

## Insisting on love: Peter

In polite society you are not supposed to go around asking people questions like “Who do you say I am?” or “Do you love me?” Perhaps because the answers might be deadening. Questions that go to the heart of the matter, particularly when the matter concerns what you really think of another person, are usually eased out of the conversation like slightly potty relatives are eased out of the room after they have misbehaved. In today’s Gospel, however, Jesus is in good voice when he asks Peter three times if he really loves him.

Remember that before the crucifixion Peter had not exactly distinguished himself. Three times he denied being a disciple of Jesus and knowing anything about him. The man Jesus chooses to exercise primacy of authority is the one who is caught out by a servant girl as he lies insistently. He is the man who is arrested by a cock crowing in the dark.

As we hear from the epilogue of John’s Gospel, after the crucifixion Peter and the disciples returned to their old trade of fishing. There is no suggestion that they believed themselves to have a mission to carry on after the death of Jesus. After Jesus had died their hopes went into the tomb and they returned to old, familiar ways. They try to cope with the loss of the one who had changed their lives.

After a long night’s fishing the disciples come up with zero, and a distant figure on the shore tells them to try again. They pull in a marvellous haul. The Beloved Disciple identifies the figure as Jesus, and Peter in his excitement tries treading water to be with him. Peter has a wet breakfast with the Lord.

After the meal Jesus asks Peter three times about the reality of his love. Insisting on love is something of a mark with Jesus. Three times Peter affirms his love, as three times Jesus insists on it. And when Peter professes his love Jesus commissions him to care for his flock. Seeing the Lord is always a dismissal for ministry; loving the Lord is always a charge to care for others.

And that is what Peter does - as we heard from today’s first reading. In his ministry of preaching and healing Peter gets through to many people, and the authorities become nervous at the ability of Peter and the apostles to work in the name of Jesus. In spite of the opposition Peter will continue insisting on his love for Jesus and this insistence will take him to martyrdom in Rome. In the end Jesus’ question “Simon, do you love me?” becomes profoundly unnecessary. There is nothing circumstantial about Peter’s love.

So the question of Jesus is openly directed to each of us: “Do you love me?” But before Jesus puts the question to us he goes to enormous trouble to first assure us that he really loves us. He died making the point. When we’re assured of that first love we might be less hesitant in declaring our own.

The question of Jesus stays with us hoping for an answer. The question comes from one who is more interested in our future prospects than our past failures. He doesn’t pass the time in bitter recriminations. He’s more interested in what can become of us. That kind of person is worth letting through our defences and locked doors. He’s not a security risk. After all, his Valentine has already been slipped under the door.

(From *Seasons of the Word* by Denis McBride).

# The Messenger

St Michael’s Church,  
Langdown Lawn  
Hythe SO45 5GR

18 April 2010  
Year C  
divine office WK 3

St Bernard’s Church  
Southbourne Avenue,  
Holbury, SO45 2NT

## TIMES OF SERVICES

Sun	18	9 am	SB	Third Sunday of Easter
		11 am	SM	Third Sunday of Easter & Baptism of Adi Ralogaivau
		6 pm	SM	Third Sunday of Easter
Tue	20	10 am	SM	No Mass Today
Wed	21	7.30 pm	SM	Evening Prayer & Mass
Thu	22	10 am	LT	No Mass Today
Sat	24	10 am	SM	Mass
		11 am	SM	Sacrament of Reconciliation until 11.30am
Sun	25	9 am	SB	Fourth Sunday of Easter
		11 am	SM	Fourth Sunday of Easter
		6 pm	SM	Fourth Sunday of Easter



**Mass Intentions: For the week beginning 18th April:** People of the Parish, Parishioners who are unwell, Tommy Mohan RIP, Mrs Ellen Pick (B’day), Win Cocker (Bday), Vera West RIP

**For the week beginning 25th April:** People of the Parish, Parishioners who are unwell, Tony Warrillow RIP, Gerard Mangham RIP

## New Forest East Pastoral Area - Sunday Mass Times

St Theresa, Totton - Sat Vigil Mass 6pm; Sun 10.30am  
Ashurst Community - Sun 9am  
Our Lady & St Edward, Lyndhurst - Sun 9am

## WATERSIDE CATHOLIC PARISH

Pastoral Team: Rev David Adams (Parish Priest)  
Rev Steve Bowler (Deacon) (8020 7449)  
Rev Ian Tobin (Deacon) (8089 7354)  
Kevin Barnett (Chair: Parish Pastoral Council)

