

St Peter's and St Philip's Newsletter

POPE'S INTENTIONS FOR JANUARY

Universal –Violence against Women

For women who are victims of violence, that they may be protected by society and have their sufferings considered and heeded

16, Green Lane, Hazel Grove, SK7 4EA Phone 0161 483 3476 Fax 419 9592
www.stpeterscatholic.church www.churchservices.tv/stockport
Email admin@stpetershazelgrove.org.uk
Fr. Peter Sharrocks petersharrocks@stpetershazelgrove.org.uk



Mother of God Local Missionary Area in Stockport

YOU ARE ALL WELCOME TO OUR PARISH COMMUNITIES

If you wish to attend Mass at St Peters on Saturday or Sunday then you should reserve a place by e mailing admin@stpetershazelgrove.org.uk.

If you wish to attend Mass at St Philip's on Saturday evening then you should e mail david.smith7220@ntlworld.com

ORDINARY TIME WEEK 6 Year B

Divine Office Psalter Week 2

ALL MASSES FROM ST PETERS WILL BE AVAILABLE ON THE LIVE STREAM
Each evening the Rosary will be said at 7 00 p.m, except Sunday then at 5 00 p.m.
Join in on line www.churchservices.tv/stockport. The Rosary is not open for people to attend but just broadcast over the internet.



THE WORD OF GOD

FIRST READING:

Leviticus 13:1-2,44-46

PSALM 31

You are my refuge, O Lord; you fill me with the joy of salvation

SECOND READING:

1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia Alleluia!

A great prophet has appeared among us; God has visited his people
Alleluia

GOSPEL READING:

Mark 1:40-45

The Sacrament of Reconciliation

will be celebrated in the sacristy during Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on Fridays and Saturdays and subject to social distancing

The Mill Hill Missionaries will offer their annual Novena of Masses and Prayers in preparation for the Feast of St Joseph, their patron, at St Joseph's Church in Maidenhead from Wednesday 10th to Thursday 18th March. Further details on the online version of this newsletter

Saturday 13th February 2021

11.00 am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

12 Noon Secular Clergy Fund

6.00 pm Mass at St. Phillips

6.00 pm Polish Mass

Readings Genesis 3:9-24; Psalm 89; Mark 8:1-10

Sunday 14th February SIXTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

Readings Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46; Psalm 31; 1 Corinthians 10:31- 11:1; Mark 1:40-45

10 00 a.m. Mary Donnelly

6 00 p.m. People of the Parish

Monday 15th February 2021

12 Noon McLoughlin Family (sick)

Readings: Genesis 4:1-15; Psalm 49; Mark 8:11-13

1 00 p.m. Crematorium Service for Robert Carter

Tuesday 16th February 2021

12 Noon Anthony Quiligotti

Readings: Genesis 6:5-8,7:1-5,10; Psalm 28; Mark 8:14-21.

Wednesday 17th February 2021 ASH WEDNESDAY

9 15 a.m. Mass at St Philip's

12 Noon John Mulvaney

7 00 p.m. Hannah Gleeson

Readings: Joel 2:12-18; Psalm 50; 2 Corinthians 5:20-6:2; Matthew 6:1-6,16-18

Thursday 18th February 2021

12 Noon Martha Armstrong

Readings: Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Psalm 1; Luke 9:22-25

Friday 19th February 2021

12 Noon Nellie Cain

Readings: Isaiah 58:1-9; Psalm 50; Matthew 9:14-15.

