



THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF CHRIST THE KING

THE PRESBYTERY, 4 LORDS CROFT, AMESBURY, WILTS., SP47EP

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WELCOME TO CHRIST THE KING

We welcome visitors, family and friends to our Mass today.
We are glad you are joining us today.

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR- A-2023

FROM THE DESK OF FATHER SAJI: EMBRACING LOVING AND LASTING RELATIONSHIPS Ted and Karen had been married 50 years and had no secrets except one: Karen kept in her closet a shoe box that she forbade her husband from ever opening. But when Karen was sick and near death, and with her blessing, Ted opened the box and found a crocheted doll and £95,000 in cash. “My mother told me that the secret to a happy marriage was never to argue,” Karen explained. “Instead, I should keep quiet and crochet a doll.” Ted was touched in that only one doll was in the box, which meant Karen had been angry with Ted only once in 50 years. “But what about all the money?” Ted asked. “Oh,” Karen said, “That’s the money I made from selling all the dolls.” On Sunday 12th February our church celebrates World Marriage Day, which is a practice sponsored by Worldwide Marriage Encounter. It is observed on the Second Sunday in February; and, honours the beauty of marriage as it salutes the grace of faithfulness, sacrifice, and joy within married life. One of the great mysteries in life is the way two people meet. Contact is made in a mysterious manner that brings two people together aware that this would not occur if one took a different path on a particular day. A recent article in Time Magazine indicated that 40% of heterosexual couples meet online with a forecast of 50% by 2037. I joined in a celebration of wedding in mid-January, and in making the arrangements with the couple I mentioned that my history with January weddings never brought any accumulation of snow. This must have jinxed the couple in that three hours prior to the wedding it began to snow. Luckily the snow stopped beforehand, yet I found myself and others shovelling a path through the snow for the bride and her wedding party so that nobody would slip, fall, or ruin their wedding shoes. Anytime a couple comes to see me to make arrangements for a wedding, after the initial questions, I look at each of them and take notice of the love that is visible in each of their eyes. Meaningful communication in relationships is so important to keep the channels of love alive in that one of the major reasons that marriages succeed or fail pertains to the way a husband and wife handle their differences in that a majority of marital problems centre on the fact that people are different.

Prior to getting married couples take a “Focus” questionnaire, which renders questions that pertain to intimacy, family, spirituality, values, communication, problem solving, friends, interests, and parenting issues. This provides an inventory upon the way each individual envisions married life, and opens up important areas for discussion as well as different points of view on concerns that pertain to their lives together. Breakdowns in relationships are often caused through lack of good communication, loss of shared interests, sexual incompatibility, loss of excitement, conflicts over children, substance abuse, and in-law difficulties. I give much encouragement to individuals who choose to marry, yet remind couples (even those who have cohabitated for years) that on the day after a wedding they will see each other in a different light. Many couples who cohabit without discernment over a future marriage live with immense fear about making a commitment. Building a strong marriage consists of making the marriage the greatest priority in life so that decisions within the relationship are based on ways to benefit the marriage, not one individual within the marriage. Children who experience a loving relationship among parents reap the fruit of parental love to mirror the good qualities of each parent that builds character in their lives. One common pitfall in marriage is the belief that hard to manage concerns or disturbing behaviours prior to marriage pass out of sight in the aftermath of a wedding; it seldom happens; therefore, matters that need attention must be rectified beforehand if a marriage is to hold the highest priority in the life of two people. As World Marriage Day is highlighted on the second Sunday in February, ponder the promises made on your wedding day; if unmarried, give thought to your relationships, friendships, and commitments knowing that all people are loving creations of God. Have a great week ahead. BE BLESSED AND BE A BLESSING

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: come, let us worship God and bow low before the God who made us, for he is the Lord our God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: The good man is a light in the darkness for the upright.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Alleluia, alleluia! I am the light of the world, says the Lord, anyone who follows me will have the light of life. Alleluia!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON: Let them thank the Lord for his mercy, his wonders for the children of men, for he satisfies the thirsty soul, and the hungry he fills with good things

PARISH DONATIONS: Generosity is at the heart of the Gospel and the Christian life. We really appreciate your weekly giving at Mass. Donating a regular amount of money is the best way of supporting your parish financially. It enables us to plan ahead knowing that we have a reliable source of income, especially in these uncertain times. Your giving allows us to do everything we do here in this Parish, including enabling our Masses to take place, sacramental preparation, work with children and youth and their families and much more. All of this is made possible by your prayers, serving and giving – we couldn’t do it without you. If you would like to send in a cheque, please make it payable to "Catholic Parish of Christ the King. If you would like to give regularly but do not want to give online then please use the Standing Order Form, as well as the GiftAid declaration form, if you are a UK tax payer. You can collect the forms from Jeff Coy, our parish treasurer and please return the forms to him. Jeff will help you to process the Gift Aid Form and enlighten you more about it A big thank you for all your generous donations, which are greatly appreciated. Should you wish to transfer to standing order or bank transfer, the Parish bank details are: Name: Christ the King Church Amesbury; Natwest Sort Code 52-10-03 Account Number 66286638. If you wish to remember the Parish in your Will, further information is available from the Parish Office. Thank you and God bless you.

