

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 21st MARCH 2010

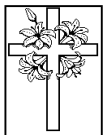
✠ FIFTH SUNDAY of LENT (C) ✠

Sun 21	Saturday	6.30pm	✠ Vigil Mass: Rocco Migliozi RIP
	Sunday	9.30am	✠ Mass: John Saunders RIP
		11.00am	✠ Mass: Pro Populo
		4.00pm	✠ Mass: For the Malayalam Community
Mon 22	Feria	9.45am	Morning Prayer
		10.00am	✠ Mass: Margaret O'Keefe RIP
Tue 23	Feria	9.45am	Morning Prayer
		10.00am	✠ Mass: Franco Verdolini
Wed 24	Feria	9.45am	Morning Prayer
		10.00am	✠ School at Mass: Giocanda de Rocco RIP
Thur 25	The Annunciation of Our Lord	7.00am	✠ Mass: Jack McIntyre RIP
Fri 26	Feria	9.45am	Morning Prayer
		10.00am	✠ Mass: Geraldine O'Conner's Intention
		7.30pm	KSC Stations of the Cross and Vigil
Sat 27	Feria	10.00am	✠ Mass: Bran Griffith RIP
		10.30am	Confessions and Exposition

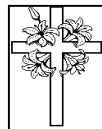
✠ PALM SUNDAY of the LORD'S PASSION (C) ✠

Sun 28	Saturday	6.30pm	✠ Vigil Mass: Weronika Oszywa RIP
	Sunday	9.30am	✠ Mass: Ben De Souza RIP Begins promptly in the Scott Hall
		11.00am	✠ Mass: Pro Populo Begins promptly in the Scott Hall

Please pray for the following, whose anniversaries occur this week:



Grace Fingleton, Francesco Verdolini, Lorna Ryan,
Father Pierre Barbyer, Kathleen Hawkins, Pat Knell,
George Bond, Brenda Corcoran,
Doreen Stone, and Les Ross.



May their souls and the souls of all the ✠ faithful departed
through the mercy of God rest in peace.

OUR LADY of GILLINGHAM



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Registered Charity 235468

21st March 2010

✠ FIFTH SUNDAY of LENT (C) ✠

WORD OF GOD

Neither do I condemn you.
Go away and don't sin any more.

(John 8:11)



WORD FOR TODAY

Do we have double standards? Often we expect to be forgiven ourselves but we are quick to judge other people for things that we consider to be wrong. And equally often the very thing that we judge them for is something that secretly we know is one of our own faults.

ANNUNCIATION (25th March)

Exactly nine months to the day when in the Christian calendar she will give birth to Jesus, Mary today hears the news from the angel that she is to bear a child that comes from God. We rejoice in her faith, her trust and her whole-hearted response to this strange news. Like her we rededicate ourselves today to being bearers of God's Son and we thank God for this cosmic intervention that has changed the face of our world:



Almighty Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
you have revealed the beauty of your power
by exalting the lowly virgin of Nazareth
and making her the mother of our Saviour.
May the prayers of this woman
bring Jesus to the waiting world
and fill the void of incompleteness
with the presence of her child
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy
Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

AROUND the PARISH

PASSIONTIDE As from this Sunday our Crucifixes and statues are veiled to remind us that we are entering the remaining two weeks of Lent. Crucifixes remain veiled until the afternoon Liturgy on Good Friday; images of the saints are unveiled before the Easter Vigil. † Details of our Holy Week and Easter timetable are available at the back of the church. ♦ Our children's liturgy group will be holding an Easter Garden ceremony in the McMahon Hall this Friday, 26th, starting at 4pm. Please join them. The children's liturgy on Palm Sunday, 28th March, will continue after we have begun our Mass in the Scott Hall; parents, please follow our catechists' directions. ♦ In view of the Chrism Mass being on the Wednesday of Holy Week (31st March) our parish Mass that day will be at 7am. ♦ Parishioners are welcome to attend a service for the Polish custom of blessing Easter food. The service will be in English and held on Holy Saturday at 11.30am in the church. If you know any Polish families who may wish to come, please let them know. A similar service in Polish is held at St Francis' Church, Maidstone (☎01622 756217 for details).

