

## MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS

<b>Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> March</b>	6.00pm (Sat)	<i>Ellen Braconnier RIP</i>
	9.00am	<i>Sarah and Archie Grant RIP</i>
(HMP)	10.15am	<i>Holy Souls</i>
	10.45am	<i>Antonio Zita RIP</i>
	6.00pm	<i>Private Intention</i>
(Preston Hall)	9.00am	<i>People of the Parish</i>
<b>Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March</b>	10.30am	<i>Private Intention</i>
<b>Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March</b>	10.30am	<i>In reparation for abortions in Brewer St</i>
<b>Ash Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March</b>	6.30am	<i>Holy Souls</i>
	10.30am	<i>Private Intention</i>
	6.30pm (Polish)	<i>Private</i>
	8.00pm	<i>Holy Souls</i>
<b>Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March</b>	10.30am	<i>David Weston RIP</i>
<b>Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March</b>	10.30am	<i>Joan Whitely RIP</i>
	8.00pm	<i>Holy Souls</i>
<b>Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> March</b>	10.00am	<i>James Dignan RIP</i>
<b>Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> March</b>	6.00pm (Sat)	<i>Terence McCarthy, Lilian &amp; William Smith RIP</i>
	9.00am	<i>William Joseph RIP</i>
(HMP)	10.15am	<i>Holy Souls</i>
	10.45am	<i>Maria Denicola RIP</i>
	6.00pm	<i>People of the Parish</i>
(Preston Hall)	9.00am	<i>Holy Souls</i>

**Confessions:** *Monday – Friday 10am – 10.15am*  
*Saturday 10.30am – 11.15am, 5.30pm – 5.45pm*

**Exposition of Blessed Sacrament:** *Friday 7am – 10pm*

**Rosary:** *Monday – Saturday after morning Mass*

**Morning Prayer:** *Every Saturday 9.30am*

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS:** These will take place on Friday evening during Lent 7.15pm. We will also be having Stations of the Cross at St. Luke's chapel, Preston Hall at 8.50am – we shall reflect on two or three stations every Sunday so that by the end of Lent, we will have completed the journey.

**We remember in our prayers those whose anniversaries occur at this time:**

Josephine Evans, Mary Capeling, Ned Sullivan, Marion Forster, John Dooley, Frank Weston, Jack Helm, Joanna Patterson, Stephen Flaherty, Jack Powis, Ameliese Down, Iris Baker, Rita Haggerty, Daisy Raemers, Hilde Fenner, John Donlon, Mary Docker, David Godding, Doris Thompson, Ernest Morgan, Mary Whooley, Kathleen Mooney, Margaret Baker, James Dignan and Raymond Bennett.

## ST. FRANCIS CATHOLIC PARISH NEWSLETTER

**3<sup>rd</sup> March 2019 Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)**

126 Week Street, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1RH Tel. 01622 756217

Email [maidstone@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:maidstone@rcaos.org.uk) Website [www.stfrancisparish.org.uk](http://www.stfrancisparish.org.uk)

**Parish Priest:** Fr. Liam Gallagher

**Assistant Priest:** Fr. Pawel Sobol

**Deacon:** Rev. Ian Black

**Parish Office hours:** 9.00am – 12.00pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

**Catholic Schools**

St Francis Primary School: Queens Road, Maidstone, ME16 0LB 01622 771540

St Simon Stock Secondary School: Oakwood Park, Maidstone, ME16 0JP 01622 754551

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### PASTORAL LETTER FROM ARCHBISHOP PETER SMITH

Dear Brothers and Sisters, On Wednesday this week, Ash Wednesday, we shall begin the Season of Lent in preparation for celebrating the great Paschal Mystery of the passion, death and resurrection of Christ at Easter. Experience tells us that there are moments in our lives when we are presented with an opportunity to do something which will be to our advantage if we take it up. That experience is summed up pithily in the old Latin adage, or maxim, “carpe diem” which is variously translated as “seize the day” or “seize the moment.” It’s an exhortation to make the most of an opportunity when it comes, and not dither about indecisively because that opportunity may not come again at a favourable time! Every year, the season of Lent offers us the opportunity to stand back a little from our daily concerns, and reflect on our lives in the light of the Gospel. As the great philosopher, Socrates said so wisely, “The un-reflected life is not worth living.” The Church gives us the season of Lent as a time to recall, and to reflect on the meaning of our baptism and the commitment which flows from it. Lent is the season for each of us to enter into a closer union with the person of Christ and to reflect on how we deal with the temptations which afflict us all in different ways. To do that fruitfully we need to be serious about the three traditional helps towards that end, namely, prayer, fasting and almsgiving. But important and vital though these personal efforts are, we need to open our hearts humbly to the life-giving grace and presence of Christ, and ask for his help. Each day we are invited to die a little more to the sin and selfishness which marks the life of each one of us, and to witness to the love, compassion and mercy of Jesus Christ. We are invited to enter willingly and generously the narrow gate of prayer, fasting and almsgiving, for that’s the way to die to the false self within us, and to grow into new people formed ever more deeply in the image and likeness of Jesus. In order to do that, Jesus tells us, “If you want to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross every day and follow me.” The constant temptation is to turn in on ourselves and give way to selfishness. The antidote to these temptations is to be found in prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Prayer, personal and liturgical, takes us out of ourselves and places us firmly in the hands of God. Fasting teaches us to exercise self-control and helps us grow in compassion for the suffering of our world.

