



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.

FROM THE DESK OF FATHER SAJI-RISING WITH CHRIST FROM OUR SPIRITUAL PARALYSIS AND SLUMBER Our scriptures this weekend are filled with the reality of dying and rising, with a special focus on rising. We should not misunderstand what the scriptures are telling us. We will all die. Even when Jesus was raising Lazarus from the dead, he made sure that his sisters understood that he would die again. It was so important for Jesus, especially when performing his miracles, to make sure that people were not getting hooked on the fabulous, sensational and incredible events of his life. Those might've been the things that got people to be with him, but he did not want them to begin to believe that somehow they would be raised up above other people and not have to suffer the same consequences of life that others do. This is a heads up for us to make sure that our faith is not based on whether we see signs or wonders. We have to make sure that we're not basing our faith and life on always getting what we want. We have to make sure that we're not making God in our own image, blessing good people and hurting bad people. We need to take the lesson of this weekend's scriptures so that we can live day by day in faith and hope. When Jesus wasn't there right away to mourn with Martha and Mary, they became frustrated with him and began to question his friendship with Lazarus and with them. They wanted to know why he just didn't drop everything and come to them, expecting him to be the magician, willing to erase the effects of being a human being. This focus on the universal experience of death for each human being might seem depressing, but St. Paul's Letter to the Romans gives us the source of our hope. It reminds us that the same Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in each of us, and the one who raised Jesus from the dead will raise our mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwells in us. How's that for a promise? The full mystery of faith is the guideline for our life. It is not just living or dying or rising, but a continual cycle of that throughout our entire lives into eternity. Our hope promises that the Spirit of God resides in us through all of those experiences. The scripture instructs us that anybody is able to live with hope when everything is going their way. What really proves our faith is how we live with the ordinary and the suffering. Are you still able to celebrate your ordinary life? Can you celebrate the predictability and the habitual nature of your own life? Or do you see that as a reason that God is not present to you because it gets boring sometimes? Are you able to live in the ordinary, and not need to keep boosting the pizzazz of your life? Can you truly be happy, choose to be happy, living an ordinary life with nothing stupendous happening? Ordinary life is the majority of our life, and if we can't live in hope during that time, how could we ever live in suffering and be faithful? For those among us who are in the midst of suffering and loss, I would ask you to hold on to the scripture that reminds us that even though the outside doesn't look like it, the Spirit of God is living within us, dwelling within us, and Jesus is being faithful to us. Jesus is our companion, especially in those times since he knows suffering and hardship. He didn't ask everybody else to do that and then excuse himself from that part of humanity. He chose that as an act of love toward us. Enjoy the company of Martha, Mary and Lazarus, seeing ourselves in each of them as we grapple with and embrace more deeply, the Paschal Mystery of living, dying and rising.

This Sunday is St. Patrick Day. Although it is not celebrated liturgically on Sunday since the church celebrates the 5th Sunday in Lent. Also, next Tuesday, March 19 is the Feast of St. Joseph, husband of Mary which is celebrated at 10:00 am and 6.30pm. Next Wednesday, March 20 is known as an International Day of Happiness. This year's theme is: "Happier Together." It emphasises the importance of connection and being part of something greater for lasting happiness. In times of uncertainty and conflict, fostering meaningful relationships and contributing to a kinder world can bring joy and fulfilment. It also reminds us that "being happy" is a human right and worth celebrating. This weekend's Gospel provides us with the 7th Sign in John's Gospel, which is considered Jesus' greatest sign, the Raising of Lazarus. If you ever wish to educate yourself and extract much more about the Raising of Lazarus, I recommend a book by Rev. Jim Martin SJ titled, "Come Forth, The Promise of Jesus' Greatest Miracle." The book generates incredible details about Jesus' greatest miracle through the author's visits to the tomb as well as personal reflection and scholarly illustrations from many theologians. As per this Sunday's Gospel that pertains to Lazarus coming out of the tomb, give thought to an area in your life that is hiding in a tomb, which holds you back through fear from becoming the person God calls you to be. BE BLESSED AND BE A BLESSING. Have a great St. Patrick Day weekend.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM A pure heart create for me, O God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God! If a man serves me, says the Lord, he must follow me; wherever I am, my servant will be there too. Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON Many will come from east and west and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob at the feast in the kingdom of heaven, says the Lord.