STATIONS of the CROSS Our final meditation on the Way of the Cross will be led this Friday by the Medway Knights of St Columba from 7.30 to 9.30pm. The theme will be "The Year of the Priest". ✠ There is a Deanery Penance Service at St Thomas', Rainham, on Tuesday 30th March at 8pm.

EXPOSITION We expose the

Blessed Sacrament on Saturdays after the morning Mass for the duration of Confessions. The last period of exposition for Lent will be this coming Saturday. We will resume on Easter Saturday (10th April) for the remainder of the *Year for Priests*. Please pick up a leaflet explaining and encouraging Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

FIRST FRIDAY MASS In response to a suggestion from the Vision group, Mass on the First Friday of each month will in future be celebrated in the evening at 7.30. This will begin in May.

AROUND the DIOCESE and BEYOND

AYLESFORD RETREAT See the notice about a Day Retreat at the Friars on Saturday 27th March.

A DAY WITH MARY on Saturday 27th March at St Joseph's, London SE18. Details on the noticeboard. Also on Saturday 1st May from 2pm to 5pm at St Francis de Sales Church, Hartley. This afternoon includes Eucharistic adoration and Rosary, with the opportunity for Confession. Contact Fr Alex Saba, 01474 705361.

ANNUAL ALTAR SERVERS' RALLY See the poster for this event on Monday 3rd May at Aylesford.

MASS in CELEBRATION of MARRIAGE This annual Mass is for couples celebrating their 10th, 25th, 40th, 50th, 60th and beyond wedding anniversaries. At St George's Cathedral on Saturday 12th June at 3pm. Couples are invited to apply, thus securing a personal invitation and special arrangements on the day. Please ask Fr Geoffrey or Deacon

Michael; there is a list in the sacristy.
DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE to LOURDES See the poster giving details of this year's pilgrimage from 20th-27th August.

FAITH IN FOCUS: FAULTY JUDGMENT If you commit the crime you should do the time. This is something we hear a lot today, along with suggestions that some people should be locked up and the key thrown away. For all our pretence at civilisation and sophistication, we find ourselves in a society that is very far from the values of Jesus and particularly the core Christian value of forgiveness. Sidelining forgiveness allows us to be judgmental. It allows us to make comments about other people as if we were better than them, as if we were never guilty of sin ourselves; yet all our judgment is faulty, for we have all sinned. This is the pitiful scene that Jesus faced when they brought a woman who had been caught committing adultery. Jesus seems not to be dismayed by the woman's sin (and her partner whom we never meet). What does dismay him is the arrogance of the scribes and Pharisees who presume a "holier than thou" attitude towards the woman. And so, despite the carefully prepared trap to get him to be at odds with the Law, Jesus first sets about dismantling the judgmental hypocrisy of the accusers rather than tackling what the woman has done. It's worth noting that forgiveness is not ours to give. Forgiveness comes from God and all we can do is to pass it on, just like love. God is love and our love is merely a sharing in his perfect love. God is forgiveness and when we

forgive we are simply holding up a mirror to the God who has first forgiven each of us. "Our" forgiveness is simply a reflection. Of course, if we refuse to forgive then we cannot expect forgiveness for our trespasses. This has always been the simple message of the Our Father. Very often when we judge others it is because we see the same fault in ourselves, and condemning the other person allows us to expiate our own frailty. Of course, Jesus did not praise the woman for what she had done; he told her to go away and sin no more. But what he did do is to prevent her from being judged by people who were as weak as she was but pretended to be better. Ring any bells?

EASTER EGG RAFFLE This week in favour of our annual Joss Bay trip in the summer.

TABLE SALE We will again be holding a table sale after both Sunday Masses next weekend. The proceeds all go to our Building Fund.

ATTENDANCE We welcomed **449** people to Mass last weekend who gave **£783.26** in the collection. The collection for Archbishop Kevin came to **£158.07**. We are grateful to the anonymous donor of **£100** to the Building Fund, and to the Knights of St Columba who raised **£125** at their recent Quiz in favour of the same fund. ♦ This week there is a retiring collection to help cover the cost of flowers for the church for the Easter Triduum and beyond into Easter itself. Thank you. ♦ Our recent White Flower Appeal in favour of SPUC raised **£175.00**.