



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.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT-LAETARE SUNDAY YEAR-A-2023

FROM THE DESK OF FATHER SAJI: LENT: THE POWER OF PERSONAL PRAYER There is a story about a man who returns to court for stealing a pair of shoes. The judge looked at him with anger and began to scold the man for his actions. "I'm very disappointed in you. Wasn't it only two years ago that I lectured you about stealing a pair of shoes? Now here you are again back in my courtroom for the same offence." The defendant looked at the judge and said, "That's right your honour. I'm disappointed too. They just do not make shoes the way they used to." As we approach the fourth weekend of the Lenten Season we frequently find ourselves as repeat offenders of the Season. On Ash Wednesday we start out with good intentions, but fall victim to repeated actions that lull us away from the promises made for Lent. Perhaps we even ignore the purpose of the Season and never initiate a starting point aware that little effort was made to reconstruct areas of our life that render greater closeness to God. This week manifests a good opportunity to take an honest evaluation of personal prayer, the type we hear from Matthew's Gospel on Ash Wednesday, "When you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret" (Matthew 6:6). Private prayer can generate a new perspective to the way we view our lives. I imagine that most of us do pray in secret, which may take place in the privacy of our room, car, walk, or at places that generate peacefulness to our lives. It is worthwhile to examine our motive for personal prayer as a dear friend of mine once commented to me that he prays to get to heaven; however, I witnessed that his prayer made him a better person in that prayer led him to reflect on challenges he grasped from the scriptures that steered him to good works and generosity among people who needed his time and attention. There is incredible strength found in personal prayer as it navigates us to go the extra mile in actions that demonstrate care for others outside the inner circle of our relationships; therefore, it becomes an authentic encounter with God, which gives testimony to the presence of God throughout the world. I also detect personal prayer to be strongest during burdensome, perplexing situations in life, or whenever a significant task looms ahead of us. One scope of life that is touched with personal prayer are out of the blue circumstances around the globe where the lives of people have been devastated due to unpredictable events such as the War in Ukraine, the earthquake in Turkey/Syria and the toxic derailment of a train that left an unhealthy environment upon the people in East Palestine, Ohio. Prayer shows us the way to remember these people as well as respond through an assortment of avenues with assistance to needs that evolve due to these cruel and merciless situations. This weekend's gospel unveils Jesus giving sight to a man blind from birth (John 9:1-41). It is an invitation to examine the way prayer opens our eyes to experience life through eyes of faith as well as determine whether we are blind to the light of Christ, and stumble away from him due to paths of darkness. Abraham Lincoln once called personal prayer a source of quiet strength in stating, "I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go." This week with sincere honesty ponder your personal prayer life, which in itself becomes a prayer. There are times when distractions enter into our prayer. This is a normal occurrence for most people; yet never rush through prayer for the sake of getting it done. A good prayer life leads to incredible fulfilment as it communicates to God who we are, and puts new perspectives into our lives through some of our successes and failures. This generates desires within our hearts to do God's will aware that our strongest connection with God comes through prayer so do not deprive yourself from it. Have a great week! BE BLESSED AND BE A BLESSING

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her. Be joyful, all who were in mourning; exult and be satisfied at her consoling breast.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God! I am the light of the world, says the Lord; anyone who follows me will have the light of life. Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON: The Lord anointed my eyes: I went, I washed, I saw and I believed in God.

THE RIGHT REVEREND BISHOP DECLAN LANG-PASTORAL VISIT: This weekend, we extend a warm welcome to Bishop Declan Lang to Christ the King, Amesbury. It is also an opportunity for Bishop Declan to invite the faithful to a renewal of Christian life and to an ever more intense apostolic activity. The pastoral visit helps the Bishop to evaluate the effectiveness of the structures designed for pastoral ministry, taking account of the circumstances and difficulties of the task of evangelisation, so as to determine more accurately the priorities and the means required for overall pastoral provision.

CAFOD LENT FAST DAY CAFOD Family Fast Day collection last Weekend amounted to 289.82. Many thanks for your continued generosity in reaching out to the needy through CAFOD. Thank you and God bless you!