Parish Administrator: Helen Hughson (Mon & Tues only 9am—2pm)  
All correspondence to: The Parish Office,  
Angel House, 6 Langdown Lawn, Hythe SO45 5GR

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For the Ideal Gift  
visit  
Faith, Hope & Charity  
8 ST JOHN’S STREET, HYTHE  
SO45 6DA  
Tel: 023 8020 7882

**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:** Please keep in your prayers: Nigel Bolton, Marion Butler, Petra Daniels, Bill Feltham, Pat Gallanagh, Amanda Gudge, Irene Mitchell, Roy Nicholas, Joan Olden, Michael Peake, Bridget Reeves, Margaret Scott, Valerie Slipper, Lena Westfoot (If you wish someone to be included for prayers here please give their name to Fr David.)



**General Election: Meetings with Local Candidates**  
Our Bishops have produced a document entitled "Choosing the common good" in which they suggest that voters ask election candidates where they stand on certain ethical issues. CAFOD too have questions to be put to them on overseas aid, protection of the environment and ending child poverty.

In response to the above, meetings are being arranged with the New Forest East Candidates. Further background and details are on the noticeboard or phone Louise Croll on 80898213. Anyone interested in joining the group meeting the candidate please phone Louise who needs to know numbers. **Meetings arranged so far: Dr Julian Lewis, Conservative 23rd April at 1.30pm at Cadnam, Col Terry Scriven, Liberal Democrat, 28th April 11 am, St Bernard's Hall, Holbury.**

**WATERSIDE CHURCHES TOGETHER:** has organised an General Election Forum. This will take place at the Parish Hall, West Street, Hythe on Thursday, April 22nd at 7.30pm. Unfortunately Dr Julian Lewis (Con) is unable to be present at that time, but he will be available at the Parish Hall between 5pm & 5.45pm to respond to any questions. Questions for the main meeting at 7.30pm need to be emailed to [election@watersidect.org.uk](mailto:election@watersidect.org.uk) or delivered to St Andrews Church, Dibden Purlieu as soon as possible. Questions are needed to make the meeting happen! You must attend if you wish your question to be put to the candidates. The meeting will be chaired by Rev John Currin, Rector of Dibden.

**QUIZ NIGHT & AMERICAN SUPPER:**  
this Saturday, 24th April at 7.30pm in St Bernard's Hall. Tickets on sale after Mass. This event is being organised by the Martha Group. It will be a great fun evening so please support this parish event.

**YOUNG PEOPLE:** We still have only 3 adult volunteers for the 9am children's liturgy. We could give the young more and better Catholic-based learning, worship, friendship and fun, both at Mass and beyond - but only with more help. Can **you** help the Church of the future? Irregular/occasional volunteers welcome too: please ring Clare (8084 2232) or Hilary (8084 3173).

**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, 21st March and for the next two weeks. Thanks to Carmel McClatchey for organising the envelopes. Anyone wishing to join the scheme should contact either the Parish Office on 80843479 or Carmel McClatchey 80842403.

**SPECIAL THANKS TO STEVEN DREWITT** for painting the motifs on the Paschal Candle again for this year. It was just one of those providential coincidences that the colours harmonise so well with the Easter Banner.

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

**Message from Bishop Crispian:** 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*).

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 parish projects. The campaign has been running very successfully in other parishes. **The Parish Team is now in place. They will be helping Fr David meet with parishioners to invite support for the campaign.**

**PLEASE SAY "YES" TO SHOPPING VOUCHERS** next time you do your shopping and you are offered vouchers at Sainsbury or Tesco checkouts. You could then place them in the CAFOD stamps flip-top bins and we will then pass them on to Our Lady and St Joseph Catholic Primary School, who are asking for them. Also... ..A huge sack of used stamps, foreign coins and some old mobile phones was handed over to the CAFOD office at Wonersh, Surrey recently. Thank you all very much, and keep them coming in. Why not get friends and relatives, at home and abroad, to collect them too?

**EASTER EGG RAFFLE:** The Easter Egg Raffle at the parish shop "Faith, Hope & Charity" made £260 for the Roof Fund! Well done everyone and thanks to all those who contributed the lovely eggs and all those who took part. There is a list of prize winners at the back of the church.

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

**WANTED—URGENTLY!** Fridge/freezer electric cooker, microwave, kettle, kitchen table and chairs, washing machine, beds, wardrobes, coffee table, 3 piece suite. **All must be in good, usable condition. Please contact Craig on 07946674199 or leave a message at the Parish Office.**