

# THE PARISHES OF ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST AND ST MARY MAGDALENE

35 Brighton Place, Edinburgh EH15 1LL

Bingham Avenue, Edinburgh EH15 3HY

Parish Priest: Fr. Jock Dalrymple:

0131 669 5447

Deacon – Revd Eddie White:

07986 015772

*Pastoral Team: Alice Codling, Jennifer Morris and Chris Vinestock*

*Shared Parish House: 3 Sandford Gardens, EH15 1LP*

*Administrator: Enrico Fertini*

*(Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 10am to 3pm & Friday 11am-4pm)*

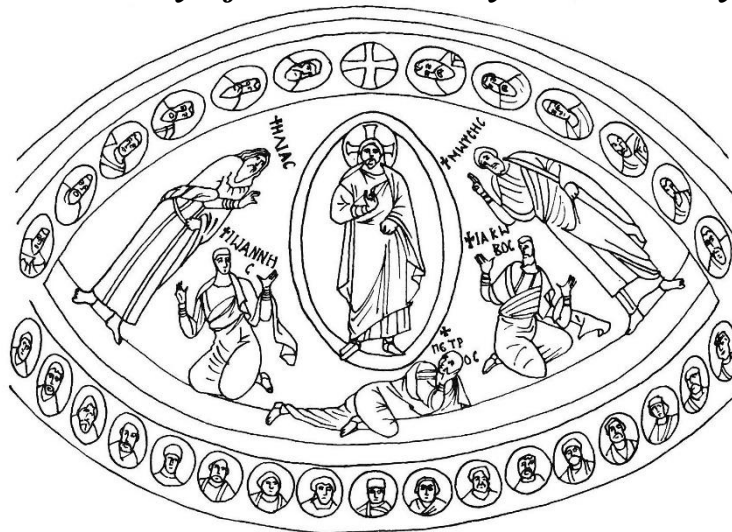
*Web address: [www.stjohnsportobello.co.uk](http://www.stjohnsportobello.co.uk)*

*Web address: [www.stmarymagdalenes.co.uk](http://www.stmarymagdalenes.co.uk)*

*Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/StJohnsandStMaryMagdalenes>*

*Joint e-mail for our sister parishes: [stjohnsandstmarymagdalenes@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnsandstmarymagdalenes@gmail.com)*

## Second Sunday of Lent – Sunday 28 February 2021



*“This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to Him.”*

**This Sunday is the fourth Sunday of the month – and therefore is the monthly collection for the St John’s Tower Fund.**

As part of the **Year of St Joseph** (initiated on 8 December 2020 by Pope Francis), our Archdiocese has produced a **St Joseph’s Family Prayer book** - price 50p – but as a Lenten gift, we are giving everyone who wants one a free copy – just come to the Parish house and ask for one.

The Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh **Catholic Directory** for 2021 is also available at the Parish House – price £3.00.

**Fr Jock writes: ‘Can I encourage you - if you are not already doing so - to try joining us at 9.15pm at least one evening this week for Compline, the Night Prayer of the Church.** It takes 10 minutes (though you are invited to join in silence 5 minutes before and stay for 5 minutes at the end, if you wish) and is ‘broadcast’ every evening.

*The details for getting into Compline online:*

**Passcode:** compline

**Link to Join Compline on Zoom:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83916544352?pwd=VGIVSnZ5dDhwMGICMEU0eUJscTd1Zz09>

or, if you already have a Zoom account,

Meeting ID: 839 1654 4352 Passcode: compline

If you need help to get online - then please contact the Parish House (0131 669 5447)

We can give help with using Zoom. If you need help to get a device - pad or computer or to get on the internet we can also help.

This week we also hope to make available two pre-recorded Night Prayers for those people who – like me for three of the last four days this week – forget and miss the 9.15pm ‘slot’ or, alternatively, wish to ‘tune’ in at a time more suitable for them to be able to do so....