6—00 p.m.—8 00 p.m. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

Saturday 20th February 2021

11.00 am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

12 Noon John Heneghan

6.00 pm Mass at St. Phillips

6.00 pm Polish Mass

Readings Isaiah 58:9-14; Psalm 85 Luke 5:27-32

Sunday 21st February FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

Readings Genesis 9:8-15; Psalm 24; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:12-15

10 00 a.m. Matthew Coleing

6 00 p.m. People of the Parish

Please remember to wear face masks and sanitise your hands coming in and going out of church and keep to social distancing including sitting away from the aisles as much as possible.
YOU SHOULD ONLY SIT WITH MEMBERS OF YOUR OWN HOUSEHOLD
Please follow the Arrow markings on the floor of the church DO NOT COME TO CHURCH IF YOU HAVE ANY SYMPTOMS - SNEEZING, COUGHING, SORE THROAT ETC



The sick - remembering, all the sick in the parish, in our hospitals and nursing homes. We also remember those who are housebound and are unable to come to Mass. We remember especially young people who are sick. Let us also keep in our prayers all those who have care of the sick and the dying at this time often putting their own lives at risk in the process..

Lately Dead: Robert Carter whose funeral is tomorrow, Monday February 15th, at Stockport Crematorium at 1 00 p.m. Maureen Carroll, Tony Byrne, John Hand (Junr), John Ready (funeral on February 26th) and Michael Longden (Funeral on February 24th)

Anniversaries that occur around this time: Michael Newcombe, Joyce Humphreys, James Mullaney, Mary O'Donahue, Daniel Mulkeen, John Buttle, Thomas Conboy, Celia Carter, Dennis Byrne, John Henaghan, William Grace and Theresa Maher,

Prayer Intentions - We have a team of 'prayer warriors' who will pray for your intentions at this time, send your intentions to the parish office and they will be forwarded. You can also light a 'virtual' candle on the parish website.

To prepare for this prayer, spend a few moments asking the Holy Spirit to open your mind and heart to hear this Word being spoken to you.

6th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year B) Mark 1:40-45

A leper came to Jesus and pleaded on his knees: 'If you want to' he said 'you can cure me'. Feeling sorry for him, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him. 'Of course I want to!' he said. 'Be cured!' And the leprosy left him at once and he was cured. Jesus immediately sent him away and sternly ordered him, 'Mind you say nothing to anyone, but go and show yourself to the priest, and make the offering for your healing prescribed by Moses as evidence of your recovery'. The man went away, but then started talking about it freely and telling the story everywhere, so that Jesus could no longer go openly into any town, but had to stay outside in places where nobody lived. Even so, people from all around would come to him.

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1. Spend some time quietly reading and rereading the passage, noting the words/phrases that draw your attention.
2. As you reflect on this scripture passage, what does it say to you about Jesus?
3. The leper pleaded, on his knees, making a request to Jesus. Take time in prayer to bring before Jesus all from which you want to be freed.

For Conversation:

Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him.

To which 'outcasts'/'unclean' are you/your community being called to stretch out your hand and touch?

ASH WEDNESDAY—FEBRUARY 17th

*Lent begins on Wednesday and there will be Masses at 9 15 at St Philips and 12 noon and 7 00 p.m. at St Peters. Please book in for one of these Masses as you do for the weekend Masses. This year Ashes will **NOT** be given because of the current Covid restrictions. I have some small 'hand crosses' which you will be invited to take as a Lenten sign of repentance and sharing in the Lord's journey through Lent to Calvary. These crosses are made in Bethlehem from olive wood and fit easily into your pocket, purse or whatever. I realise that not everyone will be able to attend Mass on Wednesday so you can pick one up from church as long as stocks last through Lent.*

During Lent there will be Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament each Friday evening from 6 00—8 00 p.m. and I will be available for the Sacrament of Forgiveness at that time

as well as on Saturday mornings as usual. In the 'on line' version of the newsletter you will find the Pope's message for Lent and some other resources for the Lenten journey

We look forward to being able to celebrate Easter this year with some congregation present but I suspect there will still be restrictions on numbers able to attend our services. We will give more details about the Holy Week and Easter services nearer the time



PRAISE AND WORSHIP Mary Hardiman on 'Surrender'

Friday evening 19th February at 7.30pm please join us on Zoom for our regular Praise and Worship time when we will be joined by Mary. "God wants us to live happy and healthy lives under his guardianship and protection. The talk will focus on why we might be afraid of surrender, what it means and how to go about living our lives as God wants".

