

# PARISH OF OUR LADY IMMACULATE, WESTBOURNE

Roman Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth: registered charity 246871  
visit us at catholicwestbourne.org

**FR ANDREW WRITES:** Today is 'Laetare Sunday'. At the mid-point of the Lenten season the prayers and readings of today focus on the word 'joy'. In families, today should also be characterised by joy as they celebrate Mothers' Day. However, the ever-growing cloud of the Coronavirus casts a dark shadow over so much. The lives of each of us – and that means the whole human family – may be greatly impacted by this virus. In the coming weeks things are likely to get a lot worse before they get better. In normal times, our spiritual life sustains us, the more so in times of difficulty. These are not normal times and just as we may not be able to get the things we usually expect from the supermarkets, so too we may not be able so readily to access the spiritual 'provisions' we have depended on throughout our lives. The suspension of the public celebration of mass is unprecedented and will be challenging for all who draw immense spiritual benefit from the mass. If it will seem strange not to be able to attend mass, it is no less strange for me to be saying mass – as I will continue to do – to an empty church. But despite physical distance we are united in faith, in spirit, in prayer and in mutual Christian love. Let us pray for all who are managing this crisis, especially Health workers, for those who have contracted the disease, for those who have died and let us pray for each other.

**MORE GENERALLY:** The internet, for those who have access, is a valuable source of prayerful material. The universalis app, [www.universalis.com](http://www.universalis.com) is especially recommended.

**LIVE STREAMING:** The Oratory in Bournemouth has a permanent live stream which means you can make a virtual visit to the Blessed Sacrament [www.bournemouthoratory.org.uk/live-feed/](http://www.bournemouthoratory.org.uk/live-feed/) A number of Churches in our diocese also live stream the mass, again for virtual participation. The web-sites for each church will give details and timings:

Abingdon	Our Lady & St Edmund
Basingstoke	St Bede's
Bournemouth	The Oratory
Hinksey	Holy Rood Church
Ilford	Saints Peter and Paul
New Milton	Our Lady of Lourdes
Portsmouth	The Cathedral

The following prayer would be appropriate if following a live stream mass:

**Spiritual Communion**  
(cf. St Alphonsus Liguori)  
My Jesus,

I believe that you are present in the Holy Sacrament of the altar.

I love you above all things  
and I passionately desire to receive you  
into my soul.

Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,  
come spiritually into my soul  
so that I may unite myself wholly to you now  
and forever. Amen.

**OUR PARISH TREASURER WRITES:** Across the country many are facing financial challenges. Though not in the same category the parish, too, will have to watch its finances. Many of you give generously through standing order and others through the collection on Sunday. The latter accounts for 50% of our parish income but our outgoings will remain pretty much the same. We hope to have a simple 'Donate' facility on the website within the next few days, so look out for that. For those who use envelopes, new envelopes for the coming year are available in the church porch. Please retain your envelopes until such times as normal service may be resumed. For those who might make a brief visit to the church on Sunday there will be a facility to make your ordinary offering. *Many thanks for your continued support.*

## ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCHES IN THE AREA

**The Annunciation**  
Charminster Road. BH8 9RW  
01202 513369

**St Edmund Campion**  
481 Castle Lane West BH8 9TN  
01202 513369

**Bournemouth Oratory**  
1 Albert Road. BH1 1BZ  
01202 411140

**Corpus Christi**  
17/18 St. James Sq. BH5 2BX  
01202 425286

**St. Joseph and St. Walburga**  
2a Archway Road. BH14 9AZ  
01202 746539

**Our Lady of Fatima**  
35 Brixey Road. BH12 3PB  
01202 746539

**Fr Andrew will say Mass privately**  
**LITURGICAL CALENDAR AND INTENTIONS**  
Prayer of the Church: 4th Week of Lent. Psalter Week 4  
Cycle of Prayer: All Penitents

<b>Sunday</b>		<b>FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT</b>	—	People of the Parish
<b>March 22nd</b>				
Mon	23rd	of the 4th Week of Lent	—	—
Tues	24th	of the 4th Week of Lent	—	Joyce Horton RIP
<b>Weds</b>	<b>25th</b>	<b>The Annunciation of the Lord</b>	—	—
Thurs	26th	of the 4th Week of Lent	—	—
Fri	27th	of the 4th Week of Lent	—	Special Intention
Sat	28th	of the 4th Week of Lent	—	—
<b>Sunday</b>		<b>FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT</b>	—	People of the Parish
<b>March 29th</b>				

## Some practicalities:

- The best way to keep abreast of necessary information is through the parish website:  
[www.catholicwestbourne.org](http://www.catholicwestbourne.org)
- The newsletter will be posted on the website but will also be available in hard copy in the porch (please take a copy home and copies for neighbours or friends who may not have internet access).
- Fr Andrew will post a short homily on the website.
- As far as possible, the church will be open for short visits for personal prayer as follows:  
Sunday – (8.30 a.m. - 12.00 p.m.)  
Tuesday – Friday inclusive (10.00 a.m. – 12.00 p.m.)  
Timings and extent of access will be kept under review and may change without notice.
- As already noted, Fr Andrew will continue to say mass privately and mass intentions previously requested will be said, as will any further requests.
- The Parish Office will be physically closed but will be operational:  
email: [oliadmin@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:oliadmin@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)  
phone: 01202 760640.
- All parish activities are suspended until further notice.
- There will be no access to the Hall, the lift or to the toilets.