**Linked with this, for the first five weeks of Lent, I am offering a short (15 minutes-ish) talk on the Psalms, and particularly the Psalms used at Night Prayer, each Monday evening at 7pm – and available online after that. The Psalms (150 of them) are the prayer book of both Jews and Christians and have been prayed and loved for nearly 2500 years, but come alive for many people with a little knowledge of their background. They were probably known by heart by both Jesus and Mary and prayed often by them both.’**

**Compline is the final church service of the day** - the word comes from Old French meaning “to complete”. It offers a contemplative time with prayers that emphasizes spiritual peace and holds both what was good and what was hard in that day and in life generally.

**Our online Compline contains:** an introduction; an examination of conscience – giving thanks and asking forgiveness; psalms with accompanying antiphons; a short scripture reading; the responsory; the Cantic of Simeon – Nunc Dimittis; concluding prayer and a blessing; it closes with the antiphon to the Blessed Virgin Mary, ‘Salve Regina’.

**Each week, we are also offering material for PRAYER WALKS – see the attachment/handout:**

**Tracy Burgess writes:** *‘We have various different options offered us during Lent – aiming ultimately to know God deeply and hopefully to know ourselves a little better too.*

*One of my favourites is to get outside and embrace God in nature.*

*To walk peacefully with presence and stillness, to be in the moment.*

*I let myself become aware that God is everywhere and in everything and open up my mind and heart to his presence - heart of my heart, spirit of my spirit.*

*Giving myself space to feel loved by God. Breathing God in. Recapturing wonder and expressing gratitude.*

*Sometimes this is enough, to let God in nature sink in like rain and refresh my soul.*

*I can let go of the noise, distractions and anxieties and be reminded of God’s love and presence.*

*At other times I find that using a short text from scripture to meditate on as I walk can deepen my awareness of God.*

*Focusing on key words or phrases repeated over and over can bring clarity and stillness with a deeper communion with the Divine.*

*A favourite that I use is – ‘be still and know that I am God.’ I focus on different parts, immersing myself into being still and knowing God.*

*During lockdown while we are encouraged to go out and get exercise why not combine it with a little walking meditation during Lent.*

*Go outside and appreciate God’s beautiful gift of Nature.’*

**The World Day of Prayer** is on Friday 5 March.

## **THIS WEEK**

**(NB It is only possible to attend Mass online)**

**Saturday 27 February**

6.30pm – St John’s – **Vigil Mass** (livestreamed)

9.15pm – Zoom – **Night Prayer**

## **Sunday 28 February**

11.00am – **Mass** (livestreamed from the Prayer Room)

12.15pm – Zoom meeting – ‘**Tea and Coffee after Mass**’ – **Open to all**

To join in over Zoom, go to

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75237120255?pwd=Umg5VW05ZTZ4czIvOUtRK2M3N2ROQT09>

or, if you already have a Zoom account,

Meeting ID: 752 3712 0255    Passcode: 0U3LDb

9.15pm – Zoom – **Night Prayer**

## **Monday 1 March**

10.00am – Prayer Room – **Mass** (livestreamed)

7-8.15pm – Zoom Meeting – A SECOND SHORT TALK BY FR JOCK ON THE PSALMS – followed by a time of  
**Sharing and Reflection – Open to All**

To join in over Zoom, go to

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86151022356?pwd=QXJvODB3UHFNOXI4em5RQXA0V2NvUT09>

or, if you already have a Zoom account,

Meeting ID: 861 5102 2356    Passcode: 840380

9.15pm – Zoom – **Night Prayer**

## **Tuesday 2 March**

12 midday – Binning Wood, East Lothian – **Funeral Service for Viola Bondesiak**

7.00pm – Prayer Room – **Mass** (livestreamed)

9.15pm – Zoom – **Night Prayer**

## **Wednesday 3 March**

10.00am – St John’s – **Mass** (livestreamed)

9.15pm – Zoom – **Night Prayer**

## **Thursday 4 March**

10.00am – St John’s – **Mass** (livestreamed)

7.00pm – **Benediction** (livestreamed from St John’s)

9.15pm – Zoom – **Night Prayer**

## **Friday 5 March**

10.00am - St John’s – **Mass** (livestreamed)

11am - **Rosary Group** – ‘Anyone can join, especially if you have Facebook Messenger, but also on WhatsApp, or just on the phone. Sometimes it takes time for us all to join in, but we always manage. Please join us.

