



THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF CHRIST THE KING

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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.

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME-YEAR-B-2024

FROM THE DESK OF FATHER SAJI: ARE YOU A CURIOUS PERSON? There is a difference between being a curious person and a nosy one. Nosy people are interested in other peoples' business because it gives them a sense of power over that person, knowing information that they are not really supposed to know. Curious people seem to be led forward by wonder and awe, open to the adventure of what comes next and how might life be experienced in a deeper and more meaningful way. In the scriptures we have this weekend we find curiosity confusing and directing certain people being called by God. In one case, we have a person who is just learning how to listen to the voice of God, and sometimes gets confused about who it is that is speaking to him. It always helps in situations like that to have an older and wiser person who can lead you to decipher and discern Who it is that's calling you and whether that voice is worth listening to. When Jesus notices folks are becoming curious about him, he doesn't answer all those questions that they have, but he invites them to come and see for themselves. Nosy people won't usually do the extra work, but curious people will. I'm praying that as we enter into these short couple of weeks of ordinary time before we start Lent, you can exercise your wholesome curiosity and attempt to get to know Jesus even better than you do right now. We're in this season of the year where there is less sunshine and more cloudiness. Temperatures are cold and that tightens us up physically and sometimes emotionally. Things seem to be more drab than delightful, and we can get into a sense of lifelessness or boredom. Where does curiosity go at a time like this? We might not have all the new plants springing out of the ground and trees budding with their new blossoms. We might have more dead leaves on the ground than any living sprouts on the trees. But we are still capable of exercising our curiosity, not about the nature that God has created, but about God himself. The dormancy that we experience in nature ought to be able to create some curiosity within us. What happened to all that life that seemed to go underground? This might be a season of your life where God seems to be more quiet or disconnected from you or me. Does that create any curiosity in you? Does God take a vacation from us or do we take a vacation from God? In our relationships with other human beings, there are periods where we need to be more inventive or creative to keep our relationships alive and lively. It can be the same with Jesus. Sometimes it takes a greater concentration of time or consciousness. Sometimes it takes thinking less about ourselves and more about the other. Sometimes what used to bring life and breathe into a relationship seemed to work and we need to be creative about what gifts we bring forward to continue to give our best to the other. Could we honestly say the words of our relationship with God at this very moment are "Here am I Lord, I come to do your will." If we are not able to say that honestly right now, what would need to change so that that would be an honest response on our part. Are we curious enough about Jesus to see where he takes us for our next step? Do we trust Jesus enough to let him take the lead and for us to follow him wherever he will take us? Steps of trust along the way build deeper and deeper relationships of love. May each of us consciously choose those steps of trust in our relationships with Jesus and with each other.

This weekend the church returns to Ordinary Time as the Christmas Season has ended and church arts/environment go back to shades of green until Lent, which begins early this year on February 14 (Valentine's Day). The scripture readings this weekend for the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time bring to light the calling of Jesus' first disciples. In John's Gospel the call comes from the witness of another as John the Baptist brings Andrew and an unnamed disciple to Jesus. Like the Gospel, the first reading from the Book of Samuel illustrates a calling from God that is not received without the help of another. This week ponder some ways another person in your life has pointed the way to Christ for you. How did you respond? Have a great weekend and enjoy time together with family and friends. BE BLESSED AND BE A BLESSING

WHITE FLOWER APPEAL-2024 13/14 January-White Flower Appeal 2024-The Society for the protection of Unborn children (SPUC) will be holding its annual appeal this weekend. SPUC's vision is for a world where abortion is unthinkable. This year's appeal calls for the Government to end the pills-by-post DIY abortion policy. As well as ending the lives of precious babies, this policy lacks safeguards against illegal let-term abortions, and puts mothers at physical and psychological risk. 86percent of GPs are concerned that this scheme leaves women vulnerable to coerced abortion. Please be as generous as you can to help SPUC defend unborn babies and their mothers by highlighting this urgent crisis. There will be a retiring collection for the worthy of SPUC's White Flower Appeal this weekend.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON All the earth shall bow down before you, O God, and shall sing to you, shall sing your name, O Most High!

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Here I am, Lord! I come to do your will.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Alleluia, alleluia! Speak, Lord, your servant is listening: you have the message of eternal life. Alleluia!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON You have prepared a table before me, and how precious is the chalice that quenches my thirst.

