

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT, YEAR C

Every year the season of Lent bears upon us, and with it the season of resolutions. What shall I give up this year? I think the chocolate or the wine, or maybe everything that adds to the waistline? And how likely is it that I will stick to it – is this actually achievable, unlike my last diet or self-discipline campaign? Abstinence, fasting, and penance are important and valuable parts of Lent. They remind us of the season, and exist to divert our attention from our own wants, and to focus on Christ. To encourage prayer, and a closeness with the Lord as we approach the depths of Christ's passion, death, and resurrection.

There is, however, a second aspect to this penitential Lenten season which we can sometimes miss. This aspect emerges from the very start of Lent: 'remember you are dust and to dust you will return'. At first hearing, a little morbid, but on reflection, a reminder of our creaturely condition. A reminder that, yes, at one level, we need to exercise control over our body and mind as part of our Lenten practices. Yet at another level, the imposition of ashes points to the inescapable limitedness of our control of nature, and of our very selves. To accept this fact, I think, is by far the more difficult project.

This was the stumbling-block of both Adam and Eve, and because of it, their story casts a long shadow over every Lenten season. In the garden of Eden, all they wanted to do was to eat of the tree that promised them transcendence of their limits: to partake was to know everything, all 'knowledge of good and evil'. They wanted knowledge and control of everything, that is, to be God.

Perhaps it is the same with all of us. It can be difficult to accept that we can't control everything: our natures, our families, other people, the natural world, our futures. We try hard: so much of our effort in life is expended on 'keeping things together', or getting to the point when we can say 'everything is under control'. But we do keep dreaming about having situations and other people just the way we want them. That is, in our power, and under our control. Here, we are the central characters in the story. This, I think, is the whole point of the counter-narrative of Lent. In the story of the life and death of Jesus, our false vision of control without limit or power without constraint is given up. During Lent, we realize that we are radically dependent upon God; it is a time to embrace our limitedness, and realize that it is the Lord who raises us up. This is the meaning of joining in the narrative of Lent. So let us reflect and pray that these weeks will be a journey for us, which by journey's end we reach a point in our lives when we can say, with Jesus, 'Lord, in to your hands I commend my Spirit'. And that, I suggest, is *a somewhat harder challenge for us all*.

Fr Philip



FISHER HOUSE NEWSLETTER

Sunday 14th February - FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

CALENDAR - TERM WEEK V

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| Sunday 14 | FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT 9.00am Sung Latin Mass 11.00am Sung English Mass |
| Monday 15 | 12.30pm Mass |
| Tuesday 16 | 1.05pm Mass |
| Wednesday 17 | 1.05pm Mass 12.30pm <i>Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament</i> |
| Thursday 18 | 1.05pm Mass |
| Friday 19 | 1.05pm Mass 6.45pm Stations of the Cross 7.30pm Mass |
| Saturday 20 | 1.05 Mass in EF 4.30—5.30 <i>Confessions</i> 6.00pm Vigil Mass of Sunday |
| Sunday 21 | SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT 9.00am Sung Latin Mass 11.00am Sung English Mass |

FR MARK LANGHAM - SR ANN SWAILES OP - FR PHILIP MOLLER SJ
www.srcf.ucam.org/fisherhouse/

SVP VISITS

The SVP Group is beginning a new initiative, to visit the elderly in their homes. If you would like to be part of this, or if you (or someone you know) would like a visit, please sign up on the list outside chapel.

SVP PRAYER PARTNERS

This Lent, the SVP invite you to consider adopting a prayer partner. For more information come to a short meeting and prayer service on Sunday night at 6.30pm, or see Fee Doherty or Sr Ann for more details.

CAFOD LENT APPEAL

This Lent, CAFOD is seeking to provide water to communities in Africa without it. There is a collection basket outside the chapel.

CAFOD VOLUNTEER CENTRE

CAFOD is opening a volunteer centre in Cambridge, with a range of opportunities for those who wish to engage in its activities combatting poverty and injustice around the world. Please see the card outside the chapel.

SCRIPTURE STUDY

On Monday at 7.30pm in the Library, Fr Bruno will study Matt 6:1-18. All welcome.

PILGRIMAGE TO WALSINGHAM

In each diocese, there has been designated a 'Door of Mercy', and the ancient shrine of Walsingham has one. There will be a day pilgrimage to Walsingham on 14 March, with Mass, a talk by the shrine Rector, and a visit to the ruins of the medieval priory. Cost £10. Please sign up on the board outside the chapel if interested.

FISHER LECTURE

Professor Monica Grady, one of our foremost authorities on planets and space science, will speak on Science, Faith and Life, on Tuesday 23 February at 5.00pm.

COMPLINE

Compline is sung in chapel on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays at 9.00pm; Fridays at 9.30pm.

CATHOLICISM FOR THE CURIOUS

A series of talks over lunch on Monday at 1.15pm, given by Fr Mark. This week: *Thomas Merton*.

CONFIRMATION

Cardinal Cormac will celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation on 28 February. If you would like to be confirmed, please give your details to one of the chaplains.

FR PHILIP AT CHURCHILL

Next Sunday, Fr Philip will preach at Churchill College at 5.45pm.

FRUGAL FRIDAY & CAFOD

A cookbook produced at Fisher House, containing dozens of easy recipes. On sale after Mass at £7 (includes £1 donation to CAFOD's Lent charity). Cheques to CUCA (nb).

MUSLIMS AND CHRISTIANS: LISTENERS FOR THE WORD

Fr Dan Madigan SJ will deliver a lecture on Muslim/Christian relations, in the Fisher Room on Tuesday 16 February at 8.00pm.

ARADIN LECTURE

Professor Remy Brague (Sorbonne) on *A Bird's-Eye View of near Eastern Intellectual History*. Wednesday 17 February, 5.00pm, Boys Smith Room, Fisher Building, St John's College.

COLLEGE MASS

On Wednesday at 6.15pm in Queens' College. The considerable pleasure of seeing Fr Mark there will be almost eclipsed by fame of the choir director - John Rutter.

FAITH AND POLITICS IN VENICE

21—28 August, join young people from all over Europe answering 'The Call to Public life', at the Jesuit international Student Residence in Venice. For details cf www.faithandpolitics.eu

FRANCISCAN LIFE AND SPIRITUALITY

On Thursday at 7.30pm in the Fisher Room, Fr Donal Walsh OFM and sisters Helen and Roisin FMM will share some of their personal stories and experiences of the Franciscan order, and answer questions. All are welcome.

GRADSOC

Madeleine Teahan, deputy editor of the Catholic Herald, will speak on 'Catholicism and the Press' on Wednesday at 8.00pm in the Fisher Room.

SAINTS AND SCONES

4.30pm on Sunday in Sr Ann's room is the time and place to relax with a delicious Devon cream tea, and learn about the lives of the saints. This week, Solene Lapiere will talk about *St Jean Vianney, the Cure d'Ars*

MARRIAGE PREPARATION

There will be a one-day course of marriage preparation on Saturday 12 March. This is a requirement for those wishing to marry in Church. Please see Fr Mark if interested.

COLLECTION LAST WEEK

£431.27

Thank you!