As anyone who has heard Mary give a talk previously will know, it promises to be an inspiring evening so please be in touch with Laura and she will send you the link. (laurasmall192@outlook.com).

ST PETER'S JUSTICE AND PEACE LENTEN PROJECT:

We recently met as a group via Zoom and discussed how St Peter's and St Philip's could support our three local primary schools. Having contacted the schools, we would like to request that if anyone has **an old laptop that they are not using**, could they please donate it to us so we can get it reconditioned and sent into the schools for children to use. Please deliver to Carmel O'Malley at 11, Aldwyn Crescent, Hazel Grove SK7 5HY - she will make space in her porch for a Covid safe drop off.

The schools also said there was a need for a **supply of dried foods and tinned goods** to be kept in school for when families struggle to access the local Foodbanks. We are hoping to be able to start this collection shortly - if you can please start collecting food without expiry dates, such as tinned food, cereal, beans/pulses, pasta, tea/coffee, long life milk, sugar etc. and we will let you know when and where you can safely leave it.

Prayer request:

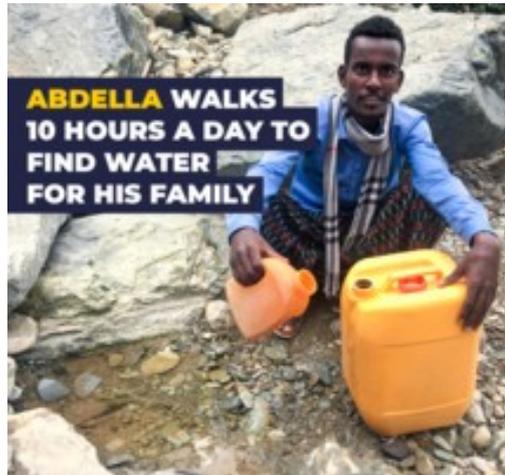
Our schools are a really big part of our church family and have remained open for teaching the most vulnerable students and the children of key workers throughout lockdown. Please hold our teachers, the support staff and the whole school community in your prayers:

Thank You, Father, for technology allowing many students to continue their educations online. For virtual classrooms and technological resources. Thank You for every teacher and student adjusting to their new normal. Comfort teachers and support staff as they miss interacting with their students in person. Equip them with energy and inspiration to come alongside their students in this challenging time of crisis. Protect their health, Father, both physically and mentally. Encourage them to use their gifts and talents to find new ways to reach students.

CAFOD Lent Appeal

Abdella lives in an extremely remote and mountainous part of Ethiopia. It takes him ten hours a day to collect water. He says his life is being wasted as he has no time for anything else. Give today to reach vulnerable communities around the world with water and to provide other vital support. Donate online at cafod.org.uk/lent or

by using a CAFOD envelope. You can also give via text. Text LENT to 70460 to donate £10*. *Texts cost £10 plus one standard rate message you'll be opting in to hear more about CAFOD's work and fundraising via telephone and SMS. If you'd like to give £10 but do not wish to receive marketing communications, text LENTNOINFO to 70460. For more information, please see CAFOD's Privacy Policy: cafod.org.uk/Legal-information/Privacy-notice. The Lenten Family Fast Day envelopes will be available from Ash Wednesday and the **Family Fast Collection will be taken on Easter Sunday**. There is more information about this appeal on the Cafod website



To help people like Abdella
**Text LENT to
70460**
to donate £10 to
CAFOD's Lent Appeal

Or visit
cafod.org.uk/give

CAFOD
Catholic Agency for
Overseas Development

<https://cafod.org.uk/Fundraise/Family-Fast-Day>

ST PETERS YOUTH

Hello Everyone, if you are a young person who is in Year 7 or up we would love you to come and join St.Peter's Youth also known as 'SPY'!

