



The Lion and The Dragon

A Monthly News Sheet for St. Mark's, Basford and St Margaret's, Wolstanton

www.stmarksbasford.co.uk and www.stmargaretswolstanton.org

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Lenten thoughts from the ministry team.

Get those Alleluia's Out-the-Way!

*In that heav'nly country bright, need they no
created light; Thou its Light, its Joy, its Crown,
Thou its Sun which goes not down; there for
ever may we sing, alleluias to our King.*

(Hymnody: As with gladness, men of old.)

Beloved,

I'm sat at my desk, when I could really do with packing for my post-Christmas leave, however I have endless emails to sort before I go and trying to write a Lenten reflection while I'm still in Christmas mode seems odd. I was struck today by today's Hymnody which tells us of forever singing Alleluia, and also in the message of Revelation as the voice like a great multitude cries out "Hallelujah!...God reigns...the marriage of the lamb has come...these are true words of God..." (19:6-10)

Which is interesting, because not long after we proclaim the 40-day old baby to be Our Salvation, do we turn to the cross. Moments after we hopefully open red envelopes full of joy and the dark ash sweeps our foreheads, do we no longer sing the A-word, for 'Eggs and Bacon' will be our song. This isn't because we are miserable, or we should use Lent to diet and feel sorry for ourselves, but we must look INTO OURSELVES and see where God is. I do feel I'm quite a Lenten priest and so I'm feeling ready for the season, but only because I'm an Easter one too!

This Lent I hope there will be some different opportunities to engage deeper into the great

mysteries of our faith – some extra worship, Lent Course (sorry as we print I have no further details yet of content), a Lent appeal, or some reading perhaps, and of course the incredible Holy Week when our lives will be changed forever - so do come and join in.

Today's Gospel of the Wedding at Cana, saw the first miracle as Jesus turned water into wine and began his ministry – we turn from the crib, and we may sing differently of our King, but we now seek a king, and our songs may be quiet, but they still proclaim forever the one God reigning from the Tree.

May you have a Holy Lent, (Don't get to Easter, without having 'lived' Lent!)

In Christ, Your Shepherd, Fr Tommy

This year, Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent falls on 14th February. As I sit to share these few thoughts with you, I am reminded that it will soon be time for me to consider and reflect on a Lenten intention.

I well recall the Vicar coming into primary school one day for our RE lesson. He reminded us that it would soon be Lent and encouraged us to think about three things when making our special intention. Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving. He then handed out to each one of us a Lenten Purse and encouraged us to keep a good Lent by thinking of other people in need of hearing God's word.

He suggested that one way for us was to give up buying sweets during Lent and put the pennies we would have spent on them into the Lenten Purse! At Easter the money from the purses would then be sent

Clergy: Fr Tommy Merry ☎ 01782 624450 ✉ frtommymerry@gmail.com; Rev'd Pat Dunn ☎ 01782 846417.

St Mark's Parish Administrator and Reader: Julie Atkins ☎ 01782 632213 ✉ jouls1506@gmail.com

St Mark's Churchwardens: Diane Downward ☎ 01782 621424; Nick Atkins ☎ 01782 632213.

St Mark's Reader: Janet Pazio ☎ 07594135691; **Safeguarding Coordinator:** Jill Ayres ☎ 07792 549356.

St Margaret's Churchwardens: Dai Elias ☎ 07562 988435; **St Margaret's Safeguarding Coordinator:** Catherine Plumb 07944578077

abroad to help in missionary work. I'm not sure how many purses were handed back to him!!

Lent is a good time to build up virtuous habits. There are plenty of ideas for actions and practices. Coming up with ideas is not usually the problem, its sticking to whatever we choose to do that may prove difficult for our will power! However, whatever we choose to do we don't want to do anything simply to be doing it, even if it's a good thing; we need to do it to enable us to draw closer to God so that we're set for a grace-filled journey to Easter.

Blessings, Reverend Pat.

I am old enough to remember, in my childhood, the coal fire that was the only way of heating the house with a back boiler to heat up the water. When the Spring light came through after the Winter fog up with curtains drawn and chilblains through getting too near the fire, It showed up a rather frowsty interior (Not that I noticed as a child) but my mum certainly did. So we set to for the annual Spring clean.

In a way Lent reminds me of this or at least one aspect of it. We can become dusty and grubby through the stresses and strains of everyday happenstance. Perhaps even a little bored with our daily routine. So, Lent gives us the opportunity for our spiritual spring clean to prepare for the joyous occasion of Easter.

Sometimes it's good to step back in our spiritual lives and ask why am I doing certain things and not others. Time is very precious and again, at least to me, Lent gives me the impetus to carve out quality time to spend with the Lord. To look at the community in which I'm placed and to ask of the Lord what his desires are for me at this moment in time. To listen and allow myself to be loved. Maybe just to be kind to myself and others.

Each of us is at a different stage in our journey and I hesitate to proscribe anything, but I don't think we can go wrong in reflecting on the readings for Ash Wednesday. Isaiah 58:1-12 and Matthew 6:1-6 and 16-21. To ask of the Lord where are you leading me

this lent on my unique and special spiritual journey. And what tools do I need to aid this?

Blessings Janet

Worship Services during February

(St Mark's, Basford (B), St Margaret's, Wolstanton (W))

4 th	2 nd before Lent	9.30am	Holy Communion (B)
		11.15am	Mass (W)
7 th	Wednesday	10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP) (B)
11 th	Next before Lent	9.30am	Holy Communion (B)
		11.15am	Mass (W)
14 th	Ash Wednesday	10.30am	Holy Communion+Ashing(B)
		7.00pm	Holy Communion+Ashing(B)
18 th	1 st of Lent	9.30am	Family worship + HC (B)
		11.15am	Mass (W)
21 st	Wednesday	10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP) (B)
25 th	2 nd of Lent	9.30am	Holy Communion (B)
		11.15am	Mass (W)
28 th	Wednesday	10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP) (B)

Diary Dates for February

3 rd	Saturday	1.00pm	Soup and Bingo (B)
7 th	Wednesday	7.00pm	PCC (B)
10 th	Saturday	6.30pm	Pancake party (B)
20 th	Tuesday	7.00pm	Lent Course (B)
27 th	Tuesday	7.00pm	Lent Course (B)

Early March Dates

5 th	Tuesday	7.00pm	Lent Course (B)
12 th	Tuesday	7.00pm	Lent Course (B)
16 th	Saturday	10.00am	Christian Aid walk
19 th	Tuesday	7.00pm	Lent Course (B)

Pancake Party:

There will be a Pancake Party on Saturday 10th February at St Mark's church hall. Come and join us at 6.30pm for an evening of games and pancakes.

Ash Wednesday:

You have three opportunities to start your Lenten journey with Holy Communion and Ashing. Services will be offered at St Mark's church at 10.30am and 7.00pm. Please do your best to make it to one.

Lent Course:

Come and join us for our Lent course this year. We will meet for 5 weeks each Tuesday evening at 7pm, at St Marks church, in the lady chapel. Beginning on the 20th February.