

ST. MARY OF NAZARETH /ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI – WEST WICKHAM

13th March 2022: Second Sunday of Lent

Hazel writes:

This week we prayed for Ukraine in our services, in church buildings during the week and in our homes. This coming week we will continue with the same times for prayer in the buildings and begin to consider how we can turn our prayer into action.

Churches and individuals will be able to contribute the new humanitarian sponsorship programme which is being developed by the UK government. Here is a link to an organisation which the Diocese of Southwark is supporting for this response:

www.sanctuaryfoundation.org.uk. Please continue to pray and consider what our contribution might be.

Today, we have Holy Communion services at 8am in St Francis' Church, at 9.15am in St. Mary's Church and at 10.45am in St Francis' Church.

Hymns at 9.15 a.m. in St. Mary's – Blessed be your name -Come down O love divine -Take my life and let it be – Such love -Guide me O thou great Redeemer

Hymns at 10.45 a.m. in St. Francis – Amazing grace – To be in thy presence – Just as I am -Brother, sister let me serve you.

Next **Sunday 20th March**, we will have Holy Communion services at 8am and 9.15am in St. Mary's Church and at 10.45am in St Francis' Church.

The **St Mary's APCM** will follow the service – please do stay afterwards for this important meeting.

Morning Prayer is held each week in St Francis' Church on Wednesday morning at 9.30am, followed by the church being **open for private prayer** from 10.30-11.30am. It is also held at St Mary's Church on Thursday morning at 9am.

The church buildings will again be opened this week to **Pray for Ukraine**: St Mary's from 7-8pm on Tuesday and St Francis' from 7-8pm on Thursday.

Resources and updates for the week ahead – This week our service will be livestreamed on YouTube from St Mary's **at 9.15am** on Sunday. All other files for this week have been combined and posted as a pew sheet which has been sent on paper to those who have told us that they are not on-line. Other worship and resources that you might want to listen to or look at on Sunday:

- The Church of England's national virtual service will be available on their website at www.churchofengland.org.

- The BBC have the following programmes to watch and listen to:
 - Sunday Worship at 8.10am on Radio 4 – A service from Down Cathedral, Downpatrick for the second Sunday in Lent.
 - Choral Evensong at 3pm on Radio 3 from the Chapel of Keble College, Oxford.
 - On BBC 1: Songs of Praise at 1.15 p.m.- Rev. Kate Bottley meets the monks at Mount St. Bernard’s Abbey in Leicestershire and tries their renowned ale.

Coffee & Chat is this week on Thursday 17th at 2.30pm in person at St Francis’ Church and on the first Thursday of each month on Zoom. If you would like to come and meet others for a chat, please do join us. If you would like to do this, but cannot make the date, or would like the log-in details, please let Rowena know (rowena.griff19@btinternet.com or 8777 6112).

Easter Eggs that share the Easter Story – Chocolate Evangelism! If you buy Easter Eggs for your children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nephews, nieces, etc, think about buying them from the Meaningful Chocolate Company. Each egg comes with a 24-page Easter story-activity book, the chocolate is Fair Trade, and a percentage of the profits will be donated to charity. In the past 11 years, more than 3 million people have read the Easter story books and £320,000 plus has been raised for good causes. You can’t buy these eggs in supermarkets, but I would be delighted to order as many eggs as you would like. There are further details and an order form at the back of the church.

Prices: Dark chocolate - £5.50; Milk chocolate - £4.50; White chocolate - £5.00

To get free delivery, I need your orders by **March 13th at the latest**. If you’re not able to place your order at church, contact me at richard.ford73@ntlworld.com or on 020 8289 2432. I’ll collect the money from you when the eggs have arrived. *Richard Ford*

Please bring **Foodbank donations** to the Vicarage or St Francis’ Church. Currently they require tinned hot and cold meat, tinned potatoes, tinned vegetables, long life fruit juice, tinned fish, chopped tomatoes, rice, custard, rice pudding. They are well stocked with pasta, cereals and baked beans. Please do not bring any fresh food, or baby milk as the foodbank cannot pass this on. You can also donate financially here <https://bromleyborough.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-money>. Thank you for your continuing support.

