

The Messenger

St Michaels Church, (SM) Langdown Lawn, Hythe SO45 5GR
St Bernard's Church, (SB) Southbourne Ave, Holbury, SO45 2NT

20th May 2012

Ascension of the Lord (Year B: Psalter Wk.3)

Sun	20 th	9.00am Mass at St Bernards 11.00am Mass at St Michaels 6.00pm Mass at St Anne's, Brockenhurst
Mon	21 st	No Service (Liturgy: of the 7 th Week of Easter)
Tues	22 nd	10.00am SM Morning Prayer & Mass (Liturgy: of the 7 th Week of Easter)
Wed	23 rd	10.00am - Mass at St Anne's, Brockenhurst (Liturgy: of the 7 th Week of Easter)
Thurs	24 th	10.00am - Mass at Our Lady's, Lyndhurst (Liturgy: of the 7 th Week of Easter)
Fri	25 th	No Service (Liturgy: Memorial - St Bede the Venerable, Relgious, Doctor of the Church, 672-735AD)
Sat	26 th	10.00am SM Mass followed by Sacrament of Reconciliation until 11.00am (Liturgy: Memorial - St Philip Neri, Priest, Founder, 1515-1595)
Sun	27 th	Pentecost Sunday 9.00am Mass at St Bernards 11.00am Mass at St Michaels 6.00pm Mass at St Anne's, Brockenhurst

Mass Intentions: For this week: All members of the Parish, All those who are unwell, Holy Souls, Deceased Clergy of the Province, Guidance for choice of new Bishop, John & Lena Keane (Intentions), Michael Moran RIP Anniv (F/M), Pat Connaughton RIP, George Simpson RIP Anniv, Irene Mitchell RIP Anniv, deceased members of the McCarthy family

For the week beginning 27th May: All members of the Parish, All those who are unwell, Holy Souls, Deceased Clergy of the Province, Guidance for choice of new Bishop, Michael Moran RIP Anniv (F/M), Pat Connaughton RIP

WATERSIDE CATHOLIC PARISH

Pastoral Team: Rev David Adams (Parish Priest)
Rev Steve Bowler (Deacon & Chair Parish Pastoral Council) (023 8020 7449)
Rev Ian Tobin (Deacon) (023 8089 7354)

All correspondence to: The Parish Office, Angel House,
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New Forest East Pastoral Area - Sunday Mass Times

St Theresa, Totton - Sat Vigil Mass 6pm; Sun 10.30am
Geo House (Ashurst) - Sun 9am
Our Lady & St Edward, Lyndhurst - Sun 9am, (Holy Day Vigil 7pm)

New Forest Pastoral Area - Sunday Mass Times

Saturday Vigil Mass: Lymington and New Milton at 6pm
Sunday: Milford on Sea at 8:30am, New Milton at 10am,
Lymington at 11:30am, Brockenhurst at 6.00pm

CHRIST, THE YEAST THAT RAISES THE WHOLE BATCH

The telling of an event or a story is framed and expressed by how we see the world. For the ancient peoples the realm of heaven was literally up beyond the sky. But we know too that the writers of Scripture used meteorological metaphors, for example: the presence of God the Father is signified by a cloud as in - *a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved ...'* (Matt 17:5). But interestingly Matthew's Gospel makes no explicit reference to the ascension of Jesus. What is more difficult for us, if not impossible, is to distinguish the boundaries between symbol and metaphor on the one hand, and empirical references on the other. So is Luke imagining the ascension of Jesus much as we would watch the launch of a space rocket or is it all metaphor '*a cloud took him from their sight*' meaning simply Jesus returns to the Father? Mark's Gospel avoids using too many atmospheric images but still has to use the royal throne metaphor: *the Lord Jesus ... was taken up into heaven: there at the right hand of God he took his place* (Mark 16:19). (If all this talk of metaphor seems strange remember Jesus himself said: *I have said these things to you in figures of speech (i.e. metaphors). The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures (i.e. metaphors) but will tell you plainly of the Father* (John 16:25)).

In our time and culture we have conventions of writing that, with the exception of poetry and poetic lyric, demand absolute clarity and separation between measurable events and forces and those which are of their nature subjective and unquantifiable, e.g. experiences of consciousness. Some people only accept as true and real things and events that can be verified by measurement. However even astrophysicists and quantum physicists have to resort to metaphor to describe phenomena indicated by observation, experiment and mathematical analysis.