### General Prayers for Health

Lord Jesus, you came that we might have life in all its fullness.

In this time of sickness and the fear of sickness, give me the health of mind – that I might seek out wise guidance and act upon it;  
the health of body – that will enable me to serve you and those around me;  
the health of spirit – that my soul rests in the secure knowledge that there is nothing that can separate me from the Father's love.  
Give me the grace to share your peace – that peace the world cannot give.

### Prayer for those Affected

Merciful God, come to the help of your people. Be our shelter in this time of peril and strengthen the bonds of our community. Bring healing to all who suffer the ravages of disease and assist those whose skill and art can put an end to this affliction. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

O God, our refuge and our shield, even when we walk in the shadow of death you are there at our side. Be with your people in this time of danger: bring strength to the afflicted and protection to those untouched by disease. Give us love and courage, that we may trust in your power to save and reach out to all who need our care. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Prayer for those in Authority

Loving God, in Christ Jesus, the servant of all, you call us to the service of others. Grant to those who govern the community the skill to recognise its urgent needs and the strength to pursue the common good. Endow us all with patience and courage, that we may care for the suffering, feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, and sustain the needy. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Prayer for all Mothers

Today we thank God for the gift of mothers and mothering across the world. Isaiah wrote that God is a mother to us, comforting and carrying us in her arms. *As one whom a mother comforts, so I will comfort you – Isaiah 66:13.*

Gentle, patient God – thank you for your tender care.

**Safeguarding Officer**  
**Matthew French**  
[mail@matthewfrench.net](mailto:mail@matthewfrench.net)

**Parish Administrator**  
**Suzanne Quinn**  
**Office hours :**  
Mon, Wed, Fri  
9.30-11.30am.  
**All enquiries**  
Tel  
01202 760640  
Email  
[oliadmin@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:oliadmin@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

**Website:**  
[catholicwestbourne.org](http://catholicwestbourne.org)

**Address:**  
Our Lady Immaculate  
Seamoor Road,  
Bournemouth,  
BH4 9AE

**Parish Priest**  
**Fr Andrew Moore**

**Gift Aid**  
Pay income tax?  
We can reclaim 25% of your offering today from the Government at no cost to you. Please use one of our special envelopes or ask for a form.

**We are part of**  
**Bournemouth**  
**Pastoral Area**



Clocks go forward  
1 hour next Sunday

### PRAYER CORNER



All the sick and housebound of our parish,  
including:

Patricia Kowalewska, Win Sheridan, Patricia Plumb, Kathleen Wood, Peter Henry, Philip Rockford and Germain McAulay.