We are now approaching the time of our annual meetings when new **PCC members** will be elected. If you are interested in what happens in our churches, please do think about joining the PCC. Speak to Hazel or any member currently on the PCC for more information.

Each year the Bishop of Southwark has a **Lent Call** which raises money to support projects throughout the diocese and in our link dioceses of Zimbabwe and Jerusalem. Details of the projects being supported in 2022 are available here:

<https://southwark.anglican.org/news-events/events/lent-call/resources/> there are also hard copies available in each of the church buildings to borrow or read while you are there. There are envelopes available for donations during the next few weeks and the offertories on Easter Sunday will also go towards this appeal.

If you, or someone you know, could do with some help with things such as hospital appointments, shopping, or days out, there is a local befriending service called Companions. There are leaflets about this service in both of our churches, or if you'd like more information, contact either Andrea (07506 686238) or Maria (07939 120718) or by email at companions22@btinternet.com.

The funeral of **Cynthia Symes** will take place on Friday 8th April at 11.30 a.m. at St. Mary's. Further details next week.

Eco Church is a tool to help us in treasuring God's earth. It's an online survey which looks at:

- worship and teaching
- management of church buildings
- management of church land
- community and global engagement
- lifestyle. You can see the detail of questions asked here:

<https://ecochurch.arochoa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Eco-Church-Survey-v2-January-2018.pdf>. If there are any things that you would be interested in looking at in more detail, please contact Nicky Nightingale at nicholanightingale@hotmail.co.uk or on 8916 9855.

Police Encounter Panels South Area Police are looking for members of the public to form a panel on each of the three boroughs – Sutton, Bromley and Croydon. The panels are being created to give communities the opportunity to feedback on policing encounters from their own neighbourhoods, by watching Body Worn video (BWV) footage and offering their views on what went well or what the Met can improve. If you are over 18 and live, work, in education or have other strong links to the boroughs and would like to get involved or simply hear more, please email the dedicated mailbox at PolicingEncounters.SouthArea@met.police.uk

The Methodist Church in Beckenham is appointing a **Church Administrator** to work 20 hours per week worked over 4 or 5 days. Salary: £15/hour. Duties include managing the church office; letting the church rooms; supporting the ministers and church stewards; liaising with external service providers and managing the church diary. The successful applicant will have expertise in Microsoft Office and will need to collaborate effectively with others. For more information and an application pack contact Christine Handel on 020 8658 1381 or at christine.handel@ntlworld.com. Closing date for applications 18th March with interviews on 2nd April.

If anyone would like a pedestal at either church in memory of a loved one or to commemorate a special anniversary etc., please contact Merri Womack (8777 8772) for St Mary's (or there is a list to sign in the vestibule at St. Mary's) or Nicky Nightingale (nicholanightingale@hotmail.co.uk or 8916 9855) for St Francis'.

No flowers now until Easter.

If anyone would like to join a group going to Made in Dagenham which the WWOS are performing at the Churchill Theatre in Bromley on Tuesday May 17th, please let Beryl know (8289 8097). If we get a group of 10 or more the cost of the ticket will be £22, less than that it will be £24.

Any items for the joint pew sheet to Beryl berylbolton@hotmail.com and items for the websites to brian.griff19@btinternet.com or Gifty office@stmarywestwickham.co.uk.

Collect

Almighty God,
by the prayer and
discipline of Lent
may we enter into the
mystery of Christ's
sufferings, and by
following in his Way
come to share in his
glory; through Jesus
Christ our Lord.

First Reading:**Philippians 3:17-21- 4:1**

¹⁷ Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. ¹⁸ For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. ¹⁹ Their end is destruction; their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. ²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. ²¹ He will transform the body of our humiliation so that it may be conformed to the body

of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself.

¹ Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

Gospel Reading:**Luke 13: 31-35**

³¹ At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, 'Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.' ³² He said to them, 'Go and tell that fox for me, "Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. ³³ Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed away from Jerusalem.'" ³⁴ Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children

together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! ³⁵ See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord."

Post Communion Prayer

Almighty God, you see that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves: keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls; that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Bible reading from the New Revised Standard Version Bible: Anglicised Edition, copyright © 1989, 1995 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

REFLECTION – Ken Bryan

I have a British passport which allows me certain privileges including to pass freely without let or hindrance on my travels. Paul also was allowed privileges as he was a Roman citizen, as well as a Hebrew born of Hebrews. He was protected in two ways for where he went and what he did. But in our Epistle today he is saying is that it is more important that he is a 'citizen of heaven', and he believes that should be the same for all followers of Christ.

