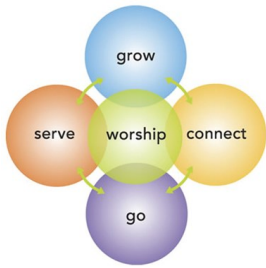


The Parish of
STONY STRATFORD
 with
CALVERTON



THE PARISH NEWSLETTER
THE 5th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
SUNDAY 7th February AD 2016



Welcome to the Parish Church where, after the example of the early church, we celebrate the Eucharist: the "apostles teaching and fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42)

How the wisdom of God differs from the wisdom of men! If a businessman of today (or even of the year 28 A.D.) were choosing a chairman and assistants for the world-wide enterprise he was about to set up, is it likely that he would choose them from among the unknown, unlettered fishermen of Galilee? Yet Christ, who was about to set up not only a world-wide institute but an everlasting one, chose these simple fishermen and made them his assistants and his successors in the work that he had taken in hand.

And it wasn't that he was restricted in his choice. There were many highly educated priests and scribes in Jerusalem whom he could have won over, men who could preach and instruct so much more eloquently than Peter or Andrew. There were Roman officers in Palestine who were highly educated, and who would be much more eagerly listened to in the Gentile world. There were Greek philosophers whose very name would add prestige to the Gospel message had they been Apostles. Yet it was to none of these that Christ entrusted the arduous task of spreading the good news of the Gospel, it was to none of these that he gave the keys of his kingdom.

Christ was not influenced in his judgement by external, accidental qualifications. He judged the heart and the will. He knew the true worth of men. Furthermore, the truths he was committing to his Church's keeping were not based on earthly wisdom which would require eloquence and prestige to bolster them up. They were the eternal, divine truths which needed no human propaganda, no help from mere men.

Thus, in the selection of his Apostles, Christ has given us an extra proof, if one were needed, of his own divine wisdom and of the divine origin of the Christian religion which we profess. Our religion is not man-made, God is its author. God lets down his nets and he throws none of his catch away for all are given grace to serve him.



THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH

- TODAY:**
 9:30am **5th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME PARISH MASS at St Mary & St Giles**
 6:00pm **EVENSONG at All Saints** with the choir 'Quorum'
Our Parish
 Pray for: *Our Parish*
- Monday: Feria**
 9:30am 'Squeals on Wheels' in Parish Hall
 8:00pm Bell Ringing Practice
 Pray for: *The Sick, Housebound & Handicapped*
- Tuesday: Shrove Tuesday**
 10:30am **Mass at All Saints + 'Elevenes'**
 5:30pm Confessions at *St Mary & St Giles*
 Pray for: *For Confessors & Penitents*
- ASH WEDNESDAY - THE BEGINNING OF LENT**
- 9:30am Mass at St Mary & St Giles**
 6:00pm Parish Office Open to arrange: Banns, Marriages & Baptisms
 Handbell Ringing Practice at SMSG School
 The Band - Practice at SMSG School
- 7:30pm PARISH MASS at St Mary & St Giles**
 Pray for: *For grace to keep a good and holy Lent*
- Thursday: Feria**
 10:30am **Mass at St Mary & St Giles**
 7:00pm Flower Arrangers meet with Rector
 Pray for: *For the victims of totalitarian regimes*
- Friday: Feria**
 8:00am **Mass at St Mary & St Giles School**
 7:30pm Parish Singers Rehearsal
 Pray for: *For all who teach the Faith*
- Saturday: Feria**
 10:00am 'Musical Bite' Coffee Morning
 4:00pm Confessions in St Mary & St Giles
 4:30pm Evening Prayer in St Mary & St Giles
 Pray for: *For those seeking faith in Christ*
- Next Sunday: The 1st Sunday of Lent**
 9:30am **PARISH MASS at St Mary & St Giles**
 11:00am **Family Mass at All Saints**
 Pray for: *Our Parish*

