

# DOWNSIDE ABBEY

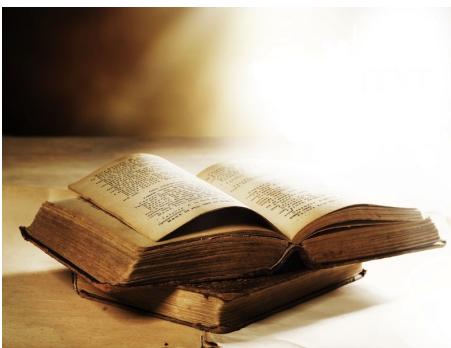
## ST BENEDICT'S PARISH NEWSLETTER

### THE FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

#### 2<sup>ND</sup> FEBRUARY 2020

*When they had done everything the Law of the Lord required, they went back to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. Meanwhile the child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and God's favour was with him (Luke 2, 40).*

Last Sunday, January 26, was the first time we have celebrated the new feast of The Sunday of the Word of God. Pope Francis, in accordance with the Church's tradition, greatly desires that all Catholics should deepen their love and knowledge of God's Word. In his sermon on last Sunday's Gospel (Matthew 4, 12-23) he said, 'Dear brothers and sisters, let us make room in our lives for the Word of God! Each day, let us read a verse or two of the Bible. Let us begin with the Gospel: let us keep it open on our table, carry it in our pocket, read it on our cell phones, and allow it to inspire us daily'.



By proclaiming 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand' Jesus tells us that God is not far from us. 'The One who dwells in heaven has come down to earth; he became man. He has torn down walls and shortened distances. We ourselves did not deserve this: he came down to meet us.'

'Repent', 'Change your life'. Change your life, for a new way of living has begun. The time when you lived for yourself is over; now is the time for living with and for God, with and for others, with and for love. That is why the Lord gives you his Word, so that you can receive it like a love letter he has written to you, to help you realize that he is at your side. His Word consoles and encourages us. At the same time it challenges us, frees us from the bondage of our selfishness and summons us to conversion. His Word has the power to change our lives and to lead us out of darkness into the light. Jesus chose to proclaim the Gospel for the first time not in the forecourt of the Temple in Jerusalem but in Galilee of the Nations, a complex and obscure region. In the same way, Jesus is not afraid to explore the terrain of our hearts and to enter the roughest and most difficult corners of our lives. He knows that his mercy alone can heal us, his presence alone can transform us and his Word alone can renew us. So let us open the winding paths of our heart to him, who walked "the road by the sea"; let us welcome into our hearts his Word, which is "living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword ... and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (Heb 4:12). That is why we need his Word: so that we can hear, amid the thousands of other words in our daily lives, that one Word that speaks to us not about things, but about life'.

As a parish we can think about how we can respond to the Pope's call to deepen our own knowledge and love of God's Word. We could begin by finding new ways of sharing with one another the reading of God's Word in accordance with the Benedictine tradition of *Lectio Divina*.

**Open Church Wednesday 12th February 6 – 7pm.** We will be opening the church for an hour of prayer and reflection. We hope to make this a monthly event and the theme each time will be different. During this month's hour we will say the rosary, sing a few verses of a suitable hymn and have quiet time for private prayer. You are welcome to stay for the whole hour or you can just pop in for a few minutes. Tea and coffee will be available.

## **Young Catholic Adults Retreat 21 to 23 February 2020 at Downside Abbey**

*"Understanding the World as God's Portrait: a Retreat musing on the magnificence of the Incarnation."*

All young Catholics aged 18 to 35ish are invited to attend this residential Retreat at Downside Abbey. The principal speaker is Sebastian Morello, formator and lecturer at the Centre for Catholic Formation in London, and known for his stimulating and challenging insights into the Catholic Christian tradition. One of the Downside Monks, Fr. Anselm Brumwell, will also be speaking about *The Biblical Revelation of God*.

**His Excellency The Most Reverend Bashar Matti Warda CSsR** Chaldean Archbishop of Erbil will hopefully also be joining us to deliver the Homily at the Downside Abbey Church Mass at 10 a.m. on Sunday 23 February.

