

I am available for any parishioner who needs me. My mobile number is 07554427063. Please feel free to contact me to have a chat or to have prayers or a mass said for someone.

Feb 6th– 13th

Sat:20th Emma Tikhanova RIP

Sat:20th

Sun: 21th Michael O'Connor RIP

Sun: 21th

Mon: 22nd

Tue:23rd

Wed:24th 9am

Thur:25th Kevin Eustace RIP

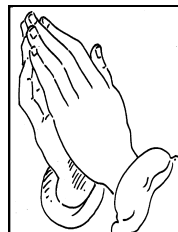
Fri:26th In Thanksgiving

Sat:27th Michael Murray RIP

**Public Mass**  
**Sat Eve 6pm Wantage**  
**Sunday 9am Wantage**  
**Sunday 11am Lambourn**

**Tue 10am**  
**Fri 10am**  
**Booking essential**

**Weekdays 10am on Zoom**



In your prayers, please remember all who have recently died especially Beth Monaghan. Also pray for all who are sick, in hospital or housebound especially Pete Gray, Sybil Murphy, Margaret Joyce, Peter Shaw, Wendy Purslow, Sue Maher, Cedric Andrews, and all those suffering during this pandemic. Please contact the office if you would like someone to be added to our sick list.

### **CAFOD's Harvest Fast Day Friday 26th March**

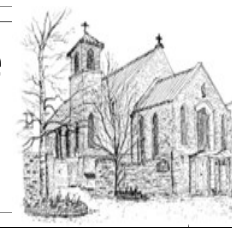
Although in lockdown, we can still transform lives this CAFOD Harvest Fast Day. This Sunday we are asked to take home a harvest fast day donation envelope. On Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March we are asked to fast, and put the money we have saved into the envelope. Fill out the gift aid slip if you are a UK tax payer. Return the envelope on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> February or soon after.

### **Collections Thank You**

If you would like to continue supporting the Church through the period of close-down your weekly/ monthly offering can be made online using this name and account number: **PRCDT Wantage St John Vianney Sort Code: 30-93-04 Account Number: 01720016 Account Name: PRCDTR Wantage St. John Vianney.** Please remember that you can always drop your donation into the Presbytery letterbox. Same Account for Wantage and Lambourn



## **St John Vianney Wantage** **Sacred Heart Lambourn**

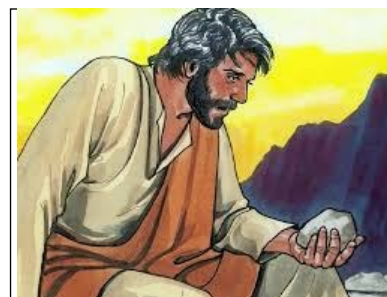


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### **2021 First Sunday in Lent Year B**



### **What is Lent all about?**

Many of us would confess that we're not quite sure what Lent is all about. We know it's about doing difficult stuff, like giving up chocolate. We know that Lent is about growing closer to God, but can giving up chocolate really get us closer to God?

To understand Lent, we need to look to the wilderness story which we are told on the first Sunday of Lent every year. Every year on the first Sunday of Lent we are told how Jesus went into the wilderness for forty days to fast and to reflect on the job he was about to do here on Earth. We are told how he was confronted with temptation and how he overcame it. There are three elements to this story. Jesus withdrew from worldly distractions and fasted, he reflected on who and what he was about, and he overcame temptation. The problem is, we all seem to latch onto the first bit of the story about fasting and forget the two more important elements. Jesus reflected on the importance of the ministry he was about to undertake and he refused to be swayed from it. This is the important bit. This is how we need to understand and live our next forty days.

At this time of year we are asked to 'repent'. We are asked to turn away from things in our lives that are not working well or are wrong. That will be different for all of us, so we need to sit down in a quiet space and work out what we need to do. How we need to change should be something more important than those new-year resolutions we all make and break. Next we need to identify the barriers that stop us making those changes. Withdrawing from worldly comforts might be part of this barrier which is where fasting or giving up TV might come in. Lastly we need to resist the temptation to give up on plans to change ourselves and the world around us, and that's the hardest bit of all.

Continued over....

As children today's gospel is presented to us with an accompanying illustration of the devil complete with huge bat like wings a scaly tail and horns. How easy to resist temptation packaged so obviously as a 'bad choice'. The trouble with temptation is it rarely comes packaged as a 'bad choice'. Often temptation comes as a fairly harmless choice or even as an attractive or intelligent option. How harmless does it seem to sip half a glass of wine when you're supposed to be quitting. How harmless does it seem to 'borrow' a little cash from the office tea fund ... you can always pay it back later.