WELCOME TO CHRIST THE KING! We would like to extend a warm welcome to all our parishioners and visitors attending public Mass. Whether you are just passing through or looking for a spiritual home, we pray you find Christ the King inviting and spiritually uplifting. If you are attending Mass on a regular basis, we encourage you to register with the parish. Please call our parish office and start the conversation! To our visitors, we hope you enjoy your stay here in Amesbury. Our church is always open to you, your family, and friends. *pax et bonum* (peace and all good)

CHILDREN’S LITURGY OF THE WORD: Children’s Liturgy of the Word is an extension of the Liturgy that provides young children with a worship experience shared in ways understandable and engaging to them. The Children’s Liturgy of the Word includes the First Reading, Responsorial Psalm, Alleluia, Gospel Reading, Gospel Reflection, Creed and Prayer of the Faithful. Children participate by joining the group as it gathers in the hall when invited by the celebrant after the Opening Prayer. They are sent forth with the team of volunteers and return during the Offertory. In order to continue this task on a regular basis we need committed volunteers. We are looking forward to recruiting new members who are able to lead children’s liturgy. If you are interested, please contact Father Saji. Children’s liturgy materials will be supplied for the programme.

FLOWER COMMEMORATIONS If you are looking for a way to help beautify our worship in our church, you may want to consider donating money to purchase a floral arrangement that may be placed in the sanctuary. This is a lovely way to remember a loved one who has died or to commemorate a special birthday or anniversary of a family member. If you are interested placing a floral arrangement, please contact Anne Larke at 07485423471 or please contact Father Saji.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! We would once again like to be able to hold our Children’s Liturgy Program during the 11:00 Mass, each week. We’re searching for 4 to 5 adults to rotate Sundays to work with the children, during Mass to explain the Sunday’s liturgy to them in ways they can understand and participate. Interested adults should contact Father Saji Mathew.

WORLD YOUTH DAY, LISBON (31st July - 7 th August 2023): The diocese of CLIFTON is taking a group of young people (aged 18-35) to World Youth Day in Lisbon summer 2023. Booking process now open; the price is £1,295, which includes flights, 3* accommodation (shared room), transfers,

WYD registration fee & meal vouchers. If you are between 18-35 you can book to join the Diocesan group online.

DEALING WITH UNAPPRECIATIVE PEOPLE

Unappreciative people are usually the ones who don't see value in life. Their disappointment towards others is not related to what others do or don't do for them, but it represents their dissatisfaction with themselves. Sometimes, we put our best effort into helping someone and even go beyond our capability, only to find that they are still dissatisfied with our efforts. Lack of acknowledgement can not only be discouraging but also heartbreaking. It not only disheartens people but sometimes puts them off from helping others. If you know that someone has made an attempt to help you, value their efforts. The result may not be what you wanted, but a good intention always deserves appreciation. People might not always be able to help you the way they want but if they did the way they could appreciate it.

WHAT’S THE BUZZ? When a new store or restaurant opens in the area, there can be quite a buzz. People want to see what the place is like. If the establishment is lucky, a positive word of mouth can spread all over the area. The challenge then becomes keeping that buzz alive. If people start to think that the new place is not as good as advertised or they had hoped, the crowds will dwindle and soon the new place will simply become an old place. Even worse, it could become a closed place. If you were a store owner, what would you do to attract people? Would you always put your best foot forward? How hard would you work to show everybody that your place is worth repeated visits and patronage? You may not be an entrepreneur with your own business, but you do have your parish community. This is your community and what you do and how you act in the world around you will either add to a buzz or a lack of interest. How you use the gifts you and your community have been given will do a lot to attract people and cause them to talk. You will be like a city on top of a mountain that no one can miss. Can your light shine so bright that it can be seen from miles around? You may be only one person, but you are a part of something greater than yourself. Your stewardship can easily become contagious. At a time when too many are choosing to disregard the Church, it is time to create a positive buzz.