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 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.

ON THE WAY- A CATECHESIS ON CONFESSION: Why Confess? The fact that Jesus Christ himself gave us the Sacrament of Penance should be enough for us to know its essential role in the Christian life. But that doesn't eliminate the question Why? As many people ask, Why do we have to confess our sins to a priest? Why can't we just confess individually and directly to God? These are good questions that deserve answers. The answer to that last question – Why can't we confess to God directly? – is that we can. In fact, it should be the daily practice of every Catholic to make an examination of conscience, acknowledge one's sins before God, and ask forgiveness. This is not the same as sacramental confession. But the Sacrament doesn't make much sense (or do much good) outside it. Again, the Sacrament of Penance only makes sense within the broader context of a life of penance. Still, the question about sacramental confession remains. Why did our Lord give us this

Sacrament? The answer touches on the nature of man, sin, and the Church. First, human nature. As the Divine Physician, Jesus knows perfectly what our fallen human nature needs. Confession is suited to it. First, it answers our need for accountability. We know that human reason can easily become rationalisation. We can downplay certain sins, making them appear less grave than they actually are. In Confession an internal auditor examines our work and makes sure we haven't low-balled our sins. The opposite is also true. We can often exaggerate ("catastrophise") our situation and see our guilt as greater than it is. Again, the confessor's role is to help us see things clearly, so that we don't assume more guilt than we should. Such accountability brings about the formation of conscience, so that we think in deeper union with Christ and his Church. Further, the Sacrament of Confession answers our need to know that we are forgiven. The certainty that we desire isn't something that we can produce on our own. The Church teaches that peace is one of the effects of a good confession precisely because when we make a good confession we hear those words, "The Lord has freed you from your sins..." That statement is not wishful thinking or even a sincere hope. It's the guarantee of the Church to the penitent. Second, the social nature of sin. Sin is intensely personal. We are not guilty for one another's sins. But that doesn't mean sin doesn't have a social dimension. When we sin, we hurt not just ourselves but others as well. Every sin introduces a certain disorder into the human family. This is clear with certain sins, such as gossip or theft. But even the most interior sins cause this harm because we are so closely united. This applies especially in our relationship with brothers and sisters in the Church, which brings us to the last reason for Confession... The nature of the Church. Union with Christ is inextricably bound to union with the Church. We have no union with Christ except through the Church. The Eucharist – the source and summit of our faith – unites us not only with Christ but also with one another as his Body. So also, our sins harm our union not only with him but also with the Church. Logically, then, we need to be reconciled not only with Christ but also with his Body. For that reason, the priest in the confessional acts as a minister of Christ and a minister of the Church.

MASS SCHEDULE STARTING FROM 18TH MARCH 2023
SATURDAY 18TH MARCH MASS AT 6.00PM FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE PARISH

SUNDAY 19TH MARCH 11.00AM MASS KYLE (HEALING AND WELL BEING)

MONDAY 20TH MARCH ADORATION AT 9.00AM MASS AT 10AM STACEY KEMP (HEALING) AND MASS AT 6.00PM SOLEMNITY OF ST JOSEPH FOR ALL THOSE WHO PRAYED THE NOVENA TO ST JOSEPH AND THEIR FAMILY'S INTENTIONS

TUESDAY 21ST MARCH ADORATION AT 9.00AM MASS AT 10.00AM (HEALING OF ALL OUR SICK PARISH AND FAMILY MEMBERS)

WEDNESDAY 22ND MARCH ADORATION AT 9.00AM MASS AT 10.00AM MARGARET ROGERSON, RIP

THURSDAY 23RD MARCH MASS ADORATION AT 9.00AM MASS AT 10.00AM MARGARET RYAN (SPECIAL INTENTIONS)

FRIDAY 24TH MARCH ADORATION AT 9.00AM AND MASS AT 10.00AM SACHA BLANCHARD (INTENTIONS) STATIONS OF THE CROSS 10.30AM AND MASS AT 6.00PM STATIONS OF THE CROSS AT 6.30PM LISA AND CHRIS PALIN (HEALING AND WELL BEING)