READINGS NEXT SUNDAY
1st Sunday of Lent
 1st Reading: Deuteronomy 26:4-10
 Psalm: 91 (part)
 2nd Reading: Romans 10:8-13
 Gospel: Luke 4:1-13

- Sidesmen Team 1
- Altar Servers Team 1
- Offertory Brian & Fiona Collins
- Cleaning Team 2
- Gardening Team 3

Worshipping Numbers last Sunday: 152

INFORMATION



The Order of Mass is on the laminated card. The references to the Scripture Readings, which may be either listened to or followed in the Bibles provided, along with the Psalm and the Prayer of the Faithful are also included in this Sheet. Hymns are unannounced but are indicated on the boards towards the front of the Nave.

AA Large Print Orders of Service are available at St Mary & St Giles. Please ask a Sidesman or Sideswoman for a copy.



A Loop System is in operation at St Mary & St Giles - please set hearing aids to the "T" position.



Access for the Disabled at St Mary & St Giles is via the path on the north side of the church. **At All Saints** it is via the South Porch.



Gluten-Free Hosts: if you are on a Gluten-Free diet and would like a Gluten-Free Host when you receive Holy Communion please mention this before Mass to one of the Sidesmen or women who will arrange this for you. Please make yourself known to the Parish Priest so that he is aware of your need.



Collections: for the continuing mission of Christ are taken while the altar and gifts of bread and wine are being prepared. If you are a visitor and a taxpayer and would like to make a donation please use the Gift Aid envelopes provided at the end of each row - please fill in your details. This enables us to reclaim, from the Inland Revenue, 25p for each £1 donated.



We observe a period of quiet prayer and reflection before the celebration of Mass, between the end of the Organ Voluntary and the Sacristy Bell being rung, in order that we may be better prepared to worship almighty God.



Please join us at the back of church for tea or coffee after Mass. A priest will be near the main door shortly after the end of Mass should you need to talk with one.

Please take this Service Sheet home with you and use as part of your devotions during the week.

FUTURE DIARY DATES

Sunday 7th February

6:00pm Evensong at All saints with 'Quorum'

Tuesday 9th February

Shrove Tuesday

5:30pm Confessions

Wednesday 10th February

ASH WEDNESDAY

9:30am Mass

7:30pm Parish Mass with Imposition of Ashes both at St Mary & St Giles

Saturday 13th February

10:00am 'Musical Bite' Coffee Morning at SMSG

Wednesday 17th February

7:00pm the 1st of this Lent's weekly celebrations of the Stations of the Cross at SMSG
7:30pm Mass at SMSG
8:00pm the start of the Course 'A Faith for Skeptics' in the Parish Hall

Thursday, 18th February

12:30pm free Lunchtime Concert with Jacob Collins and his musical friends - a great half term treat, all ages welcome

Sunday 21st February

Masses as usual
4:00pm Lenten Motets & Meditations

Sunday 5th March

The Rector, at the Invitation of the Bishop of Dorchester, will be participating in the Diocesan 'Shared Conversations' on Human Sexuality
Fr Joseph will celebrate both Masses today.

Saturday 12th March

10:00am 'Musical Bite' Coffee Morning at SMSG with John Neal on the Pipe Organ

Tuesday 15th March

7:30pm Parochial Church Council in Parish Hall

Thursday 17th March

Diocesan 'Shared Conversations' on Human Sexuality

Sunday 20th March

Passion (Palm) Sunday
9:30am Joint Parish Mass
6:00pm Evensong & Benediction at All Saints

THIS EVENING: 'Quorum' will be leading the singing at Evensong in All Saints Church at 6:00pm. It promises to be a beautiful celebration of this much loved service from the Book of Common Prayer.