There's a lot of talk about what is classed as a temptation and what isn't. In the context of the first Sunday of Lent, a temptation is anything that takes you further away from God. If having an extra cream cake takes you further away from God, then it's a temptation ... if having an extra cream cake has nothing to do with your relationship with God then it's totally unimportant.

When it comes to temptation, a simple rule of thumb is to ask yourself in each of your daily decisions, "Will this decision bring me nearer to God or take me further away?" Knowing who you are and what you are trying to achieve in life not only helps you to identify your temptations, but also gives you a reason and strength of character when it comes to resisting. Today is the day we start giving the devil a hard time. Tempted?

### Super Soup Supper 2021 Be a 'Souper' hero!

Our Catholic aid agency, Cafod is hosting a Lenten appeal this year to transform lives. Consider one simple idea to become a 'souper hero' to help our aid agencies raise more funds. Choose the families' favourite soup and dish it up once a week throughout Lent with a pile of crusty bread. Ask the family to consider what savings this has made and ask them to put the money into a 'Souper Hero' pot. At the end of Lent contribute online to one of the following [www.cafod.org.uk](http://www.cafod.org.uk) (England and Wales)

### Fairtrade Fortnight 2021 (22nd February – 7th March)

For two weeks each year at the end of February and start of March, thousands of individuals, companies and groups across the UK come together to share the stories of the people who grow our food and drinks, mine our gold and who grow the cotton in our clothes, people who are often exploited and underpaid. The climate crisis threatens vulnerable countries who are already seeing its impacts from droughts and crop disease to floods, heatwaves and shrinking harvests.

With the emergence of the global COVID pandemic, the challenges that farmers face now are bigger than ever before with falling commodity prices and widespread shocks reverberating along our global supply chains.

We have the power to help in something as simple as changing our shopping habits. Buying Fairtrade is easy. There are over 6,000 Fairtrade products now in our shops. Make this week and next week a time for trying new Fairtrade products. If you discover something that you really like, don't forget to share it with friends.



### Travels with my bro....

One of the great joys of this trip has been the wonderful places that we have seen since first setting off last March from the first dribble of the Thames. Then it was "Fat man on a Rower". The trip was my homage to Jerome K Jerome. The name has changed but sadly I'm no thinner.

You would have expected that after over 4,000 kms I'd have lost some few kilos but sadly not. No need to email me suggesting that following the various food journals its no wonder!! Little did I think a year later that I would still be on my pilgrimage. Africa seemed a bit daunting with all that sand so we have decided to go inland; at least for a while. You all know how much I love Spain, its culture, history and to be honest its cuisine and wine but as its Lent we have to be careful. Man does not live on Tapas alone....Seville has been a highpoint. As we entered this ancient Andalusian citadel I was looking forward not only to its famous tapas but to *fino* and *manzanilla*. We had to squeeze in the dining to Monday and Tuesday with Ash Wednesday looming. When I told Br.M what we were giving up for Lent he looked at with astonished eyes. I'd get more in prison he said in a forlorn air. We are a long way from top table at Cambridge now I suggested! The Flamenco class booked for Br.M didn't happen sadly as the school had to close due to a sudden virus scare. I'm not suggesting for one moment that anything underhand happened but I did find Br.M googling the number for the Andalusian Ministry of Health hot line. He did say he liked dancing. It's a real pity that we will have moved from Seville for Holy week has some of the most spectacular festivals held for the *Semana Santa*, however throughout Cuaresma (Lent) much happens too. We will be visiting the churches as we journey to see the pasos or religious floats that each local community makes to take in procession for Holy Week. Some of the sculptures used date back to the 16th century. We were lucky enough to watch the first rehearsal of one of the *costaleros* teams who were practicing for the famous Via Crucis. For those who are worrying that all the fasting may be a little too difficult our research will continue into Lenten traditions in Spain. Thankfully traditional Lenten desserts include *torrijas* (sliced bread soaked in egg and wine, fried, then dipped in honey and cinnamon), *pestiños* (crunchy dough fried in olive oil, bathed in honey and flavoured with anise or sesame seeds), or *roscos fritos* (Spanish donuts sprinkled with sugar). You know my thought on honey but as its Lent I'll do penance. All of them, obviously, are delicious. What I love about this culture is that it is full of life To witness the devotion that congregations have for their favourite sacred images, there's nothing quite like going to see a *besapiés* or *besamanos* "foot-kissing" and "hand-kissing ceremony, which are often held during *Cuaresma*. Not sure how they will do it now with social distancing but I'm looking forward to Lent in Spain. Travel broadens the mind but alas also the waistline.

Hasta la proxima semana as they say here. Dios bendiga.

### Dates for you Diary:

Taize Prayer Evening Sunday 28th March 5pm on Zoom