SATURDAY 25TH MARCH MASS AT 6.00PM

SUNDAY 26TH MARCH MASS AT 11.00AM SOPHIA (HEALING AND WELL BEING)

YOU WERE ONCE DARKNESS, BUT NOW YOU ARE LIGHT IN THE LORD. Live as children of light, for light produces every kind of goodness and righteousness and truth” (Eph 5:8-9). Reconciliation is a theme throughout the Season of Lent, and one we don’t want to take for granted. I encourage everyone to partake of the sacrament of reconciliation during this season of lent and to not be afraid. I was reflecting upon some of Pope Francis’ addresses to the apostolic penitentiary as he was speaking about sacrament of reconciliation. People will often use the analogy of confession being like getting your clothes washed or going to the dry cleaners to get a stain removed. However, the sacrament is much more. Pope Francis refers to three expressions to help explain this sacrament: 1) to abandon oneself to Love, 2) to let oneself be transformed by Love, and 3) to correspond to Love. You can see that love is an essential part of the sacrament. “If it [sacrament] is functional, it is not how Jesus wants it to be” (Pope Francis Address, 12 March 2021). Let’s look at what Pope Francis is saying in regard to these expressions. To abandon oneself to Love. This is an act of faith to God. Faith is not simply some series of concepts or affirmations to check off, but is to be understood in a relationship. God calls you and you respond. Faith is that encounter with God and abandoning yourself in the arms of this Love. People don’t often like the idea of having to surrender, because then they are not in control. To be at peace with God requires a surrendering to God, an abandonment to Love. Otherwise people will abandon themselves to other things, whether it be pride, envy, wrath, sloth, avarice, gluttony or lust. That can take forms in many different ways of life, whether it means to stop going to Church, suffering with an addiction, worldly mentality, or many other ways the devil entices.

So, when going to confession, approach with faith. Abandon yourself to Love. To let oneself be transformed by Love. We know that mere adherence to the laws do not save us, and Matthew 23 is a good reminder of this. Law does not change a person, and you can see that with people continuing to break the law many times over. Some people will even say that laws are meant to be broken. There are laws that are just and there are unjust laws. How does an individual change? Love, which is God himself, is capable of renewing all things. The penitent who encounters this Love in the sacramental exchange allows himself to be transformed by Love, by Grace. To turn the heart of stone into a heart of flesh, this is the grace of God at work. So, when going to confession, allow your heart to be transformed. To correspond to Love. Following the previous two steps have as a consequence, the correspondence of love. To receive and accept the love of God, then becomes tangible in the life of the penitent in the works of mercy that follow. To accept the welcome of Love, then means you will be welcoming your neighbour. One who surrendered himself to Love cannot but then give that same Love to another. Recognising and accepting the forgiveness by God then leads to the forgiveness of their neighbour. I appreciate these words of Pope Francis as a recognition and reminder of the forgiveness we have received. Each and every one of us is a forgiven sinner. You are a forgiven sinner, placed at the service of others, so that they too may encounter that Love which has changed your life.

Please note on your calendars that on Tuesday, March 21st at 7:00pm at St Gregory’s Church, Salisbury, we will be having a deanery penance service with multiple priests available where you can receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. There will be opportunities for Confessions on Fridays during Lent at 7.00pm after the Mass at 6.00pm and The Stations of the Cross at 6.30pm apart from the regular Penance service from 5.00pm to 5.40pm on Saturdays. As we continue towards our Easter celebration, may we take full advantage of this beautiful sacrament which draws us closer to the Lord and have an encounter with divine forgiveness.