SPY is a great way to come and meet with many other young people within the parish (& beyond!). We play games, watch videos, discuss faith, and have lots of fun.

If you would like to join us we are having a session on the 14th February at 7.30pm via **ZOOM** and we would love to see you there!

SPY is a great way to make new friends and is a kind and friendly group where we are all looking to deepen our faith.

Hope to see you on the 14th! - Tom (Contact me on 07523848101 if you're interested).

MARRIAGE CARE: If you are going through difficulties in your relationship, Stockport Marriage Care offers a confidential counselling service. You can contact us on 0800 389 3801. We are currently providing couple counselling via a secure webcam (Zoom).

OFFERTORY GIFTS Thank you for your generous donations last week which amounted to **£587-30** plus online giving last month came to over £1000 per week. Thank you to those who are putting their Offertory envelopes through the door and who have done the on line giving.. The collection for the Priests Retirement Fund has increased by another £127 giving a total of £1556-20p not counting those who will have given directly via the on line banking. Thank you for your ongoing generosity. **DURING THE PRESENT EMERGENCY WE STILL HAVE BILLS TO PAY!!** Please continue to put your offerings in an envelope and save them until we are 'back to normal' or you can post them through the presbytery door. Many of the new sets of Offertory Envelopes have been delivered through your doors over the past few days but there are some remaining to be picked up in church or will be sent by post shortly.. If you wish you can send an offering by cheque payable to St Peters Hazel Grove or

do a direct transfer to:

St Peters Hazel Grove at Lloyds Bank 30 15 52 54607668 or set up a Standing Order or for St Philip's go to **St Philips Offerton 30 15 52 54674660**

If your bank asks for the name of the account it is **Shrewsbury Roman Catholic Diocese Trustees** with the above account numbers

FROM FR PETER

It was great to see a good number at Mass on Thursday for the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. From our daily read out from Church Services a good number also joined us for the Rosary as well as Mass. In a message on the pilgrimage website Fr Long, the pilgrimage director tells us that whilst there will be no assisted pilgrims going on pilgrimage this year it is still hoped that a smaller group will be able to go to Lourdes at the end of July. This is of course dependent on the advice and regulations in place at the time from our government and the French authorities. Hopefully there will be some decision about this around Easter.

I had my second of the coronavirus injections on Friday courtesy of Stepping Hill Hospital. It is really important that when you are offered the injection that you take it. It is only when everyone has had the injection that the government will be more inclined to ease the lockdown. First and foremost it will give some protection against the virus and then help get back to some normality, whatever the new normal is going to be. It would seem that like the flu we will have to learn to live with coronavirus but the vaccination programme is an important part of the whole process.

This week sees the beginning of Lent with three Masses on Ash Wednesday all detailed on the front page of the newsletter. In the 'on line' version of the newsletter you will also see Pope Francis' Lenten message which is worth a read.

As I mentioned in last week's bulletin **ashes will NOT be distributed** this year in our parishes. It was suggested that we could sprinkle them on peoples' heads from a 'social distance' but I thought that was not an ideal solution. So we will give everyone who comes to Mass on Wednesday a small hand cross to keep as a source of encouragement during Lent in whatever Lenten penance you choose to do. Realising that not everyone who wishes will be able to come on Wednesday the crosses will be available on the following days so if you cannot get in

to Mass on Wednesday you can come on Thursday or Friday or Saturday or Sunday! The important thing is to take Lent seriously and let it be a time of renewal and healing uniting ourselves with the journey of the Lord to the Cross and Resurrection. Perhaps for those who have not yet ventured to Mass you could make it your Lenten resolution to come to Mass at least once during Lent. It is actually safer than going to a supermarket.

But before Ash Wednesday there is Pancake Tuesday and there is a pancake recipe above ...sort of!! Have a good week and if you do wish to come to any of the three Masses on Ash Wednesday then make sure you book. Already the midday Mass at St Peters is filling up.