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)

PARISH CONTRIBUTIONS AND GENEROSITY A big thank you for all your generous donations, which are greatly appreciated. If anyone would like to transfer to standing order or bank transfer, this would help to simplify our banking procedure. The Parish bank details are: Name: Christ the King Church, Amesbury, Bank: NatWest Account number 66286638 and Sort code-52-10-03. If you wish to remember the Parish in your Will, further information is available from the Parish Office or from Jeff Coy, our parish treasurer.

"LORD, GRACIOUSLY RESCUE ME! COME QUICKLY TO HELP ME, LORD!" (Ps 40:14) Welcome to Ordinary Time, as we continue our discipleship of Jesus and are reminded of the revelation of God through Him. There are thirty-three or thirty-four weeks throughout the year, within the season of Ordinary Time, in which no particular aspect of the mystery of Christ is celebrated, but rather the mystery of Christ himself is honoured in its fullness. Don't let the name of the season to make you think this time is bland or dull, but rather ordered time. We are invited to think about how the divine graces we receive can and should do in our ordinary life throughout the year. Think about how you live out your vocation in Christ each day. The week of Prayer for Christian Unity is from Jan. 18-25. The Pontifical Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity, the World Council of Churches, and the Christian Churches in Burkina Faso selected "You shall love the Lord your God... and your neighbour as yourself," from the Gospel of Luke 10:27. This theme highlights the call for charity, mercy, justice, and unity in inter-communal relations. Fr. James Loughran who is the Director for Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute speaks about the week of Christian Unity and says: "Much of the coordination of this ecumenical project was done by the community of Chemin Neuf, a French Catholic and ecumenical community of vowed and lay people, particularly through their local community in Burkina Faso, a country in the Sahel region of West Africa. Luke 10:25-37 tells the story of how Jesus is asked by a lawyer, "What must I do to inherit everlasting life?" and Jesus responds, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" The lawyer responds, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself." Then Jesus says to him, "You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live." But then in order to justify himself, the lawyer says, "And who is my neighbour?" which leads Jesus to tell the parable of the Good Samaritan." When Jesus is questioned on the path to eternal life, His answer is not only to observe the commandments, but to also imitate the love of God in giving of self to another. Let us always be aware of the good that God does in other people's lives and help nurture that life of grace.

I invite you to offer this prayer during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: We pray, O gracious Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, that we all may be one as you are one. In your community of complete unity, we have our beginning and our end. To you we pray, asking for the gift of visible unity among all who believe in your Christ. As we commemorate this Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, we are reminded by your Word that all human beings are our neighbours and that we are to love them like ourselves and in the same way we love you. Help us to overcome the barriers and divisions we have nurtured against your will. Grant to us, O Lord, a new Spirit of love and solidarity, that we may proclaim your good

news to all of creation. We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ, who with you and the Holy Spirit are one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

ORGANIST/PIANIST NEEDED Christ The King Church is in need of an organist and/or pianist who could fill-in as needed. If you would like to contribute to this most important ministry, please contact Father Saji Mathew.

IN MEMORIAM Please remember in your prayers those who recently died and for all the deceased members of our family and parish, the souls in purgatory and those who died in service of our country. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord. Amen. Please pray for God's grace for those who are ill: Please also pray for an increase in vocations, especially in our diocese and our country.

CONFESSIONS/SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION In the Sacrament of Penance, the love and mercy of the Lord Jesus is made manifest in the forgiveness of sins, thereby reconciling the penitent with God and with his Church. Confession is every Saturday from 5.00pm-5.40pm or by appointment.

REST IN PEACE May those who have died enter into the mercy of God and the joy of the Kingdom.

VISITS TO THE SICK If you cannot come to church because of illness, please be sure that we are notified so that we might minister to you either at home, hospital, or nursing home or in any care facility. Because of confidentiality issues, we cannot come to you unless requested to do so by you or your family.

NEW TO THE AREA. We look forward to personally meeting you. Please take time after Mass or whenever you may be present for parish activities to introduce yourself to the members of the parish and the parish priest.

NOT BEEN ACTIVE. If you are inactive in the practice of your Catholic faith, we encourage you to return. If you would like to speak with someone on the parish priest, please do not hesitate to contact the parish priest or any one of the parish team members

RECEIVING THE SACRAMENTS. If a previous marriage has kept you from receiving the Sacraments, we invite you to contact one of the priests or deacons. In most cases we can work with you toward a favourable solution so that you can again receive the Sacraments of the Church.