CHRIST THE KING CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Our parish has had a school, supporting parents in raising their children in the Catholic faith, since 1963. The school is an integral part of our parish and has just become part of The Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust and so has joined together with other Catholic schools in the Diocese. This exciting development will to help secure the long term future of the school for future generations of Catholic, and other, children - and we are very grateful to the governors who have helped the school to reach this stage. This new development provides the opportunity for new people to come forward and join the school’s governing body, to help lead the school on the next stage of its journey. *“To be a governor of a Catholic School is to be involved in the mission of the Church because our Catholic schools are a very important part of our work for young people in the Church.” (Cardinal Basil Hulme)* If you would like to be part of the school’s journey and help to shape the lives of our present and future children and so be involved in the mission of the Church, then now is the time to step forward and apply to be a Foundation Governor. Please complete a nomination form <https://schools.cliftondiocese.com/form-2> as soon as possible. If you have any queries or would like more details, please contact Bill McEntee, Governance Officer at Clifton Diocese via bill.mcintee@cliftondiocese.com or on 07710094976 – he would be delighted to hear from you!

PARISH LENTEN MISSION 2023 The Parish Lenten Series will be held on Tuesday, 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.

THE BIBLE: A DECLARATION OF LOVE. “If you want to seek the essential in the Bible, then seek nothing but God’s love. God’s love is present everywhere. Saint Augustine says that ‘the whole Bible can be summarised in these three words: God is love (1 Jn 4:8, 16)’. If you read the Bible without seeking to discover God’s personal love for you, then you are not reading the Bible as God’s word. God only speaks about love—he has nothing else to say.”

DEANERY RETREAT: 16 - 19 March 2023...Father Joseph leading a three-day residential retreat at the Franciscan Centre, Ladywell, Godalming exclusively for parishioners of the Salisbury Deanery....

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

DEANERY PENITENTIAL SERVICE which takes place next Tuesday 21st March at 7pm in St Gregory’s. It is very much my hope that you will be able to make use of this opportunity to join the deanery penance service.

EASTER FLOWERS (Second Collection)25/26 March In honour of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ our Church will hopefully be adorned with beautiful flowers, please do consider making a contribution. There will be second collection for the Easter Flowers next weekend. If you like to dedicate flowers in honour of departed loved ones or for special occasions such as birthday, anniversary or thanksgiving, please contact Ann Larke.

COME OUT OF THE DARKNESS In today’s gospel, we have our very familiar fourth Sunday of Lent story of the Man who was Born Blind. As they pass this man, the disciples confront one of the attitudes that they have been taught. If a person is diseased or impaired in any way, it was thought to be, a punishment from God for something that person or their parents did. Jesus clearly falsifies that belief, and makes clear the intention of God. The intention of God is that all might be made whole. The man who is born blind, is able to see again. What follows in the part of the Man Born Blind is what seems to be an ongoing challenge for each of us who are disciples of Jesus. Any of us who have come to know him and follow in his footsteps must all face the same dilemma that he did. Not only was he able to see, but he also was a visible reminder to the people of his time that assumptions about God and God’s will had to change, or they had to do away with Jesus. One or the other. There are a series of confrontations that are presented in this Gospel story. Each of those, whether it’s with the man himself or his parents, are attempting to get that person to distance themselves from Jesus, or to condemn him. The man himself doesn’t know who Jesus was, but he does know what he did. “I was blind, and now I can see.” Those confronting him want him to either condemn Jesus, question his character, or admit that he really wasn’t blind at all. Anything, except the fact that Jesus might be the Messiah, the one who was promised. Each of us who are attempting to be disciples of Jesus will experience that same confrontation brought to us by the people of our time. If we claim to be a disciple of Jesus, people will begin to question us and ask us if we really believe what we say we believe. They will push against the teachings of Jesus, as if they are unreal, or too much to ask of a human being. Each of us is given the temptation to distance ourselves from Jesus, or even in public to laugh at him and his teachings. Many of us take the more lukewarm approach, and simply don’t talk about him at all in public. What the Man Born Blind does is what we should do. We should give witness to what he has done in our lives, and not pretend to have every answer to every question, or some specific description of who he is, and why he does what he does. We simply need to give witness to the difference that Jesus has made in our life. In doing that, we should recognise that it will ostracise us from some people. It will also make clear who is still struggling with believing in Jesus. But it will put us out there as a public witness for Jesus and what he has done for us. How has Jesus opened your eyes to new dimensions in life or places in your mind and heart that need to be changed and healed? As you have grown in your discipleship, how has your relationship with Jesus changed your life? How have your eyes been opened to new horizons because the love of Jesus has set you free? Where is there still darkness within you that needs light shown up on it? Do you wish to see?