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 Treasurer or office

A CLEAN HEART CREATE FOR ME, GOD; renew within me a steadfast spirit. (Ps 51:12). **Come and be healed!** There will be a communal penance service this Wednesday, March 20th at 7:00pm at Christ The King. Several priests will be available for you to go to them and receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Please don't try to rationalise away your need for grace and healing. There are temptations to try to quiet the conscience or to try to silence God, who is speaking to you in your heart, by shouting aloud in your mind with many justifications that you have made. Recall the words of Jesus, "Those who are well do not need a physician, but the sick do. I did not come to call the righteous but sinners" (Mk 2:17b). Recall also what St. John says, "If we say, 'We are without sin,' we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8). Jesus comes to save us all! In speaking about the Sacrament of Reconciliation, here are a few words from Pope Francis to hopefully inspire you to receive the sacrament, whether it has been a year, 5 years, 20 years, 50 years or more. "Forgiveness of our sins is not something we can give ourselves. I cannot say: I forgive my sins. Forgiveness is asked for, is asked of another, and in Confession we ask for forgiveness from Jesus. Forgiveness is not the fruit of our own efforts but rather a gift, it is a gift of the Holy Spirit who fills us with the wellspring of mercy and of grace that flows unceasingly from the open heart of the Crucified and Risen Christ. [...] One might say: I confess only to God. Yes, you can say to God 'forgive me' and say your sins, but our sins are also committed against the brethren, and against the Church. That is why it is necessary to ask pardon of the Church, and of the brethren in the person of the priest. 'But Father, I am ashamed ...'. Shame is also good, it is healthy to feel a little shame, because being ashamed is salutary. In Spain when a person feels no shame, they say that he/she is 'shameless'; a 'sin verguenza'. But shame too does good, because it makes us more humble, and the priest receives this confession with love and tenderness and forgives us on God's behalf. Also from a human point of view, in order to unburden oneself, it is good to talk with a brother and tell the priest these things which are weighing so much on my heart. And one feels that one is unburdening oneself before God, with the Church, with his brother. Do not be afraid of Confession! When one is in line to go to Confession, one feels all these things, even shame, but then when one finishes Confession one leaves free, grand, beautiful, forgiven, candid, happy. This is the beauty of Confession" (Pope Francis, Feb. 19, 2014).

Please be aware that for the next weekends of Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday, the Sunday 9:30am Mass and 11:00am. Having been strengthened with the Eucharist, I do pray that you rush to show each other with patience and living charity more so than reaching your next activity.

In today's epistle, St. Paul reminds us that "God is rich in mercy." This great truth should move us to approach the sacrament of Confession with great confidence, which is to say, without fear or anxiety. Lent invites us to rediscover the great treasure we possess in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. It brings us not only the forgiveness of our sins but the grace to strengthen us in times of weakness and temptation. I certainly encourage everyone to take advantage of this sacrament as we approach Easter. Apart from the Pastoral Area Reconciliation Service with Bishop Declan on Wednesday 20th March at 7.00pm. Confessions are scheduled on Saturday evening before the vigil Mass from 5pm-5-40pm and 30 minutes before after the Stations of the Cross on Friday evenings. Every sacramental confession is an act of contrition, humility, and courage. To these, the Lord responds with great mercy and love...so be not afraid! Come and allow the Lord to heal you to set out on a new beginning!

