

Parish of St Margaret Clitherow

Fourth Sunday of Lent (A)

26th March 2017



DEANERY TEAM

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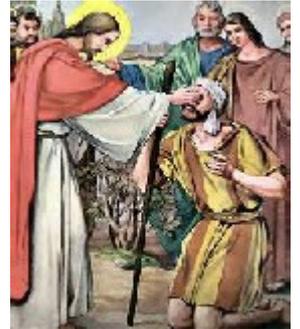
Deacons: Rev. Robert Hewertson and Rev. Anthony Arrowsmith

LITURGICAL CALENDAR

Psalter Week 4
Readings Sunday – 4th Sunday of Lent (A)
Weekdays – Lent, Wk 4

Sunday 4th Sunday of Lent (A)
Laetare Sunday

Next Sunday 5th Sunday of Lent (A)



LEIGH DEANERY

Parish of St. Margaret Clitherow

St. Ambrose Barlow
Astley
St. Gabriel's
Higher Folds
Holy Family
Boothstown
Sacred Heart
Hindsford
St. Richard's
Atherton

Parish of St. Edmund Arrowsmith

Our Lady of the Rosary
Sacred Heart
St. Joseph's
Twelve Apostles
Leigh

Archdiocesan Mission Statement



Taking to heart the last words of the Lord Jesus, we will go into the world to proclaim the Good News to the whole of creation.

GOSPEL REFLECTION

In the ancient Jewish world, blindness was not just a physical ailment. In popular thought it carried a terrible stigma. This arose from a false interpretation of the Law of Moses, which stated that people who were blind or lame could not fight in the army of God's people. There was a good reason for this. Soldiers who cannot move fast or see the enemy are not going to be much help to their comrades. However, an extreme interpretation of the rule concluded wrongly that anyone who could not fight in God's army could never enter God's Kingdom. The next step was to class them as sinners and that in turn led to them being refused work and reduced to begging. This view was never officially endorsed, but its popular acceptance is seen when Jesus' disciples ask him a question about the blind man that he meets in today's Gospel. They ask him, was this man born blind because of a sin he committed before he was born – or was it because of his parent's sins? Jesus strongly denies of course that the man's blindness was caused by anyone's sin: on the contrary, this man will make visible the works of God.

The Gospel passage today is long and, in some places, complicated, but we hear of the formerly blind man who becomes increasingly full of life and who very soon teaches the Pharisees the ways of God. The miracle itself takes up only a couple of sentences in today's Gospel; the rest concerns the disciples' questions and the way in which the blind man takes a deeper step of faith whilst the Pharisees become even more closed to God's will. They wonder how a sinner could possibly open the eyes of a man born blind. They persist in questioning the man, so he repeats the story, and even asks them, the Pharisees, if THEY want to become disciples of Jesus. They furiously insist that they are disciples of Moses.

As the man moves closer towards Jesus, the light of the world, the Pharisees move further away into deeper darkness. In the longer version of the Gospel the parents of the man born blind are questioned and try their best to remain non-committed. They are asked if this is their son, if he was born blind and, if so, how he can now see. They reply "Yes" to the first two questions, but refuse to comment on his new sight. "He is old enough. Let him speak for himself," they say, because they fear being expelled from the synagogue if they are perceived to be followers of Jesus. In the Gospels people either accept Jesus as the light, or they reject him, remaining in darkness. There is no middle road. Later, Jesus will insist that there is only one sign for those who claim to be his disciples, those who follow his light: they will love one another in the same way that he has loved us.

Psalms Response The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Gospel Acclamation I am the light of the world, says the Lord; anyone who follows me will have the light of life.

PARISH NEWS

This Week

Planned Giving Envelopes

New GIFT AID and NON GIFT AID ENVELOPES for weekly contributions are now available for collection from the Narthex at St Richard's and from the back of church at Holy Family and St Ambrose Barlow.

CAFOD Lenten Café

The CAFOD Lenten Café will be open in Holy Family Hall after the 9.00am and 11.00am Masses **today and every Sunday during Lent**. Tea, coffee, soft drinks, a wonderful array of home-made cakes and delicious snacks - including bacon butties - will be available. Proceeds from these will go to CAFOD.

The Traidcraft Stall containing a selection of fairtrade products will also be available. You will be very welcome.

A big 'thank you' to all the sponsors of the CAFOD Lenten Café.

