



THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF CHRIST THE KING

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

PARISH PRIEST: Rev Saji Mathew
saji.mathew@cliftondiocese.com

Parish Office Telephone: 01980 622177
Website: Amesbury.cliftondiocese.com
PARISH MOBILE 07412604880

WELCOME TO CHRIST THE KING

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

SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR- A-2023

FROM THE DESK OF FATHER SAJI: WHOEVER DOES NOT LOVE DOES NOT KNOW GOD, BECAUSE GOD IS LOVE. Love our enemies? Really?! That's a ridiculously difficult request. Yet, Jesus Christ not only calls us forth to that in our Gospel this weekend, but we see Him model that request for us. For these past three Sundays, we have been proclaiming the gospel of Matthew, chapter 5. The way this chapter is written, invites us to examine our long-held beliefs, and to see if God is calling us to a broader and deeper understanding of that which we had been taught a long time ago. The examination is between living a faith that is satisfied with the minimum or living a faith that continues to grow and deepen, asking more of us each and every day. Many of us get tired of being called to growth and change. Especially as adults in faith, we seem satisfied to remain with our understanding of God and our relationship with others for a long time. We are willing to progress professionally because we have to keep a job. Most of us even keep tabs on the latest fads in dress and our behaviour so that we don't look like an oddball in the world, but somehow it's different with faith. Why is it that we continue to be given the option of growing in our understanding of God and our relationships with others but we primarily stay stuck in where we are? What are we afraid of? And this week we are asked to look at our attitudes of revenge toward those who have hurt us, exacting punishment on them, in the same way that they have punished us. Jesus teaches us that his disciples should not act that way, and yet we continue to do that. Jesus teaches us that love means embracing friend and enemy, not just those who agree with us or who support us. We hear his teaching and yet we decide we will not grow in that way. What are we afraid of? Why do we refuse to grow when Jesus asks us to? We have a creed that we profess, and a very specific ritual that we call the Mass. We know what the 10 Commandments are, what the eight beatitudes are, and we know the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, but how we practise all of those needs to keep growing and deepening, or our faith becomes empty for ourselves and does not have the power to attract others to Jesus. As Jesus tells us, what good is it for us to only love those who love us back. He says that people who don't even believe in God can do that. What's the big deal?

We have the perfect season that is about to begin on Ash Wednesday, February 22. We have the opportunity to choose to deepen our relationship with Jesus, and to deepen our commitment to live out the gospel as Jesus teaches it. There is such a temptation, to simply begin again, the same practice as we have had for years. There is the temptation to pray the same prayers, fast in the same way, and give alms in exactly the same way. Are you open to deepening your prayer, fasting, and almsgiving? Are you willing to come to know Jesus more clearly and more deeply during this Lenten time? Will you be celebrating the Sacrament of Confession or is that something you just quit doing years ago? Will you come to daily Mass to celebrate the Eucharist more often, even if it is an inconvenience? Will you take this opportunity to understand more deeply, those with whom you hold a grudge and to begin the path toward reconciliation? Are you willing to go beyond checkbook charity, and actually become personally involved with the poor, the homeless, the hungry and naked, the imprisoned and sick, and anywhere else you see the suffering and broken Christ on the face of the Earth? As the scripture this weekend tells us, "God catches the wise in their own ruses." As we approach Lent, I think it is important to look at our attitude toward those we disagree with, or have hurt us. We are called forth to love them, but what does that look like? It can start by praying for them. Pray, "Lord, be with (name). Help me to see their perspective but also see Your perspective, so that your peace and grace may bring about healing in our relationship. May we have respect and appreciation for each other, even if we continue to disagree. I encourage you to utilise this Lent to grow in charity toward your enemies. Offer up your fasting for them and see what the Lord does with those sacrifices. The Sacrifice on the Cross brought about healing and the salvation of the world. Your Lenten Sacrifices will help further that healing in the world and bring about greater ability to love our enemies. Have a great week ahead. BE BLESSED AND BE A BLESSING

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: O Lord, I trust in your merciful love. My heart will rejoice in your salvation. I will sing to the Lord who has been bountiful with me.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: The Lord is compassion and love.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Alleluia, alleluia! If anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him. Alleluia!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON: I will recount all your wonders, I will rejoice in you and be glad, and sing psalms to your name, O Most High.

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.