Gin Pancakes

INGREDIENTS:

- Flour
- Milk
- Eggs
- Gin



METHOD:

1. Chuck the flour, eggs & milk in the bin.
2. Drink the gin.

Fr Peter

The National Novena to St Joseph will take place from 10th- 18th March 2021 at **St Joseph's Church** in **Maidenhead**. In this Year dedicated to St. Joseph, the Mill Hill Missionaries are preparing for the Feast of St Joseph, their patron, with a special Novena of Masses and prayers to ask for God's blessing on their Society's missionary outreach, and for the intentions of all those who support their work.



If you are able, and if it is possible to attend, Masses are on Wednesday to Friday (10-12 March), at 7.30pm, Saturday, 13 March at 10am, Sunday, 14 March at 11.00am, Monday – Thursday (15-18 March) at 7.30pm.

If you are unable to attend but would like to join in from home, for the first time this year, Masses from **St. Joseph's Church** will be available to follow on **Zoom** and **YouTube** via the parish website: stjoseph-parish.co.uk and the Mill Hill website: www.millhillmissionaries.com/novena, where you will also find the Novena prayer leaflet.

You can also join in by praying the daily Novena prayer, which will be in your Novena prayer leaflet. You are welcome to send in your petitions and/or to request a printed Novena prayer leaflet. Please write to the **Novena Director, 41 Victoria Road, Liverpool, L37 1LW**, or email novenamhm@gmail.com

The past twelve months have been an exceptionally difficult time for all of us. We can only hope that the current vaccine rollout will eventually provide some relief. May the coming Novena to St. Joseph, in this Year dedicated to him by Pope Francis, be a source of comfort and support to all who have lost loved ones and whose lives have been adversely affected by this pandemic

LENTEN MESSAGE FROM POPE FRANCIS **"Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem" (Mt 20:18).**

Lent: a Time for Renewing Faith, Hope and Love.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Jesus revealed to his disciples the deepest meaning of his mission when he told them of his passion, death and resurrection, in fulfilment of the Father's will. He then called the disciples to share in this mission for the salvation of the world.

In our Lenten journey towards Easter, let us remember the One who "humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross" (*Phil 2:8*). During this season of conversion, let us renew our *faith*, draw from the "living water" of *hope*, and receive with open hearts the *love* of God, who makes us brothers and sisters in Christ. At the Easter vigil, we will renew our baptismal promises and experience rebirth as new men and women by the working of the Holy Spirit. This Lenten journey, like the entire pilgrimage of the Christian life, is even now illumined by the light of the resurrection, which inspires the thoughts, attitudes and decisions of the followers of Christ.

Fasting, prayer and almsgiving, as preached by Jesus (cf. *Mt 6:1-18*), enable and express our conversion. The path of poverty and self-denial (*fasting*), concern and loving care for the poor (*almsgiving*), and childlike dialogue with the Father (*prayer*) make it possible for us to live lives of sincere faith, living hope and effective charity.

1. Faith calls us to accept the truth and testify to it before God and all our brothers and sisters.

In this Lenten season, *accepting and living the truth revealed in Christ* means, first of all, opening our hearts to God's word, which the Church passes on from generation to generation. This truth is not an abstract concept reserved for a chosen intelligent few. Instead, it is a message that all of us can receive and understand thanks to the wisdom of a heart open to the grandeur of God, who loves us even before we are aware of it. Christ himself is this truth. By taking on our humanity, even to its very limits, he has made himself the way – demanding, yet open to all – that leads to the fullness of life.

Fasting, experienced as a form of self-denial, helps those who undertake it in simplicity of heart to rediscover God's gift and to recognize that, created in his image and likeness, we find our fulfilment in him. In embracing the experience of poverty, those who fast make themselves poor with the poor and accumulate the treasure of a love both received and shared. In this way, fasting helps us to love God and our neighbour, inasmuch as love, as Saint Thomas Aquinas teaches, is a movement outwards that focuses our attention on others and considers them as one with ourselves (cf. *Fratelli Tutti*, 93).