Easter Cards to the Holy Land

This Lent we will again have the opportunity to show our love and solidarity for our fellow Christians living in the Holy Land by sending Easter cards. A list of the names and addresses of the churches, together with a selection of Easter cards, will be available over the next few weeks. As in previous years, you are asked to sign the cards and address the envelope – but not to put a stamp on. Instead, place the card in the box at the back of church, and we will send all the cards off together, at the beginning of April, to the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem for distribution to the churches in time for Easter.

Holy Family / St Gabriel's Mass Switch this week

Due to the funeral at Holy Family on Friday, the Mass at **10.00am on Thursday morning will be in St Gabriel's school** instead of Friday. As always parishioners are welcome to come into school for Mass.

Lenten Services

Please come along to one of our Lenten services as we prepare for the great celebration of Easter.

Early morning Masses will take place in:-

- St.Ambrose Barlow, Astley – Wednesday at 7.30am
- Holy Family, Boothstown – Friday at 6.30am.

Stations of the Cross will take place in:-

- Holy Family – Sunday at 3.00pm.
- St. Richard's – Tuesday at 7.00pm.
- St. Ambrose Barlow – Friday at 7.00pm.

Holy Hour with reflective music & Reconciliation (Confession) available at Holy Family each Friday of Lent, 3.00-4.00pm.

Why not do something extra during Lent this year?

All Eucharistic Ministers

Part of being a minister is gathering together to pray and reflect on what we do, and as such all ministers from our three churches are asked to come to a training and prayer morning at Holy Family on **Saturday 1st April**. This will begin with Mass at 10.00am, with opportunity for prayer during Exposition before the session begins after tea and coffee in the hall at 11.00am and conclude by 1.00pm. All new ministers are invited too as this will include training for you as you begin your ministry.

Holy Week Liturgies

Sign up sheets are at the back of Holy Family and St Ambrose Barlow for the ministries of reader and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion during these great days. As always, we are looking for a balance showing the unity of our communities in our celebrations by working together and sharing ministries where possible. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

"With You Always" Preparation Sessions

A reminder to the Year 4 children from St.Richard's, Sacred Heart (Hindsford) & St.Ambrose Barlow that the next "With You Always" preparation sessions will take place on the following dates:-

- **Tuesday March 28th in St.Richard's Parish Centre at 5.30pm,**
- **Thursday March 30th in St.Ambrose Barlow Hall at 6.00pm.**

Please note that you can go to either of the sessions. It doesn't matter which school the children go to. During each of the seven preparation sessions the children and their parents will work together exploring the different themes each week as the children prepare to receive their First Holy Communion in May and June.

For St Gabriel's and Holy Family the next sessions are also this week:

- **Tuesday 28th at 3.15pm in St Gabriel's school,**
- **Thursday 30th at either 3.45pm or 6.30pm in Holy Family church.**

Eyes Down - Look In

St Ambrose Barlow PTA are holding a Family Chocolate Bingo night in the parish hall from 7.00pm on **Friday 31st March**. All are welcome.

Ladies Group Easter Hamper Draw

Tickets will be on sale on 1st and 2nd April after each Mass and will be drawn on Sunday 9th April after the 11:00am Mass at St Ambrose Barlow Church. All monies raised will be going to the British Lung Foundation.

St Ambrose Barlow 200 Club March Winners

The March winners are:

- £100, number 30, Angela Stevenson.
- £ 50, number 192, James Pickering.

Newsletter

Please ensure that items for the newsletter are sent in no later than Wednesday evening. Thank you.

Clergy Addresses

Fr Paul Seddon

St Richard's Presbytery, Mayfield Street, Atherton, Manchester M46 0AQ

Fr Paul Grady

Holy Family Presbytery, 208 Chaddock Lane, Boothstown, Worsley, Manchester M28 1DN

Finance

The monies for the five church communities of the Parish of St Margaret Clitherow are held in one account.

Please make all cheques payable to **St Margaret Clitherow** (Please note spelling 'Clitherow'). Thank you.

