

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

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

**COLLECT**

O God, who through your Word  
reconcile the human race to yourself in a  
wonderful way,  
grant, we pray,  
that with prompt devotion and eager faith  
the Christian people may hasten  
toward the solemn celebrations to come.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of  
the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

**FIRST READING** 2 Chronicles 36:14-16, 19-23

A reading from the second book of  
Chronicles.

All the heads of the priesthood, and the  
people too, added infidelity to infidelity,  
copying all the shameful practices of  
the nations and defiling the Temple that  
the Lord had consecrated for himself in  
Jerusalem. The Lord, the God of their  
ancestors, tirelessly sent them messenger  
after messenger, since he wished to spare his  
people and his house. But they ridiculed the  
messengers of God, they despised his words,  
they laughed at his prophets, until at last the  
wrath of the Lord rose so high against his  
people that there was no further remedy.

Their enemies burned down the Temple  
of God, demolished the walls of Jerusalem,  
set fire to all its palaces, and destroyed  
everything of value in it. The survivors were  
deported by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon;  
they were to serve him and his sons until  
the kingdom of Persia came to power. This is  
how the word of the Lord was fulfilled that he  
spoke through Jeremiah, "Until this land has  
enjoyed its sabbath rest, until seventy years  
have gone by, it will keep sabbath throughout  
the days of its desolation."

And in the first year of Cyrus king of  
Persia, to fulfil the word of the Lord that  
was spoken through Jeremiah, the Lord  
roused the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia to  
issue a proclamation and to have it publicly  
displayed throughout his kingdom: "Thus  
speaks Cyrus king of Persia, 'The Lord,  
the God of heaven, has given me all the  
kingdoms of the earth; he has ordered me to  
build him a Temple in Jerusalem, in Judah.  
Whoever there is among you of all his  
people, may his God be with him! Let him go  
up.'"

The word of the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.

**PSALM** Psalm 136

Response:

**O let my tongue  
cleave to my mouth  
if I remember you not!**

1. By the rivers of Babylon  
there we sat and wept,  
remembering Zion:  
on the poplars that grew there  
we hung up our harps. (R.)
2. For it was there that they asked us,  
our captors, for songs,  
our oppressors, for joy.

"Sing to us," they said,  
"one of Zion's songs." (R.)

3. O how could we sing  
the song of the Lord  
on alien soil?  
If I forget you, Jerusalem,  
let my right hand wither! (R.)
4. O let my tongue  
cleave to my mouth  
if I remember you not,  
if I prize not Jerusalem  
above all my joys! (R.)

**SECOND READING** Ephesians 2:4-10

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

God loved us with so much love that he was  
generous with his mercy: when we were  
dead through our sins, he brought us to life  
with Christ – it is through grace that you have  
been saved – and raised us up with him and  
gave us a place with him in heaven, in Christ  
Jesus.

This was to show for all ages to come,  
through his goodness towards us in Christ  
Jesus, how infinitely rich he is in grace.  
Because it is by grace that you have been  
saved, through faith; not by anything of your  
own, but by a gift from God; not by anything  
that you have done, so that nobody can claim  
the credit. We are God's work of art, created  
in Christ Jesus to live the good life as from  
the beginning he had meant us to live it.

The word of the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

**Glory and praise to you, O Christ!  
God loved the world so much that he gave  
his only Son;  
everyone who believes in him has eternal life.  
Glory and praise to you, O Christ!**

**GOSPEL** John 3:14-21

A reading from the holy Gospel according to  
John.

Jesus said to Nicodemus:

"The Son of Man must be lifted up  
as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert,  
so that everyone who believes may have  
eternal life in him.

Yes, God loved the world so much  
that he gave his only Son,  
so that everyone who believes in him may  
not be lost  
but may have eternal life.  
For God sent his Son into the world  
not to condemn the world,  
but so that through him the world might be  
saved.

No one who believes in him will be  
condemned;  
but whoever refuses to believe is  
condemned already,  
because he has refused to believe  
in the name of God's only Son.  
On these grounds is sentence pronounced:  
that though the light has come into the  
world  
men have shown they prefer  
darkness to the light  
because their deeds were evil.  
And indeed, everybody who does wrong  
hates the light and avoids it,  
for fear his actions should be exposed;

but the man who lives by the truth  
comes out into the light,  
so that it may be plainly seen that what he  
does is done in God."

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.**

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

We place before you with joy these offerings,  
which bring eternal remedy, O Lord,  
praying that we may both faithfully revere  
them  
and present them to you, as is fitting,  
for the salvation of all the world.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

**Jerusalem is built as a city bonded as one  
together.  
It is there that the tribes go up, the tribes of  
the Lord,  
to praise the name of the Lord.**

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

O God, who enlighten everyone who comes  
into this world,  
illuminate our hearts, we pray,  
with the splendour of your grace,  
that we may always ponder  
what is worthy and pleasing to your majesty  
and love you in all sincerity.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

**THE WORD**

In the Fourth Gospel (John), Jesus encounters individuals who represent a specific type of person. Nicodemus is a Jewish scholar who is literally and metaphorically in the dark about Jesus. He is an honest individual, one with well-formed beliefs, whose attitude to Jesus is positive, but limited by his own understanding of God.

He is impressed by the signs that Jesus has worked, but these do not, and cannot, bring him to a true appreciation of who Jesus really is. He seems to want to fit Jesus into his present system of belief, but Jesus challenges him to expand his vision beyond a narrowly Jewish way of thinking to one which is universal.