Lent is a time for believing, for welcoming God into our lives and allowing him to "make his dwelling" among us (cf. *Jn* 14:23). Fasting involves being freed from all that weighs us down – like consumerism or an excess of information, whether true or false – in order to open the doors of our hearts to the One who comes to us, poor in all things, yet "full of grace and truth" (*Jn* 1:14): the Son of God our Saviour.

2. Hope as "living water" enabling us to continue our journey.

The Samaritan woman at the well, whom Jesus asks for a drink, does not understand what he means when he says that he can offer her "living water" (*Jn* 4:10). Naturally, she thinks that he is referring to material water, but Jesus is speaking of the Holy Spirit whom he will give in abundance through the paschal mystery, bestowing a hope that does not disappoint. Jesus had already spoken of this hope when, in telling of his passion and death, he said that he would "be raised on the third day" (*Mt* 20:19). Jesus was speaking of the future opened up by the Father's mercy. Hoping with him and because of him means believing that history does not end with our mistakes, our violence and injustice, or the sin that crucifies Love. It means receiving from his open heart the Father's forgiveness.

In these times of trouble, when everything seems fragile and uncertain, it may appear challenging to speak of hope. Yet Lent is precisely the season of hope, when we turn back to God who patiently continues to care for his creation which we have often mistreated (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 32-33; 43-44). Saint Paul urges us to place our hope in reconciliation: "Be reconciled to God" (*2 Cor* 5:20). By receiving forgiveness in the sacrament that lies at the heart of our process of conversion, we in turn can spread forgiveness to others. Having received forgiveness ourselves, we can offer it through our willingness to enter into attentive dialogue with others and to give comfort to those experiencing sorrow and pain. God's forgiveness, offered also through our words and actions, enables us to experience an Easter of fraternity.

In Lent, may we be increasingly concerned with "speaking words of comfort, strength, consolation and encouragement, and not words that demean, sadden, anger or show scorn" (*Fratelli Tutti*, 223). In order to give hope to others, it is sometimes enough simply to be kind, to be "willing to set everything else aside in order to show interest, to give the gift of a smile, to speak a word of encouragement, to listen amid general indifference" (ibid., 224).

Through recollection and silent prayer, hope is given to us as inspiration and interior light, illuminating the challenges and choices we face in our mission. Hence the need to pray (cf. *Mt* 6:6) and, in secret, to encounter the Father of tender love.

To experience Lent in hope entails growing in the realization that, in Jesus Christ, we are witnesses of new times, in which God is "making all things new" (cf. *Rev* 21:1-6). It means receiving the hope of Christ, who gave his life on the cross and was raised by God on the third day, and always being "prepared to make a defense to anyone who calls [us] to account for the hope that is in [us]" (*1 Pet* 3:15).

. Love, following in the footsteps of Christ, in concern and compassion for all, is the highest expression of our faith and hope.

Love rejoices in seeing others grow. Hence it suffers when others are anguished, lonely, sick, homeless, despised or in need. Love is a leap of the heart; it brings us out of ourselves and creates bonds of sharing and communion.

"Social love' makes it possible to advance towards a civilization of love, to which all of us can feel called. With its impulse to universality, love is capable of building a new world. No mere sentiment, it is the best means of discovering effective paths of development for everyone" (*Fratelli Tutti*, 183).

3. Love, following in the footsteps of Christ, in concern and compassion for all, is the highest *eLove is a gift* that gives meaning to our lives. It enables us to view those in need as members of our own family, as friends, brothers or sisters. A small amount, if given with love, never ends, but becomes a source of life and happiness. Such was the case with the jar of meal and jug of oil of the widow of Zarephath, who offered a cake of bread to the prophet Elijah (cf. *1 Kings* 17:7-16); it was also the case with the loaves blessed, broken and given by Jesus to the disciples to distribute to the crowd (cf. *Mk* 6:30-44). Such is the case too with our almsgiving, whether small or large, when offered with joy and simplicity.

