



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.

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME—YEAR-B-2024

FROM THE DESK OF FATHER SAJI: TEACH ME YOUR WAYS Most of us have been blessed along the way with certain individuals or groups of people who have mentored us well. They have taught us the right and wrong, and how to make the choices that bring about the most good. They've taught us about manners and etiquette, appropriate words to use in certain circumstances and ways to communicate with different sorts of people in different sorts of situations. We have been truly blessed to have wise and learned teachers along the way. I'd like to suggest that we take a very humble approach to the scriptures this weekend and take the invitation from them to come to Jesus and let him teach us the way. Since most of us have had a good dose of Christianity throughout our lives, if we're not careful, we might begin to believe that we know all there is to know about what it means to follow Jesus. We might've even memorised the Ten Commandments and the Eight Beatitudes. We might've even memorised some scriptures. Most of us are able to tell a story or two from the life of Jesus and even the moral of the story that we're telling. But are we still open to allowing Jesus to teach us an even deeper way of following him? There were several recurring themes that seemed to come out whenever people would request Jesus and his teachings. It usually had something to do with repentance and conversion. He also had a lot to say, and teach about our relationships with those who are broken or lowly. He taught us about the journey of discipleship, how it is never finished and never perfected. I wonder if we're still willing to learn more and more in each of those three areas? Instead of settling for being satisfied with fulfilling the Ten Commandments, are we looking for deeper ways to live, not just the Ten Commandments, but the two great Commandments of love of God and love of neighbour? Can we continue to grow in our sense of who our neighbour is? Are we willing to let Jesus teach us about what it really means to love our enemies and forgive those who hate us? Does he really want me to work with every ounce of my being, so that the unity of all God's people might come to be? Am I willing to let him teach me how to do that? One level of teaching will lead to just another level. In order to love, we have to repent and allow our hearts to be converted again and again. We need to acknowledge over and over again our own sinfulness, instead of always pointing out the sins of others. He will teach us, if we allow him to see our own faults and failings, to become more conscious of them, and more conscious of the consequences of our choosing to do them again and again. To let Jesus teach us means that we have to acknowledge that we are not finished yet, and not satisfied with where our lives are at this point. It doesn't mean we have to condemn ourselves or put down the effort that we have put into our lives so far. It's simply means that we must acknowledge that Jesus has deeper places to lead us to his call as disciples, much more purely and clearly. Just as Jesus walked along the sea of Galilee and called his disciples by name, imagine him walking down your street, knocking on your door and calling you by name. That is how personal this gets. Our response can be just as personal. Will we hear him call our name and turn our back and pretend as if we don't hear him? Will we allow our uncertainty and insecurity about where he will take us to keep us from responding to his call? We could not ask for a greater teacher. What is it that is holding us back from saying yes?

Today begins a week of prayer for Christian Unity which lasts until January 25. It renders the opportunity to bring forth through works and prayer ways that bond all believers in Christ accepting the traditions of all the faithful. Also, next Monday, January 22, the church highlights a day of prayer for the legal protection of unborn children, which promotes a consistent ethic of life for all. The day presents the opportunity to ponder new concrete actions that each of us can take to affirm life. This weekend's scripture readings once again focus on Christ's calling us to specific ministries and ways of life. In most cases "calling passages" from the scriptures centre on what we are being called to do; however, sometimes a calling passage necessitates being called away from something. This weekend ponder something God may be calling you away from in your life? What new calling may be emerging in its place? Have a terrific weekend; stay warm and safe. BE BLESSED AND BE A BLESSING

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON O sing a new song to the Lord; sing to the Lord, all the earth. In his presence are majesty and splendour, strength and honour in his holy place.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Lord, make me know your ways.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Alleluia, alleluia! The kingdom of God is close at hand; believe the Good News. Alleluia!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON Look toward the Lord and be radiant; let your faces not be abashed.

The more ardent the love for the Eucharist in the hearts of the Christian people, the more clearly will they recognise the goal of all mission: to bring Christ to others. Not just a theory or a way of life inspired by Christ, but the gift of his very person. Anyone who has not shared the truth of love with his brothers and sisters has not yet given enough. **Pope Benedict XVI**

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.