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION DURING LENT: Throughout the season of Lent we will celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation every Friday from 6-30-7.00pm before the Stations of the Cross at 7.00pm. Also 30 minutes after the stations of the Cross every Friday evening. Apart from that Sacrament of Penance is administered every Saturday from 5pm-5-40pm prior to the Vigil Mass

"Let us allow ourselves to be 'infected' by St. Joseph's silence! We need it greatly, in a world that is often too noisy, that does not favor meditation or listening to the voice of God." **Pope Benedict XVI**

MORE FOR LENT-Stations of the Cross- Every Friday during Lent **10.30 AM AND 7.00PM. The Lent Encounter-**Stuart Ford, who spent a year in Salisbury parish as a seminarian, and who now works for the Bible Society, has edited and contributed to a series of Lenten devotions called: **The Lent Encounter: where is Jesus in the Old Testament?** Take a journey through the Old Testament this Lent to find the answer. Sign up for free at: <https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/resources/the-lent-encounter-sign-up/> and you'll receive a free daily devotion from Ash Wednesday to Easter.

MASS SCHEDULE STARTING FROM 16TH MARCH 2024

SATURDAY 16TH MARCH MASS AT 6.00PM MARY CHAPPELL, RIP (DONOR SLAV AND MARZENA DABROSZ)

SUNDAY 17TH MARCH MASS AT 11.00AM JO CHAMBERS FAMILY (INTENTIONS)

MONDAY 18TH MARCH ADORATION AT 9.00AM AND MASS AT 10.00AM FOR PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS

TUESDAY 19TH MARCH ADORATION AT 9.00AM MASS AT 10.00AM AND MASS AT 6.30PM MARIA CHAMBERS (INTENTIONS) DONOR JO CHAMBERS FEAST OF ST JOSEPH

WEDNESDAY 20TH MARCH AT 9.00AM ADORATION AND MASS AT 10.00AM ANN LARKE (INTENTIONS) REONCILIATION WITH BISHOP DECLAN AT 7.00PM

THURSDAY 21ST MARCH ADORATION AT 9.00AM AND MASS AT 10.00AM GREYHAM DAVIS, RIP (DONOR LORETTA DAVIS)

FRIDAY 22ND MARCH ADORATION AT 9.00AM AND MASS AT 10.00AM MASS STATIONS OF THE CROSS AT 10.30AM. AND 7.00PM

SATURDAY 23 TH MARCH MASS AT 11.00AM FOR THE SICK WITH THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK 6.00PM FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE PARISH

SUNDAY 24TH MARCH MASS AT 11.00AM

"Confession is an act of honesty and courage – an act of entrusting ourselves, beyond sin, to the mercy of a loving and forgiving God." (St. John Paul II)

SAINT PATRICK This weekend highlights the celebration of the patron saint of Ireland, St. Patrick. Our church community constitutes a sizeable number of Catholics from the Irish background. The Feast of St. Patrick falls on a Sunday this year, the liturgy of that day celebrates the 5th Sunday of Lent, however, the liturgy generates a spirit that connects us to St. Patrick as he was one who like Lazarus in this weekend's Gospel was raised from captivity to a life that has passed down the message of Christ to generations of people since the 5th century. Although St. Patrick was not born in Ireland, he gained his reputation as a missionary to Ireland. Many in the parish have taken countless trips to Ireland to celebrate their Irish heritage. My initial trip to Ireland occurred in 2015. This was a tremendous thrill. I was transported to my hotel on O'Connell Street where I was introduced to a Guinness while waiting to check into my room. It was my first real Guinness, and I enjoyed it so much that I ordered a second Guinness. Upon check in, the remainder of my day consisted of a stroll throughout Dublin whereby I took in the sights of the city; however, through my week's stay in Ireland, I realised that it was in the Irish pubs that I met the real beauty of Ireland, the people. It is easy to see the joy that comes to so many on St. Patrick Day with festivities, parades, and friendly gatherings. Yet, it must not be forgotten that a man named Patrick enhanced the faith of the Irish as a missionary, which ties in the life of Patrick with our Lenten commitments. Patrick also raised the standards of scholarship in Ireland, encouraged the study of Latin, and brought Ireland into closer relations with the rest of the Western World. Although many of the details of Patrick's life are uncertain; it is known that he took the name Patrick upon ordination to the priesthood. Most scholarship attests that he was also a Briton who was kidnapped at age 16 by Irish raiders, and sold as a slave which steered him to discover God in his life. Many in Ireland celebrate this day with a visit to some of the sites where Patrick journeyed which include hilltops, vast mountains and exquisite mountain lakes. Ireland's holiest mountain, Croagh Patrick, nicknamed "The Reek" which is a soaring 2,507 ft. conical mountain near Westport, County Mayo is a location Patrick arrived after taking a forty-day retreat during Lent. Also, according to Patrick's autobiographical letter, Confessio, written around 450 AD, and published in the 9th century consists of information about the way Patrick fled from enslavement and studied in France to become a priest. The original copy of Confessio may be found in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin.