To experience Lent with love means caring for those who suffer or feel abandoned and fearful because of the Covid-19 pandemic. In these days of deep uncertainty about the future, let us keep in mind the Lord's word to his Servant, "Fear not, for I have redeemed you" (*Is* 43:1). In our charity, may we speak words of reassurance and help others to realize that God loves them as sons and daughters.

"Only a gaze transformed by charity can enable the dignity of others to be recognized and, as a consequence, the poor to be acknowledged and valued in their dignity, respected in their identity and culture, and thus truly integrated into society" (*Fratelli Tutti*, 187).

Dear brothers and sisters, every moment of our lives is a time for believing, hoping and loving. The call to experience Lent as a journey of conversion, prayer and sharing of our goods, helps us – as communities and as individuals – to revive the faith that comes from the living Christ, the hope inspired by the breath of the Holy Spirit and the love flowing from the merciful heart of the Father.

May Mary, Mother of the Saviour, ever faithful at the foot of the cross and in the heart of the Church, sustain us with her loving presence. May the blessing of the risen Lord accompany all of us on our journey towards the light of Easter.

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 11 November 2020, the Memorial of Saint Martin of Tours

Francis

NEW BEGINNINGS - A JOURNEY FROM LENT TO EASTER

For the past few years I've produced a Lent reflection leaflet continuing a format started by Bryan Halson during our time together on the former Shrewsbury Diocesan Justice and Peace Commission. This year Lent takes on a new meaning for me following the death from natural causes of my beloved elder daughter Annie in June 2020. For Advent 2020 I put together a series of weekly reflections based on her writings as a scripture scholar, teacher and evangelist. For Lent this year I am sharing some more of her material as we journey through Lent towards Easter.

I've been looking at C S Lewis' classic *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* whilst helping home-school our 9 year-old granddaughter during the latest lockdown. It seems apposite in the current situation to identify with a bleak land where it is 'always winter but never Christmas.' At present it feels as though we are existing in a continual season of Lent, an enforced time of fasting and abstinence from so many of the ordinary pleasures we take for granted: visiting family and friends or new places, going to a film or out for a meal, enjoying a day out to the coast or the countryside. We wait, sometimes with impatience, for the time to move forward to Easter and the joy of the Resurrection. We are locked in a period of stasis, of stagnation. There is frustration and fear. Will our lives ever be the same again? But we can choose to embrace this enforced isolation as an opportunity to quieten ourselves, to truly listen to God and discern a new way forward. We can use this time wisely to consider changes to our lifestyle that will help conserve the fast-diminishing natural resources of our planet, to live more simply and to work for the good of all. This is an opportunity to focus on what really matters and to journey in faith and hope.

Anne O'Connor

Ash Wednesday, February 17 *Be reconciled to God ... now is the favourable time.* 2 Cor 5:20 – 6:2 'The journey with the Lord is a journey into love.'

Thursday, February 18 *Anyone who loses his life for my sake will save it.* Lk 9:22-25 'You have made us for yourself, O God, and our hearts are restless until they find rest in you.'

Friday, February 19 *Is not this the sort of fast that pleases me: to break unjust fetters ... to let the oppressed go free.* Is 58: 1-9 'We can bring release to captives by offering a place of welcome to the lonely and the marginalised.'

Saturday, February 20 *Show me, Lord, your way so that I may walk in your truth.* Ps 85: 1-6 'Lord, may your spirit reveal to me the right path and give me the strength, consolation and determination to walk it.'

ANOTHER LENTEN RESOURCE

The Jesuits in Britain and the BBC are bringing a special on line Lenten retreat. For Further details go to

<https://www.jesuit.org.uk/bbc-and-jesuits-britain-bring-you-special-lent-retreat>