ON THE WAY-CATECHESIS ON THE EUCHARIST: Medicine or Reward? What for millennia was unremarkable has today become a point of controversy, namely that the Church places certain restrictions on the reception of Holy Communion. Throughout her history, the Church has never had "open communion." She has always articulated the requirements that inhere in the Eucharist itself. She has also established certain conditions (e.g., the Eucharistic fast) to encourage greater devotion in the faithful. The Church's Code of Canon Law enshrines this theology in two canons (laws). One has to do with the recipient of Holy Communion and states that a person conscious of grave sin should not receive Communion without previous sacramental confession (see c. 916). Another canon has to do with the minister of Holy Communion and states that he should not admit to Holy Communion "Those who have been excommunicated or interdicted after the imposition or declaration of the penalty and others obstinately persevering in manifest grave sin" (c. 915). So, in the vast majority of cases, the Church leaves it to the individuals' discernment whether to receive Communion. But in certain cases — specifically, for those "obstinately persevering in manifest grave sin" — it is the Church's ministers who are not to give Communion. That the Church would withhold Communion from anyone has become a source of scandal for some. But nobody really believes in "open communion." We all draw the line somewhere. If a known and unrepentant murderer — a mafioso, perhaps — were to receive Communion, we would be rightly scandalised. We would recognise that for a dealer of death to receive the Lord of Life is a serious contradiction — a sacrilege, in fact. We would also be rightly scandalised by the bishop or priest who justified giving Communion to such a man. Some years ago, Pope Francis made headlines when he declared that members of the Mafia are "excommunicated." Now, he didn't mean that in the technical, canonical sense of "excommunicated." He meant that their actions set them against the Communion of the Church and thus they shouldn't receive Communion. He was making precisely this unpopular point, that certain choices are incompatible with the Eucharist. Now, that's an extreme case. One doesn't need to be a mafioso, or a murderer of any stripe, to commit mortal sin. Still, some argue that since the Eucharist is medicine for the weak and not a reward for the strong, we shouldn't place restrictions on it. Some have gone so far as to argue that Communion should be given most of all to those who need the medicine most. Which is an absurd argument, as it would mean that the unrepentant murderer not only may but should be given Communion. It's true that the Eucharist is not a reward for the strong but medicine for the weak. We acknowledge that at every Mass when we confess, "Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed." But medicine cannot be given or received indiscriminately. (Which is why your doctor asks you if you're allergic to any medicine.) Sometimes a person is so sick and

so weak that his body can't endure the strength of the medicine administered. There must be a minimal level of health for someone to receive medicine. So also the soul must possess that minimal level of health that we call the "state of grace" in order to receive Holy Communion. The reception of Holy Communion doesn't require the heights of sanctity. But it does require that we not end our union with Christ by way of mortal sin. We receive our Lord not because we are saints but to become saints.

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 20TH JANUARY 2024

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

SUNDAY 21ST JANUARY MASS AT 11.00AM FOR JO CHAMBERS FAMILY (INTENTIONS)

MONDAY 22ND JANUARY ADORATION AT 9.00AM AND MASS AT 10.00AM PRO-LIFE MOVEMENTS (VICTIMS OF ABORTION)

TUESDAY 23RD JANUARY ADORATION AT 9.00AM AND MASS AT 10.00AM JOHN BUCKLEY (BIRTHDAY INTENTIONS)