MASS SCHEDULE STARTING FROM 4TH FEBRUARY 2023
SATURDAY 4TH FEBRUARY MASS AT 6.00PM PAT THOMSON, ROBERT JONES, RIP (HEAVENLY BIRTHDAYS)

SUNDAY 5TH FEBRUARY 11.00AM MASS CAROL DRENNAN (INTENTIONS)

MONDAY 6TH FEBRUARY MASS AT 10AM SALLY WHITMARSH, RIP

TUESDAY 7TH FEBRUARY MASS AT 10.00AM HELEN MUSGROVE WILSON (BIRTHDAY INTENTIONS)

WEDNESDAY 8TH FEBRUARY MASS AT 10.00AM SUE BRADWELL (INTENTIONS)

THURSDAY 9TH FEBRUARY MASS AT 10.00AM

FRIDAY 10TH FEBRUARY ADORATION AT 9.00AM AND MASS AT 10.00AM DOMINIC FITZPATRICK, RIP

SATURDAY 11TH FEBRUARY MASS AT 10.00M OUR LADY OF LOURDES (WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE SICK AND THEIR CARERS AND 6.00PM VIGIL MASS FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE PARISH

SUNDAY 12TH FEBRUARY MASS AT 11.00AM MASS Lord Jesus, who went about doing good and healing all, we ask you to bless our friends who are sick. Give them strength in body, courage in spirit and patience with pain.

WE ARE THE BEACONS ON THE HILL In today's Gospel, Jesus says that we are "The salt of the earth and the light of the world." What do salt and light have to do with us? In the time of Christ, salt was actually valuable...it was used, not only to cook and to make foods more palatable, it was also used as a preservative. The value of light is obvious...but what most of us don't think of is that the average home in Jesus' time was very poorly lit. No one who heard Jesus speak would have missed the absurdity of taking a lamp and hiding it underneath a basket. But the lesson for us is, how are we as followers of Christ and bringers of his message doing with the mission he has given to us? Too often we think we can live our lives as Christians for ourselves without getting added in...like the salt. We think it's perfectly alright to hide our faith under the bushel basket. As a people living in an affluent society, we value our privacy and our individuality. That's fine. But if taken to an extreme, it can be these things that keep us from being salt and light. It can be these things that prevent us from getting mixed up with a world that needs Christ. Is it time for us to turn up the brightness and throw in more salt for Jesus?

Our gospel this weekend reminds us that we are the light of the world. It takes people shining a light so beautifully in the world that those who observe want to discover how that person became the way they are. Simply sitting back and going through the religious motions and basing our relationship as a very individual and private experience is counterproductive to growing and increasing the communion of saints. But do we need to wait until then to know what we must do to make our parish thriving and alive? Do we need someone else to make the decision for us that we need to re-enliven and regenerate our community? I hope not. All that means is that we are acting like victims instead of possessing and owning our own lives, and the power of the Christ has given us. What are you willing to do personally to spread the good news of Jesus Christ? The Prophet Isaiah has some good marching orders for us if we are to become a light to the world. Have you noticed how easy it is to be kind and loving and forgiving to those who pat you on the back and agree with you always? There's not much that it takes to do that and certainly not a lot of faith. But if we are to do what the prophet says, that will make us a glowing light in the face of the world and those who observe us. Are you sharing your bread with the hungry? Are you sheltering those who are oppressed and homeless? Do you clothe the naked and not turn your back on them? The interesting part of the Prophet Isaiah is that he talks about a wound that will be quickly healed if we choose to live in that way. What's the wound you think the prophet Isaiah is talking about? I think we all know the wound that needs to be healed. Just look around, and you notice quickly, how broken the world is right now. Do you notice the shakiness within families, the unfair distribution of the resources around the world, even within our own country, and the persistence of hatred and prejudice against those who appear different than we are. That wound will only be healed if we live as Jesus has asked us to live. Just remember that Jesus told us that we can go to church and say our prayers but if we have hatred for another, we cannot pretend to be a follower of Jesus. Let's work together to be beacons on the hill shedding the radiant light of Christ individually, and as a community for others to see the abiding presence of Christ in our midst.

DO TOUGH TIMES SERVE ANY PURPOSE: Tough times test our patience, resilience and inner strength. We often make choices, take decisions or make a move because of our challenging situations just to find that it all worked in our favour. It is hard to stay optimistic when everything seems to work against us. We need to remember that life is always working in our favour. Hardships are sometimes a part of a higher experience of life. If you are experiencing a difficult time, keep the faith, look for a solution and find ways to overcome it. It is just a matter of time before you realise even tough times bought a positive change in your life.