Farewell Card and Collection: I have purchased a card which may be signed today in St Mary & St Giles and this evening in All Saints for Fr Benjamin as he prepares to move to his next Parish. The Churchwardens will be happy to receive donations towards the purchase of book tokens as a leaving gift from the Parish. Fr Ross

To all the Parish Family at St Mary and St Giles Church and School, and All Saints:

Dear Friends, As I think you all know the bishops have given me a new assignment, continuing my curacy in New Hinksey in Oxford, which I am aiming to be in a position to begin by Holy Week. So I am immensely grateful for this opportunity to express to you all my gratitude for my time in Stony Stratford and Calverton, and the kind messages I have received since the move was announced. I'm grateful for all that Fr Ross and you have given me, and I shall remember you with affection. Please keep me in your prayers: as I shall keep you in mine. With love: Fr Benjamin

The Real Easter Egg: if you would like to purchase Easter Eggs that tell the story of Holy Week and Easter, that are made with high quality, 'proper' chocolate, then please sign up on the freestanding notice board—in both our Parish Churches. There are three to choose from, all details on the board or see Lesley Salter. Orders by 28th February please!

Care for the Family is a Christian charity promoting and protecting all aspects family life. They are holding an evening for parents in Milton Keynes on Wednesday, 2nd March (see blue noticeboard and flyers). You would be sure to have an enlightening, inspirational and fun evening.

Saturday, 13th February 10am - 12noon - our musical bite coffee morning this month will be in the Parish Hall and give you the chance to see a display of the updated history of our newly refurbished organ and to enjoy great refreshments and catch up with friends and make new acquaintances.

The Fellowship: this important group in the life of our parish started out as the 'Women's Fellowship' and then made the brave step of welcoming men into their fold. This provided a much needed boost to its life and vitality. This group is always on the lookout for new members, it is a group of men and women who meet together at 2:00pm, usually in the Parish Hall, on the third Wednesday of each month for fellowship and usually has a variety of engaging speakers and activities throughout the year - and most events seem to involve the consumption of food (!).

At its 17th February Meeting, after the speaker the Rector will be joining with the Fellowship to plan its future. This would be a good meeting to come along and join, if you haven't done so far - as the Fellowship is looking to give itself a boost once more with new members and new ideas as to how it can best fulfil its part in the life and mission of our parish.

The Rector's Lent Book: 'Deep Church Rising' (published by SPCK) by Andrew Walker and Robin Parry argues that the future of the church must be a 'deep' one, one that

PARISH NEWS AND NOTICES



looks to great traditions of the church as part of its history and future. They are concerned that there is a Third Schism taking place, one which looks to set separate Christianity from its theological moorings, that casts doubts of the traditional doctrines of the Trinity, incarnation and resurrection. Walker and Parry claim we have lost, or are in danger of losing, the gospel and the response is therefore a vital recovery which they call 'Deep Church' - harking back to CS Lewis' working title for his eventual book 'Mere Christianity.'. A Deep Church response they say is in the practice of right belief, right worship, right living sourced in scripture and tradition and made possible through an intentional catechesis.

The book has three major points to make. First it articulates the dangers the church is facing: the privatisation of belief, worship as entertainment, ethics without moral justification; all of which threaten Christian orthodoxy and orthopraxis ("right action"). The fault-line on which a possible third schism may occur is precisely a too 'thin' Christianity which has unwittingly wed itself to a consumer age. The authors see dangers target in both a liberal Christianity, which wants to jettison key doctrines, and an evangelical charismatic Christianity that is too dismissive of deep catholic traditions of the church.

The second point is to offer a defence of a catholic Christian rooted in creeds, sacrament, and catechesis. The future of the church is one that takes seriously the doctrine of the church as articulated in Nicaea, one that takes seriously the celebration of the Eucharist, one that takes seriously the catechesis of Christian faith and practice. The authors argue that where these are marginalised, we have lost the plot, experiencing a gospel amnesia.

The third point is a clarion call for a church renewed by the past, a church that has the deep resources which shape its worship and mission to enable it both to survive and flourish.

In his commendation of this book the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Rowan Williams, writes: "We don't become either human or holy without the nurture and wisdom of others; this book helps us make contact with those others so that we can indeed grow in humanity, sanctity, and discernment as we need to."