WEDNESDAY 24TH JANUARY ADORATION AT 9.00AM AND MASS AT 10.00AM ST FRANCIS DE SALES BARBARA FINNAN, RIP

THURSDAY 25TH JANUARY ADORATION AT 9.00AM AND MASS AT 10.00AM PRIVATE INTENTIONS

FRIDAY 26TH JANUARY ADORATION AT 9.00AM AND MASS AT 10.00AM VOCATIONS TO THE PRIESTHOOD AND RELIGIOUS LIFE

SATURDAY 27TH JANUARY MASS AT 6.00PM PRO POPULO

SUNDAY 28TH JANUARY MASS AT 11.00AM

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE FOR US TO “TRAVEL LIGHT” IN 2024? I suggest that we begin by letting go of some of the baggage we carry with us through life. First, let’s drop the grudges we hold against people. Many of us can hold a grudge for a long time. In some cases we might even forget the source of the grudge, yet we still cling to it. How much lighter we will feel if we let go of the grudge and allow ourselves to move on from the original upset. Second, let’s drop our feelings of envy toward others. Too frequently we can fixate on what we don’t have rather than be grateful for what we do have. Instead we may concentrate on the blessings other people seem to have and lose sight of the blessings God has given us. Let’s let go of envy and be more mindful of the presence and action of God in our lives.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS: LEARN. SERVE. LEAD. SUCCEED. A priest was walking along a corridor of a Catholic School near the preschool section when a group of four year olds were trotting by on their way to lunch. One little lad stopped and looked at him in his clerical clothes and asked, “Why do you dress funny?” The priest told the child that this is the uniform of a priest. The boy pointed to the priest’s plastic collar tab and asked, “Do you have a scratch (bruise/cut)?” The priest was perplexed until he realised that to the boy the collar tab looked like a white band aid. So the priest took off the collar tab and handed it to the boy to show him. On the back of the tab the boy sees raised letters giving the name of the manufacturer. The little guy felt the letters, and the priest asked, “Do you know what these words say?” “Yes I do”, said the lad who was not old enough to read. Peering intently at the letters he said, “Kills ticks and fleas up to six months.” Catholic Schools throughout the country celebrate with activities and events to promote Catholic education throughout the course of each year. The life of a priest in a parish with a Catholic School differs than ministry in a parish without a School as time and effort is inserted in the progress of a school; yet a Catholic School engenders tremendous joy for a priest knowing that he plays a part in the academic, spiritual and social growth of the children. A priest also receives much joy from the children as he observes them grow and mature throughout their years of education. In my many years at different parishes with Schools in the vicinity, it is heartwarming to see the way students that welcomed me have attained success in Secondary Schools, colleges, and careers. Catholic Schools are meant to Learn, Serve, Lead and Succeed.” If you walk into any Catholic School it is evident that something special is happening through the environment within the building. Catholic Schools maintain values that have stood the test of time, yet have embraced the 21st century with modernised systems of technology, which prepares a student for higher levels of education as it integrates technology into the classroom. The school has built a quality education in the lives of many generations of people which makes it so attractive to families. Our Catholic Schools instil Christian values into students in a small, safe, and structured environment that encourages students to be critical thinkers, socially capable, spiritually sensitive, and culturally aware individuals.

Recently I came across a person who went to a prestigious Catholic School. So often in conversation she pointed out to me her love for the Catholic School with particular attention to faculty members who instilled discipline and leadership skills into her life. Catholic Schools provide a force of well-trained, well-prepared teachers as well as administrators and support staff who enhance the social, physical, emotional and spiritual development of our students. The faculty and administration of Catholic Schools are top-notch as our school embraces a Catholic Identity rooted in Gospel values; therefore the school is such an important component of the parish. I have discovered that my own presence with the children as well as the presence of others add enormous strength to the school as well as its Catholic Identity. Next week I plan to touch upon reasons that families send children to Catholic Schools.

GOD’S PRECIOUS GIFT On Monday, January 22, the church invites us to observe a day of prayer for the full restoration of the guarantee of the right to life, and penance against the violations of the dignity of the human person. The church uses this day to remember victims of abortion, and for those who have had abortions as well as prayer for the leaders of the nations to be cognisant of the needs of the born and unborn establishing laws to protect all capacities of human life which leads us to remember that all life is sacred. Cardinal Sean Patrick Malley, O.F.M, Cap Archbishop of Boston once stated, “The cause of life will rise and fall not because of scientific knowledge or political strategies, the cause of life will be decided because of our courage and love, or by our lack of courage and love.” January 22 poses an opportunity to ponder personal beliefs on human life, and establish an honest approach to positions that are taken incorporating all components of human life from conception to natural death since unknowingly many people devalue or dehumanize human life in ways oblivious to themselves. Some of these include disrespectful comments toward minorities or those lacking proper education, clothing, housing or food. There may also be lack of care toward elderly people who are often ignored or forgotten by family so that nobody has to contend with their presence or bothersome moments. The promotion of human life is the backbone of Catholic morality; therefore, enormous responsibility is attached to points of debate that engender an honourable quality of life for the born and unborn. The church instils countless reminders of lifestyles, which respect human life that includes many unwanted migrants who have come into our developed nations.