IS GOSSIP A SIN? QUESTION Is gossip a mortal sin? Answer: To really ask this question, we must consider the Eighth Commandment: "You shall not bear false witness." In its reflections on this commandment, The Catechism of the Catholic Church invites us to not only think about what bearing "false witness" means, but to also consider how we understand the truth and how

we communicate more broadly. This is why so much of this section of the Catechism has to do with the gift of language. With this in mind, we will notice that the word "gossip" isn't used by the Catechism. Instead, we find the words "detraction" and "calumny," which are actually two forms that gossip can take, and both can be quite serious. First, detraction is of revealing "another's faults and failings to persons who did not know them," without morally valid reasons. Calumny, by extension, is saying something about another person that is untrue, and it is sinful because it "harms the reputation of others and gives occasion for false judgements" (see no. 2477). In all of our communication, we have to always recognise that we have a moral obligation to the truth and to always work to protect the reputation and honour of our neighbours (see no. 2479). Gossip can, in fact, prove to be a very serious sin. After all, the Catechism reminds us: "No one is bound to reveal the truth to someone who does not have the right to know it" (no. 2489). When we have gossiped, especially if we are aware we have damaged another person's good name or reputation, we want to make every effort to undo the damage we have done, including seeking the grace and forgiveness offered in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

VALUE YOUR EFFORTS Appreciate yourself. It will increase your self-worth. Self-appreciation means we realise our own effort and encourage ourselves regardless of how much others value us. We usually rely on others to appreciate our efforts. Most of our efforts go unnoticed because people don't realise how much heart we put into doing things. But, you know every little bit you do at home to make it function smoothly, your workplace to excel, and your relationship to stay intact. Value your own efforts and give yourself a pat on the back. Every time you do this, you get strength and encouragement to continue the good work, even if you don't find appreciation from anyone else.

MASS SCHEDULE STARTING FROM 18TH FEBRUARY 2023
SATURDAY 18TH FEBRUARY MASS AT 6.00PM ALICIA LABORTE, RIP

SUNDAY 19TH FEBRUARY 11.00AM MASS HELEN RIMMER, RIP

MONDAY 20TH FEBRUARY MASS AT 10AM GAY SAVAGE (BIRTHDAY INTENTIONS)

TUESDAY 21ST FEBRUARY MASS AT 10.00AM CAROL DRENNAN (INTENTIONS)

ASH WEDNESDAY 22ND FEBRUARY MASS AT 10.00AM HOLY SOULS AND 6.00PM MASS WEDNESDAY DAY OF FAST AND ABSTINENCE

THURSDAY 23RD FEBRUARY MASS AT 9.00AM ADORATION 10.00AM PRIVATE INTENTIONS

FRIDAY 24TH FEBRUARY ADORATION AT 9.00AM AND MASS AT 10.00AM JO CHAMBERS AND HER FAMILIES (INTENTIONS) STATIONS OF THE CROSS 10.30AM

SATURDAY 25TH FEBRUARY MASS AT 6.00PM VIGIL MASS FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE PARISH

SUNDAY 26TH FEBRUARY MASS AT 11.00AM

ALTAR FLOWERS Last week, the Altar flowers were donated by Althea Power in memory of Pat Thomson, Robert Jones and Margaret Thomson. May they rest in perfect peace and rise in glory with God. Thank you very much Althea and God bless you!

Lent stimulates us to let the Word of God penetrate our life and in this way to know the fundamental truth: who we are, where we come from, where we must go, what path we must take in life. Pope Benedict XVI

ASH WEDNESDAY This Wednesday we ready ourselves in preparation for the Season of Lent. Spiritual endeavours (prayer, good works, sacrifice) throughout Lent equip us for the most important celebration on the liturgical calendar, the Resurrection of Jesus. Ash Wednesday launches us into preparation for this special day as it invites us to take "time out" from the normal activities of life to receive ashes as a sign of engaging into Lent with desire for victory which is greater closeness to God.

Ash Wednesday bids us to the sidelines to ponder personal and communal objectives aware that points are never scored if an effective game plan is not implemented; therefore, this special day is the kick off for personal and spiritual growth that continues in the aftermath of the Season. Ash Wednesday opens a window to an honest review of personal strengths and weaknesses, and sets attainable but challenging goals. Some mistake the purpose of Lent as self-congratulations that stems from accomplishments or sacrifice involved with extra effort in prayer or good works, but the main thrust of Lent is to disarm ourselves from complacency. Lent is also not a time to look down on oneself with self-inflicted criticisms, but in the words of Oscar Wilde, "Be yourself; everyone else is already taken." This makes Ash Wednesday a day that offers us the promise of "second chances" which calls forth greater discovery in areas of life that make us proud of who we are as followers of Christ. The late Henri Nouwen, one of the most prolific and popular spiritual writers of the 20th century once wrote, "How often have I tried through these weeks without paying much attention to penance, fasting, and prayer? How often have I missed the spiritual fruits of the season without being aware of it? But how can I ever really celebrate Easter without observing Lent? How can I rejoice in your Resurrection when I have avoided participating in your death?" Sometimes there are expectations that God does all the work if we live out our commitment through Lent with the correct recitation of prayers and devotions; however, Lent is not dropping to our knees in hope for God to work miracles; God provides strength for us to follow through with a game plan that renders victory through the cross. Ash Wednesday lulls us away from spiritual complacency, and serves notice that the Resurrection of the Lord is weeks away. Ashes, which are a powerful symbol of humility and repentance, and known as a sacramental in the church, get placed on our foreheads as a reminder of human weaknesses and mortality aware that our lives are different than a year ago; therefore, repetition of past Lenten observances without venturing into uncharted territory often generates activities that hold little value for us since we have ripened and aged through time.