Church Library: We are recommending a very short book by Stephen Cottrell in our collection for Lent this year. "The Things He Carried" is based on Jesus' last journey from Pilate to the cross. Bishop Cottrell imagines what Jesus might have been thinking, based on the things He was carrying and wearing, like the cross itself, the crown of thorns, and the seamless robe. But he also considers the burden on Jesus of the expectations and fears of those around him, Jesus' own hopes and cares, his duty to God - all considerations we also feel at times as weighty burdens in our own lives. This is a simple and attractive book which repays slow reading. We also recommend Graham Tomlin's book "Looking through the Cross", which helps us to see our everyday concerns from the point of One who saw the Cross as the way to accomplish His mission. (The Archbishop recommended it first, but those of us who read it last year enjoyed it too!) These and many others are available to borrow for free from the church library.

Lent, Holy Week & Easter 2016

Ash Wednesday (10th February) Masses as usual at 9:30am and 7:30pm in St Mary & St Giles.

Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving are the traditional methods of participating more fully in the Lenten Spiritual Disciplines.

Prayer: Setting aside time for prayer at least three times a day throughout the year, particularly on rising in the morning and at the going down of the sun, and on retiring for the night is the time honoured tradition of Christians throughout the world. In Lent this pattern of prayer remains, but recourse to prayer at other times of the day during Lent enables us to grow in faith as in praying we are drawn further into our heavenly Father's life and love.

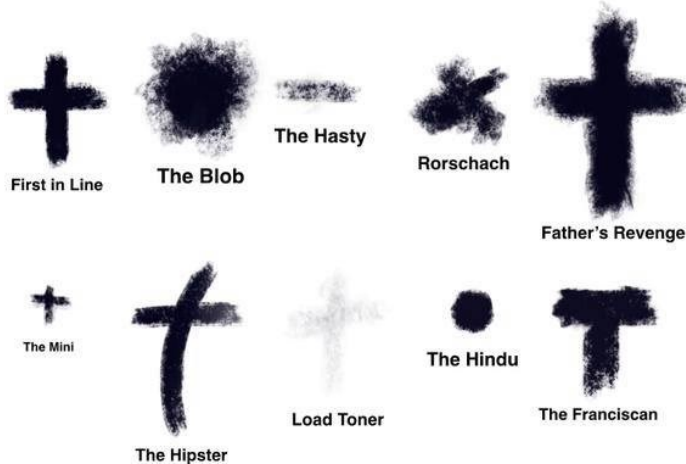
Fasting: Think about what spiritual discipline you are going to take on rather than simply giving up vegetable (in reality that is what much Milk Chocolate is as the solids are so often substituted with vegetable fats). There is nothing wrong with making sacrifices...indeed it is commendable ...providing one doesn't binge once Easter Day arrives!

To help with this and raise money for our Lent Appeal (see below) Saturday's at 12:00noon sees our customary Lent Lunches in the Church or Parish Hall.

Almsgiving: Each year Christians set aside any money they have saved by fasting and often make additional offerings of alms for those in need. Each year our Parish supports a charity during Lent. This year the PCC, mindful of the suffering of so many Christians throughout the world, particularly in Iraq and Syria, agreed to support the work of the Barnabas Fund. **Lent Boxes are available today** along with Gift Aid envelopes and a Prayer Card. Notices about the work of the Barnabas Fund are on display in each of our Parish Churches. In order that we may learn more about the work of the Barnabas Fund, the Rector is trying to arrange for some one to come from the Fund to speak to us about its mission and work.

Of course, study is another feature of Lent and the Course '**A Faith for Sceptics**' will begin on Wednesday 17th February after the evening Mass in the Parish Hall. Each session will last about one hour. Any adults seeking Confirmation are asked to attend this Course. This course will have four sessions during Lent and continue during Eastertide. In what is considered by some to be a secular and rational age it will help to show that Faith, and especially the Christian Faith, is not irrational at all.