Now every nation needs a focus, a heart, a capital city and the heart, the capital, of this nation was Jerusalem. But Jerusalem was not just a capital city, it was also where the nation's Temple stood and where they worshipped God.

But for years the Temple, Jerusalem, and nation were under the rule of Rome. Roman symbols capped the Temple building; the Roman governor controlled the Temple politically and ensured that they paid heavy taxes to feed imperial Rome.

The Jews naturally resented this deeply. They longed for freedom in the land God had promised them. Rebellion was in the air. But when rebellion came to a head in AD70 Rome stamped on it decisively. And by the time Luke recorded the remembered words of Jesus weeping, Jerusalem and Temple were destroyed.

The Romans were good, often ruthless, at keeping order. In every big city they had a barracks of active soldiers, and sometimes settlements for veteran soldiers too. One such city was Philippi, with Roman soldiers very visible on the streets.

Less visible in Philippi was a small community of people, living on the fringe of city life. They were followers of Jesus. One day, this little group received a letter, from Paul. Paul had started this community of Jesus followers on a visit. Now he was writing to them telling them 'Our citizenship is in heaven.'

So, for Paul, being a 'citizen of heaven' clearly doesn't mean withdrawal from this world. Nor does it mean a passport to a trouble-free passage through this world. Paul wrote to Philippi from prison, imprisoned for publicly insisting on the good news about Jesus.

And the good news about Jesus is this that through Jesus' death and resurrection, God transformed expectations by the creation of a new nation founded on faith, centred not on the Temple, but on Jesus himself – an inclusive nation, transcending national boundaries, with citizenship open to all.

Our faith in Jesus gives us dual citizenship.

Today we have another ruthless nation trying to suppress another. Where individuals and small groups are defending their homes and their livelihoods.

Rome sacked Jerusalem. Russia is destroying Ukraine. The evil in this world is there writ large for all to see. In Ukraine many people have a strong faith which has kept them positive. Yet they know they must work for their peace. Yes they should pray but it is for them to defend themselves. They are turning the other cheek in that they are not attacking Russia but defending their nation and their way of life.

We are seeing the horrors on our TV screens day after day.

But I want to share with you one story which was published by Premier Christianity Media trust on the 7th March.

Sharyn Borodina and her husband, Ruslan have been leaders in Youth With A Mission Ukraine for the last 25 years. YWAM in Ternopil is currently the city headquarters for relief efforts for incoming refugees.

Sharyn says: *"In December we were having a prayer time in Ternopil, Ukraine, with our leadership team. We were asking God to give us his heart for the upcoming year. In a time of worship, this verse came to my mind: "The battle belongs to the Lord." (2 Chronicles 20:15) I thought it might be in reference to some difficulties we were walking through as a base, but I really felt an unease in my spirit, that no, this was going to be a headline, in a much bigger way in 2022.*

"I brushed it off, because I didn't want to think about something happening that would be such a battle. When the war broke out just over a week ago, the Lord brought the verse back to me again and again. It has been a comfort to me, He let me know that he is fighting that battle. There is so much hope in that for me. I know that God is going before us. I know there will be a victory, but I don't know what the cost of that victory will be.

"My husband, Ruslan's father is Russian, and his mother is Ukrainian. His last name is very Russian, but he is a Ukrainian patriot through and through. That is the story of most of Ukraine. Everyone has some sort of mixture of Ukrainian and Russian background. Half the country speaks fluent Ukrainian, the other half speaks Russian. I love the Russian people. I speak Russian in a part of Ukraine that is very much Ukrainian speaking. They are very patriotic about being Ukrainian speaking, but they have treated me, even as a Russian speaker, very well. The war has attacked the beauty of that. It feels very much like a divorce, it is heart breaking.

“But there have been some stories that have encouraged us. We have heard of bombs dropping out of the sky and not exploding, stories of tanks running out of fuel that had fuel. Stories of Russian soldiers who have given themselves up as Prisoners of war because they refuse to take up arms against part of their own Slavic families.