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. Bishop will avail this momentous opportunity to become acquainted with the reality of the current pastoral programs, and the overall functioning of the parish.

PALM SUNDAY in two weeks and Easter in three! We warmly invite you to join us for the most important events in human history and our lives. The beautiful liturgies will bring us closer to Jesus, our Saviour, and God.

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.

CONFIRMATION 2023 Confirmation in the Salisbury Deanery will be on 27 June this year and our programme will begin soon.

PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES: Applications are now open to travel with The Society of our Lady Of Lourdes on its annual Pilgrimage to Lourdes at the end of May and we would love you to join us! We are a ‘working pilgrimage’ that has been taking pilgrims who need medical assistance and support to travel to Lourdes for over a hundred years. Our VIPs stay in the Accueil Notre Dame, inside the Sanctuary where we can provide 24hr medical and personal care and support as needed. SOLL exist to minimise the barriers of finance and illness in making a Lourdes pilgrimage. We rely on volunteer Doctors, Nurses, Carers and helpers and there is a warm welcome and a role for all. We ask you to cover a daily shift, in a friendly team, to enable our Assisted Pilgrims to have a fantastic week. We also welcome ‘praying pilgrims’ who join in all of the services and events. This year we have some flights from Bournemouth available (for those who do not require our medical team) so it’s a great opportunity to come and see what Lourdes is all about and be of service for a week! For more details, please take a look at the SOLL website www.soll-lourdes.com or contact Sacha Blanchard on sacha@soll-lourdes.com or 07768 622880.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION AND THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS There will be Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction every weekday from Monday to Friday during Lent at 9:00 am prior to 10.00am Mass. The Stations of the Cross is held every Friday during Lent at 10.30am and 6.30pm. Mass on Friday will be celebrated both at 10.00am and 6.00pm during Lent

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 March after the Mass at 12.30pm

GRATITUDE VS. COMPLAINING. These excerpts from an article have helped me. “There will always be something to complain about. There will always be something to be grateful for. You get to choose what you focus on. And once you choose, it will have an effect on how you feel and how you see the world. Gratitude leads to joy. Gratitude not only leads to feeling good, gratitude feels good immediately. It may be hard to do when you’re dealing with loss and disappointment. But it is possible. And it will make you feel better. It starts with intention, and before you know it, you’re noticing more to be grateful for, and paying less attention, or not even noticing, things to complain about. Try this next time you’re feeling annoyed – instead of complaining, pause. Just pause. Then use that pause to shift your thoughts and think about one simple thing that you’re grateful for. Maybe it’s the shoes on your feet. Maybe it’s a special relationship. Maybe it’s the warm shower you took this morning. Maybe it’s a cup of coffee. [Maybe it is Jesus’ personal love for you.] When you focus on gratitude, you’ll notice that you feel good immediately. You will begin to see the world in a different light. A world where there’s less to complain about, and more to be grateful for.”

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. Book Now, the deadline is next Wednesday 22 March, please register your names on the list in the Narthex

ARE YOU THE REASON FOR SOMEONE'S SILENCE? People often become silent for a reason. They are either sad or deeply hurt. Everyone wants their opinion and ideas to be heard. Some people always disregard their partner's or loved ones' opinions. They made them feel that their suggestions, ideas or understanding of life is very little. When it happens too often, that person prefers to be silent rather than being belittled repeatedly. Pay attention when your loved one has become silent. They are usually carrying a lot inside their heart. Listen to them, respect their opinion and value their thoughts. Every person is worthy, and everyone's life experience is worth the consideration. Sometimes people become silent because they are made to feel their words have no worth.