*For those self-isolating*

*For all health workers*

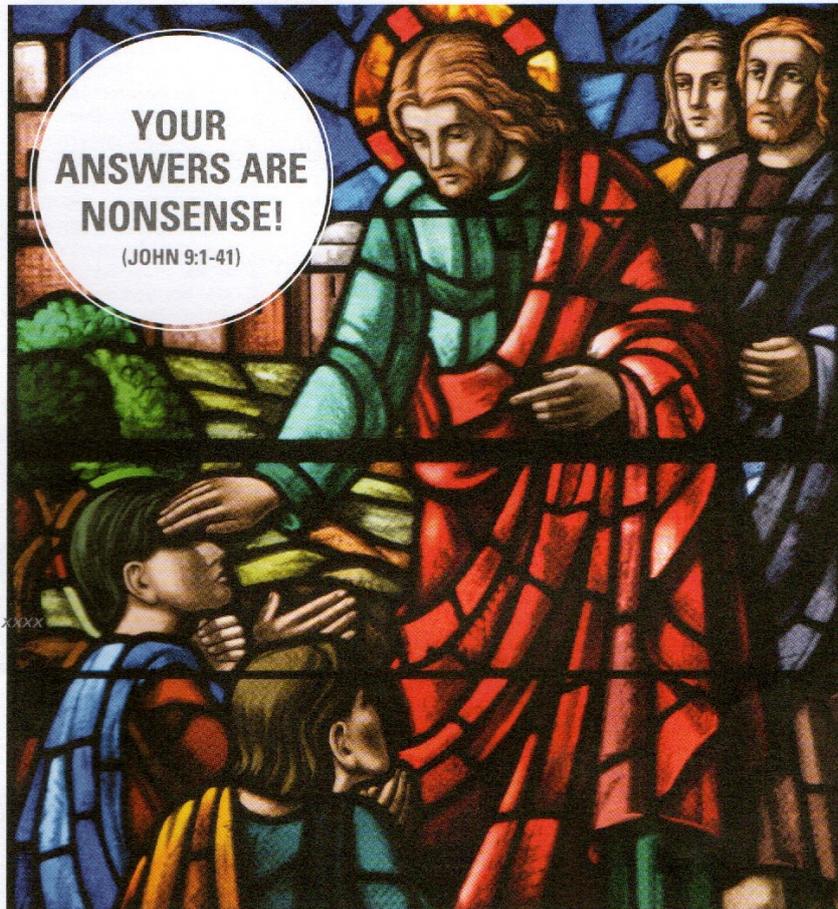
22 MARCH 2020

# Sunday Message

4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT

THE WORD

Year A • Psalter Week 4



The story of the man born blind is regarded as one of the best-written narratives in the scriptures.

The healing by Jesus leads to the person coming to faith in him by clinging to his own experience in the face of challenges from the highly educated religious authorities. All that the man in question knows is that Jesus has cured him, and so cannot be a sinner, whether he has acted on the sabbath or not. By remaining true to his convictions, his appreciation of Jesus deepens, from being the man called Jesus, to a prophet and, finally, Lord, and worshipping him. The leaders remain true to their convictions, but these lead them deeper into unbelief. Their initial efforts to disprove the healing fail, so they argue from theology: because Jesus does not keep the sabbath, he cannot be from God. They cannot match the arguments of their irrepressible opponent so end up resorting to insult and excommunication.

It is by remaining faithful to his own experience and rejecting seemingly logical arguments from the religious authorities that the former blind man finds himself in the presence of Jesus and makes his act of faith. This is the culmination of a gradual process in understanding, and an example of how a person can come to faith in Jesus. ■

## DO

If you can see, thank the Lord for your ability. Give some of your Lenten alms to a charity for the blind.

## SAY

**I am the light of the world, says the Lord**  
(John 9:5)

## REFLECT

Some people imagine that the Gospels simply relate historical events which have little bearing on the present day. This applies especially to those who imagine they understand fully how God operates, people who devise a theological system and feel that everything is now worked out: Jesus' criticism of the religious authorities of his day cannot possibly apply to those of our own. But the Bible warns us that this is a dangerous way of thinking. The book of Job is the classic critique of conventional theological wisdom.

The Gospel passage today is a masterpiece, comical in places, of the (formally) uneducated person who defeats the theologically qualified simply by pointing out the flaws in their argument. The most telling comment about the religious authorities in the story (and sometimes in our own day) is that they simply will not listen to the story of other people whose experience does not fit with their well-worked-out abstract theories. They accuse the healed man – and, implicitly, his parents – of being in bad faith, instead of thinking, maybe we should look at this again.

It is by not accepting the easy answers but by remaining true to himself and his experience that the person in the story, who represents anyone in a similar position, comes to true belief in Jesus. Unless we examine what we believe, we will not grow in our faith and understanding of Jesus and our relationship with him. This is not to doubt the truth: it is saying that the way we understand it has to change as we do. Pope St John XXIII famously said that the deposit of faith is one thing: the way it is presented is another. Yesterday's answers may not be sufficient for today's questions. ■

## LEARN

The expression "the Jews" in the Fourth Gospel usually applies to the religious leaders, not to the people as a whole.

The Pharisees feature in the story today: the term is interchangeable with the Jews.

Both groups are presented as being opposed to Jesus.

**FIRST READING** 1 Samuel 16:1.6-7.10-13

A reading from the first book of Samuel.

The Lord said to Samuel: "Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have chosen myself a king among his sons." When Samuel arrived, he caught sight of Eliab and thought, "Surely the Lord's anointed one stands there before him," but the Lord said to Samuel, "Take no notice of his appearance or his height for I have rejected him; God does not see as man sees; man looks at appearances but the Lord looks at the heart." Jesse presented his seven sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, "The Lord has not chosen these." He then answered, "Are these all the sons you have?" He answered, "There is still one left, the youngest; he is out looking after the sheep." Then Samuel said to Jesse, "Send for him; we will not sit down to eat until he comes." Jesse had him sent for, a boy of fresh complexion, with fine eyes and pleasant bearing. The Lord said, "Come, anoint him, for this is the one." At this, Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him where he stood with his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord seized on David and stayed with him from that day on.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM**