Message Maria Igoe on 07981333219 or [mariaigoe@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:mariaigoe@yahoo.co.uk)’

2pm - Zoom – **World Day of Prayer Service** (see below)

9.15pm – Zoom – **Night Prayer**

## **Saturday 6 March**

6.30pm – St John’s – **Vigil Mass** (livestreamed)

9.15pm – Zoom – **Night Prayer**

## **Sunday 7 March**

11.00am – **Mass** (livestreamed from the Prayer Room)

9.15pm – Zoom – **Night Prayer**

The **SCIAF Stations of the Cross** will be prayed on Friday 12 March – more details next week.

## **Benediction during Lent**

**Deacon Eddie writes:** “During Lent, we would like to invite you to join us for twenty minutes or so each Thursday at 7pm for a weekly Benediction service.

A time for some reflection, gentle music and silence as we spend some time in prayer before Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament.

The link is available [here](#) and will also be live on Facebook too.” - <https://youtu.be/rg8919sT5Eg>

## The World Day of Prayer is on Friday 5 March.



'The service this year has been provided by the Christian women of Vanuatu. More information about Vanuatu, the World Day of Prayer and a copy of the booklet for this years' service can be found on the Scottish WDP website ([www.wdpscotland.org.uk](http://www.wdpscotland.org.uk)). **A small number of booklets are also available from the Parish House.**

Although we cannot hold the usual 'in person' service in one of our PACT churches we are warmly invited to join the Zoom Service on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March at 2pm. It is being hosted by Augustine United Church in Edinburgh with participants expected from across Scotland. For joining details, please see the WDP website (link above) or [Facebook](#).

The Scottish Committee have also planned 10 Days of Prayer starting on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February. The 10 days of Prayer will be posted on the Facebook site every morning and on the website. The Committee are inviting the national leaders of 10 denominations to share a Thought for the Day focusing on Vanuatu and one of the Scottish Committee will end with a prayer.'

## From Archbishop Leo's Weekly Ad Clerum

The **St Joseph's Family Prayer Book** is a result of ideas from the clergy about our response to Covid. Its aim is to get people to pray at home at a time when they can't come to Mass. It is also a way for parishes to reconnect with those who might feel separated from the church while places of worship are closed. The prayer book was put together by our Catechetics Commission and is released to coincide with the year of St Joseph, as announced by Pope Francis.

**Lent event 1: INSPIRE prayer talks** - Register now for the Archdiocese's INSPIRE talk series for Lent. Guest speakers will guide you prayerfully through the season. All talks on Zoom, 7-:7:45pm. If you miss a talk you can find it at [bit.ly/ArchYouTube](http://bit.ly/ArchYouTube)

TALK 2: *Songs of the Redemption: The Benedictine Liturgy of the Hours*, with Brother Joseph Carron.

**7pm, Tue 02 Mar.** Register: [bit.ly/LentCarron](http://bit.ly/LentCarron)

TALK 3: *Prayer as a Relationship Reflected in St Teresa of Avila*, with Sr Sally Rollo. 7pm, Tue 16 March.

Register: [bit.ly/LentRollo](http://bit.ly/LentRollo)

TALK 4: *Praying the Passion according to St Mark*, with Archbishop Leo Cushley. 7pm, Tue 23 March.

Register: [bit.ly/LentCushley](http://bit.ly/LentCushley)

**Lent event 2: Pro-Life Stations of the Cross** - Stations of the Cross, organised by the Archdiocesan Pro-Life Office, is on each Monday evening of Lent at 7:45pm. The Stations are followed by a short reflection by a priest of the Archdiocese. You can register now on Eventbrite: <http://standrewsandedinburgh.eventbrite.com>

**Lent resources** - The Archdiocesan Catechetics Commission has produced a range of resources for Lent that will assist adults and children to deepen their understanding of this holy season and aid them in their prayer life. Find them in the resources section at: <https://archedinburgh.org/pastoral-governance/catechetics/>.

