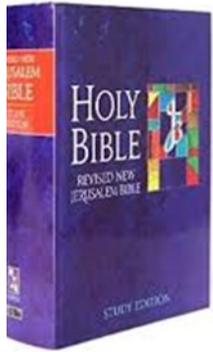


CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. EDMUND OF CANTERBURY
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24 January 2021
Third Sunday in Ordinary Time
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St. Peter Claver
89 Shortlands Road, BR2 0JL
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THE SUNDAY OF THE WORD OF GOD



AS YOU MAY REMEMBER in this country for over a year now we have been keeping a special Year of the Word of God, entitled *The God who Speaks*, designed to help Catholics in England and Wales deepen our knowledge of the Bible. The Bishops Conference has developed special resources for this which you can access at www.godwhospeaks.uk. Linked to this in September 2019

Pope Francis instituted for the whole world a special *Sunday of the Word of God* to be celebrated on this Sunday every year; of course this will often be during the annual *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*, and the pope made it clear that **‘the Scriptures point out, for those who listen, the path to authentic and firm unity.’** Of course all this was planned before the pandemic - as part of the special year we did have two study evenings in the church before the shutters came down last spring, which were live-streamed.

I think I have pointed out elsewhere that, difficult as the last ten months have been, the coincidence between ‘lockdown’ and this special year might turn out to be providential. Has the pandemic period helped us get to know the Bible better?

In some ways, no. At purely live-streamed Masses, the Scripture readings are read solely by the priest or a deacon, since no one else is in the church building. This is far from ideal in that the reading of the Word of God at Mass, since the renewal of our liturgy following the Second Vatican Council, should involve the active participation of lay-people. When we have been open, a limited number of readers, and sometimes only the altar server, has been able to read for safety reasons, and moreover the homily has been limited to five minutes and the Bidding Prayers, intended to be a response to the Bible readings, have been suspended. The Holy Father in his 2019 letter encourages us to ‘enthroned’ the sacred text during the Mass this Sunday to emphasise its importance, and this is not easy in the present circumstances; nor is the commissioning of readers by the local bishop today, which he also recommends.

In other ways we can be more positive. Vatican II taught us that in the Mass one of the four ways in which we encounter the presence of Jesus Christ is through the Bible readings. That is why the reading of the Bible at Mass is a *solemn event which should be done properly* - with care,

reverence and audibility. That’s why at Mass the deacon or the priest kisses the gospel text at the end of the reading, and why, ordinarily the gospel book is bowed to and revered with incense; sometimes the gospel text is sung. We should normally see this as a *special kind of reading*, because God speaks to us through the words which are being read; he is with us in this way.

You probably don’t know this but a privilege given to bishops is that they can have a chapel in their homes with the Blessed Sacrament reserved. Many of us would have liked this in the last few months. But if we’re serious about encountering the presence of Christ in the Bible - not restricted to the reading of the scriptures at Mass - then we have the Lord present in our homes if we possess a Bible. This prompts some awkward questions: do we have one? If we do is it a good, up-to-date Catholic Bible? Where do we keep it? Does it get opened or is there a film of dust on the top? I draw attention to this because while it is important that so many of you have been strengthened in these difficult times by being able to participate in live-streamed Masses, from our own church and from elsewhere in the world, *it is also important that we meet Our Lord in the Scriptures*, and (provided we have a Bible or can access one online) we can do that without leaving our homes.

In the talks we had last year we did recommend good Bibles which does mean, I am afraid, avoiding some. Don’t go and buy a ‘King James Bible’ from WHSmith (if you can these days), as it’s not a Catholic Bible and is incomplete. In my view the best one now in this country is the *Revised New Jerusalem Bible* (DLT 2019), shown here, largely the work of the Benedictine scholar at Ampleforth, Dom Henry Wansbrough (known to some of you). It’s outstanding and not very expensive - note that Catholic Bibles are expected to have at least some brief explanatory notes, and Fr Wansbrough’s are excellent. Another good one is *The Bible freshly translated by Nicholas King* (Kevin Mayhew 2013). Fr King, who is a friend of mine, is a Jesuit priest based in Oxford who gave some online talks in our deanery last year. Please don’t feel embarrassed to ask about Bibles or the Bible - we’re here to help so that this Sunday, and at this time, we can all grow in our knowledge of the Bible.

IN THE CHURCH

Our church is closed for the safety of our parishioners. All services are live-streamed and can also be viewed as a recording.

