

## LENT'S COUNTER-NARRATIVE

Every year the season of Lent bears upon us, and, with it, the season of resolutions. What shall I give up this year? Will I 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 immediate desires, to focus on Christ, to encourage prayer, and closeness with the Lord as we approach the depths of Christ's passion, death, and resurrection.

There is, however, a second aspect to Lent which we can sometimes miss. It 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. So let us reflect and pray that these weeks will be a journey for us, by the end of which we may reach a point in our lives when we can say, with Christ, '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 25th February - 2nd Sunday of Lent

### CALENDAR - TERM WEEK VI

Sunday 25	SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT	
	9.00am	Sung Latin Mass
	11.00am	Sung English Mass
Monday 26	1.05pm	Mass
Tuesday 27	1.05pm	Mass (6.30pm at Robinson)
Wednesday 28	12.30pm	<i>Exposition of Blessed Sacrament</i>
	1.05 pm	Mass
Thursday 1	1.05pm	Mass <i>St David, Patron of Wales</i>
March		
Friday 2	12.30pm	<i>Stations of the Cross</i>
	1.05pm	Mass
	7.30pm	<i>Vespers and Reflection</i>
Saturday 3	1.05pm	Mass
	4.30—5.30	<i>Confessions</i>
	6.00pm	Vigil Mass of Sunday
Sunday 4	THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT	
	9.00am	Sung Latin Mass
	11.00 am	Sung English Mass
		Celebrant: Bishop Nicholas Hudson

### CONSIDER YOUR CALL

Anyone considering vocation to priesthood or religious life is invited for discussion, tea and Vespers on Friday, 6.00pm in the Great Chamber.

### BOOKS FOR THE HOMELESS

Many homeless people like to read donated books. Our SVP will take these out on their nightly rounds. A box is outside the chapel for suitable donations.

### SENIOR MEMBERS' READING GROUP FOR LENT

At 6.00pm on Thursdays in Lent, an opportunity for senior members to meet and discuss together Dr Luigi Gioia's *Say it to God*. Copies are available from Fr Mark at £7. Meeting in the Dining Room, to consider chapters 2 & 3.

### LOURDES O&C PILGRIMAGE

The Oxford and Cambridge Lourdes pilgrimage takes place 21 - 27 July. Cost £350 (bursaries available). Contact [lourdesoandc@gmail.com](mailto:lourdesoandc@gmail.com) or speak to Fr Mark

### CATHOLIC UNION

David O'Mahoney will speak at 11.00am Mass this weekend, and be available in the Fisher Room after Mass.

### QUAERO : THEOLOGY FOR NON-THEOLOGIANS

Our theology group for postgraduate and undergraduate students continues on Sunday at 3.30pm in the Library with the question of *Indulgences*. For more details, and a reading package, contact Robert Billups on [querocam@gmail.com](mailto:querocam@gmail.com)

### TAIZE PILGRIMAGE

Revd Andrew Bigg, Chaplain at Corpus Christi, is organising a pilgrimage to Taizé 3-10 September. Travel will be via TGV, and cost will be around £400. Please contact him for more information on [ab2495@cam.ac.uk](mailto:ab2495@cam.ac.uk)  
Revd Bigg needs names by the end of this month.

Br Jean-Marc from the Taizé community will preach in Corpus chapel on Sunday 4 March at 6.00pm Evensong.

### BENSON CLUB

The next novel to be read is our own Monsignor Benson's apocalyptic masterpiece: *Lord of the World*. It is available free online. We meet to discuss it on 15 March. Recommended by two Popes!

### DANTE CIRCLE

The Dante circle meets next on 7 March at 7.30pm to discuss Canto xxx of *Purgatorio*. Texts and translations provided.

### VESPERS & MEDITATION

takes place at 7.30pm on Fridays.

### MASS AT ROBINSON COLLEGE

Mass will be celebrated at Robinson College on Tuesday at 6.30pm.

### GRADSOC

The grad/postdoc society will be swinging their hips at Salsa Dancing class, 7.00pm St Paul's, Hills Road.

### APOLOGIA

Our popular Tuesday series continues this week with Dr Anna Abram (Principal of Margaret Beaufort Institute) on *Catholic Theology and Virtue Ethics*. Come for a meal at 7.00pm, talk at 8.00pm. Followed by Compline and Bar. Voluntary donation of £1 towards the cost of the meal.

### EUCCHARISTIC CONGRESS 8 - 9 SEPTEMBER

A major event in the life of the Church. A Eucharistic Congress will be held in Liverpool, with delegates from every parish and community in the country. We have several allocated places. If you would like to attend, see Fr Mark.

### ARCHBISHOP PAUL GALLAGHER

The Vatican's 'Foreign Secretary' will speak at Fisher House on Tuesday 6 March at 1.00pm on Vatican policy in the Middle East.

### TAIZÉ PRAYER

Monday 5 March at 9.00pm.

### STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Are celebrated every Friday during Lent at 12.30pm, just before Mass.

### MORNING PRAYER

The Office of Lauds is prayed in the chapel each morning at 8.15am.

### FISHER HOUSE STATIONS

On Friday 9 March, we celebrate Stations of the Cross at 7.30pm, with your own reflections, poems, songs.

### SCRIPTURE READING

On Fridays in Lent, over lunch in the Fisher Room, there will be opportunity to read and discuss some scripture passages.

### CONFIRMATION

Bishop Nicholas Hudson will celebrate Mass at 11.00am next Sunday, and confer the sacrament of Confirmation.

### FILM CLUB

Tonight (Sunday) Gregory Peck is the pattern of all priests in war torn China: *The Keys of the Kingdom*. 8.00pm Fisher Room.

### NIGHT FEVER

Friday 16 March - please sign up outside the chapel.

### COLLECTION LAST WEEK

£354.84

*Thank you!*