“Just yesterday, my husband Ruslan got a phone call from a maternity ward in a small town just outside of Kyiv that had been destroyed from the bombing. The maternity ward was in desperate need of all supplies and gave him a list. He took the list, walked out the door of our building, and all of a sudden a truck pulled up outside. Out jumped a group of Norwegians who had come over from a YWAM base in Romania. The van was full of humanitarian aid, including every item that was on the list from the maternity ward. Ruslan was able to direct the supplies to exactly where they were needed.

“I was just talking to a colleague at YWAM Kyiv, and they are feeding 150 people a day right now at their base. They are talking about how eight kilos of macaroni is feeding 150 people – food is being multiplied.

“These stories are what has been lifting our spirits. It is the support and prayers of the body of Christ around the world that are making the difference. This is a “such a time as this” (Esther 4:14) moment for the Russian and Ukrainian people, but really for the world.

“I don’t know what is going to happen. But I do believe there will be a victory. I don’t know if we will see that victory in the next couple of weeks, or if it will take longer. I don’t know what the cost will be. What I do know is He who is for us is far greater than Him who is against us.”

People around the world are protesting and supporting relief work, even at great personal cost.

It has been reported that a priest, Father Burdin, who gave an anti-war sermon in Russia yesterday has been arrested and is due to appear in court later this week. It is said that he gave a sermon to a small congregation in the town of Karabanovo. He also put a message on the parish’s website which read:

“We, Christians, cannot stand idly by when a brother kills brother, a Christian kills a Christian”.

Last week more than 270 Russian Orthodox priests and deacons signed an open letter appealing for reconciliation and an immediate ceasefire in the war.

In this country we will be facing economic hardships due to the war, but this is nothing compared to the suffering in Ukraine.

In our gospel passage Jesus was going to Jerusalem as his mission was first and foremost to the Jews as their Messiah.

He is unhurried, showing he is in charge of all time. Three days looks back to the boy Jesus found on the third day in the Temple, and forward to the man crucified but then risen on the third day.

Like a mother hen protects her young sometimes even to the point of death, so Jesus will sacrifice himself for those who follow after and believe in him. The fox analogy easily pointing to Herod, the son of the Herod in power at Jesus' birth.

God works in our world but not as we would always like. Sometimes seeming to be absent. Our duty is to follow the way of Christ. Standing firm for what is right. Remembering that God's timing is not our timing.

We are citizens of our nation but also the world. But more importantly we are 'citizens of heaven'.

Amen

Prayer Pointers

Pray for those ridiculed and ostracised for their belief and faith in Jesus. That they may find courage and strength to stand firm and not give up.

Pray for Judith, daughter of John Godfrey, who got married to her partner, Jacqui, on Friday, that they will reflect God's love in their relationship together.

For Nightwatch and Renewed Hope – two organisations working with the homeless in Croydon and East Surrey respectively and supported by the Bishop of Southwark's Lent Call.

For all those who are ill and for their friends and relatives – especially for Julie Bailey and Vicky Pearce. For all recovering and convalescing from treatment - that they may have patience and be ready to accept help from others as they heal. For those still unwell and facing further treatment.

For the family of Jamie Gilbey, a volunteer on the weekly soup run that was supported and staffed by members of St Mary's and St Francis', who is missing and presumed to have come to harm. For the specialist police officers supporting his family and those involved in the investigation.

For the soul of Carole Hubbard, for her husband Malcolm and all her family; for the soul of Robert Davis, for his wife Marian and all his family; and for the soul of Cynthia Symes, for her husband Archie, her daughters Joanna and Michelle and all her family. May God help them all to begin again.

Offer our own personal prayers – our deepest needs, our fears, our joys and thanksgivings and for all those who we love dearly.

A Prayer for Ukraine

God of strength and peace, send your blessing on the people of Ukraine. Sustain them in their struggles, hold them in their fear, protect them from all danger, and be for them the hope they desire. *(Composed by Andrew Nunn – Dean of Southwark)*

Bishop of Southwark's Lent Call Prayer 2022

Loving and saving God, we thank you that you have given us a home with you in heaven, help us work to enable others to feel at home in our communities. Give us your generosity of spirit that we might work with our neighbours to bring hope and peace to those around us. Amen.