Deanery Website

www.leighdeanery.co.uk

Catholic School Websites

<http://stmaryschs.org.uk/>

www.athertonsacredheart.wigan.sch.uk

www.boothstownhollyfamily.wigan.sch.uk

www.saintambrosebarlow.co.uk

www.saintgabrielsprimary.co.uk

www.saintrichards.wigan.sch.uk

www.sacredheartrchindsford.co.uk

Lenten Reflections

Throughout Lent there will be a number of Lenten Reflections focusing on the Sunday Gospel and the writings of Pope Francis in his encyclical "Laudato Si". The reflections have been prepared by CAFOD and include case studies from home and overseas, questions to guide discussion, and opportunities to 'See – Judge – Act'. Sessions will take place every Wednesday morning after Exposition in the Parish House at St. Richard's beginning at approximately 10.00am. The fourth Lenten Reflection session will take place **this Wednesday, 29th March**.

Sessions will also take place on Friday lunch times, 12.30 - 1.30pm, following the midday Mass, at St Joseph's Presbytery (Green Room). All are welcome.

Justice and Peace and St Vincent de Paul Groups

The second of our joint meetings will take place on **Wednesday, 29th March** at Holy Family after the 7.00pm Mass (aim to begin at 7.45pm). The purpose of the meeting is to share a Lenten Reflection based on the Gospel from 26th March and the writings of Pope Francis. The reflections have been prepared by CAFOD. There is overlap of the work carried out by the two groups, hence the coming together in this meeting, so please come along if you can.



Reflect:

When we ask God for light, we are asking to know as God knows: good, bad, up, down, all of it. A good prayer is to ask the Father to let us know ourselves the way the Holy Spirit knows us, "for the Spirit searches the depths of everything, even the depths of God". (1 Corinthians 2:10).

God does everything to bring us light. In our turn, each of us must get ready to accept God's illumination. (*Joseph Tetlow SJ*)

Pray:

Lord of Light, let us not be blind to those we would rather not see - the destitute; the homeless; the hungry; the starving. Instead open our eyes to the needs of your people. Help us to recognise and cherish the uniqueness of each person, to see Christ in all people. We ask this through Jesus, Our Lord. Amen.

Act:

The same Jesus who passed by Bartimaeus is alive. The Good News is that no matter what has happened in our past, Jesus walks into the dusty streets of our lives this day. We simply need the eyes of living faith to see Him and a renewed heart to follow Him on the way. Prayer is the fuel which keeps living faith alive and keeps our eyes open to see.

Make extra time this week to open our hearts to Jesus revealing himself to us in our prayer and through our encounters with others. Where is Jesus passing through our own lives? He always shows up for those who have their spiritual eyes opened to see Him. Is He in our workplace? How about in our relationships? What about in our families?

Challenge:

Take time each day to pause and consider how God reveals himself to us in the beauty that surrounds us: in the song of birds; in the new growth bursting forth from our abundant earth; in the gentle breeze which refreshes us; in the stunning vastness of the night sky; in the face of those we meet as our paths converge on our journey through life.

Easter Flowers at St. Richard's

Team JCB, the Flower Ladies at St. Richard's, invite you to help once again with the Easter Flowers this year. If you would like to make a donation and have the names of your loved ones displayed in Church during Easter then please give the names into Church before Palm Sunday, the weekend of 8th/9th April. Please write their names on an envelope and pass it into the Parish House as soon as possible.

Successful Social Events

Over 60 people braved the wet and windy weather to enjoy the St Patrick's night singalong in Sacred Heart Parish Centre.

The Parish visit to Oscott College Seminary was a wonderful and uplifting experience for all the 20-strong group who went last Sunday, not least seeing the photograph on the wall of Fr Paul the Younger with Pope Benedict.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Churches Together Lenten Talks

The Churches Together In Atherton series of talks during Lent take place on Sunday evenings at 6.30pm in the Salvation Army Chapel on the following dates - March 26th & April 2nd. The talks will be followed by a Palm Sunday United Service on Sunday April 9th at 6.30pm in Atherton Salvation Army Chapel.

Ladies Group

The next meeting takes place on Tuesday 4th April at 2.00pm in St Ambrose Church Hall. Raffle: Jo Hampson and Betty Copping.

Cineworld – Live Screenings

It has been great to meet up with other parishioners at the Live Screenings at Cineworld in Leigh to watch a live performance and enjoy each other's company. There are three more good looking performances coming up. We could meet up in the foyer about 6.45pm so we can buy tickets and a drink and enjoy the performance together.

- RSC's "Julius Caesar" – Wednesday April 26th
- RSC's "Anthony & Cleopatra" – Wednesday May 24th
- RSC's "Titus Andronicus" – Wednesday August 9th.

