

DOWNSIDE ABBEY

ST BENEDICT'S PARISH NEWSLETTER

THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (C) 26TH MAY 2019

'Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid' (John 14, 27b).

PAPAL TEACHING, at least since the time of St John Paul II, has been summoning us, with increasing urgency, to attend to the looming environmental crisis. 'Instead of carrying out his role as a co-operator with God in the work of creation, man sets himself up in place of God and thus ends up provoking a rebellion on the part of nature, which is more tyrannized than governed by him.... humanity today must be conscious of its duties and obligations towards future generations' *Centesimus Annus* (1991). A refusal to attend to the findings of environmental scientists in our time is more culpable than it would have been to ignore political developments in Germany in the 1930s. With 1.2 billion Catholics in the world, many of whom are already suffering the effects of environmental degradation, we have a huge responsibility to meet the crisis generously and courageously.



St Benedict by John Crockett, 1973

St Benedict can help us. It is worth remembering that he wrote his Rule for a lay community that included Priests, and the tradition is that he was not himself a Ministerial Priest. He asks his monks to abstain from meat, except when they need to build up their strength after an illness; he allows wine, but suggests that monks drink about half of what his society considered normal; he encourages the buying of local produce and the recycling of clothes to help the poor. He asks his community to avoid avarice and to sell their products cheaply to help the local poor 'so that in all things God may be glorified'. Most tellingly, he recommends to his Cellarer that he regard all goods and utensils of the monastery 'as though they were the sacred vessels of the altar.' Everything, both animate and inanimate, has been created through Christ, the Word of God: we should therefore treat all things with reverence.

I think St Benedict asks us to make our response not as disparate individuals, but as a community of faith. He is, after all, the great teacher of Christian community life. As communities God can do more with us. We can include prayers for the protection of Creation in our bidding prayers and in prayer groups. We can think of ways of making better use of our resources as a Parish. Useful suggestions are easy to find and share. And because anxiety is unhelpful, we should find occasions to celebrate and give praise to God

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for the gifts of his Creation. We need his grace and guidance to use these gifts with respect and love for the whole of his Creation. Our Bishop invites us to stand out as people of hope and never of despair. 'Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid' (John 14, 27b).

Dom Leo Maidlow Davis
Assistant Parish Priest

Fr Patrap Reddy returns from the Diocese of Kurnool in East India. He will speak at our Masses on Sunday, 26th May, appealing for his orphanage and community hall. His parish is in a very poor area, where life expectancy is only 40 years and orphans are numerous.



Ascension Day: Thursday 30th May is the Ascension and a holy day of obligation. Mass will be at 10 a.m. in the Abbey Church and at 7 p.m. in St Benedict's Stratton-on-the-Fosse. Falling between the Resurrection on Easter night and Pentecost, the Ascension prepares us to receive afresh the gifts of the Holy Spirit. St Luke tells us that at the Ascension the disciples worshipped Jesus and then went back to Jerusalem full of joy. May we together enter fully into this joy of the Holy Spirit.



Parish quiz night to be held on **Friday 14th June at 7.30pm** in the parish room. Teams of 4-6, £5 a head to include a ploughman's supper. There will be tea and coffee and squash available but no bar so please feel free to bring any alcoholic drinks required. Prizes for 1st, 2nd and 'wooden spoon' teams. There will be a raffle so raffle prizes will be gratefully received. To enter your team please add your name to the list at the back of the church or phone Liz on 01761 232040

Parish Pilgrimage to Belmont Abbey and Hereford Cathedral is planned for **Saturday July 6th**. More details are to follow but if you are interested in joining us please add your names to the list at the back of the church so that we can make the necessary arrangements. This promises to be a lovely day out.

Diocesan Day: On Saturday 6th July there will be a day for formation, prayer, reflection and conversation at St Brendan's Sixth Form College, Bristol. The Bishop is encouraging all who can to participate.

Schools Vocations roadshow: During May the Diocesan Schools and Colleges Department will travel to six places in the Diocese to witness to the vocations of marriage, priesthood and religious life. The target audience is Year 5 and above, including secondary schools and colleges. Please support this initiative with your prayers.

Vocations Discernment Retreat: A residential Vocations Discernment Retreat, organised by Clifton Diocese and Downside Abbey, will take place at Downside from 18th to 20th October 2019. The Retreat will be for both men and women between the ages of 18 and 35. Invited speakers will look at all vocations. Further information will follow after Easter, but if you would like to be added to the email contact list, please register with Rina rinabird@outlook.com

We pray for the sick of our parish: Eileen Barratt, who is in Paulton Hospital. Robert Wiseman and James Wiseman are also both in hospital and would appreciate prayers.

Diocesan Prayer Link: St Thomas More, Marlborough, with Pewsey; St Joseph, Wroughton

Ecumenical Prayer Link: Trinity Radstock

The Parish Collection: Last week raised: £312.75

If you are new to our parish or are visiting, please make yourself known to Dom Michael or Dom Leo. If you are at the 10 a.m. Mass in the Abbey, please make yourself known to the priest saying the Mass.

May Needs

Instant mash/Jam (not marmalade), long life fruit juice, sponge puddings, sweet snacks, household cleaner, men's deodorants, toilet cleaner, toilet rolls, washing powder and washing up liquid



Items for the Newsletter If you would like to contribute items for consideration for inclusion in the Parish Newsletter, please send to: sparsons@downside.co.uk or call (01761 235323)

If you would like to receive the **newsletter by email**, please contact Steve Parsons sparsons@downside.co.uk

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Mass & Office Times

Everyone is welcome

Masses in St Benedict's church

Saturday Vigil Mass 5 p.m.

Sunday Masses 9 a.m. 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.

Weekday Masses in Holy Ghost church, Midsomer Norton

Tuesday, Friday & Saturday at 9.45 a.m.

Confessions

Saturdays at Holy Ghost 10.15-11 a.m.

Sundays in St Benedict's 10.15-10.45 a.m.

Sundays in the Abbey church 9.35-9.55 a.m.

Regular events

Adoration 9.30-5pm Monday to Saturday and 11.30-6 p.m. on Sundays

Prayer group on Mondays at 7.30 p.m. in Holy Ghost church

Rosary on Thursdays at 7 p.m. in St Benedict's

The Abbey Church

Weekdays

Vigils 6 a.m.

Lauds 7.10 a.m.

Mass 8.35 a.m.

Midday Office 12.30 p.m.

Vespers 6 p.m.

Sundays

Lauds 7.30 a.m.

Mass 10 a.m.

Midday Office 12.30 p.m.

Vespers/Benediction 5 p.m.

Parish Priest: Dom Michael

Clothier. Tel: 01761 235111

Assistant Parish Priest: Dom

Leo Maidlow Davis. Tel: 01761 235107



Martyrology: St Augustine of Canterbury was a Benedictine monk and became the first Archbishop of Canterbury in 597. Pope Gregory the Great sent him to Britain on a mission to spread Christianity in 595 and he established a monastery in Canterbury. He died in 604 and his feast is marked on Monday 27th May.

Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury was also a Benedictine monk of Bec in Normandy. He was prior of his community and also abbot of St Stephen's Abbey, Caen. He became Archbishop of Canterbury after the Norman conquest in 1070. He is recognised as doing much work to confirm the rule of William the Conqueror in Britain before he died in 1089 and his feast is marked on Tuesday 28th May.



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