The Gospels put forward the message that the most significant teaching of Jesus is the sacredness of human life in that Jesus never hands down the death penalty, or speaks harshly to a sinner or outsider such as the Samaritans, but leads us to believe that violence begets more violence, and love begets love. Jesus uplifts and defends unmarried women aware of the complexities that may exist in his society in raising a child under peculiar circumstances that may have existed prior to or after a birth. Letting go of anger, hatred, revenge, and bitterness towards another due to harsh, past experiences generate an opportunity to demonstrate greater respect towards human life. Respect for life should remind us that we were created to give glory to God with everyone as an equal to ourselves with the ultimate question whether we live only for personal desires or for God. In a speech to diplomats on January 13, 2014 Pope Francis declared, “Unfortunately, what is thrown away is not only food and dispensable objects, but often human beings, themselves, who are discarded as “unnecessary.” For example, it is frightful even to think there are children, victims of abortion, who will never see the light of a day; children being used as soldiers, abused, killed in armed conflicts; and children being bought and sold in that terrible form of modern slavery which is human trafficking, which is a crime against humanity.” This week give thanks for your life aware that all life is a gift from God, and that the journey through life is to accept ourselves with all our flaws and imperfections that make us human. People who maintain a healthy attitude toward human life colour every aspect of reality as well as their image of God. People who see themselves to be losers act as losers and often devalue the lives of others. People who are happy with themselves strive to uplift the lives of all, and work to encourage others to see God’s gift of life so that respect is given to all. This gives witness to the inward beauty expressed in the voice, attitude and good manners of others that eases the burdens of another so that the voice of God is heard in all people.

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’

LENTE 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?

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.

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION (EMs/Eucharistic Ministers) assist the priests at Mass with the ministering of Holy Communion to the assembly. EMs to the Sick provide comfort, prayer and Holy Communion to those who are ill with either hospital or home visits. This is an extremely rewarding Ministry and our homebound parishioners enjoy the visits and conversation! If you are interested in learning more about becoming an EM at Mass or to the sick, contact Father Saji or the Parish Office for more information. We will contact our ministry heads who will contact you. Training sessions are held periodically. The next Training day for those who wish to be extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion will be on Saturday 3rd February at 3.00pm at St Gregory’s church, Salisbury.

“MAKE KNOWN TO ME YOUR WAYS, LORD; TEACH ME YOUR PATHS” (Ps 25:4) The cold weather has arrived, but this will not deter us from our pilgrim journey to heaven! In 2019, Pope Francis instituted in his letter *Aperuit Illis* (He opened to them) that the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time would be celebrated as Sunday of the Word of God. The theme for this year is taken from the Gospel of St John: “Remain in my Word” (John 8,31). This Sunday gives us the opportunity to better learn the Word of God and engage God in scriptural prayer. Sometimes people in their excitement to read the Bible will try to do so from cover to cover. This is not meant to be how it is read, but rather a dialogue with God. Allow me to share some word with you from Pope Francis, “The Catechism affirms that: ‘prayer should accompany the reading of Sacred Scripture’ — the Bible cannot be read like a novel — “so that a dialogue takes place between God and man” (par. 2653). This is where prayer leads you, because it is a dialogue with God. That Bible verse was written for me too, centuries and centuries ago, to bring me a word of God. It was written for each of us. This experience happens to all believers: a passage from Scripture, heard many times already, unexpectedly speaks to me one day, and enlightens a situation that I am living. But it is necessary that I be present on that day for that appointment with the Word. That I be there, listening to the Word. Every day God passes and sows a seed in the soil of our lives. We do not know whether today he will find dry ground, brambles, or good soil that will make that seed grow (cf. Mk. 4: 3-9). That they become for us the living Word of God depends on us, on our prayer, on the open heart with which we approach the Scriptures. God passes continually through Scripture. And here I return to what I said last week, to what Saint Augustine said: ‘I am afraid of God when he passes’. Why is he afraid? That he will not listen to him. That he will not realise that he is the Lord” (General Audience, Jan. 27, 2021).

I encourage you to think about how you welcome the Word of God into your daily life. Do you carry the Word with you? Some people will carry a small gospel in their pocket or bag so they can read it throughout the day. You can easily download the Bible onto your mobile phone to consult it at any time. Perhaps spend some time in the Church, or visiting another Church, and looking at the art, see if you can identify the biblical episodes that this art tells. Or perhaps when you pray the rosary, to give a greater biblical foundation and depth to your meditation of the decade, after you announce the mystery, follow it with a corresponding biblical passage. These are just some ideas to consider as you spend time with Scripture that you may always recognise the Lord when He is near. Allow me to conclude with a quote from the Catechism, “The spiritual writers, paraphrasing Matthew 7:7, summarise in this way the dispositions of the heart nourished by the word of God in prayer ‘Seek in reading and you will find in meditating; knock in mental prayer and it will be opened to you by contemplation.’” (par. 2654).