Cathedral Celebrations

This year marks the Golden Anniversary of the opening of the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King. There will be a number of special events to mark this great occasion. For more details please see the notice at the back of Church or visit www.liverpoolmetrocathedral.org.uk.

LAST WEEK'S PARISH COLLECTIONS

Offertory	£2123.10
Lenten Alms	£ 171.82
CAFOD	£ 132.30

Thank you so much for your generosity.

SECOND COLLECTIONS

Today Emergency Appeal - CAFOD
+ Cards for the Holy Land

Next Week Catholic Blind Services

The **Catholic Blind Services** assist the Church in her ministry with people who are blind or have a visual impairment. One aspect of their work is to prepare the large print Mass sheets that are available at the back of church.

PARISH MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS

Week Beginning 26th March	Holy Family	St. Ambrose Barlow	St. Richard's
SUNDAY	9.00 am Veronica Walsh 11.00 am Mary Evans 12.30pm <i>Baptism</i> <i>3.00 pm Stations of the Cross</i>	(Sat) 6.00 pm Brian Gerrity 11.00 am Brian Lloyd	(Sat) 6.00 pm Thomas Albert Proctor 9.30 am Rufino & Andrea Kinamot 6.30 pm Catherine O'Connor
MONDAY			
TUESDAY		9.15 am Tony Sutton	9.15 am Billy Clee <i>7.00 pm Stations of the Cross</i>
WEDNESDAY	7.00 pm Paula Kavanagh	7.30 am Christine Moore	9.00 - 10.00 am <i>Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament</i>
THURSDAY	10.00 am Linda Buckley <i>Mass in St Gabriel's School</i>		9.15 am Joan Mullin
FRIDAY	6.30 am Vocations 11.00 am Funeral Mass for James Lewis <i>3.00 - 4.00 pm Holy Hour</i>	 <i>7.00 pm Stations of the Cross</i>	9.30am John Haslam <i>Mass In Sacred Heart School</i>
SATURDAY	10.00 am Those affected by terrorism	10.00 am <i>Padre Pio Prayer Group</i> 6.00 pm Mary Pendlebury	6.00 pm Patricia Leach
NEXT SUNDAY	9.00 am Manuel Mendes 11.00 am Grace & John McGee <i>3.00 pm Stations of the Cross</i>	11.00 am Joe Rigby	9.30 am Alan Charlton 6.30 pm Simon Ward

LET US HOLD IN PRAYER

Those who have died, especially:
Thomas Albert Proctor **Joan Mullin**
James 'Keith' Lewis

Those who are sick, especially:

Emma Oldham Kathy Kenyon Guy Ryan Shelagh Welsby Derek Maude Catherine Jones Michael Wright Agnes Pilkington Margaret Hurley Thomas McLoughlin Marjorie Price Jean Tchibukdjian Ann Mellin Margaret Dawson Maureen Halliday Enid Kenwright Bernard O'Donnell Mary Tiernan Simon, grandson of B & N Atkinson Ted & Harriet Langin	Pat O'Neill Rev Jim Melia Anne Broad Margaret Case Joan Wilkinson Margaret Smith Irene McIntyre Susan Phillips Neil Hurley Margaret Ross Eugenie Cheetham Freda Peake Leonard Beach Fon O'Hara Thomas Higgins Betty Rostern Nancy Heaton Wyn Wright Bridie Molyneux
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SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Confessions 10.30am after Saturday morning Mass and during Holy Hour, Friday 3.00 - 4.00pm at Holy Family. Confession also available by request or by appointment.
 After 6.00pm Saturday Mass at St. Richard's. Confession also available by request or by appointment.

BAPTISMS

We welcome into our Family of Faith
Matteo Loui Musso, Leah May White,
Hollie Grace Elizabeth Rogers & Hudson Jax Best
 May God bless them and their families.

READINGS FOR NEXT WEEKEND

Fifth Sunday of Lent (A)

First Reading *Ezekiel 37:12-14*
 The exile of the people to Babylon is described in terms of death. And their return home is described in terms of resurrection and spiritual renewal.

Second Reading *Romans 8:8-11*
 It was the Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead. Now this same Spirit lives in us.

Gospel Reading *John 11:1-45*
 By raising Lazarus from the dead, Jesus shows that he is Lord of life and death.