The challenge of Lent is to work on both offense and defense aware that our offense consists of countless opportunities for spiritual and corporal touchdowns, while a good defence protects us from actions/habits that are not beneficial to our lives; therefore, Ash Wednesday charts a course for all of Lent. Matthew's Gospel is this year's guide throughout the weekends of Lent as it brings to light the Three Temptations of Jesus on the First Sunday of Lent. On Ash Wednesday, Matthew's Gospel focuses on prayer, almsgiving and fasting; and warns us against hypocritical public prayer. In making reference to Matthew's Gospel, Pope Francis states, "In Matthew's Gospel Jesus shows sinners that he does not look at their past, at their social status, at external conventions, but rather, he opens a new future to them. I once heard a beautiful saying: 'There is no saint without a past nor a sinner without a future.' This is what Jesus does. There is no saint without a past nor sinner without a future. It is enough to respond to the call with a humble heart and sincere heart." As you receive ashes this Wednesday, take time to see God as the centre of your life which will make Lent a holy season for you.

EARTHQUAKE HUMANITARIAN AID Second collection This weekend-18/19 February The earthquake and the aftershocks that followed have already killed more than 50,000 people, injured hundreds more and destroyed thousands of homes and buildings. The scale of this disaster is unclear but search and rescue for survivors continues in both Turkey and Syria in a desperate bid to save lives. Please support and help reach families who have lost everything through CAFOD. The people of Turkey and Syria continue to need our donations and prayers. There will be a **Second Collection this weekend** for the support of the victims and their families.

GOING THE EXTRA MILE So often in life, people are concerned about the minimum requirements. What is the minimum I must do to get a certain grade? What is the minimum I need to do to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation? What exactly do I have to do to make my boss happy? This concern does not stop with everyday life but continues into our relationship with God. What exactly is required of me for salvation? How much time, talent, and treasure are enough? Jesus does not call us to this way of life, but instead to a life of unbounding generosity and surrender. Jesus said, "If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles." The minimum requirement is one mile; however, we are not to be disciples of minimum requirements and checking off boxes. We are to go the extra mile because that is how we bear witness to the transforming power of Jesus Christ. That is how we change lives and share the grace and love we have received in abundance. Nothing ever changes by doing the minimum. There is no real glory given to God by responding to His call with the minimum. Imagine a world where all of us good stewards give without ceasing and go far beyond the minimum requirements. Our world would be a very different place. So, what is stopping us?

BISHOP DECLAN'S PASTORAL VISIT TO CTK Bishop Declan Lang will make his pastoral visit to Christ the King Parish on Sunday March 19th and will preside over the 11.00am Mass. The pastoral visit is an apostolic endeavour, an event of grace for the whole of the parish family. The Pastoral Visit is intended to meet with the priest, lay pastoral assistants, and lay people responsible for various areas of the pastoral life of the parish. Bishop will avail this momentous opportunity to become acquainted with the reality of the current pastoral programs, and the overall functioning of the parish. From a faith perspective, to look at the parish community in its main components: faith education at all ages, sacramental and liturgical life, the sense of community, co-responsibility and leadership, service to society, the relationship of the parish with the diocesan and universal Church; financial organization and the state of recordkeeping of sacramental registers and other archival material. It will also help the Bishop to bring encouragement and hope to those involved in pastoral work and to all the people of the parish. Also, to celebrate the Mass, to proclaim the Word of God and to preach with the parish community as well as to make known the pastoral priorities of the diocese and to foster a sense of belonging to the diocesan Church. The pastoral planning team/pastoral council will meet to discuss the special event in the life of parish and plan the strategy.

GIVING PROVIDES US FULFILMENT Give without expectation. You will receive the greatest satisfaction. Giving is the greatest form of humanity. When we do anything that helps another human, we satisfy our soul, which brings inner fulfilment. People often help others, but they keep reminding them or expect them to return their help. When you see your help as a favour, you expect it to be returned, so you turn a great feeling into a trade. In order to feel fulfilled, give with all your heart. Don't expect that the person should return your help, but rather thank the Almighty that He made you capable of helping someone else.