MASS SCHEDULE STARTING FROM 13TH JANUARY 2024

SATURDAY 13TH JANUARY MASS AT 6.00PM FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE PARISH

SUNDAY 14TH JANUARY MASS AT 11.00AM- MARIA AND JOHN COCKING (INTENTIONS)

MONDAY 15TH JANUARY ADORATION AT 9.00AM AND MASS AT 10.00AM PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS

TUESDAY 16TH JANUARY ADORATION AT 9.00AM AND MASS AT 10.00AM

WEDNESDAY 17TH JANUARY ADORATION AT 9.00AM AND MASS AT 10.00AM MAURA O' MAHONY (INTENTIONS)

THURSDAY 18TH JANUARY ADORATION AT 9.00AM AND MASS AT 10.00AM PRIVATE INTENTIONS

FRIDAY 19TH JANUARY ADORATION AT 9.00AM AND MASS AT 10.00AM HOLY SOULS

SATURDAY 20TH JANUARY MASS AT 6.00PM JOHN COCKRELL (INTENTIONS)

SUNDAY 21ST JANUARY MASS AT 11.00AM PRO POPULO

ALL GOD’S CHILDREN Two people were chatting at a cocktail party when a woman asked a young man about the way he makes a living. The young man responded, “I am a paratrooper.” The woman went on to say that it must be scary to be a parachute jumper, the man replied, “Well, it does have its frightening moments.” “Tell me about your most terrible experience” said the woman. “Well,” said the paratrooper, “I think it was the time when I came down on a lawn where there was a sign which read, ‘Keep off the Grass.’” “This Thursday, January 18 initiates a Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. For many centuries there was tremendous diversion upon all religious traditions that communicated to those of other faiths to “Keep off our Grass.” Throughout the last century there has been a higher level of respect for those of all Christian traditions toward each other with a desire to promote unity that bonds all people in Christ; hence the “Keep of the Grass” sign has been taken away. This year’s theme for Christian Unity Week comes from Luke 10:27, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your strength and with your mind, and your neighbour as yourself.” The theme is rich in charity, mercy, justice and unity that invites people of all faiths to “live the golden rule.” The theme comes from combined efforts of the Pontifical Dicastery for promoting Christian Unity, the World Council of Churches and the Christian Churches of Burkina Faso, a country in the Sahel region of West Africa. Christian Unity Week presents ways people experience God through acceptance of others aware that the prophets repeatedly reminded Israel that their covenant with God demanded relationships to be characterised by integrity, compassion and lack of prejudice. The seven days, which concludes on Thursday, January 25, welcomes us to bond with people of different faiths letting go of personal prejudices; and, work to mend racial, ethnic and religious divisions throughout the world. Some of the greatest disputes, wars, and quarrels developed due to the lack of tolerance toward people who take different paths to express belief in God. Although Christians are called to discover unity in Christ; throughout western civilisation, religion has been used by some for short-sighted political ends, or to promote violence rather than search for mutual understanding within the dominant religions. In most cases, these individuals or groups of people live with the conviction that they are “right” whenever issues surface about religion, which engenders lack of respect for the convictions of others.

If religion instils God’s love into an individual, it is a positive experience; yet people are not compelled to agree with those in other faiths on issues where there are strong opposing viewpoints, but only to respect the rights, opinions, and lifestyles of others. This leads to sensitivity to the beliefs of others, and with appreciation toward those differences which steers a believer to demonstrate a personal example of good will in the same way that people of our faith want others to respect us a Catholic Christians. This guides us to show respect to others even when it appears difficult. Verbal slurs and off colour comments to people of different religions, races, economic backgrounds, or political affiliations often set sub-par examples for children to imitate. Unfortunately, there are some who do these things so naturally without thought that remarks, emails, and the use of social media may allude to personal prejudices. Forgotten is the sensitivity that must be exhibited aware that bigotry is not funny or excusable. Even in faith communities there are contrasting theological viewpoints that give birth to walls of controversy that cluster people around an issue or interpretation that renders division. As Christian Churches take flight in the annual celebration of Christian Unity Week, it is advantageous to use time to step forward and ponder the good among all faiths that lead people closer to God. Faith in God is not meant to change others, but to change ourselves to be more lovable, kindhearted, tolerant, and open

CHRIST THE KING 200 CLUB- NEW MEMBERS ARE VERY WELCOME! The 200 Club was set up over ten years ago, 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 2023 we had 93 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, posted, or handed in to the school office, clearly marked in an envelope. 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