**Emergency Appeal - Mary's Meals** has launched an emergency appeal for aid for **Tigray, Ethiopia** where millions of people have been displaced as a result of civil conflict and are lacking food and basic necessities. Donations can be made at [www.marysmeals.org.uk](http://www.marysmeals.org.uk).

## NOTICEBOARD



*Children's liturgy by Zoom continues for the young people of our parishes. To join us on a Sunday morning at 11:15, please send your contact email address to [lauder.82@btinternet.com](mailto:lauder.82@btinternet.com) along with your name, the children you are including and which Mass you would normally attend. **If you are aware of any families who may like to join us but may not see this notice, do please share with them that they are very welcome.** If you have any questions about Zoom children's liturgy, please call Arlene Lauder on 07950880833.*



## FROM THE EDINBURGH JESUIT CENTRE – WHAT WOULD POPE FRANCIS DO?

a series of Tuesday evening Lenten Talks Exploring the Key Issues Defining Francis' Papacy.

'To mark the eighth anniversary of Pope Francis' election on 13 March, the Edinburgh Jesuit Centre is delighted to announce a number of prominent Catholic voices exploring the teaching of Pope Francis. Join them each Tuesday in Lent as they delve into some of the key issues that are defining Francis' papacy.'

### **Tuesday 2 March - 7.30pm - Pope Francis on Refugees & Migration, with Sr Imelda Poole**

'Sr Imelda Poole, IBVM MBE is focusing on Francis on Modern Slavery. Sr Imelda is the President of Religious in Europe Networking Against Human Trafficking (RENATE) and President of Mary Ward Loreto (Albanian Mission Against Human Trafficking). She has also received an MBE by Queen Elizabeth II for her services to combating modern human slavery.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2365092814> or Meeting ID: 236 509 2814

View on Facebook live by typing Edinburgh Jesuit Centre into Facebook'

## **JUSTICE AND PEACE – Poverty and Pandemic Online Event - Sunday 7 March – 4.30pm-6pm**

**Frances Gallagher writes:** "Justice and Peace Scotland invites you to join us for a discussion of the impact of the pandemic drawing on the experience of our panel. Together we will share, reflect and start to identify how the church can be ready and prepared in our communities to meet the challenges which remain.

The panel includes: Prof. Stephen McKinney (University of Glasgow), Fr. Basil Clark VE (Archdiocese of St. Andrews & Edinburgh), Danny Collins (National President, Society of Saint Vincent de Paul Scotland), Martin Johnstone (Poverty Truth Network / At the Edge)" - Please book to join:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/poverty-pandemic-tickets-141110283657>



"Justice & Peace Scotland are also sponsoring - **Scottish Churches: COP26,**

Divestment & Investment in Just & Green Recovery on **Wednesday 3rd March between 7pm and 8.30pm.** As Scotland prepares to host the UN climate talks (**COP26**) later this year, we have a unique opportunity to make an impact and increase the pressure on institutions and governments to respond with the urgency that the climate crisis demands. Your help in generating interest in this event would be very appreciated". - This is the link to register and read about that

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/scottish-churches-cop26-divestment-investment-in-just-green-recovery-tickets-141263774753>

## Fairtrade Fortnight has begun!

‘In the next two weeks there will be so many chances to join us in choosing the world you want: a world where the people behind our food are earning enough to deal with the climate crisis they face every day. But for starters, here’s four simple ways you can stand with those farmers and workers.

### #1: Join the Choose the world you want festival

With dozens of free live events, our Choose the world you want festival is a great chance to learn, have fun and connect with the global Fairtrade community. [Step in to the festival today](#) to find out more and if you’d like to hear even more from the people behind our food, [sign up to our interactive virtual Q&A with Kenyan Fairtrade farmers Patrick and Bernard](#), taking place on Sunday 28 February.

### #2 Get quizzical

We're bringing our whole Fairtrade community together for [an extra special quiz night at 7:30pm Friday 5 March](#).

[Sign up today](#) to join us for a fun evening filled with all sorts of general knowledge questions, and even a special guest appearance from Fairtrade Foundation patron Nick Hewer.