Psalm 22

Response:

**The Lord is my shepherd;  
there is nothing I shall want.**

- The Lord is my shepherd;  
there is nothing I shall want.  
Fresh and green are the pastures  
where he gives me repose.  
Near restful waters he leads me,  
to revive my drooping spirit. (R.)
- He guides me along the right path;  
he is true to his name.  
If I should walk in the valley of darkness  
no evil would I fear.  
You are there with your crook and your  
staff;  
with these you give me comfort. (R.)
- You have prepared a banquet for me  
in the sight of my foes.  
My head you have anointed with oil;  
my cup is overflowing. (R.)
- Surely goodness and kindness shall  
follow me  
all the days of my life.  
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell  
for ever and ever. (R.)

**SECOND READING** Ephesians 5:8-14

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians.

You were darkness once, but now you are light in the Lord; be like children of light, for the effects of the light are seen in complete goodness and right living and truth. Try to discover what the Lord wants of you, having nothing to do with the futile works of darkness but exposing them by contrast. The things which are done in secret are things that people are ashamed even to speak of; but anything exposed by the light will be illuminated and anything illuminated turns into light. That is why it is said:

Wake up from your sleep,  
rise from the dead,  
and Christ will shine on you.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**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!**

**GOSPEL**

John 9:1-41

(For shorter form read between >< )

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

>As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth.< His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, for him to have been born blind?" "Neither he nor his parents sinned," Jesus answered "he was born blind so that the works of God might be displayed in him.

"As long as the day lasts

I must carry out the work of the one who sent me;

the night will soon be here when no one can work.

As long as I am in the world

I am the light of the world."

Having said this, >he spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man, and said to him, "Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam" (a name that means "sent"). So the blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored.

His neighbours and people who earlier had seen him begging said, "Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?" Some said, "Yes, it is the same one." Others said, "No, he only looks like him." The man himself said, "I am the man." < So they said to him, "Then how do your eyes come to be open?" "The man called Jesus" he answered "made a paste, daubed my eyes with it and said to me, 'Go and wash at Siloam'; so I went, and when I washed I could see." They asked, "Where is he?" "I don't know" he answered.

>They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. It had been a sabbath day when Jesus made the paste and opened the man's eyes, so when the Pharisees asked him how he had come to see, he said, "He put a paste on my eyes, and I washed, and I can see." Then some of the Pharisees said, "This man cannot be from God: he does not keep the sabbath." Others said, "How could a sinner produce signs like this?" And there was disagreement among them. So they spoke to the blind man again, "What have you to say about him yourself, now that he has opened your eyes?" "He is a prophet" replied the man.<

However, the Jews would not believe that the man had been blind and had gained his sight, without first sending for his parents and asking them, "Is this man really your son who you say was born blind? If so, how is it that he is now able to see?" His parents answered, "We know he is our son and we know he was born blind, but we don't know how it is that he can see now, or who opened his eyes. He is old enough: let him speak for himself." His

parents spoke like this out of fear of the Jews, who had already agreed to expel from the synagogue anyone who should acknowledge Jesus as the Christ. This was why his parents said, "He is old enough; ask him."

So the Jews again sent for the man and said to him, "Give glory to God! For our part, we know that this man is a sinner." The man answered, "I don't know if he is a sinner; I only know that I was blind and now I can see." They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He replied, "I have told you once and you wouldn't listen. Why do you want to hear it all again? Do you want to become his disciples too?" At this they hurled abuse at him: "You can be his disciple," they said "we are disciples of Moses: we know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this man, we don't know where he comes from." The man replied, "Now here is an astonishing thing! He has opened my eyes, and you don't know where he comes from! We know that God doesn't listen to sinners, but God does listen to men who are devout and do his will. Ever since the world began it is unheard of for anyone to open the eyes of a man who was born blind; if this man were not from God, he couldn't do a thing." >"Are you trying to teach us," they replied "and you a sinner through and through, since you were born!" And they drove him away.

Jesus heard they had driven him away, and when he found him he said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" "Sir," the man replied "tell me who he is so that I may believe in him." Jesus said, "You are looking at him; he is speaking to you." The man said, "Lord, I believe," and worshipped him.< Jesus said:

"It is for judgement  
that I have come into this world,  
so that those without sight may see  
and those with sight turn blind."

Hearing this, some Pharisees who were present said to him, "We are not blind, surely?" Jesus replied:

"Blind? If you were,  
you would not be guilty,  
but since you say, 'We see',  
your guilt remains."

>The Gospel of the Lord.<

**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

**PROFESSION OF FAITH**

**I believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,**

*(all bow during the next two lines)*

**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;  
he descended into hell;  
on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God the  
Father almighty;  
from there he will come to judge the living  
and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting.  
Amen.**

