

**ST DOMINIC'S, DURSLEY**  
**&**  
**ST JOSEPH'S, NYMPSFIELD**

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**SUNDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2021**  
**FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT, YEAR B**



**Collect**

Grant, almighty God, through the yearly observances of holy Lent, that we may grow in understanding of the riches hidden in Christ and by worthy conduct pursue their effects.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen

## **Gospel** (Mark 1: 12 – 15)

The Spirit drove Jesus out into the wilderness and he remained there for forty days, and was tempted by Satan. He was with the wild beasts, and the angels looked after him.

After John had been arrested, Jesus went into Galilee. There he proclaimed the Good News from God. 'The time has come' he said 'and the kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent, and believe the Good News.'

## **Reflection**

In Mark's Gospel, we are told that Jesus went into the desert immediately after his baptism, led by the Spirit. Jesus' public ministry in Galilee begins after his temptation in the desert. Mark's Gospel makes a connection between the arrest of John the Baptist and the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Jesus' preaching about the Kingdom of God is in continuity with the preaching of John the Baptist, but it is also something new. As Jesus announces it, the Kingdom of God is beginning; the time of the fulfilment of God's promises is here.

In Mark's Gospel, the desert marks beginning of Jesus' battle with Satan; the ultimate test will be in Jesus' final hours on the cross. In a similar way, our Lenten observances are only a beginning, a preparation for and a reinforcement of our ongoing struggle to resist the temptations we face in our lives. During Lent, we are led by the Holy Spirit to remember the vows of Baptism in which we promised to reject sin and to follow Jesus. Just as Jesus was ministered to by the angels, God also supports us in our struggle against sin and temptation. We succeed because Jesus conquered sin once and for all in his saving death on the cross.

### **CELEBRATION OF MASS DURING LOCKDOWN**

During this lockdown we are still able to celebrate Mass with a congregation, so our services this week will be as follows:

Saturday 20 February: Mass at St Joseph's at 5.30pm

Sunday 21 February: Mass at St Dominic's at 10.30am

Wednesday 24 February: Mass at St Dominic's at 9.00am

However the bishops have made it clear that the Sunday obligation remains suspended, so it is not necessary to attend Sunday Mass. The elderly and those at special risk are asked to give careful thought about whether to attend. If you do wish to attend, please contact the Church Office on 01453 542039 or at [dursley.stdominic@cliftodiocese.com](mailto:dursley.stdominic@cliftodiocese.com) to book a place. To keep everyone safe, please observe the guidelines: 'Those attending mass must not mix with people, even family members and friends, from outside of their household or support bubble while inside or outside the church building.' Thank you

## Stella Maris (Apostleship of the Sea): Charity Raffle

Stella Maris is our charity for 2021. We are hoping to hold a fundraising raffle – details of how this will work whilst we are not meeting together will follow ...

So far we have received some very generous offers for prizes – very many thanks for these. If you would also like to donate a prize (we are thinking of a value of perhaps £10 or more) please contact the office. At this stage we are happy to receive pledges; the actual prize can be delivered or collected later.

We are hoping that by next week we will have the full set of prizes and will be able to launch the raffle!

## Our Parish

PLEASE PRAY for those who have died recently: Martin O'Driscoll

**Diocesan Prayer Link:**

Holy Cross, Bedminster

**Churches Together Prayer Rota:**

Dursley Methodist Church

**Parish Prayer Rota:**

The young people of our parishes

## Cam and Dursley Churches Together United Lent services 2021 Via Zoom

### THE PRAYERS OF JESUS

This Lent, refresh your relationship with God by exploring the way Jesus Himself prayed to His Father. Focusing on six of the prayers of Jesus leading up to the central events of our faith, encounter the Saviour in a new way and reach new depths of intimacy with God in prayer.

Through six sessions, experience more of God's presence as you pray and reflect on Jesus' journey to the cross.

21 February at 6.00pm: The Lord's Prayer  
*'This then, is how you should pray...'*

*Matthew 6.9*

Led by Simon Helme

***The Zoom link will be published each week in the Parish email***

## CAFOD LENT FAST DAY

**Friday 26 February**

This year's appeal is for water – find out more by visiting the CAFOD link

***projects.cafod.org.uk/walkforwater***

Envelopes are available at the back of St Dominic's. Alternatively donations can be made via the Parish giving link – please use the reference **CAFOD**

## THANK YOU SO MUCH

553.46 kg of food & toiletries  
have been collected from

DURSLEY CHURCHES TOGETHER  
in 2020

2020 was a monumental year for us all.

We fed and supported over 7000 people  
with crisis food and holiday hampers.

2/3 of this food goes to children.

*We couldn't do our work without your support*



Our gratitude to all who have given food, finances and time.

Stroud District Foodbank—Reg Charity in Eng & Wales No. 1176306



## Echoes of God: Journeying with the word of God

In place of our usual Lent Study Group, this year we invite you to take time during Lent to make a journey through the Bible with David McLoughlin. A short introduction to this week's material is below – there is a link to the whole meditation on the Parish website. You might like to make these reflections part of a longer time of prayer and meditation – you might even like to link up with someone else to share your thoughts

### Week 2: Genesis

As the Hebrew slaves journey towards the Promised Land, they reflect further on their experience of liberation. The People of “the God” look backward to the beginning of things and forward to where they might be travelling next. Gradually, they come to realise “the God” who is “I am” must also be the source of all that is, and its ultimate end. This is an inspired understanding going beyond all that the religions around them taught about their local gods.

As they walk through difficult places, some very desert-like, they imagine “the God”, their Creator, back in a beautiful original garden, perhaps inspired by the oases they hope for as they cross the desert. There “the God” chose to walk in the cool of the evening amidst the peaceful creatures, in the company of man and his companion.

Genesis has two creation accounts which themselves demonstrate how the people of “the God” again and again look backward and forward trying to understand who “I am” is, and what he wants of them. At the beginning of Mark's Gospel, there is an echo of this as Mark thinks of Jesus alone in the wilderness with just the animals and the angels for company. He is thinking of Jesus as a new Adam starting to renew the relationship between “the God” and humanity.

The story echoes throughout the Bible until the very last book where the original paradise is recreated as a Garden City. Here at the end of time, the God will again dwell in the midst of his people in a renewed Jerusalem (Revelation Chapter 21).

*For further study... the Bible reading, some background information and a reflection are available on the Parish website [dursleynymphsfieldrcparish.co.uk](http://dursleynymphsfieldrcparish.co.uk)*