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION: First Holy Communion is a wonderful moment in a child’s life and represents a sign of growth in the knowledge and love of God for each and every child. Parents who bring their child or children for First Holy Communion are fulfilling the vow they made publicly at their child’s baptism some years before to be the “first and best teachers of their child in the ways of faith”. Now they are more actively fulfilling this vow. The celebration of First Holy Communion each year is primarily a Parish Community Celebration. There is great expectation that the family are full practising members of the community and that they regularly come to Mass. On this understanding, the parish will provide all the necessary help to parents and children, particularly those children not attending Catholic schools. The support from parents for this and other elements of the course cannot be emphasised enough. No child will be denied First Holy Communion; however, children who miss two or at most three sessions will have missed key catechesis. In such cases and after discussion with catechists and parents, the parish priest may remove a child from the course and invite parents to reapply for the following year. Sports events, parties and other such competing attractions must come second to First Holy Communion preparation and the regular attendance of Mass during the First Holy Communion year. **First Communion Class Schedule: 28th January at 12.30pm, Sunday 4th February at 12.30pm Sunday 11th February at 12.30pm Sunday 3rd March at 12.30pm Sunday 10th March at 12.30pm Sunday 17th March at 12.30pm Sunday 14th April at 12.30pm Sunday 21st April, Sunday 28th April at 12.30pm Sunday 5th May at 12.30pm and Sunday 12th May at 12.30pm **First Holy Communion Mass on Sunday 19th May at 9.00am****

CHILD STARTING SCHOOL NEXT YEAR? If you have a child born between 1 September 2019 and 31 August 2020, then now is the time to apply for a place at a primary school for admission from September 2024 onwards. You must complete an application form available from Wiltshire Council at <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/article/1657/> Apply-for-a-school-place. If your child has been baptised and you are applying for a Catholic school, you must also provide a copy of the baptism certificate to the school. Closing date of 15 January 2024.

JOURNEY IN FAITH: This is a programme for adults who are interested in Christianity but who are not confirmed Catholics. The next meeting is on Sunday 21 January at 4.30pm in the Parish Rooms next to St Osmund’s Church on Exeter Street. For more on this programme please visit ‘Exploring Your Faith’

SAY YES TO LIFE Our liturgy invites us to review personal attitudes toward human life; and, give recognition to the value of life from conception until natural death. Prayerful reflection on issues involving human life challenge us to ponder the roads we travel to nurture God’s creation with honour and reverence in that it is so easy to devalue human life. I often discover that the devaluation of life often occurs during unforeseen incidents that may erupt within a day. As Christians we are called to promote a culture of life so that future generations come into a world where life is loved and defended at all costs. A healthy starting point consists of giving time and encouragement to individuals who suffer from illness, or through assistance to children who are unwanted by parents. These situations are so visible to us, but derive from words in the Gospel to love our neighbour as ourselves. If we cannot love lives visible to us, it becomes difficult to love lives we cannot see. There are countless traps that some fall victim to in seeking to respect human life; I believe most sins committed against life are unintentional; but, stem from fear or an unhealthy self image. Unfortunately, many proclaim to respect life in one or two dimensions; but are blind to daily situations that erupt at home, work, school, or the neighbourhood that present challenges to show respect for another life. The internet has become a means that some use to foster disrespect toward life through the practice of internet pornography. This has captivated many as it leads to addictive habits and behaviour that produces a vineyard of wild grapes of selfishness and false pleasures. Surfing the internet for pornographic websites or chats with strangers about intimate secrets easily becomes a destructive force in life. Forgetful to these individuals is the beauty of St. Pope John Paul II’s encyclical, *Evangelium Vitae* (The Gospel of Life), which sheds light for all to see God’s image in all human beings. In striving to generate a culture of life, a reflection on such issues as abortion, death penalty, generic enhancement, AIDS, the terminally ill, labour practices, political candidates, women’s rights, foreign cultures, non Christian religions, and the freedom to die with dignity must be examined. In addition, sometimes little attention is given to the frequent sins committed against life through speech, neglect, silence, and education. Education that is infused with values and virtues is a window that enriches many with newfound aspiration to defend life at the risk of a promotion in a career or personal goal. Support for those living in crisis pregnancy centres, or financial donations to those who assist unwed, pregnant women must also be reinforced. As a society, the attitudes, laws and approach to respect life issues will create a future for families that our nation will inherit. In his address on June 16, 2013, Pope Francis declared, “Let us say, “Yes” to life and not death.” Here, Pope Francis referenced the scriptures to make mention of an assortment of ways that God bestows life by stating, “all too often people do not choose life, they do not accept the ‘Gospel of Life’ but let themselves be led by ideologies and ways of thinking that block life, that do not respect life, because they are dictated by selfishness, self-interest, profit, power and pleasure. And not by love, and concern for the good of others...the Living God is replaced by fleeting human idols which offer the intoxication of a flash of freedom, but in the end brings new forms of slavery and death.” As a parish, let us make strides toward the creation of a culture of life that begins with our daily routines, which sets in motion a tone to generate a harvest of respect for all who cherish our love.