Sunday 24 January

6.00 pm vigil
9.30 am Church
5.30 pm Church

Monday 25 January

9.30 am
10.00 am Church
6.00 pm Church

Tuesday 26 January

10.00 am Church
6.00 pm Church

Wednesday 27 January

9.30 am
10.00 am Church
6.00 pm Church

Thursday 28 January

10.00 am Church
6.00 pm Church

Friday 29 January

9.30 am
10.00 am Church
5.00 pm Church
6.00 am Church

Saturday 30 January

10.00 am Church
6.00 pm vigil

Sunday 31 January

9.30 am Church
4.30 pm Church
5.30 pm Church

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is on the webcam each weekday from 11.00 am until 5.00 pm.

There will be Benediction every Friday at 5.00 pm and on the last Sunday of each month at 4.30 pm.

READINGS FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Year B Cycle 1 Psalter Week 4
Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Psalms 95:1-2, 6-7, 7-9
1 Corinthians 7:32-35

Your offerings last week amounted to £2713.80
Thank you

To make your regular donations electronically, please click here <http://saintedmunds.net/index.php/donations/> or to set up a standing order. Our bank details are:

St Edmund's Church
Sort Code: 60-02-12
a/c no: 14282887

Next weekend there is a second collection for the Catholic Association for Racial Justice which exists to support the work of the Catholic Church to promote racial justice in our schools, parishes and in wider society. Your donation can be given through ChurchSuite via the DONATE option..

*Heavenly Father, it hurts so bad.
Dull the pain with Your love.
Blur the sharp edges by reminding me that from bad
comes good.
Help me appreciate that after the sorrow, joy is
sweeter.
I look forward to better times.
I can endure anything with You by my side.
Amen*

During this time when we are all trying to keep safe, our priests would prefer if you did not call at the Presbytery without first making an appointment.

Our clergy can all be contacted by email and by phone (details on the front page.)

Fr Ashley's day off is Monday, Fr Steve's, Tuesday and Fr David's is Wednesday. Please leave them free to enjoy it.

The Parish Office is closed and the staff are working from home.

Emails are read during the working day and the phone is monitored.

We pray for those who have died recently: Tessa Gould, Fr Michael Boland, Fr George Webster, Ted Northwood, Norman Potter, Denise Ricketts, Rosi Baruffi, Rowland Jenkins, Marie-Christine Kerr, Clautilda Binang, Canon Frank O'Sullivan, Fr George Webster, Fr Patrick Nwokeji, Maria Muoghalu, Bishop Gregory Ochiagha, Norah Kidd, Siba Mahalingam, Michael Bowden and Michael O'Sullivan.

We pray for those whose anniversaries are this week: William Webster, Monica Hyland, Anne Lymbery, May McMahon, Tom Gower, Cheryl McGoldrick, Gibson Janika Sikaleya, Frank Donagh, Caroline Pearson, Yvonne Harvey, Jason Du Haney, Jim McNamara, Michael Akpenyi.

We pray for the sick: Angela, Evelina Armani, Rob Burns, Carmel Cardiff, Chant, Christine, Mark Clapson, Jorge Corrigan-Zorilla, John Crouch, Sorcha Davis, Niamh Dawson, Giacomo Dillon, Bridget D'Souza, Alex Dufort, Joshua Dunford, Nicholas Dunford, Sarah Dunmore, Cecil Dutton, Suzanne Eilbeck, Antonio Ferrara, Felicity, Mary Flood, Flora, Sarah Gallagher, Erika Geddes, Gaetan Goa, Noreen Griffiths, Tony Hallett, Hans Halpin, Margaret Halpin, Michael Harper, John Harrow, Pauline Hatfield, Eileen Hayes, Kathleen Hayes, Marie Hayock, Lesley Hill, Glen Jack, Rosemary Jackson, Peter Anthony Jones, Catherine Kelly, Eileen Kelly, Antony & Richard Kirin, Andrew Kuzan, Rosy Lobo, Rose McDonnell, Mary McGrath, Paul McIndoe, Eddie Mitchell, Salvador Moreno, Barbara Moyce, Robert Moyle, Eva Perjesi, John Quaife, Brian Russell, Brigitte Savreux-O'Driscoll, Margaret Pietrzyk, Mary Shipsey, Coleen Shroeder, David Silk, Siobhan, John Stokoe, Bob Swan, Philippa Tolley, Pauline Ullisak, Deborah Walcott-Grappie, Joan, Alfred, Susan & Wendy Waller, Jimmy Walters, Patricia Weal, Sue Wingfield, Christine and Terry Woollard and Charlie Wynn.