Whatever the empirical evidence may be our relationship with God is most definitely experienced within the realm of consciousness or awareness. Indeed consciousness is the irreducible ground of every experience from the empirical to the ineffable. But it is here that we need to make an important distinction. This is the difference between the experience, the awareness or consciousness and the words, thoughts, images that we use to try to articulate that experience. In Western culture we have become more and more identified with thought, ideas and concepts. By getting our words right we imagine we have found the truth. But all we find, in fact, are ideas about the truth, although some ideas can clearly correspond more closely to the truth than others.

Truth is an experience of being, life and reality. Because everything is connected it is ultimately about relationship. In the Bible the word "know" is much closer in meaning to touch, taste & experience than to ideas that is why it has a sexual reference as in Mary's question: *How can this be since I do not know a man* (Luke 1:34). This is why Jesus blessed his Father *for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to mere children* (Matt 11:25). In Genesis (2:17) the prohibition concerning *the tree of the knowledge of good and evil* is not about preventing a theoretical understanding of morality but about preventing the violation of God's very good creation by presuming to judge and act as if some of it were good and some of it were evil. This divides and separates and breaks the unity of all things in God. We do this in a very small way every time we say, for example: *Its rotten weather today*. The term "rotten" is a value judgement not an impartial description.

Jesus once said that *the Kingdom of heaven was like yeast a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened* (Matt 13:33). This is what happens in the Ascension. As the writer to the Christians at Ephesus put it: *The one (Jesus) who rose higher than the heavens to fill all things* (Eph 4:10). We connect with and perceive this mystery through our participation in the consciousness of God, in other words, through the Holy Spirit. As Paul puts it: *these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit, for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God* (1 Cor 2:10). The ascension of Jesus reconnects (in our consciousness) body, soul and spirit, earth and heaven, death and life, past, present and future, God, humanity and the world. It expresses the definitive victory of God's love over our sin, enmity and alienation. By the gift of God's Spirit we are awakened to the mystery of God-With-Us and faith is our acceptance of this reality, of who we really are - children of God. This God is *Father of all, over all, through all and within all* (Eph. 4:6). This means every moment, everything, every person is sacred, is lifted up. It is why justice, compassion and love are the imperatives of the here and now. (DMA)

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK: Please keep in your prayers: Janice Bird, Nigel Bolton, Molly Booth, Russell Bowlds, Philomena Breen, Marion Butler, Petra Daniels, Derek Faiers, Magdalen Forshaw, Mervyn Francis, Terry Francis, Sheila Godwin, Amanda Gudge, Sarah Hedges, Sally Herbert, Doreen Holman, George Hutcheson, John Keane, Lyndsey Keggins, Gillian Plummer, Norma Rudd, Lilly Ricketts, Eileen Shanley, Jason Singleton, Ronald Stevens, Ann Wilton, Anne Wyatt. (If you wish someone to be included for prayers here please give their name to Fr David.)

PRAYER POTTERY: next meeting Tuesday, 29th May at 11.00am.

PARISH MEETINGS: The Parish Pastoral Council is meeting on Thursday, 24th May at 7.30pm in the Meeting Room.

Celebrating Marriage 2012: On Saturday, 16th June 2012 there will be a special Mass with the Bishop at St Bede's, Basingstoke for couples in our diocese celebrating significant wedding anniversaries during 2012. If you are celebrating your 25th, 40th, 50th, 60th anniversary during 2012, or any anniversary over 60 years, please let your parish priest know as soon as possible so that you can be sent an invitation. Attendance will be by invitation only and numbers are limited. For more information contact: Katja Babei, Advisor for Marriage and Family Life. kbabei@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk. Tel: 01329 835583

COURT OF APPEAL CASE: Last week the Court of Appeal heard evidence from our Diocese in a case which is testing a point in law -- whether a bishop can be held liable in law for the actions of an abusive priest as if he were his employer. When the case, 'Portsmouth Diocese v JGE', was in the High Court last year, you may remember dreadful headlines claiming that the Diocese was trying to get out of compensating victims by claiming that priests weren't employees. The truth is very different, and the trustees of the Diocese are very keen that this time round people understand the essential facts of the case.

