



St Francis of Assisi

Parish Newsletter

800 YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE FRANCISCANS ARRIVAL IN THE UK.



ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Grove Crescent Road, Stratford, London, E15 1BJ

SUNDAY CYCLE: B (MARK)

WEEKDAYS CYCLE: II



10th March 2024 - 4th Sunday of Lent.

On this Laetare Sunday, we rejoice in the light that has come into the world through the Son of God, and in the grace through which we have been saved. Jesus tells us that everyone who believes may not be lost but may have eternal life in him. We rejoice in the saving grace that is a gift from God and that strengthens us to live as God intended.

Today's Reading

2 Chronicles 36:14-16. 19-23: God's persistent love and mercy in the face of rejection are revealed.

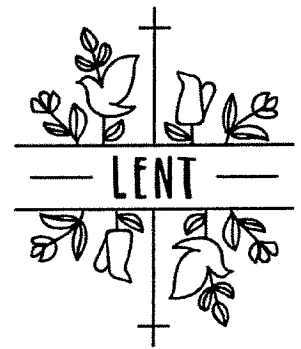
Ephesians 2:4-10: Through grace, not by our own efforts, we have been saved, so that we may live the good life God has always meant us to live.

Response to the Psalm: O let my tongue cleave to my mouth if I remember you not!

John 3:14-21: Christ is the light of the world, come not to condemn but to save, and those who live by the truth come into that light.

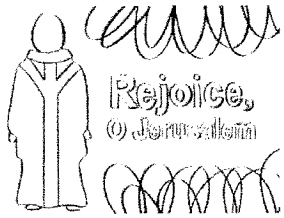
"The light of the world"

As we gather for today's liturgy, we encounter a Gospel passage that holds profound significance for understanding the essence of Christ's mission and the transformative power of his love. We've got a conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus, a Pharisee who's trying to understand the nature of salvation and what the Kingdom of God is. Jesus employs powerful imagery and looks back to the story from the book of Numbers where Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, a symbol of healing and redemption for the Israelites. By drawing this parallel, Jesus foreshadows his own impending sacrifice on the cross, emphasizing that just as the serpent was lifted up, so too must the Son of Man be lifted up for the salvation of everyone. Jesus then asserts that He has come not to condemn the world, but to save it. He highlights the truth that people who believe in Him will not perish but will have eternal life. This passage put in a nutshell the core message of the Gospel; it emphasises the profound love of God manifested in the person of Jesus Christ; Christ who offers Himself as the ultimate sacrifice for the redemption of all mankind. As we meditate on these words, let us remind ourselves of the depth of God's love for us; his invitation to embrace his truth and his grace. Let us open our hearts to receive the transformative power of Christ's love, allowing it to illuminate our lives and guide us on the path to eternal life.



EVERY FRIDAY DURING LENT – STATIONS OF THE CROSS – 7:00PM.
SUNDAY 10TH MARCH 2024 – THE REPOSITORY WILL BE OPEN AFTER ALL SUNDAY MASSES.
SUNDAY 17TH MARCH 2024 – HOLY COMMUNION 2024 – MEETING FOR ALL CANDIDATES/PARENTS/GUARDIANS 2PM.
SATURDAY 23RD MARCH 2024 – STATIONS OF THE CROSS, IN THE OLYMPIC PARK – 11:30AM – MEET BY THE AQUA CENTRE.
TUESDAY 2ND TO FRIDAY 5TH APRIL 2024 – THE PARISH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED.
SATURDAY 25TH MAY 2024 – PILGRIMAGE TO WALSINGHAM – DETAILS IN THE NEWSLETTER & POSTER AT THE BACK OF THE CHURCH

Pray for those who have died, and those whose Anniversaries occur around this time, also, please pray for the sick, and, remember the People of Ukraine, and all countries where there is war. We also pray for peace in the Holy Land.