### #3: Share their story

[Our Storytelling Tent](#) is giving a platform to those farmers and workers who did the least to cause the climate crisis, but are feeling the worst effects already. Can you help us make their voice even louder by reading and sharing their stories? [These powerful testimonies](#) from farmers and workers in the Dominican Republic, Kenya and Honduras make it absolutely clear why we need radical action on climate change right now.

#4 Choose Fairtrade (and get a discount)! Fairtrade Fortnight is the perfect opportunity to try out some new Fairtrade treats – so [check out these 7 new Fairtrade products](#). There’s even a special discount for Fairtrade supporters on Jenipher’s Coffi and Whitakers’ Chocolate Hearts.

But whether you opt for something new or an old favourite, every Fairtrade choice means farmers and workers with more power and fairer pay. And with the pressures of climate change and the global pandemic, that is more important than ever.’

## SEXAHOLICS ANONYMOUS – TUESDAY 2 MARCH - 1pm-2pm PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING ON ZOOM

‘Sexaholics Anonymous, the fellowship based on the Twelve Steps of Alcoholic Anonymous, have two meetings in Edinburgh for both men and women, and there is another one just created which will be for women only. In defining sobriety, we do not speak for those outside Sexaholics Anonymous. We can only speak for ourselves. Thus, for the married sexaholic, sexual sobriety means having no form of sex with self or with persons other than the spouse. In SA’s sobriety definition, the term “spouse” refers to one’s partner in a marriage between a man and a woman. For the unmarried sexaholic, sexual sobriety means freedom from sex of any kind. And for all of us, single and married alike, sexual sobriety also includes progressive victory over lust.

Many people haven’t heard about our fellowship and they suffer in isolation, full of shame and guilt, and often become suicidal. We would like to share our experience, strength and hope to those in need. We need priests, and professionals, to spread the word.

For that purpose, we organise a Public Information Meeting which is open to everyone who would like to know more about Sexaholics Anonymous and are considering joining us. But most of all we would like to invite medics, therapists, clergy, and other professionals who work with people and have heard many stories about their self-destructive sexual thinking and behaviour, and that they desperately want to recover from the addiction.


I’m writing to invite you to our nearest Public Information Meeting. We meet via zoom – more details can be found by clicking this link:

<https://www.sauk.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Public-Information-Meeting-2nd-March-2021.pdf>

You can also find very useful information on our website:

<https://www.sauk.org/for-professionals/medics-therapist-religious-leaders-other-professionals/>

Scottish Domestic Abuse Helpline (24 hours)

 0800 027 1234



# PARISH REGISTER

*Please pray for those who have died recently: Ann McCafferty, Robert Nicholson, Viola Bodensiek, Catherine Chuda (Veronica Kinane's mother), Jane Gilchrist (of L'Arche Edinburgh), Morag Boyter, Margaret Gordon, Patricia Walker and Ginny Bromley*

*Please pray for those whose anniversaries occur around this time: Mary Glancy, Josephine Flanagan, Mgr David Gemmell, Gerry Wynne and Maureen Sime*

**St John's Feb.27:-** William Murray (2010); Fr. Walter Glancy (1980); Sean O'Donnell(1969); Susan Passmore; **Feb.28:-** Mary Meenan (2014); John Patrick McTighe (2009); Peggie McGill (1998); James Alexander (1975); Mary Coll (1974); Bernard Macnamara; **Feb.29:-** Baby girl Lamb (1967); Rita Deignan; **Mar.1:-** Lauren (baby) Grassick (1998); Gerald P Stone (1972); **Mar.2:-** Thomas Malcolm (1983); **Mar.3:-** Mary Glancy (2020); Agnes Denning (2012); Hugh Christie (1995); Joan Gillon (1991); William T Laydon (1991); Vincent McGlone (1990); Mary Young; **Mar.4:-** Helen Ryan (1998); Paddy Dixon (1997); **Mar.5:-** Elmar Begg (1989); Thomas Rooney (1959); Elizabeth Forsyth;

