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St Michael's churches***14th march 2010  
Year C  
divine office wk 4****St Michael's Church**

Langdown Lawn

Hythe SO45 5GR

**St Bernard's Church**

Southbourne Avenue,

Holbury, SO45 2NT

PASTORAL TEAM

**Priest: Fr David Adams****Deacons:** Steve Bowler (8020 7449)

Ian Tobin (8089 7354)

**Parish Administrator:** Helen Hughson**To contact The Parish Administrator based at St Michael's**  
call between 9am - 2pm (Mon & Tue only)

For the Ideal Gift visit

**Faith, Hope & Charity**8 ST JOHN'S STREET, HYTHE  
SOUTHAMPTON, SO45 6DA**PARISH SERVICES: FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT**

Sun	14	9 am	SB	Mass: <b>Fourth Sunday of Lent</b>
		11 am	SM	Mass: <b>Fourth Sunday of Lent</b>
		6 pm	SM	Mass: <b>Fourth Sunday of Lent</b>
Tue	16	10 am	SM	Mass: followed by Prayer Pottery at 11am
Wed	17	7.30 pm	SM	Mass: <b>St Patrick</b>
Thu	18	10 am	LT	Lyndhurst: <b>4th Week of Lent</b>
Sat	20	10 am	SM	Mass: <b>Lent</b> followed by Sacrament of Reconciliation (11am - 11.30 am)

**FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT**

Sun	21	9 am	SB	Mass: <b>Fifth Sunday of Lent</b>
		11 am	SM	Mass: <b>Fifth Sunday of Lent</b>
		6 pm	SM	Mass: <b>Fifth Sunday of Lent</b>

### JUST WHO IS BEING WASTEFUL?

We've been used to calling today's Gospel story from Luke the "parable of the prodigal son", prodigal meaning wasteful. However from other points of view the father has certainly been wasteful with his property, his love and with the fatted calf! The elder son has been wasting his time "slaving" all those years for his father. This is a beautiful parable of mercy from Jesus and we can enrich our appreciation of it and its impact upon us by looking at it from different perspectives.

In the context of the culture of Jesus' time the father figure is breaking all the rules and conventions. Why did he agree to give half his property away when his younger son was treating him as if he were dead already? He sets no conditions on how he is to spend this money. Why does he wait for the boy's return, run to greet him (very undignified & not the done thing!). The father has no anger, no bitterness. He doesn't even give the wayward son time to make a proper confession. The celebration is lavish and unrestrained. The younger son has dishonoured his father, wasted his money on drink and women, and fallen to the ultimate humiliation of being subject to foreigners and tending pigs—animals considered unclean by the Jewish people. He only comes to his senses out of self-interest and a will to survive: "How many of my father's paid servants have more than enough to eat and here am I starving to death"? But he does at least recognise that "I no longer deserve to be called your son". He has found some basis of truth and humility.

The elder brother didn't seem to have a very good relationship with his father. Perhaps his father hadn't shown him love or given him encouragement or celebrated his achievements as he should have done. The elder brother is dutiful but not affectionate. Now, with the return of his brother he gets overwhelmed by all the pent up resentment and cannot celebrate. Many good, faithful people who have never wavered identify strongly with the elder brother.

If we look at the parable in this way as a human story in which everyone messes up in some way then the message is a mutual call to be reconciled to one another. Everyone has something to repent of, everyone has to die a little to their old self in order to live fully again. One can pray this parable in different ways putting oneself in the shoes of the father, the younger brother & then the elder brother, identifying with the calf is probably taking it too far!! The father can certainly be seen as representing God but ever since the institutional Church presented a more stern faced Jesus and a more remote and judgemental Father-God Mary came to best represent (for Catholics & Orthodox) the indulgent face of God's lavish mercy. Mary really became the Good News for many.

Of course leaving behind judgement, fear, self-centredness and every other negative perspective and energy is what it means to be "in Christ". The new creation is a new mind-set, a new way of seeing oneself and others. It is an evolution of consciousness but not an automatic evolution. This evolution involves and requires human freedom and choice. And this evolution of consciousness cannot encompass all until everyone surrenders to and embraces the harmony, the peace, the reconciliation and the joy. And it can never be a purely individualistic thing. There is no such thing as isolation except in the illusion of the self-created ego. And the cultural, social dimension is integral to the evolution of the human race. To lose the cultural capacity for communication, dialogue, mutual understanding, tolerance and every other attitude that enriches human existence is to regress to primitive stages of development. Christ is the consciousness of the new humanity and from that divine consciousness every blessing flows enabling us to become "the goodness of God". (DMA)

Roof Fund still to be raised -

**£4,587.01**

(Target - £13,500,

already raised - £8,912.99)

**Thank you all, for your generosity**

**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:** Please keep in your prayers: Nigel Bolton, Marion Butler, Joan Cocker, Petra Daniels, Bill Feltham, Pat Gallanagh, Andrew Handol, Joan Olden, Leslie Palmer, Bridget Reeves, Eileen Shanley, Lena Westfoot (If you wish someone to be included for prayers here please give their name to Fr David.)