Today is traditionally known as Laetare Sunday - from the Latin of the opening antiphon at Mass, "Laetare Jerusalem":

Laetare Sunday marks the halfway point through the

Lenten season of fasting, penance and almsgiving, and because of, it is a day of joy in anticipation of the close coming of Easter. Rose-coloured vestments may be worn and even a few flowers are permitted. All this is meant to anticipate the Resurrection and to be a glimpse of the joy that awaits us. Laetare Sunday can also signify a temporary suspension of our voluntary penitential observances. In the early Church, marriages were not allowed to be held during the Lenten season except on this one day. Laetare Sunday is meant to be jubilant: a joyous day amid the darkness of Lent and the coming Passiontide. As an Easter people, we are to keep our hearts and minds focussed on Our Lord and to seek Him alone. For it is only in Christ that suffering and death are overcome. While Lent is a time of spiritual desert, we place our hope in the Resurrection. As St. Peter reminds us, "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead".



Mothering Sunday, also known as Mother's Day in some countries, is a celebration honouring mothers and motherhood. Its origins can be traced back to early Christian traditions in

Europe. The history of Mothering Sunday dates back to the 16th century in England. The fourth Sunday of Lent, mid-Lent Sunday, was a day when people returned to their "mother church" – the main church or cathedral in their area. This tradition provided an opportunity for families to reunite, and servants were given the day off to visit their families and attend church together. Over time, Mothering Sunday evolved into a day to honour not only the Virgin Mary and Mother Church but also our own mothers. Children would often pick flowers or bake cakes to give to their mothers as tokens of appreciation. Today, Mothering Sunday/Mother's Day is celebrated in various ways, including giving cards, flowers, gifts, and spending time with mothers and maternal figures. It serves as an opportunity to express gratitude and love for the sacrifices and unconditional love that mothers give.

PILGRIMAGE TO WALSINGHAM **SATURDAY 25TH MAY 2024.**

Please see the posters around the Church regarding the Diocesan pilgrimage to Walsingham. We have arranged 2 coaches to take our Parishioners. One is already full. The coaches will leave Stratford at 8am to ensure we can make the most of the day. Pilgrims are advised to take a packed lunch and drinks, as although there is a cafeteria on site it is likely to be busy. Minimum cost is £10 per person. However, as the cost of the coach travel will be at least double this, if Pilgrims can pay more than the minimum this would help to cover costs and would be very much appreciated. Please contact Sarah McKiernan on 07778 868827 to book your place.

THE REPOSITORY

Will be open after all Sunday Masses
10th March 2024. Candles, cards, Easter Cards,
St Patricks Day Cards.
Cash only please.

HOLY COMMUNION MEETING:

The next meeting for the Holy Communion
Candidates/Parents/Guardians will be on
Sunday 17th March 2024 at 2pm in the Church.

LENT - PRAYER

Stations of the Cross – every Friday 7pm.
Novena to St Anthony – every Tuesday 12.15pm.
Holy Hour - Adoration – every Saturday 10.30 – 11:30am
Weekday Mass – Mon-Fri 12.15pm; Sat 10am.
Confession – Sat 10.30-11.30am & 5 – 5.45pm
(extra times during Lent as announced).
Stations in the Park – Saturday 23rd March 11:30
(Olympic Park) – **meet up at the Aqua Centre, on the Bridge.**

Grove Crescent Rd, Stratford, E15 1BJ

Masses

Monday to Friday 12:15. Tuesday, after Mass, St Anthony Novena.
Saturday: Morning Prayer: 9:40am Mass 10am followed by Holy Hour
Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament until 11:30am.
Confession: Saturday: 10:30am - 11:30am & 5pm - 5:45pm
Sunday: 6pm Saturday, 9am, 10:15am, 12 noon & 4:30pm (Ukrainian).

Fr Michael O'Grady, OFM (Parish Priest)

Fr Brian McGrath, OFM

Fr Yusuf Bagh, OFM

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Parish Office: Monday to Friday 9:30am - 3pm

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