Through the span of his life, Patrick spent over 30 years spreading the message of Christianity and founding churches and monasteries. He became the first Bishop of Armagh and Primate of all Ireland. Patrick retired in County Down, where it is believed he died in 461 AD on March 17, and is buried in the grounds of the 12th century Down Cathedral. Many families and priests in the diocese trace their roots back to Ireland. Through the years the Irish are well known for involvement in people professions such as fireman, police, nurses and priesthood. Sometimes it is common to forget that the Western World including America was a mission for Irish priests who brought Christ to our land. Happy St. Patrick Day

THE SACRAMENT OF THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick on Saturday, March 23 at 11:00 a.m. Anyone who experiences any type of illness may receive the Anointing of the Sick while those who are blessed with good health are invited to come and pray with and for our sisters and brothers who are ill or for the elderly of the parish on the day!

THE CROSS OF LONELINESS There are more people living on our planet now than have ever lived in human history at one time. There are millions of inhabitants living in the Western world. With so many people crammed ever more crowdedly into limited spaces it seems counterintuitive that a great many of those people experience loneliness...but it's true. What is loneliness? Loneliness has nothing to do with the physical presence or absence of other people. A person can be surrounded by family and friends and still be very lonely; on the other hand a person can live a solitary life or just be alone but not suffer from loneliness. Loneliness means believing or thinking that other people just don't care. Young people, senior citizens, and everyone in between can be found living in this isolation and sadness. It is a torment to believe that none of your fellow men and women love or care about you, yet it is easy in our fast-paced world where everyone is taking care of their own needs to neglect the person sitting next to them. Too many people believe themselves to be inadequate or unlovable in today's society. Glittering images of beautiful, clever and successful people are put before us every day and it's hard to measure up. This often leads to poor self-image and the belief that somehow I am unsatisfactory and am not worthy of the time and attention of other people. True, there are lots of people who pull themselves up by their bootstraps and jump into social situations and activities. Good for them! But we cannot ignore those many unseen people who just want to know that they are appreciated and valued. We can't take it for granted that just because someone has many names programmed into their mobile phone that they truly connect with others.

The lonely go through the day just hoping someone will care enough to call, email or text them – yet they are afraid of being a nuisance so they often won't take the initiative to reach out to others. In fact, studies show that the technology that should bring us closer together actually makes many of us impersonal and too eager to escape into gadgets so we don't have to deal with one another. Does God get lonely? We can only speculate. Certainly He made all creation and everything and everyone in it. Certainly He is surrounded by the angels who offer their homage at every moment. But how often is Jesus left alone in the tabernacle of an empty parish church? How many people go to sleep at night without having checked in to say "hello" and "I love you"? God is not alone, but we could certainly see where He might get lonely. He doesn't want His presence to be taken for granted either. He wants to hear from us. If you suffer from loneliness, feel the presence of the whole Church united in prayer with and for you. Although you might not experience it, you are loved and valued by God and men. And all of us could adopt a great Lenten practice that should extend beyond the forty days of this season: fill in the loneliness. Just a word, a phone call, an email or a text can be just the human contact someone needs to let them know that you care and that they are a loved and valued member of the human family. Loneliness is an affliction that can be fixed; there are enough of us around to do it! With a little more attention and thoughtfulness we can become true companions on the journey of life making our way to the Kingdom of Heaven.

