

### From Sunday's Gospel

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. Jesus spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man and said to him, "Go and wash in the pool of Siloam" (a name that means 'sent'). So the blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored. His neighbours and the people who had earlier seen him begging, said, "Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?" Some said, "Yes, it is the same one." Others said, "No, he only looks like him." The man himself said, "I am the man." Some of the Pharisees did not believe that Jesus had healed him and they drove him away. Jesus heard about this and when he found the man said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" "Sir," the man replied, "tell me who he is so that I may believe in him." Jesus said, "You are looking at him, he is speaking to you." The man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshipped Jesus



St Thomas More writes, "My dear young people, Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal." Today's word is **Healing.** God still heals today through

the sacraments of the Church, which remind us of God's love for us, and through people, doctors, nurses, and if we let him through us too. Following Jesus' teaching and loving others brings healing and adds something very special to our lives. As families are there any people to whom we could bring God's healing this week?

### Last Week's Collections

**First: £347.43 Second: £156.84 Shop: £149.74 Thank You**

**With the suspension of Public Worship the 2nd Collection for Catholic Care due to be taken this weekend will be taken later in the year.**

**Cheques made payable to Diocese of Leeds—Sacred Heart.**



## **Sacred Heart & St William**

31 High Street  
Uppermill OL3 6HS

## **Newsletter during the time of the suspension of Public Worship**

**From Saturday 21st March Fr Bernard will celebrate Mass  
IN PRIVATE without any people present.**

**4th Sunday of Lent—22nd March**

**The intentions are as follows:**

Saturday: Joan Yeardsley

Sunday: Terence McMahon

**HAPPY MOTHERS' DAY!**

Monday: Frank Holmes

Tuesday: Fr Ray Masterson

Wednesday: Cissie Bickers

Thursday: Rita & Dermot O'Leary

Friday: James Olney

Saturday: Catherine Benson

Sunday: People of the Parish

There will be only **one** Mass each day. The Church will be opened at **9.30am** for individual PRIVATE Prayer.

Confessions by appointment.

### **Contact Details:**

Parish Priest: Fr Bernard Bickers Tel: 01457 872603

Permanent Deacon: Revd Peter Rudd Tel: 01457 876559

Safeguarding Officers: Mrs Tessa Spalding Tel: 01457 873515

Mrs Michelle Moore

## Arrangements for the Sacrament and Liturgical Celebrations to reduce the risks of Covid-19 Coronavirus transmission.

The Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, having consulted the Ordinaries of the Diocese, has agreed that the cessation of public liturgies should begin from Friday evening, 20th March 2020.

Because of the situation the Church finds herself in, the obligation of the faithful to attend Holy Mass on a Sunday or Holy Day of Obligation is removed, until further notice.

The following instruction is now given for the celebration of the Sacraments and sacramental of the Church at this time.

### **Celebrations of Holy Mass**

Priests (parish priest and assistant priests) who hold parochial office should continue to celebrate Mass in a church within their parish without the faithful on a daily



basis. Deacons should not participate in these celebrations.

The continuing celebration of Mass ensures that the faithful can join in spiritual communion with the priests of the Church. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states (1364) *As often as the sac-*

*rifice of the cross by which 'Christ our Pasch has been sacrificed' is celebrated on an altar, the work of our redemption is carried out.* Daily resources for those at home, including those for making a spiritual Communion with the priest are attached in the document, Supporting the Faithful and each other in prayer and will be available on the Diocesan website ([www.dioceseofleeds.org.uk](http://www.dioceseofleeds.org.uk)). Resources are also available on the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales website ([www.cbcew.org.uk](http://www.cbcew.org.uk)). Wherever possible during this period churches will remain open, especially on Sundays, for individual private prayer, without any organised services, and offering prayer before the Blessed Sacrament.



### **Other Sacraments**

**Baptism**, except in case of necessity (danger of death) should be deferred until such time that the public health advice is that congregations can safely gather.

**First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion** should be postponed until a time that allows for families and friends to gather safely within our churches. **Confirmation** should be deferred until such time that the public health advice is that congregations can resume public worship.

**Sacrament of Reconciliation** on request as long as hygiene and social distancing requirements are observed.

**Anointing of the Sick**—no pastoral visits should be made to people who are self isolating. When anointing the Oil of the Sick can be applied using a cotton bud which can be burned afterwards.

**Matrimony**, if possible this should be deferred until such time as people can gather in safety. If this is not possible and only in the most pressing of circumstances, then those present for the marriage should be restricted to the celebrant, bride and groom and immediate family. Priests or deacon over 70 years of age should arrange for other clergy to preside at the celebration.

**Funerals**—the funeral service should take place at the graveside or at a crematorium. Arrangements should be made for a Mass to be celebrated *in memoriam* at a time when congregations are allowed to gather. Funeral services should not be conducted by priests or deacons over 70 years of age.

