

TOGETHER IN OUR ISOLATION

Term draws to a close, and a vacation looms like no other I can remember. Many of us have travel plans, for holiday, academic conferences, family re-unions - but we don't know whether these will be possible given the coronavirus outbreak. For those of us staying at home, it is an uneasy vigil, listening to the numbers of afflicted increasing with each news bulletin, aware of cases in the nearby counties - not so far away - and wondering when it will hit Cambridge.

The inexorable advance of the virus measures the increase of our own anxiety. To many of us, our greatest longing is to maintain our daily routine: we are reluctant to let go of that, for when daily life is disrupted, then we are truly in a crisis, one that takes us into new territory. One sombre stage in this journey occurred this week, when we adopted measures at Fisher House to limit any possible spread of the virus during Mass.

Should coronavirus take hold, it will mean the (temporary) end of social activity. It will demand withdrawal and isolation. Many of those most at risk will be starved of human contact. I'd like to suggest that Psalm 139 (my favourite) gives us some way of reflecting where God is in this:

O Lord, you search me and you know me:

You know my resting and my rising

You discern my purpose from afar.

The theme of this lovely psalm is that God's love is so creative that his very *watching* gives our lives meaning and purpose. We don't need to be out and about, doing things, meeting people. God's mere knowing us creates us and sustains us. God will simply not let us alone. With the happiest alliteration in the Grail translation, his love is seen to pester us, even when we are alone or afraid:

Behind and before you besiege me,

your hand ever laid upon me.

Should it come to it, this psalm may encourage us to be together in our isolation, to find a communion even in our withdrawal. For one who will never abandon us watches over us, ceaselessly, lovingly - and his quiet gaze creates us, gives meaning to our lives, and assures us that we are never isolated from his love.

Fr Mark



FISHER HOUSE NEWSLETTER

Sunday 8 March - 2nd SUNDAY OF LENT

CALENDAR - LENT TERM WEEK VIII

Sunday 8	2ND SUNDAY OF LENT		
	9.00am	Sung Latin Mass	
	11.00 am	Sung English Mass	
Monday 9	1.05pm	Mass	<i>St Frances of Rome</i>
Tuesday 10	1.05pm	Mass	
Wednesday 11	1.05pm	Mass	
Thursday 12	12.30 - 1.00pm	Adoration	
	1.05pm	Mass	
Friday 13	12.30pm	Stations of the Cross	
	1.05pm	Mass	
Saturday 14	1.05pm	Mass	
	4.30 - 5.30	Confessions	
	6.00pm	Vigil Mass of Sunday	
Sunday 15	3RD SUNDAY OF LENT		
	9.00am	Latin Mass	
	11.00 am	Sung English Mass	

FR MARK LANGHAM - SR ANN SWAILES OP - FR CHASE PEPPER CSC

LENT AND EASTER TIMES

This is the last newsletter of term. Masses next weekend will remain on term-time schedule: 6.00pm vigil, 9.00am Sung Latin, 11.00am Sung English. From 22 March, Sunday Mass will be at 10.30am only - there will be no vigil Mass.

There will be a full schedule of Masses for Holy Week and Easter - but remember, not for the faint of heart: the Easter Vigil begins at 4.00am! Times of all services will be posted at the chaplaincy and on the website.

MASS TIMES

We are intending to change the arrangement of Masses next term. The 6.00pm Vigil Mass will become the Sung Latin Mass with the Schola Cantorum: after this Mass there will be a time to socialise. The 9.00am Sunday Mass will be a simple English Mass without Music, and the 11.00am Mass will remain a sung English Mass with the Chapel Choir. If you would like to comment, please contact Fr Mark on ml709.

The chaplains wish you a blessed Holy Week and Easter, and a good rest during the vacation!

SENIOR MEMBERS' & POSTDOCS READING GROUP FOR LENT

We will meet at 6.00pm on Fridays in Lent, in the dining room, to read and discuss Ruth Valerio's *Saying Yes to Life* - a Christian look at environmental, ethical and social concerns. Please sign up outside the chapel. The book costs £7.00 and can be obtained from Fr Mark.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Sr Ann will lead Stations of the Cross on Fridays in Lent in the Chapel at 12.30pm.

GOOD WORKS WORKSHOP

A workshop (with brunch) on how we are to live out Catholic values in our careers and workplaces after Cambridge will be held on 14 March, from 11.00am to 1.00pm. A sign-up sheet for those who wish to participate is outside the chapel.

SVP

The Society of St Vincent Paul is always looking for more members to help with the soup run, and other ventures. Please sign up outside the chapel.

INTERNATIONAL EVENING

Early next term, on 24 April, we will hold an international food evening. If you are travelling home, do consider bringing some local food or snacks back with you!

BENSON CLUB

The book for this term is classic Spanish novel *The House of Ulloa* by Emilia Pardo Bazan. A fabulous tale of innocence thrown among wolves: we will meet to discuss it on Thursday 12 March in the Great Chamber, over wine and cheese. Manchego, naturally.

APOLOGIA

Our series continues this week on Tuesday with a meal at 7.00pm, and at 8.00pm Sr Ann speaking on *The Journey to Easter* - exploring the Paschal mystery. The evening ends at 9.00pm with Compline, and the Black Swan Bar.

PRO-LIFE GROUP

The group meets on Monday at 7.30pm in the Great Chamber (note change of venue), to discuss Pro-Life Theology.

GRADSOC

Grads meet for evensong at St John's on Thursday. Gather at 6.15pm in the porters' lodge.

NB the **BENSON DINNER**, our annual Graduate Dinner in honour of our most famous assistant chaplain, will take place on Saturday 21 March in the Fisher Room.

LAST WEEK'S COLLECTION

£398.96

It costs £4,000 per week to run Fisher House.

NEWMAN SERIES



Our Newman series for this term concludes on Wednesday, when Dr Alison Wood will speak on '*Newman and the University*'. Newman's thoughts on the role and place of a University still influence conversations about the subject. 7.30pm in the chapel. All are welcome.

TAIZE EVENING

Brother Paolo from Taize will be at Fisher House on Monday 9 March. There will be a meal in the Fisher Room at 6.45pm - please let Hania know if you wish to attend on ha386. Prayer in the chapel follows from 8.00pm. All welcome.

FROM CAMBRIDGE TO THE CROSS

The Catholic institutions across Cambridge have collaborated this year to create a Way of the Cross through Lent: each week a different institution prepares an evening's meditation. Please see the notice-board for details, and try to support the wider Catholic community in Cambridge.