Both of these lead us to be generous with the gifts God has lavished upon us and give of our bounty to those who struggle each day with grinding poverty and need. The spirit with which we need to approach this penitential season is also well expressed in Psalm 50: "A pure heart create for me, O God... A humble, contrite heart you will not spurn." In other words if we are to make the most of Lent, we need God's help, so we need to ask him each day to rekindle in our hearts the gift of the Holy Spirit, the 'Lord and giver of life' so that our lives will be a true witness to the love, compassion and mercy of God.

Wishing you every blessing for the Season of Lent and for Easter,

And let's pray for each other during this Season of Lent,

**DO SOMETHING EXTRA FOR LENT:** There will be a series of Lenten Sessions in the church on Thursday evenings at 7.30pm beginning on 14<sup>th</sup> March. Watch this space and the Parish website for further details.

**LIVING STATIONS OF THE CROSS:** Please support our Fledglings children as they lead Living Stations of the Cross on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> March at 2.30pm.

**ASH WEDNESDAY:** Mass times for this day with distribution of Ashes shall be 6.30am (finishing at 7.00am to give time for commuters to catch the train to London), 10.30am.6.30pm (Polish) and 8.00pm. Services shall take place at St. Francis and St. Simon Stock Schools.

**PLENTY OF FISH:** To help us reflect on our Lenten resolutions and as a visual reminder throughout Lent, all children are invited to write their resolutions on one of the fish at the display at the top end of the church and either pin it to the net or leave it unpinned. Our Fledglings group have started the way and now encourage all children to participate. Please do not put full names on the fish.



**FLEDGLINGS:** We are a group of children, aged 4 to 11, who attend a variety of primary schools and are united by being part of St Francis' parish community. We meet on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of every month, sometimes in between, for games, crafts, activities and to learn about our faith, with a team of leaders and our priests. We meet at St Francis Primary School, Queen's Road, Maidstone, ME16 0LB. Children may be left at 10 am and collected at 3 pm, but can generally fit around another Saturday activity. All that is required is a smile and something for a shared lunch. For further details please ask a member of the Clergy Team or one of the musicians at Mass.

**The next meeting will be on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> March.**

**24 HOURS:** Our church of St Francis will remain open for twenty-four hours, offering an opportunity for both Eucharistic adoration and sacramental confession. This will take place from 7am Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March to 10am Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> March. Don't miss this annual event enabling us to spend 24Hrs or part of with Our Lord. Put the date in your diary now and sign your name on the list which will be available from the beginning of March.

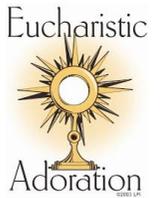
**A CHILD'S JOURNEY TO EASTER:** There are worksheets for the young children to take home with them with various activities and ideas for everyday in Lent to walk with Jesus and be truly ready for Easter.

**REPOSITORY:** A new selection of resources for Lent now available, including "Walk with Me" and "Day by Day" booklets. St Patrick's Day cards and gifts are also in stock.

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNION:** We especially welcome at the 9.00am Mass this Sunday the children who are preparing for their First Holy Communion this Summer. During our Mass they shall be presented with a prayer book to help them in their journey with Jesus. We keep them in our prayers.

**CAFOD ENVELOPES:** Please take a CAFOD envelope home with you to be ready for CAFOD Fast Day, where we are encouraged to reduce or go without a particular meal for the day and the money that is saved we put in to the envelope and offer it at the second collection on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March. This helps us stop, think and reach out to those in need throughout the world.

**CAN YOU BE PART OF SOMETHING INCREDIBLE?:** Ever since October we have been holding Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament every Friday 7am – 10pm and this is thanks to the people who commit an hour every week. If you have given your name for a particular hour then please do help us by ticking your initials that are on a register as you enter the church. This is so we are able to discover where there are gaps and where we may need more support. We cannot, after all, hold Exposition and nobody is in the church. If you have not yet given your name but would like to consider giving an hour then please let one of the clergy know. The time we are especially looking for support is between 2pm-4pm. With the season of Lent especially coming our way (and the warmer and lighter days) maybe this is something you can help our parish community with. If you had originally given your name but things have changed and you are no longer able to give please let us know.



**HOSPITAL VISITS:** Sometimes a parishioner may have been in hospital for a certain amount of time as a patient but we haven't been aware. May we ask that if you are going to be in hospital and you would like a visit, then please let the clergy know. Thank you for your help.

**FEED THE HUNGRY:** Many thanks for very generous donations. We are continuing to support a number of families also Trinity and the Day Centre. Current needs are milk, bread, crisps and washing tablets. Thank you

<b>Last weekend:</b> <b>1<sup>st</sup> Collection:</b> £1,670.77 <i>plus an average of £275 Standing Orders</i> <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Collection:</b> £521.84	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Collection today:</b> Church Hall Development Fund <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Collection next week</b> DEW Association (Nigeria - Destitute Families)
<i>Thank you for your generosity</i> <b>Parish Lottery winner – Week 9 – Number 185 – Prize £15</b>	