LENTEN RETREAT FROM THE DESERT TO THE MOUNTAIN: 22-25 FEBRUARY Following the wonderful and highly successful retreat last year, the deanery will be returning to the Franciscan Centre near Godalming for a retreat to kick-start your Lenten experience so that enter the Easter season with a renewed sense of faith and personal mission. If you are interested in learning more, please contact the Parish Office at Salisbury and put your name down to receive the information pack. There will be 25-30 places available. The cost per person is about £250-£300. If you cannot go, but would like to contribute to the costs to enable someone else to go who otherwise would not be able to afford it, why not make this part of your Lenten almsgiving?

DEAR PARISHIONERS, Wednesday, January 17, is the Memorial of St. Anthony – often called St. Anthony the Hermit or St. Anthony of Egypt or St. Anthony of the Desert or St. Anthony the Great. He is accounted the most well-known of the Desert Fathers. The Desert Fathers were Christian ascetics who withdrew to the deserts of Egypt, Syria, or Palestine to pursue lives of undistracted prayer and penance. Much of what we know of them we read in a parchment collection from the 5th century: Sayings of the Desert Fathers. This Anthony has been traditionally regarded as among the founders of Christian monasticism. However, there were many Christian hermits who preceded him, living lives of seclusion. Anthony was born in Egypt around 251 of devout parents who died while he was still a young man. (Much of what we know about his life comes from a biography, *The Life of Anthony*, written around 360 by Athanasius of Alexandria, who knew him personally.)

We are told that when he heard the words of Jesus, “If you will be perfect, go and sell what you have and give to the poor. Then you will have treasure in heaven.” (Matt. 19:21), he followed the Lord’s injunction, giving away all he had, and fleeing from all the turmoil of the world, devoted himself to a life of solitude in the desert. When he first went into the desert of Upper Egypt, he studied the writings of the Desert Fathers, to ground himself in their spirituality. For his first five years as a hermit, he apprenticed himself as a disciple of an experienced monk. After those years, he lived alone and practised strict self-denial. He ate only bread, salt, and water, abstaining from meat or wine. He ate at most once a day and sometimes fasted through two or four days. His days were spent in deep prayer and absolute solitude. He was said to be the target of Satanic assaults on his person from grotesque demons and temptations to sloth and lust. Solitude was no sanctuary for him. However, he did not retire entirely from the public order. When necessary, he left the desert to raise his voice in defence of orthodoxy of the Catholic faith. Along with Athanasius, he was vocal in his rejection of the Arian heresy, which claimed that Jesus was the firstborn of creation but not consubstantial with the Father – i.e., not divine. His fame grew among the nearby Christians. Young men came to join him, living in huts and caves near Anthony’s mountain retreat. At first, he refused to receive them, maintaining his solitude, but eventually he began to instruct them. They grew into a community of monks. To this day, there still exist such communities in the Sinai and the Judean Desert. (Overlooking the city of Jericho, there are caves in the jagged mountains in which hermits still live. Their food is lowered down to them in baskets on ropes. There is a monastery of Mar Saba where St. John Damascene is buried, between Bethlehem and the Dead Sea. It was founded in the late 5th century and has been a place of prayer for monks ever since.

Some of the sayings of Anthony are worthy of our consideration: If we make every effort to avoid death of the body, still more should it be our endeavour to avoid death of the soul. There is no obstacle for a man who wants to be saved other than negligence and laziness of soul. Men are often called intelligent wrongly. Intelligent men are not those who are erudite in the sayings and books of the wise men of old, but those who have an intelligent soul and can discriminate between good and evil. They avoid what is sinful and harms the soul; and with deep gratitude to God they resolutely adhere by dint of practice to what is good and benefits the soul. These men alone should truly be called intelligent.” Whoever has not experienced temptation cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Without temptations no-one can be saved. Anthony died at the age of 105.

2024 – THE YEAR OF PRAYER: Pope Francis has also called on all Catholics to spend this year deepening their prayer lives. Our Bishops’ Conference will be producing resources for the preparatory year of prayer, focusing on the Our Father, as well as resources about Jubilee in the Catholic Church.