Jesus appeals to their common Jewish heritage by invoking the memory of Moses fashioning the bronze serpent and curing the Israelites who had been bitten by snakes as punishment for their complaining during the Exodus journey through the wilderness. By a play on the verb "to lift up", he presents his own being exalted on the cross as a similar healing for all those who will look at him and believe. Jesus speaks of this concern of God as being due to God's love for the world, that is, for all human beings. It is on the response which the person makes to the revealing of God's self in Jesus that judgement depends: it is not an act of God, but the result of the decision which each person makes for themselves which determines whether a person is condemned or not. Judgement is in the here and now, based on whether we accept or reject Jesus and his message. ■

**LEARN**

In the Gospel according to John, the crucifixion is "the exaltation" ("lifting up") of Jesus as king and priest.

Light and darkness/night are symbols of belief and unbelief in the Fourth Gospel.

Judgement in John is the decision the person makes to accept or reject Jesus and his message: it is something which the individual does, not an external, divine action.

**SAY**

The Son of Man must be lifted up... so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.  
(John 3:14-15)

**REFLECT**

Nicodemus is an interesting character. We first encounter him as a furtive figure, coming to Jesus under the cover of darkness: later he speaks up against the religious authorities' attempt to convict Jesus without giving him the benefit of due legal process; finally, he emerges as a courageous person, risking his reputation, and perhaps more, to bury the body of the crucified Jesus. We can see in him an example of developing faith and commitment.

It is in this dialogue between Jesus and the Jewish scholar that we find perhaps the most concise summary of the Christian faith. Sometimes, we can see displayed at sporting events posters proclaiming "John 3:16": this is the four-line verse which says: "God loved the world so much/ that he gave his only Son,/ so that whoever believes in him may not be lost/ but may have eternal life." Some people have said that if we were to lose the whole of the Christian scriptures except for this one verse, then we would still have the essence of the Gospel.

Nicodemus sincerely believed in the teachings he had received: Jesus did not tell him that he was wrong, but encouraged him to think more deeply about how God viewed the world, not just Nicodemus' part of it. Perhaps we might put ourselves in Nicodemus' shoes and broaden our understanding of Jesus and his message as well. ■

**DO**

Memorise the text of John 3:16, given in the "Reflect" section.

# PARISH OF OUR LADY IMMACULATE

Seamoor Road, Westbourne BH4 9AE

Roman Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth. Registered charity 246871

## NEWSLETTER 14<sup>th</sup> March 2021 Fourth Sunday of Lent (B)

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

Parish Office: Tel: 01202 760640 (all enquiries)  
email: [oliadmin@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:oliadmin@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

Parish Priest: Fr Andrew Moore: [andrewmoore@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:andrewmoore@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

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

Today is *Laetare* Sunday or 'Be joyful Sunday'. This midway point on our Lenten journey eases things up a bit with rose coloured vestments indicative of this foretaste of the joy that we are looking forward to celebrating more fully at Easter. Another cause for joy is that today is also Mothers' Day. This week also sees the Feast of St Patrick and St Joseph.

An announcement will be made next week as to recommencing public mass at Our Lady Immaculate. Things are looking more positive, but caution is still the watchword. Although the lockdown regulations do allow for communal acts of worship and for churches to be open, the public celebration of mass at Our Lady Immaculate remains suspended. The church will also remain closed during the week but is open for individual visits on Sundays from 10.00 a.m. – 11.00 a.m.

The 'church of home' is, once again, as important as ever and our prayers, though offered alone, are always in communion with and the through our Lord.

A directory of online masses has been provided by the Bishops' Conference and can be found at: [www.cbcew.org.uk](http://www.cbcew.org.uk)

There would normally be a Second Collection this weekend for the **Clergy Assistance Fund**. Donations may best be made on the Donate button with the reference 'Clergy Assistance' or directly on the diocesan website: [www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](http://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

## Gift Aid envelopes

We are approaching the end of the current tax year and a new set of Gift Aid envelopes would normally be arriving about now. The past year has been difficult in many respects not least in the practical management of the envelopes. To make the process easier we are asking those who currently use envelopes to move to a bank standing order. Printed envelopes will no longer be available. Those currently on envelopes will be contacted directly shortly. As we are moving to a more cashless society, those who currently give by cash, but not in envelopes, may also wish to move to a standing order, which can be Gift Aided. Please email or leave a message at the parish office if you would like a form. Your offering is valuable, indeed, essential, to the parish and we would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for your continued support, understanding and generosity.

## Liturgical Calendar

Fr Andrew continues to say mass privately in the church. To request mass intentions, please email or phone the Parish Office or leave an envelope at the church.

Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> March	Fourth Sunday of Lent (B)	People of the Parish
Monday 15 <sup>th</sup>	of the day	-
Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup>	of the day	-
Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup>	St Patrick	-
Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup>	of the day	-
Friday 19 <sup>th</sup>	St Joseph	Joe & Joan Bonnici
Saturday 20 <sup>th</sup>	of the day	-
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup>	Fifth Sunday of Lent (B)	People of the Parish

**Prayer Corner:** Please remember all the sick and housebound of our parish especially: Patricia Kowalewska, Win Sheridan, Patricia Plumb, Kathleen Wood, Peter Henry, Phillip Rockford, Germain McAulay, Geoffrey Dixon, Joe Bonnici, and Marjorie Lee.

**Finance.** A 'Thank you' to those who are using the 'Donate' button on the website. The 'Donate' button has the facility of adding a reference and also the option to Gift Aid any donation. Any donation with no specific reference will be treated as ordinary offertory. The parish's bank details are set out below for those who may wish to take out a standing order or make a bank transfer.

Bank: Lloyds	Account Name: PRCDTR Bournemouth Our Lady Immaculate
Sort Code: 30-93-04	Account Number: 00875075