The Downside young adult group, developed with Clifton Diocese, now comprises over 180 young people from across the country. These Retreats are a wonderful opportunity to meet new people, and stay in touch with old friends in the beautiful setting of Downside Abbey. In addition to the talks, you will be able to join the Benedictine Monastic Community in celebrating Holy Mass, the Divine Office and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

The residential cost, all meals included, is:

£60 in shared accommodation in Retreat House

£80 in En-suite Twin Room in Monastery Guest Wing

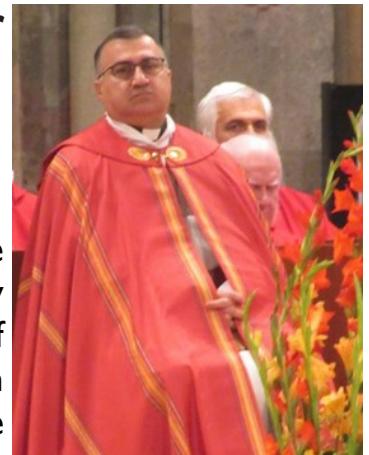
Non-Residential Cost, all meals included: £50

Contact [rinabird@outlook.com](mailto:rinabird@outlook.com) for programme and to book.

On Friday 28th February, and every Friday during Lent at 1900hrs, **The Stations Of The Cross** will be (prayed).

**Seven Sacraments Flower Festival:** We are planning to hold a flower festival on July 17, 18, 19 (Friday to Sunday) in St Benedict's Church. The theme will be the seven sacraments. There will be refreshments and an organ recital. In due course help will be requested. If you are interested in contributing an arrangement, please let Fr Michael know. St Vigor's Church has offered to help, so it promises to be a truly ecumenical celebration.

**Confirmation:** Anyone who wishes to be prepared for Confirmation should see Dom Michael or Dom Leo. The Bishop will be coming to confirm at Downside in the Abbey Church on Friday 15 May at 18.30.



**Bible Quiz Question:** The answer to this week's quiz is 'castor oil plant'. What was the question? As there were no answers to the questions of the last two weeks, the prize is again rolled over.

**We pray for the sick and housebound of our parish:** Brian Auty, Eileen Barrett, Laurence Bloom-Davis, Will and Detta Duggan, Arthur Haynes, Angela Mitchell and Paula Taylor.

**Diocesan Prayer Link:** Our Lady of the Rosary, Lawrence Weston; St Bernard, Shirehampton

**Ecumenical Prayer Link:** Bath City Church - Local Group

**St Blaise and the blessing of Throats:** There will be the blessing of throats in the Holy Ghost Church, Midsomer Norton after the 9.30 a.m. Mass on Tuesday 4 February. As the minister blesses the throat of each person with crossed candles he says: 'Through the intercession of St Blaise, bishop and martyr, may God deliver you from every disease of the throat and from every other illness. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.'

### **National Justice & Peace Network (NJPN) Open Day:**

*Our Common Home - creative responses with speakers: Fr Augusto Zampini Davies: Vatican official (a former theological advisor to CAFOD) will share Amazon Synod highlights; Phil Kingston, *Dealing with Feelings evoked by the Climate Crisis*; Nikki Jones: a Bristol-based writer and activist on energy and climate change, and founder of the Avon Needs Trees charity.*



Saturday, 8th February, 10.30a.m. to 4p.m.

St Nicholas of Tolentino Parish Hall, Lawford's Gate, Bristol BS5 0RE.

Coffee & tea provided; please bring your own lunch. All are welcome.

For further information: [admin@justice-and-peace.org](mailto:admin@justice-and-peace.org) / 0207 (London) 901 4864 or 0117 (Bristol) 924 3011

Fr Augusto will also preach on these issues at St John the Evangelist, South Parade, BATH in light of the Gospel for Sunday 9th February at all 3 Masses that w/e: Sat 8th: 5.45pm; Sun 9th: 10am and 6.30pm.

**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.

**February Needs** Coffee, UHT milk, powdered milk, long-life fruit juice, sponge puddings, washing-up liquid, cleaning products. Heartfelt thanks to everyone who donated Christmas fare and essential items so generously before Christmas. You really made a difference!



# DOWNSIDE ABBEY

## ST BENEDICT'S PARISH NEWSLETTER

### 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 in the crypt of Downside Abbey Church

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:

 Monday 3 February is the Memoria of St Blaise.

Blaise was the Armenian bishop of Sebaste, who was martyred in the fourth century. The legendary Acts of St Blaise, written 400 years after his death, tell us: 'Blaise, who had studied philosophy in his youth, was a doctor in Sebaste in Armenia, the city of his birth, who exercised his art with miraculous ability, good-will, and piety. When bishop of the city, even wild animals came in herds to receive his blessing. In 316, Agricola, the governor of Cappadocia and of Lesser Armenia, having arrived in Sebastia at the order of the Emperor Licinius to kill the Christians, arrested the bishop. As he was being led to jail, a mother set her only son, choking to death of a fish-bone, at his feet, and the child was cured straight away. Regardless, the governor, unable to make Blaise renounce his faith, beat him with a stick, ripped his flesh with iron combs, and beheaded him'.

