Grant us a new vision of your glory, a new faithfulness to your Word, and a new consecration to your service; that your love might grow among us and your Kingdom come. Through Christ our Lord. Amen

Useful links: Diocesan Website: <http://www.rcdea.org.uk>
Notre Dame High School, Norwich: Website <http://www.ndhs.org.uk>

PARISH OF THE SACRED HEART AND ST MARGARET MARY [Reg. Charity 278742]

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13TH MARCH 2016 – 5TH SUNDAY OF LENT

Sunday Masses – Page 176 of Parish Mass Book

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| Saturday | 6.00 pm | Donor's Intention |
| Sunday | 9.00 am | Sidney Bunn |
| | 11.00 am | People of the Parish |

Music for Sunday Masses - *Setting: Dom Gregory Murray Mass*

Entry 6pm – *Angelus (said)*; Hymn 205 – Lord, who throughout these forty days ...

Gospel Acclamation Hymn 184 – Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory.

Offertory Hymn 749 – From heaven You came, helpless babe (The Servant King) ...

Communion *Instrumental Interlude/Sacred silence ...*

Recessional 11am – *Angelus (said)*; Hymn 849 – God forgave my sin in Jesus' name ...

CONFESSION/RECONCILIATION - Saturday at 5.30 - 5.55 pm

Weekday Mass Times (5th week in Lent) [Psalter Week 1]

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| Mon. | No Mass today | - Lent Feria |
| Tues. | 10.30 am 7.30 pm | Sheila Christie (Nicol) - Lent Feria Queen of Peace Prayer Group – in Emmaus Room |
| Weds. | No Mass today | - Lent Feria |
| Thurs. | 10.00 am | Private Intention - St Patrick, Patron of Ireland (Feast) |
| Fri. | 10.00 am 5.45 pm 6.15 pm | John Perkins - Lent Feria Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Silent Prayer Evening Prayer (Vespers) |
| Sat. | 10.30 am 6.00 pm | Sr Anne Marie, O.C.D. - St Joseph, Spouse of the BVM (Solemnity) Maryanne Eldred's Int. - Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord |

The Parish Newsletter (incl. back copies) is available to view on the parish website from Friday onward each week.

Anniversaries this week: Fr. John Joseph Ketterer 1973 (*3rd priest at Dereham*), Betty Lynch 2002, Deanne Andrews, Peggy Free, Maurice Anthony de Chenu, Stan Bennett, Eugenie Beckett, John Hogan, Charles Hixson, Thomas Donoghue, Janet Lennon, Margaret Cliffe and Andrea O'Connor. *May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace.*

Hospital Visits – If you or family members are admitted to the Norfolk & Norwich Hospital (NNUH) or Queen Elizabeth II Hospital (QEII), King's Lynn, and would like a visit from the Roman Catholic Chaplain, please call either St John's Cathedral, Norwich (01603 624615) for visits to NNUH, or Fr Peter Rollings (01553 772220) for visits to QEII. If you would like to receive the Sacrament of Anointing of the sick before going to hospital, please contact Fr. Brendan on 01362 694066.

Sick List - Please pray for: Joan Blakiston, David Peek, Michael Reavey, Robert Nicol, Doreen Kanssen, Shirley Liebenhals, Sarah Chaudri, Anne & Derek Williams, David & Anna Thompkins, Michelle Smith, Rita Smith, Rhonda Darby, Collette Barrow-Nessian, Eileen Brockleby, Pat Howe, Kathleen (Jenny) Rudd and Pat Grout.

Money Matters – The collection last weekend was £511.21. Thank you very much for your generosity.

130 Club February Draw – 1st Prize £20 – Anne Nicol; 2nd Prize £15 – Richard Grout; 3rd Prize £10 – Pat Grout; 4th Prize £10 – Brend Winandy; 5th Prize £10 – Ian Howard.

Stations of the Cross –

- This Sunday, 13th March at 5pm, led by SVP members.
- Palm Sunday, 20th March at 5pm, led by the Prayer Group.
- Good Friday, 25th Mar – for children at 10.30 a.m., led by the children & Catechists.

Changes in Mass times this week – Please note the changed Mass times. On Monday, there is the Deanery Meeting in Norwich and, on Tuesday, Mass is at 10.30am, after which I will go to Clare for the Ministry to Priests Programme and return on Wednesday.

Diary Dates this week and next –

- Sat. 19th Mar – Saturday Club meets – 11.00am in Emmaus Room. Children who are able to attend the Good Friday Stations of the Cross for Children at 10:30am are invited to today's Saturday Club for a practice at 11.00-11.30am.
- Tues. 22nd Mar – **Holy Week - Chrism Mass** – 7pm at St John's Cathedral. There is a list at the back of church for those wishing to attend. Please note – due to the Chrism Mass, there will be no meeting of the Queen of Peace Prayer Group.

Open Parish Meeting - The minutes of our Open Parish Meeting have been approved as an accurate record of the discussion that took place and the decisions made. Copies are available at the back of the church. More copies can be printed if needed.

Holy Ghost Fathers – The Holy Ghost Fathers (Spiritans) have sent their sincere thanks and gratitude to the parish for your kind generosity in response to their recent Mission

Appeal. The £549.72 donated by parishioners will greatly increase the Order's ability to bring Christ to the poorest and most neglected, responding to their cries for help. The Fathers remain grateful for the prayers and support given to their missionaries at home and overseas.

Lenten Alms 2015 - Our Lenten Alms collection last year amounted to £185.79 and was split between the two chosen charities with £92.89 going to Aid to the Church in Need and £92.90 to Cenacolo.

Celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the Diocese of East Anglia (1976) – The Diocese will be celebrating its 40th Anniversary on **Friday, 3rd June at 6.30 p.m.** when there will be a solemn concelebrated Mass in St John the Baptist Cathedral, Norwich. The Preacher will be H.E. Vincent Cardinal Nichols. Although this is a celebration for the entire Diocese, understandably space will be limited in the cathedral. However, it is hoped that each parish will be represented by up to 20 parishioners.

Diocesan Youth Service – The Diocesan Youth Service wish to appoint three people to join the **Ignite Team**. These are full-time residential positions, sharing the Gospel message in schools and parishes, in a way young people can relate to, including using music, drama and tech. For those aged 18-29 who may perhaps be in between jobs or stages of education, unsettled in what they are doing or wanting to do something 'different', or maybe, thinking about the priesthood or religious life but not ready to take the next step, please think about applying to join the team. Please see the poster at the back of church or go to www.rcdea.org/youth for more information.

Help Christian Refugee Children in Thailand - Thousands of Pakistani Christian Families have fled to Thailand because of the persistent threat of Islamist violence towards Christians in Pakistan. But in Thailand, the authorities often treat these frightened refugees not as asylum seekers but as criminals. The Barnabas Fund is committed to helping Christian refugees in many countries around the world. Providing schools for Christian children in Thailand is just one of their projects. Donate to the Barnabas Fund at www.barnabasfund.org

For those interested in learning more about a vocation to the priesthood - Come and meet with Bishop Alan, the Vocations Directors and other likeminded enquirers who want to learn more about the priesthood and perhaps the possibility that God might be calling them to this vocation. The day begins with Mass in the Cathedral at 11am celebrated by Bishop Alan, then lunch together and time for informal discussion. We will end at 3.30pm with Benediction. Sunday 20th March 2016 at the Cathedral of St John the Baptist, Norwich. Please email frmichaelcollis@hotmail.co.uk for more details or to confirm attendance

Bite Size

“Small gestures of love, of tenderness, of care, make people feel that the Lord is with us. This is how the door of mercy opens.” - *Pope Francis.*