DEAR FRIENDS, Happy St. Patrick's Day to all. Today we are all Irish. Next Sunday we begin the holiest of weeks of the year, Holy Week. We begin the blessing of palms and the reading of the Lord's Passion. Truly a blessed time in our lives and a time to slow down and consider what our Lord has done for us. We bless and distribute palms at our three Masses next weekend. The 11:00 am Mass will begin in the Parish Hall for the proclamation of the Gospel. We will then process into church. While the Holy Week schedule has been published elsewhere, here it is for your quick reference and convenience. Holy Thursday Mass begins at 7:00 pm and will conclude with the procession of the Eucharist to the Altar of Repose in the Chapel. The hall will remain open until 12:00 am for individual silent adoration. Please note that there is no other Mass that day. On Good Friday we will have Stations of the Cross at 11:00 am. The service of the Lord's Passion, Veneration of the Cross, and Holy Communion begins at 3:00 pm. There will be another Stations of the Cross at 7:00pm. Again, there is no Mass on Good Friday. Holy Saturday, the Easter Vigil begins at 7:00 pm in front of church (weather permitting) with the lighting of the Easter Fire and blessing of the Easter Candle. Easter Sunday Masses are at 9:30 am, and 11:00 am. I pray that this Holy Week is a time of an outpouring of grace for all. Let's pray for each other this week.

ON THE WAY-THE SEVEN LAST WORDS: WHY HAVE YOU ABANDONED ME? The letter to the Hebrews tells us, "[W]e do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin" (Heb 4:15). The reason the Son of God assumed our human nature was precisely to enter into and sanctify every dimension of human life. He experienced all that we experience: infancy, childhood, adulthood; family, work, and friends; love, sorrow, and joy; life and death. In his Passion, he experienced every kind of human suffering – physical, spiritual, and emotional: the pain of the beating, scourging, and crucifixion; the agony of abandonment and loneliness; the weight and shame of every sin; and even the feeling of being abandoned by God. Thus, from the Cross he cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which is translated, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'" (Mk 15:34) This "cry of dereliction" (as it is traditionally called) indicates the depths to which the Son of God descended in his union with us. He experienced even the worst form of human suffering, the feeling of abandonment by God. He drank the chalice of human suffering to the dregs. In the Person of Jesus Christ, God understands the pain of those who feel abandoned by him. He knows this not only from the outside, as the omniscient God, but also from the inside, as one who experienced it. Now, no one can say that God doesn't know what it's like. At the same time, however, Jesus did not despair. After all, it wouldn't profit us at all if the Son of God despaired of the Father's goodness. The whole point of this cry is that he experiences the feeling of being abandoned...but doesn't give in to it. He rises above the feeling and gives hope to all who are tempted to despair. The Gospels record this cry in the original Hebrew: Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani. Now, Hebrew was for the ancient Jews what Latin is for us, a sacred language, spoken only in prayer and worship. Point is, Jesus wasn't just crying out. He was praying. And the entirety of his prayer is indicated by those few words. This shouldn't be hard for us to grasp.

We Catholics typically refer to prayers by their first words: the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Glory Be. We refer to a particular Mass by the first words of its Entrance Antiphon (or Introit): a Requiem Mass, Laetare Sunday, Gaudete Sunday, etc. So, in his cry of dereliction, Jesus "intones" or begins Psalm 22, and by speaking the Psalm's first words he indicates its entirety. Further, by intoning this Psalm, he reveals himself as the fulfilment of it. Which means that if we want to understand these words from the Cross, we need to read the entirety of Psalm 22. It is a Psalm of sorrow that gives voice to our Lord's Passion: All who see me mock me; they curl their lips and jeer; they shake their heads at me...They have pierced my hands and my feet. I can count all my bones. They stare at me and gloat; they divide my garments among them; for my clothing they cast lots... But it is ultimately a Psalm of victory, rejoicing in God's fidelity: For he has not spurned or disdained the misery of this poor wretch, did not turn away from me, but heard me when I cried out... In the end, the cry of dereliction reveals that Christ is with us in our darkest moments and that by his grace we can even then trust in the Father's love.