**Decree given at Leeds on the 18th March 2020**

**+ Marcus Stock, Bishop of Leeds & Revd Sean Crawley (Notary)**

### **ASSISTANCE**



If anyone needs assistance with shopping, dog walking, errands please contact Fr Bernard 01457 872603 or [bernard.bickers@sacredheartparishorg.uk](mailto:bernard.bickers@sacredheartparishorg.uk) in the first instance. Several parishioners have volunteered to help and we are building up a list. No body need go without if we pull together.

### **Streaming of Mass—websites**

[www.leedscathedral.org.uk](http://www.leedscathedral.org.uk)

[www.stmaryshalifax.com](http://www.stmaryshalifax.com)

[www.stedwardsclifford.com](http://www.stedwardsclifford.com)

National Catholic Shrine of Our lady of Walsingham



## 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent 2020

On Friday we celebrated the last public Mass in our church until further notice. Both during and after Mass there were tears and I could feel myself welling up as we sang, “Come back to me with all your heart, don’t let fear keep us apart.’ This Sunday I will celebrate Mass alone and in private, though I will intentionally involve those who would be celebrating if they were allowed to do so. It will be hard to think of this 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent as Laetare (Joy) Sunday given the current circumstances, but we can still see Lent as a time of grace. In our Scripture so far this Lent we have been with Jesus in his temptations and his transfiguration and we have heard his long conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well, invited to think of the gift of living water. Today the Gospel is the long and intricate narrative of the man born blind, inviting us to think of Jesus the Light of the world.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> reading picks up this theme of Jesus as light reminding us that we were darkness once but now we are light in the Lord. So, we are encouraged to do our own shadow work and bring our self deceptions and blind spots into the light or they will harm us from within. We don’t always see for ourselves the areas in which we need to grow or what we need to let go of to do so. Others can help us to do this.

In the Gospel we have one of the finest stories in John’s Gospel tracing the faith journey of the man born blind, through physical healing to inner understanding, growing insight and faith commitment. It is a very personal, lonely journey fraught with conflict and opposition from family and religious leaders. It is a journey of integrity and truth, of courage and increasing freedom as he came to know the gift of God and who it is who has broken into his life (to use the terms of last week’s story of the Samaritan woman) and to experience the light. He moves from seeing Jesus as a man who gave him back his sight to having a real experience of God who is present in Jesus. His experience forms such a contrast with the journey of the disciples who really don’t understand what is happening, his family who virtually disown him and the religious leaders as they become more hardened in their opposition to Jesus, whom they regard as a sinner for breaking the Sabbath, and who therefore opt for the darkness.

We are invited to find ourselves in the story. Do I experience the presence of God in my life or do I get lost in what takes me away from that deep experience of God’s presence? Is Jesus really and in fact the light of my world or am I attracted by other lights? Are there aspects of my life that his light has still to penetrate so that I am still blind to some areas of my life? Darkness in its many forms can hold an obstinate fascination which is another way of saying that we all need the presence of Christ, the Light of the world. And this story reminds us that our journey into greater insight and closer discipleship, like that of the blind man will not be without pain, conflict and even rejection. Seeing brings new levels of awareness and awareness makes demands, but it also leads to fuller life. In embracing the light, we also embrace life for we respond to the Word, sent by God to bring us to God. We say with the man in the Gospel, ‘Jesus, I believe.’

## Bidding Prayers for the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent 2020

Celebrant:

We pray to the Lord, who came not to condemn, but to save the world and to give us eternal life.

Reader:

We pray for the Church throughout the world – that all Christians may be a sign of Christ's light by their commitment to compassion, mercy and love for all.  
Lord in your mercy

We pray for political leaders throughout the world – that they may work in the light of Christ to turn hatred to love and conflict to peace and to uphold the human rights of all people.  
Lord in your mercy

We pray for mothers – that the Lord will bless all mothers, grandmothers and mothers-to-be, wherever they are, and that we will appreciate them and show them our love today and every day.  
Lord in your mercy

We pray for all those whose lives have been affected by the explosion of coronavirus, especially those who are living in daily fear of being infected – that they will take the necessary precautions even when these make difficult changes to the pattern of life.  
Lord in your mercy

We pray for those who have died, especially all victims of violence, accident and natural disaster, Pauline Fitzgerald, Aiden Bree, James Huston, Cissie Bickers, Frederick John Cox, Joan Elizabeth O'Hara and Amelia Cox whose anniversaries occur this week – that they and all who have died will rest in peace and rise in glory. Lord in your mercy

Either aloud or in silence we pray for our own special intentions...pause...then  
Lord in your mercy

We ask the prayers of Mary our Mother as we say, Hail Mary...

Celebrant:

Heavenly Father, source of light and hope help us always to shun the darkness and to walk in the light of your Son. We make this and all our prayers through Christ our Lord. Amen