ON THE WAY A CATECHESIS ON MARRIAGE- Indissolubility Suppose you go to a wedding and at the exchange of vows the bride looks lovingly at the groom and says, "I take you to be my husband...for the next five years, after which time we will assess our assets and debts, come to an equitable arrangement, and go our separate ways." Would you rejoice in her practicality and shrewdness? Probably not. You would recognise immediately that what was happening was not a marriage but some other kind of contractual arrangement. We all intuit that marriage is for life, and with good reason. Permanence or indissolubility is of the very nature of conjugal love and of marriage. It's not a uniquely Catholic teaching, not some added requirement of the Church, but simply the truth about what marriage is. If a bride and groom don't intend permanence, then they don't intend to marry. They want some other kind of union instead. Permanence is a consequence of the spouses giving themselves to one another. A gift cannot be conditionally or temporarily given. If the gift of self in marriage isn't permanent, then it's not a gift at all but a loan. The romance and beauty of marriage and married love come from the fact that a man and woman, not knowing what the future holds, commit themselves to one another for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death. Remove permanence, and marriage becomes just another arrangement "until further notice." And that's not so romantic. Permanence in marriage is also for the sake of the children. The union of husband and wife brings children into the world. That union also provides the best environment for the children's development and success. That is, the union of mom and dad is not just the source of the children's life once, at conception, but also the continuing source of strength and nourishment for them. As should be obvious by now, divorce is dreadful for children. It is, in effect, the putting asunder of their source of life. Remember, this teaching is the Church's because it is Jesus' first. His words on the permanence of marriage are as shocking now as they were then: "Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female' and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate" (Mt 19:4-6; cf. Mt 5:31-32; Mk 10:2-12). Divorce was permitted under the Mosaic law as a concession to their "hardness of heart." Christ restores the original meaning of marriage as indissoluble because he brings to spouses the grace to live that truth. Christ the Bridegroom proclaims the indissolubility of marriage not only because it brings some temporal benefits but also because it points to a supernatural reality. The indissoluble bond of husband and wife points to the eternal covenant between Christ and the Church. The proclamation of the Gospel depends on people's having some lived experience of stable and lasting love. Unfortunately, because of divorce fewer and fewer people have such an experience. By persevering in marriage – through better and worse, richer and poorer, sickness and health – spouses become an icon of that everlasting love. They make it, in a certain sense, present and real. Thus, they witness to the everlasting love with which God loves us.

DEAR PARISHIONERS, In his message of January 10, 2023, Pope Francis has declared Saturday, February 11, 2023, the 31st World Day of Prayer for the Sick. The Holy Father quotes the Prophet Ezekiel: "I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down," says the Lord God. "I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak" (34:15-16). With characteristic challenging candour, he situates the plight of the sick, the hungry, and the poor in a socio-cultural-economic context: The World Day of the Sick calls for prayer and closeness towards those who suffer. Yet it also aims to raise the awareness of God's people, healthcare institutions and civil society with regard to a new way of moving forward together.

The above-quoted prophecy of Ezekiel judges harshly the priorities of those who wield economic, cultural, and political power over others: "You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fatlings; but you do not feed the sheep. You have not strengthened the weak, you have not healed the sick, you have not bound up the injured, you have not brought back the strayed, you have not sought the lost, but with force and harshness you have ruled them" (34:3-4). The sick and suffering present us with opportunities and responsibilities. We are reminded of much the same in the Scriptures at Mass today. Isaiah reminds Israel that she has been commissioned to be light to all nations, revealing the compassion of her Lord to the hungry and afflicted: "If you bestow your bread on the hungry and satisfy the afflicted; then light shall rise for you in the darkness." Jesus uses that same image of light in today's Gospel, taken from his Sermon on the Mount: "You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. . . Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father." Throughout his ministry Jesus identified personally with the sick and afflicted, often connecting with them literally in a touch. Peter's mother-in-law: "He approached, grasped her hand, and helped her up. Then the fever left her." The leper: "Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand, touched him, and said, 'I do will it. Be made clean.'" The blind man at Bethsaida: "They brought to him a blind man and begged him to touch him. He took the blind man by the hand and led him outside the village. . . he laid his hands on him. . . Then he laid hands on his eyes a second time and he saw clearly . . . Jairus' daughter: He took the child by the hand and said to her, 'Talitha koum,' which means, 'Little girl, I say to you, arise!'" Just a few examples of Jesus' curing touch.