**St Mary Magdalene's Feb.27:-** James Cranston (1983); **Feb.28:-** Adele Croskery (2016); **Mar.2:-** James Sweeney (1971); **Mar.4:-** Edward Grant (1999); **Mar.5:-** Bernard Halliday (1983);

**Sick Parishioners - St. John's:** Joyce Martin, Ruth Viso, Mary Grady, Susan Cammach, Pauli Walker, Dolores Jones, Bill Laidlaw, Ian Thompson, Nora Bruce, Evelyn Oldershaw, Anna Butler, May Flynn, Vincent Knowles, John Cregan, young Saoirse Golden, John Whyte, Chloe Sutherland, Frances Cunningham, David Reid, Sheila Tansey, Frank Logan, Charlotte McGregor, Betty Dougal, Anne Thomson, Eileen Brown, Mike Noonan, Sarah McManus, Patricia Lawler, Mike Burns, Sr Jennifer Lindsay, Ernie Moran, Maureen Low, Pat Hunter, Alan Blyth, Mary Slight, Mary Phair, Rose Thornton, Kitty Dykes, Norman Telfer, Philip Jamieson, Alf MacNamara, Stan McKay, Maureen Lawrie, Kathie Gallagher, Erin Corbett, Roz Byers, Marie Angela Crolla and Lorraine Syme.

**Sick Parishioners - St. Mary Magdalene's:** Sheila and George Service, Jim Gallagher, Chris and Louise English, Jacqueline Marinello, Ray Donnelly, Sam Burns, Clive Davis, Ella Ayers, Isobel Phillips, Denis Davidson, Margaret Duffy, Maria Scott Jnr, Louise Gorman, Ann Dockrell, John Prior, John Newell, Michael McPhillips, Bridget Malone, Charles Malcolm, Margaret Ryan, Jacqueline Hannan, Julie Keegan, Rose McKay, Laurie Wallace, Annie Watson, David O'Donnell, Andrew Banks, Jude Ferguson, and Mary & James Muir.

**Please pray for sick friends and relatives of parishioners, including:** Marina and Maria Calanna, Peter Millar, Annabel Cervantes, Rose Renwick, Nan Doig, Bridie Hanlon, Sharon Henderson, Rachel Kennedy, Leo Stone, Diego Dinis, Gavin Findlay, Peter Bickmore, baby Baxter Sweeney, Sr May Lewis, Joan Murray Hamilton, Sr Margaret Mary, Billy McPhillips, Anthony Finnerty, Angela McGuigan, Jean Nelson, Margaret Anne Marton, Anne Harty, Betty Blyth, Lauren Fitzpatrick, Fr Christy Fox, Joe Greenan, Martin Carr, Michael Igoe, baby Josh Simpson, Katie McAnenny, Robert Shaw, baby Kinsley McMillan, baby Francesca Horwood, John Walsh, Linda McKean, Moira McConville, Kathleen Kay, Margaret and Victoria Roddam, John Williams, Clare Richardson, Karen MacKay, Laura Anderson, Gloria Crolla, Richard Reid, James O'Rourke, Tommy Muir, Janice Todd, Lauli Ridge, Jan Meise, Seval Kazimoglu, Anne Young, James Shepherd, Carla Zanetti, Peter Hanley, Jennifer Kay, Janie Low, Ranier Carpo, William Young, Marie Baird, Andrew Franklin, Frank Palmer, Paul Henderson, Ellen Green, Andrew Preston, Jamie Mitchell, Eunice Macdonald, Peter Bromley, Audrey Burgess, Kathleen Cawley, Margo Law, Misia Jack, Hannah Muldoon, Emma Bromet, Edward Caulfield, Igor Rekowski, Diana Hibbert, Roksan Moczulstra, Joan Brooks, Mary Turnbull, Stuart Falconer, and young Ray Donovan Syme

## Offertory Collections – 21 February 2021



St Mary Magdalene	St John the Evangelist
<b>£115.00 total</b> including Offertory of £20.00 and Gift Aid of £95.00	<b>£1019.40 total</b> including Offertory of £40.00, Gift Aid of £32.40 and £947.00 Online Donations