A Catholic Guide to Ashes



MASS TEXTS PROPER TO TODAY'S OBSERVANCE

Reflection prior to Mass

We hear in the readings today how Isaiah, Peter and Paul all experienced the power of God at work in their lives in very different ways as they answered his call. We are invited to reflect on how God has made himself present in our lives and further how he wishes us to witness to his Word. And for this, we pray that we will be safe in his care because we place all our hope in him.

The Collect

Merciful Lord, grant to your faithful people pardon and peace: that we may be cleansed from all our sins and serve you with a quiet mind; through Jesus Christ our Lord; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD (SIT)

The First Reading

Isaiah 6:1-8
SMSG Reader: Oliver Williams Old Testament Page 585

The Responsorial Psalm

(from Psalm 138)

R/. I will bless you, O Lord.

I thank you, Lord, with all my heart,
you have heard the words of my mouth.
Before the angels I will bless you.
I will adore before your holy temple. ®

I thank you for your faithfulness and love
which excel all we ever knew of you.
On the day I called, you answered;
you increased the strength of my soul. ®

All earth's kings shall thank you
when they hear the words of your mouth.
They shall sing of the Lord's ways:
'How great is the glory of the Lord!' ®

You stretch out your hand and save me,
Your hand will do all things for me.
Your love, O Lord, is eternal,
discard not the work of your hands. ®

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 15:1-11
Reader: Rita Oakley New Testament Page 147

Gospel Acclamation

(STAND)

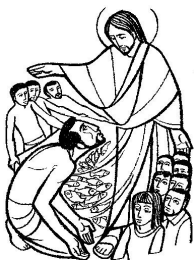
Alleluia, alleluia!

Follow me says the Lord,
and I will make you fishers men.

Alleluia!

The Gospel

Luke 5:1-11
New Testament Pages 53



The Prayer of the Faithful

(Biddings: Fiddy Abraham)

Priest:

My brothers and sisters,
God our Father wants all mankind to be saved
and calls us to the knowledge of the truth.
Let us pray to him with all our hearts.

Intercessor:

Let us pray for the holy Church of God:.....
that the Lord would guide and protect it.

V/. Lord, hear us.

R/. Lord, graciously hear us.

Let us pray for all the peoples of the world:.....

That the Lord would unite them in peace and harmony.

Let us pray for all our brothers and sisters in need:... Wendy, Fiddy Abraham, Anna Archer, Maggie Baker, Mary Barry, Henry Blake, Richard Coley, Gill Edwards, Sue Gower, Russell Herbert, Paul, Margaret Hooton, Rebecca, Magnus John, Kay Lucas, Isaac Lyon, Sue Maton, Cyril Millward, Capt John Richards CA, Shirley Scrutton, Alma Steinmetz, Fr Edmund, June Wilde, Janis Williams.....that the Lord may assist them.

Let us pray for those who have died:... Norman Stokes... and for those whose anniversaries of death occur at this time...**7th** Emma Talyor, Anne Maria Cowley; **8th** Bert Calvert; **9th** Christina George; **10th** James Roberts, Bill Barby; **11th** Edna Turner, Vi Grove, Anthony Redgrave; **13th** Thomas Bull, Ann Taylor, Dora Bull, Leslie Proctor, Charles Redgrave...that they may dwell for ever "in the shelter of the Most High".

Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord.

And let light perpetual shine upon them.

Let us pray for ourselves and our community:.....
that we may offer an acceptable sacrifice.

In silence we pray for our needs and concerns

Priest:

God of love
our refuge and our strength,
hear the prayers of your church,
and grant us today
what we ask of you in faith.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Communion Reflection:

At this moment when we receive the Blessed Sacrament we enter the presence of God more fully than Isaiah entered his presence in the Temple. We too hear the word of forgiveness as we take the Body given for us, and His Blood which was shed for us. We share the bread of life come down from heaven and drink the cup poured out for the remission of our sins. We thus receive nourishment for the eternal life which Jesus shares with us through his resurrection. Our spiritual nets are full to breaking point.

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