It is no coincidence that when the World Day of Prayer for the Sick was first established, Pope St. John Paul II chose the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. One can scarcely mention Lourdes without thinking of the sick. Who is not familiar with the story of the appearance of a beautiful Lady to the young Bernadette Soubirous at the grotto of Massabielle, on the outskirts of the village of Lourdes in the French Pyrenees, the Lady who told Bernadette, "I am the Immaculate Conception." Mention of the shrine at Lourdes evokes images of long lines of the ill, waiting their turn to bathe in the waters of the spring that Bernadette uncovered at the direction of the Lady, the baths that have been the occasions of so many miracles. On 11 February 2023, let us turn our thoughts to the Shrine of Lourdes, a prophetic lesson entrusted to the Church for our modern times. It is not only what functions well or those who are productive that matter. Sick people, in fact, are at the centre of God's people, and the Church advances together with them as a sign of a humanity in which everyone is precious and no one should be discarded or left behind. My first personal experience of Lourdes was when I led a parish pilgrimage in 2015. I found Lourdes, in the person of Bernadette, in the message of Mary, and in the gathering of the pilgrims, wonderfully warm and human, as much as it was spiritual and grace-filled, a place of great peace and blessing. I found the same when I had the opportunity in 2016 to accompany the another group on their annual pilgrimage to Lourdes. Different groups extend in tender service of body and soul the healing touch of Jesus in their care for their cherished maladies. I hope to do the same some time in the near future. I will carry any prayer intentions you entrust to me to the shrine.

ADVANCE NOTICE - CHRISM MASS IN CLIFTON CATHEDRAL on Wednesday 5 April. We have booked a small coach to travel to the Chrism Mass which will be picking up in Salisbury and Amesbury. If you would like to join our priests and deacons at this Mass, please contact the office.

EMAIL FOR CONTACTING ME: My temporary email: joseph.sajimathew@gmail.com

RACIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY-5th February (Second Collection) Every one of our parishes, schools and organisations has a responsibility to actively practise anti-racism in all aspects of our mission. We need to address the lack of visible diversity at every level, so that people can see themselves, their race, their culture and their history in the Church's life. "Racism is a virus that quickly mutates and, instead of disappearing, goes into hiding, and lurks in waiting. Instances of racism continue to shame us, for they show that our supposed social progress is not as real or definitive as we think." Pope Francis. There will be a second collection this weekend 4/5th February.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER: This year's World Day of Prayer by the women of Taiwan, is being held at the Methodist Church on the 3rd March at 7.00pm. Men, women and children are all welcome. Please join our fellow Christians in this ecumenical service.

FIRST COMMUNION PREPARATION: Our First Communion children are now working hard to prepare for this beautiful sacrament, which they will receive in June. We can't believe First Communion is only a few months away! Please keep the children and their families in your prayers! Our next First Communion class will be on Sunday 5th February after the Mass at 12.30pm

FAITH IS FOR EVERYONE, AND SO IS FAITH FORMATION! Do you have an older child who has never been baptised or never received their First Holy Communion? Do you have a child with a disability who would like to join our program? It's never too late, and your situation may not be as unusual as you may think! We accompany families with children of all ages, at all levels, in ways that are comfortable for them. Please contact the parish office for more details.

APPLICATIONS PLEASE FOR CONFIRMATION IN 2023. For young people in school Year 9 or above please apply NOW as we will soon be finalising the programme.

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION is available on Saturdays from 5.00pm-5.40pm in the Church. Reconciliation is also available by appointment. Contact Fr. Saji directly through email or by phone.

CHRIST THE KING 200 CLUB- NEW MEMBERS ARE VERY WELCOME! The 200 Club has been set up to raise funds for our Church and School, with half the money raised given out in three cash prizes each month, and the other half divided equally between the Church and School each December. During 2022 we had 82 members, with more members, monthly prizes will increase, but more importantly we will raise more funds for the church and the school. The cost is £12 per year for one number in the draw each month. Carol Crossland will be collecting money after masses throughout January, alternatively this can be placed in an envelope, clearly marked 200 Club, with your full name and telephone number, and left with Father Saji at Church, or posted. We also will accept bank transfers (please state Name, and Church or School when making your payment) Sort Code 52-10-03 Account No 66287715 Please note this IS NOT the same as the account used by Fr Saji for donations each week. Thank you to everyone for taking part. Carol Crossland.

CONFIRMATION 2023 Confirmation in the Salisbury Deanery will be on 27 June this year and our programme will begin on 7 March. The deadline for applications to join the programme is 28 February after which all applications will be deferred until 2024. If you know of anyone in school Year 9 or above who hopes to be confirmed this year