In British law, a priest has always been considered an "office-holder" rather than an employee, which is a status similar to being self-employed. This reflects the fact that a priest is not under the day-to-day control of his bishop, as an employer is of his employee, as well as the fact that a priest doesn't clock in and clock out, as does an employee. Despite this, in recent cases brought against the Church, such as the one in question here, lawyers for claimants have tried to claim that the bishop should be 'vicariously liable' for his priests' actions in the way that employers are for employees; this means that a bishop should be liable for the actions of an abusive priest even when he knew nothing about it. Some judges have seemed to accept that argument, but at the same time have argued that priests are never off duty and are not employees. These confusions and contradictions have led to the courts deciding to examine this question as a "preliminary matter" before deciding on the facts of the case itself - first in the High Court, and now in the Court of Appeal.

Five points need to be made clear: (1) the Diocese is **not** trying to evade its responsibilities to abuse victims - far from it. Wherever the Church has mishandled or failed to deal properly with an abusive priest, it pays compensation to the victim under negligence law. And it supports victims in a whole host of other ways. (2) This is not about money: there are very few abuse cases, even from that era, and the Diocese is not expecting any more claims as result of this judgement. (3) It is about an important point of law and of principle, involving questions of religious freedom: whether it is right, for example, for the law to impose a model of organisation which does not suit the Church. (4) Whatever the different legal opinions on the matter, the Diocese has the right to know the extent of its liability in law, so it can deal with the implications of this for the way it is organised. (5) Lastly, this is not just about the Church; the extension of the law of vicarious liability in an unprincipled way could affect the whole voluntary sector. These are the important points at stake in this matter. (Rev Stephen D Morgan, Diocesan Financial Secretary)

CAFOD CAMPAIGN

GIVE IT UP DURING LENT FOR CLEAN WATER

Following the receipt of some further donations and pyramids, the total for the collection has reached an amazing £2817.47 which will be doubled by the Government under the special Aid Matching Scheme to £5634.94. CAFOD has written to express thanks for this great generosity which will enable them to make a lot of difference to poor people's lives. The collection is now closed.

WATERSIDE FOOD BANK: The Food Bank organizers have written to thank parishoners for their ongoing support which saw **448 kilos** donated by the parish in the past year. However the need has increased by 25% and there is a continuing need for regular donations.. Especially in these times of economic difficulty, there is a growing number of families suffering hardship through redundancy, illness, unemployment, homelessness etc. Collection boxes are in the foyers of St Michael's and St Bernard's churches with leaflets listing the type of food needed.

NEXT SECOND COLLECTION THIS SUNDAY (May 20th): This is an obligatory collection for World Communications. This helps to fund the Bishops efforts to spread the Good News. Prayer cards are available at the back of church.

JUBILEE MASS: On Sunday 3rd June there will only be one parish Mass at 10.00am at St Bernard's. It will be a children's Mass but there will **not** be any picnic afterwards. **DO YOU NEED A LIFT? Or CAN YOU OFFER A LIFT?** Sign up sheet available at the back of St Michaels.

HEALING MASSES AT ST JOSEPH'S, ASHURST: These will be on Mondays: June 18th, July 2nd, 6th August, 3rd September at 7.15pm. Fr Ronnie Mitchell will celebrate the Masses. (St Joseph's is at the rear of Geo House).

VOLUNTEER NEEDED: Since Brenda retired some months ago, Veronica has been trying alone to keep St Bernard's church clean and tidy. Is there anyone who could spare an hour or so every two or three weeks to put a vacuum cleaner around the church; any time or day would be fine. For more information phone Veronica tel 8089 7458 or let Father David know.

NEXT ST MARTHA GROUP EVENT: This will be a Quiz Night and American Supper and will take place at 7pm on 16th June in St Bernard's Hall. Tickets are on sale from this Sunday, 20th May.



A BIG THANKS TO VERONICA & ALL THE HELPERS for a very successful Plant Sale & Spring Fayre at St Bernard's yesterday. The total raised was £867.29, a great effort! Thanks to all those grew the plants, baked the cakes & prepared the craft items; and thanks to Tina & volunteers from the Parish Shop for organising the raffle & selling the Fair trade goods and gift items. Thanks to Phil & others for providing the teas & coffees. Thanks also to everyone who supported the event.

Walking with Prayer – A day with the Labyrinth on Saturday 23rd June 2012 1000-1600 at Wisdom Centre, Romsey
A quiet day of reflection, encouraging each of us to explore our life of prayer as an ongoing journey. Throughout the day there will be opportunities to walk the labyrinth in the grounds of Wisdom House, to take a prayer walk to Romsey Abbey and the river nearby. The suggested donation for the day is £22 and lunch will be provided. Please telephone 01794 830206 or email reception@wisdomhouseromsey.co.uk to find out more.

For the Ideal Gi or Gi Voucher visit
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