**PRAYER POTTERY** - Tuesday Mornings 11-12 am led by Christine Olden. Tel: 023 80848754 at St Michael's Hythe. We 16, 23rd 30th March (Lent). All welcome for quiet scripture, prayer and reflection.



**CAFOD** just one world **SOUP LUNCH** - Thursday 18th March at 12.30 at St Bernard's Hall. Tickets £5 available after Mass from the back of the churches.

**CAFOD 50th Anniversary: Give it up Campaign** - See new materials in the porch for use all through Lent. Take the boxes home and put in the money you have saved from the things you have given up this Lent

**Concert in St Michaels, on Saturday, 27th March at 7.30pm** given by the Woodside Singers—various classical choral pieces suitable for Lent. £3.00—pay at the door. Light refreshments during the interval. After costs have been met surplus monies will be donated to **CAFOD**. See the poster for details

**FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING:** this week on Thursday, 18th March at 7.30pm in the Meeting Room at St Michael's. Angela Falder, Carmel McClatchey, Francis Waddington and Rev David Adams are on the Committee.

**PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL:** will meet next week on Thursday, 25th March at 7.30pm in the Meeting Room at St Michael's. Minutes of the previous meeting will be approved and then subsequently displayed on the notice boards of both churches. Members of the Pastoral Council are: Kevin Barnett (chairperson), Eileen Brady, Louise Croll, Phil Hopkins, Christine Olden, Polly Read, John Reilly, Francis Waddington, Rev Steve Bowler, Rev Ian Tobin & Rev David Adams. Parishioners can raise issues with any PPC member to be considered for discussion at a subsequent PPC meeting.

**NEW FOREST EAST PASTORAL AREA:** Bp Crispian, Mgr Vincent Harvey, Nicky Stevens (Dept Adult Formation) met with representatives from Totton parish, Lyndhurst parish, Waterside parish & the Ashurst community. Rev Andy Philpott has stepped down as Co-ordinating Pastor and the Bishop has asked Fr David to fulfil this role. We have been encouraged to begin again the work of binding together the different communities of the Pastoral Area and in the coming year we will endeavour, as a first objective, to establish a Pastoral Area Pastoral Council.

**GIFT AID ENVELOPES:** for the year 2010/2011 are now ready for collection and will be in the porch at St Bernard's & St Michael's this Sunday, 7th March and for the next three weeks. Thanks to Carmel McClatchey for organising the envelopes.

**MARTHA GROUP SOCIAL EVENTS:** As you can see from the amount raised last Saturday having a good fun night out can also make a significant difference to Church funds. Please make a note in your diary of the next function: Quiz Night & American Supper, 24th April.

## **THE DIOCESAN FUND-RAISING CAMPAIGN - "LIVING OUR FAITH":**

**Message from Bishop Crispian:** "This initiative has touched all our communities from Maidenhead to the Isle of Wight, from Bournemouth to Liphook and from the outskirts of Oxford and Wantage to Jersey. There have been amazing—and humbling—acts of generous and sacrificial giving from over 3000 families, all of whom have been eager and willing to play their part in building and sustaining the life and future of our diocese. They have readily given new money for the new work that faces us". (*So far money given and pledges made amount to £8 million; £4.5 million towards the Diocesan target of £6.5 million and the remainder for specific parish projects*). "We were able to celebrate success so far in a Mass of Thanksgiving in the Cathedral in January. Now that a further 37 parishes are taking up the challenge of the campaign, I look forward to similar celebrations around the diocese in the coming months"

This campaign is to raise funds so that the Diocese can continue: 1) vocations work for priesthood & diaconate; 2) the training of students for the priesthood; 3) the work of adult formation and training for lay ministry; 4) the provision of financial support for parishes. The campaign has been running very successfully in other parishes. During the first part of this process Fr David will be gathering a campaign team together. The team will be invited to a meeting details of which will follow.

### **DATES FOR THE DIARY:**

**Lenten Reconciliation Service** at St Michaels on Tuesday, 23rd March at 7.30pm.

**PASTORAL AREA EVENTS:** (see notice board for other services during Lent)

**Day of Reflection for Ministers of Holy Communion:** on Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> May 2010, from 10 for 10.30am until 3.45pm at St Joseph's, Ashurst, led by Fr Ronnie Mitchell SMM. Tea/Coffee provided bring packed lunch, opportunity for Reconciliation & Mass. We will join together with parishioners from Totton & Lyndhurst.

**THE 2010 PLANT SALE:** will be held on May 15<sup>th</sup> this year and organised by Veronica Chadwick. So all you gardeners please get busy.