PASTORAL AREA PENITENTIAL SERVICE WITH BISHOP DECLAN AT CHRIST THE KING Our pastoral area Lenten Penitential Service with Bishop Declan Lang will be on Wednesday 20th March starts at 7.00pm in our Church. It will be a wonderful opportunity for us to join the Bishop and other priests, and people of the deanery to celebrate God's mercy through the Sacrament of Penance. Bishop Declan will be the principal celebrant.

200 CLUB WINNERS FOR FEBRUARY winners for 200 club for February are 1st Millie Barnett £25, 2nd Emma Barnett £15, 3rd Lynda Mullen £10. Many congratulations to the winners. Our sincere gratitude and grateful thanks go to Carol Crossland for organising the 200 Club. Thank you and God bless you!

RESIGNATION OF THE BISHOP OF CLIFTON AND APPOINTMENT OF A NEW BISHOP Today, the Holy Father, Pope Francis, has accepted the resignation of the Right Reverend Declan Lang as Bishop of Clifton. Bishop Declan was ordained the ninth Bishop of Clifton on 28th March 2001 and has served the Diocese for 23 years as its bishop. The Holy Father has appointed Rev. Canon Bosco MacDonald, a priest of the Diocese of Clifton, until now Dean of the Cathedral Church of St Peter and St Paul, Bristol, as the tenth Bishop of the Diocese of Clifton. May the Lord, who has chosen Canon Bosco as His servant, fill him with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, as he faithfully guides His Church with wisdom, patience, and love. We are privileged and honoured to have had Bishop Declan Lang as our Chief shepherd and Pastor for the Diocese of Clifton for 23 years. Bishop Declan's wisdom, dedication, leadership, compassion, and pastoral care have touched many of our lives. We recognise Bishop Declan's great contribution to the sacramental, spiritual, and pastoral life of the Diocese. In our prayers we will continue to ask God to sustain him in good health, bless him with an abundance of gifts from the Holy Spirit, and preserve the joy of his vocation. **DONATE TOWARDS OUR EASTER FLOWERS- SECOND COLLECTION 23/24TH MARCH** The Parish Flower Arrangers will have their annual Easter Flower Collection after all Masses next weekend. If you would you like to honour a loved one or celebrate a special thanksgiving during this Easter season you can specifically ask for it when you make a contribution or donation. You can memorialise your loved ones with a special gift of beauty by making a donation for Easter lilies or any church-friendly flowers of your choice! All Easter memorials and thanksgivings will be published in the newsletter.

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 emphasized 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 Sunday 17th March at 12.15pm Sunday 14th April at 12.15pm Sunday 21st April, Sunday 28th April at 12.15pm Sunday 5th May at 12.15pm and Sunday 12th May at 12.15pm **First Holy Communion Mass on Sunday 19th May at 12.30pm.**

PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES: The Society of Our Lady of Lourdes (SOLL) are pleased to announce that their annual pilgrimage of the sick to Lourdes will be on the 24th to the 31st May 2024. SOLL seeks to ensure that sick pilgrims are offered an opportunity to travel to Lourdes, minimising the barriers of disability and finance. Applications are now open. Please think if there is someone in the parish who SOLL can help. Applications are also welcomed for volunteer helpers, carers, nurses, doctors and priests! For further information, please contact SOLL on [0208 8489833](tel:02088489833) or www.soll-lourdes.com or call your parish contact , Sacha Blanchard on [07768 622880](tel:07768622880)