**The January and February Draws for the St Mary Magdalene's 200 Club will take place after the 11 am Mass this Sunday.**

### History will remember:

*History will remember when the world stopped, and the flights stayed on the ground. And the cars parked in the street. And the trains didn't run.*

*History will remember when the schools closed and the children stayed indoors, and the medical staff walked towards the fire and they didn't run.*

*History will remember when the people sang on their balconies, in isolation, but so very much together in courage and song.*

*History will remember when the people fought for their old and weak and protected the vulnerable by doing nothing at all.*

*History will remember when the virus left and the houses opened, and the people came out and hugged and kissed and started again.*

*Kinder than before.*

(Donna Ashworth)

## A REFLECTION ON THE READINGS FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

### Mark 9: 2-10

It's a brave person who comments on the weight of another. We do so at our peril. When I first went away to College, all meals were served in a huge refectory. Three times per week, fresh bread was served from the in-college bakery – and whilst it may not have been butter that was available on the table, the yellowish substance akin to axle-grease soaked into the warm bread and ran down the chin. Heaven! My first holiday from College, at the end of the first term, had my mother exclaiming as I walked through the front door – ‘You are a bit heavy. You’ll need to get rid of that weight!’ I would have preferred something a little more welcoming, - perhaps, ‘It’s lovely to have you home!’ but then, subtlety was never the strongest card in my mother’s hand. Some of her expressions were off the scale when it came to political correctness which, even if it had been invented, would have been greeted with a Scrooge-like ‘Bah Humbug!’ If I can give a word of advice, then, don’t comment on another’s weight. Weight loss, as well as weight gain may never have been intended and it’s dangerous to assume the medical state of anyone else. ‘Have you been on a diet?’ is as dangerous as ‘You’re looking well!’ Best not to comment at all. Sometimes, however, a transformative process **is** involved as a clinically obese person sheds over 20 stone to move from 36 stone to 16, thus giving themselves a fighting chance of making old bones. It’s usually acceptable to comment on such weight loss, as it truly is transformative – and even transfigurative.

This weekend we are invited to reflect on **the** Transfiguration. Something happened both physically and mentally to all four individuals who went for an away-day walking in the hills. Did Jesus know what was in store, or did he feel himself drawn by his Father and needed the reassurance of close friends to accompany him into the unknown? Was it a case of his being prepared for the forthcoming ordeal of Calvary? He needed his disciples to be with him. They would prepare together. Much will be demanded of them all. *All the world’s a stage, and all are players...* You have probably had a similar experience where anxiety and uncertainty threatened to overwhelm you. You needed some space – just to think things through and get your head in order. You suggested a weekend away with husband, wife or perhaps an old school friend who was always ready with a listening ear.

Today’s episode is at the half-way point into Mark’s account of the Gospel. Events are in motion and Jesus is beginning to become aware that Jerusalem cannot be avoided. Galilee offered an easier ministry, but Jerusalem was his calling and destiny. Ahead, too, is the Garden of Gethsemane which caused Jesus to sweat with such severity that his sweat appeared as drops of blood. It’s a phenomenon called *hematridosis*. Now that **is** stress. But before Gethsemane there is the Transfiguration. It is all part of the same journey, the same process of the strengthening of Jesus and the chosen disciples for the ordeal that lies ahead. As is the case so often in our own lives, things make more sense in hindsight. Today’s episode makes sense in the minds of the disciples once they had witnessed the Resurrection. We speak, rightly, of the ‘benefit of hindsight’. we can see this same awareness in the lives and eyes of Jesus, Peter, James and John.

The beauty of our immersion into a living relationship with God as Father, God as companion in the Person of Jesus Christ, and God as the enlightener of our mind in the person of the Holy Spirit, means that we can all be transformed and transfigured from instinctive Christians, creatures of habit and ritual, into individuals who live, breathe and are happy to ‘be’ and thrive in the image and likeness of God - a likeness that is chiefly in our souls, but which is real and **alive**. We become alive to his Word and his Love. Today we reflect on the potential we all have, to be Transfigured and Transformed.