PARISH LENTEN MISSION 2023 The Parish Lenten Series will be held on Tuesday, February 28th, March 7th, March 21st, and March 28th after the 10:00AM Mass. Each talk will give a brief Lenten reflection. **All talks are focused on prayer, the season of Lent and learning more about the Lord through Scripture. Here are some of the topics:**+ Abiding in the Word of God+ Overcoming Our Temptations+ Believing Our Identity as "Beloved"+ Growing in Unshakeable Hope+ How to Handle Unanswered Prayers+ Overcoming Lies of the Devil+ Restorative Prayer+ Saints with a Devotion to the Passion of Jesus+ Jesus' Time in the Garden of Gethsemane+ Living out the Pattern of Life, Death and Resurrection: advice from St. Elizabeth of the Trinity.

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 us and be part of this Mass, please contact the office.

EMAIL FOR CONTACTING ME: My temporary email: jo-seph.sajimathew@gmail.com

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 26th February after the Mass at 12.30pm

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. **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

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.

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.

YOU SHALL NOT BEAR HATRED FOR YOUR BROTHER OR SISTER IN YOUR HEART. Though you may have to reprove your fellow citizen, do not incur sin because of him." (Lev 19:17). With Ash Wednesday being February 22 this year, thus beginning the Lenten Season, allow me to give some reminders regarding the penitential practices that the Church calls us to follow. Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are obligatory days of fasting and abstinence for Catholics. In addition, Fridays of Lent are obligatory days of abstinence. Please note that when health or ability to work would be seriously affected, the law does not oblige. When in doubt concerning

Fast or Abstinence, a parish priest or confessor should be consulted. For members of the Latin Catholic Church, the norms on fasting are obligatory from age 18 until age 59. On days of Fast (Ash Wednesday and Good Friday), one full meal is allowed. Two other meals, sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to each one's needs, but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted; but liquids, including milk and fruit juices, are allowed. You may ask, "Why do I fast?" The purpose for fasting is to experience the effects of not eating and serves as a penance or a sacrifice. When we don't eat, for even a little while, we get hungry. When we get hungry, we have a heightened sense of awareness. If, when we eat too much, we have a sluggish feeling. Fasting is a wonderful exercise when we want to sincerely ask a grace from God. St. John Chrysostom says beautifully, "Fasting is the support of our soul: it gives us wings to ascend on high, and to enjoy the highest contemplation". Some things that fasting helps with is to tame the flesh, fosters self-control, helps purify us and prepare us to pray more deeply. The norms concerning abstinence from meat are binding upon members of the Latin Catholic Church who have completed their 14th year. The purpose for abstinence is to be an act of penance or a sacrifice, that helps us grow in freedom to make much bigger sacrifices. Of course, it does not make sense to make the sacrifice of not eating meat, and then eat a wonderful meal you might enjoy even more. For those who don't eat meat, in order to keep the spirit of penance, I encourage you to make a renunciation of something else that would be more penitential. We want to allow Friday to be a day of self-denial and mortification in prayerful remembrance of the passion of Jesus Christ. It should be noted that many people in this world cannot afford to eat meat or do not have access to it. Part of our abstaining from meat can help strengthen our solidarity with many of our brothers and sisters around the world. Parents should also see that where their children are not bound by the laws of fast and abstinence, they are educated in an authentic sense of penance. Catholics also are earnestly urged to receive the Sacrament of Penance during the Lenten Season; preferably the Sacrament should be received prior to the Triduum, i.e., before Holy Thursday, Good Friday or Holy Saturday.

During the Lenten Season, other acts of penance are to be chosen by each person according to circumstances. These ideally will include increased prayer life, greater effort in the pursuit of virtue and the voluntary surrender of pleasures. You may ponder about the seriousness of this obligation. The teaching of Pope Paul VI speaks on fast and abstinence in his apostolic constitution, Paenitemini. Feel free to read this document online, but allow me to give you a simple paraphrase. The obligation to do penance is a serious one; the obligation to observe, as a whole or "substantially" the penitential days specified by the Church is also serious. No one should be scrupulous in this regard; failure to observe individual days of penance is not considered serious; rather it is the failure to observe any penitential days at all or a substantial number of such days which must be considered serious. People should seek to do more rather than less. Fast and Abstinence on the days prescribed; works of religion and charity on the Fridays outside of Lent should be considered a minimal response to the Lord's call to penance and conversion of life.'

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 22 and ends with the evening of the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, April 6. Please be aware that Ash Wednesday will have additional Masses offered that day to allow you the opportunity to better enter into the Lenten Season. The Lenten Season and the period of penance is a reminder of our ongoing call to conversion and renewal in our own lives. I invite you to make good use of this season and go beyond the minimum requirements of obligatory days of fasting and abstinence. Perhaps you can commit yourself during Lent to go to daily Mass, pray a daily rosary, do some spiritual studies, join in the Stations of the Cross or accomplish some other form of self-denial in preference to Christ. Remember that Jesus said as a condition for discipleship, "If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me" (Luke 9:23)