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"All things are ready if our mind be so." William Shakespeare, 'Henry V'.



Army Roman Catholic Newsletter



Welcome

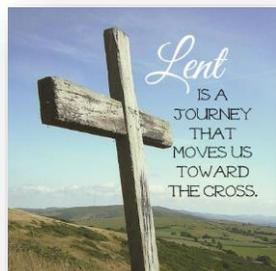
From
The Revd. Fr. Ian Stevenson CF
Principal Roman Catholic Chaplain
(Army)



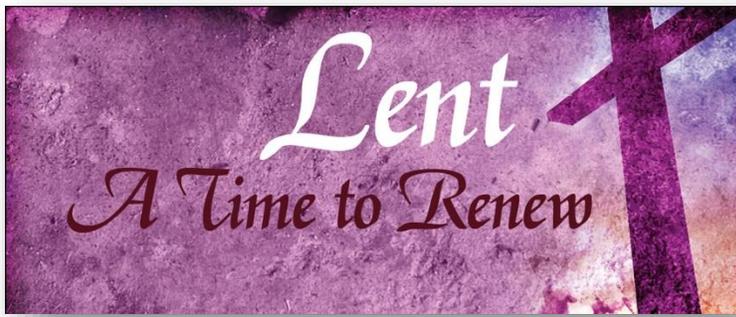
Happy New Year to our readers and welcome to the first Issue of our Newsletter for 2022.

As the New Year started we said goodbye to Fr. Paschal Hanrahan, who has now finished his service with the Army and returned home to Ireland. I would like to thank him for all he has done as PRCC(A), and within the Bishopric and wish him well on his new journey.

I have recently taken on the role of Principal Roman Catholic Chaplain (Army) following Fr. Paschal's departure. I am based in Edinburgh, as the Senior Chaplain Scotland. This is the first time that a Roman Catholic Army Chaplain has filled this position and had a presence in Scotland for more than a decade. I am delighted to have been presented this challenge to support my fellow brother Priests serving in the Army and I look forward to working alongside the other two Principal Chaplains of the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force for the Bishop of the Forces.



And so, after almost 2 years of restrictions and unpredictability it looks as though we are moving forward towards some sort of normality. With that in mind, as we move through February we will be aware that Lent starts at the beginning of next month. Lent presents us with a new opportunity to grow in faith. It is the Church's New year and a time of excitement at the opportunity to grow deeper in faith.



Preparing for Lent

Some may ask, how do we prepare for Lent? How have we prepared in the past and what should happen during Lent? Before we go into those questions, let us remind ourselves of what Lent is.

Lent is the period of six weeks (40 days not including Sundays) leading up to Easter, the most important event in the Christian calendar. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, and runs through until Maundy Thursday in Holy Week. Lent, this year, begins on Wednesday 2nd March (Ash Wednesday) and ends on Thursday 14 April (Maundy Thursday).



Lent is a solemn religious observance in the Christian liturgical calendar commemorating the 40 days Jesus spent fasting in the desert, according to the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, before beginning his public ministry, during which he endured temptation by Satan. We, as Christians remember the events leading up to and including the death of Jesus Christ, whose life and teachings are the very foundation of Christianity. The 40 day period is called lent after an old English word meaning 'lengthen'.



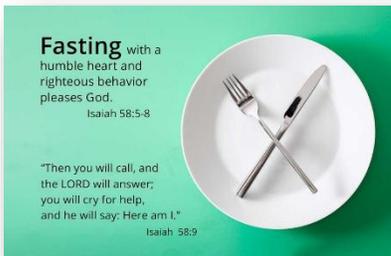
In Western Christian churches, the day before Lent starts is Shrove Tuesday (Shrove comes from the verb 'to shrive' which means to confess sins). Shrove Tuesday has also become known as 'Pancake Day'. This day was traditionally the last chance to use up the foods Christians would not be eating during Lent. Ash Wednesday is the day when churches hold services during which Christians are marked on the forehead with a cross of ashes. This is the sign of saying sorry to God for any wrongdoing.



Traditionally, there are three parts of Lent that Catholics spiritually use to prepare: Prayer, fasting and Almsgiving. Perhaps we pray more than usual or we pray with different emphases. We eat smaller or fewer meals or give up a favourite food or drink and we are more charitable with resources and/or ourselves during Lent.

So, how can we prepare for Lent? We can pray about it and understand where in our lives we need to grow or change. Allow ourselves time to pray and listen. Trust in the Lord to guide us. It is worth considering whether our prayer life is what we would wish it to be. Think about how we can make improvements. Are there prayers that we have wanted to pray but never said them? This season of Lent may be the perfect time for us to make more time for prayer. You may wish to bring in some structure and make a prayer plan. Be realistic in setting aside time each day or each week, this way we will be more successful in our endeavours. Remember, the purpose of prayer is to communicate with God and in doing so bring us closer to him.





Fasting and abstaining: Traditionally, Catholics abstain from eating meat on Fridays during Lent. Practicing abstinence or abstaining, in the general sense, means voluntarily going without food, drink or some other pleasure. But for Catholics, it is a specified requirement; Catholics should abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and every Friday of lent and fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. This applies to everyone of age 18-59, unless exempt due to usually a medical reason. Those outside the age limits include the physically or mentally ill including chronic illnesses and pregnant and nursing women.

This tradition goes back to the first century, when Christians abstained from eating meat on Fridays to honour Jesus' death on the cross on Good Friday. Because Jesus sacrificed his flesh for the salvation of humankind, the flesh of warm-blooded animals was not consumed on Friday. The practice of abstaining from certain foods and fasting actually goes back to the Old Testament. The Bible says that God told the Hebrews through Moses to prepare for celebrating Yom Kippur, the day of atonement. Although fasting isn't mentioned, the Bible does say for this day, "You shall afflict your souls" (Leviticus 16:31; 23:27-32; Numbers 29:7) and from ancient times, rabbis have interpreted this to mean fasting. The New Testament also mentions the practice saying "It has been decided by the Holy Spirit to abstain from meat sacrificed to idols, from blood, from meats of strangled animals" (Acts 15:28-29)

Almsgiving: There is only one place in the Bible where all three parts of Lent that we have been discussing are found. And the author firmly emphasises the last: "Prayer and fasting are good, but better than either is almsgiving accompanied by righteousness. It is better to give alms than to store up gold; for almsgiving saves one from death and expiates every sin. Those who regularly give alms should enjoy a full life" (Tobit 12:8-9).



Mike Aquilina, An introduction to Lent: Almsgiving (Feb '12) tells us that almsgiving is better than prayer and fasting because it is prayer and it involves fasting. He states that Almsgiving is a form of prayer because it is "giving to God" and not mere philanthropy. It is a form of fasting because it demands sacrificial giving not just giving something, but giving up something, giving until it hurts. Jesus presented almsgiving as a necessary part of Christian life: "when you give alms, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing" (Matthew 6:2-3). He does not say IF you give alms, but WHEN. Like fasting and prayer, almsgiving is non-negotiable.

It all sounds so simple but, there is a lot to consider and do. So, if things don't go according to plan and you feel you've failed in some way, here are some things you can do that will help you get back on track.

10 THINGS TO DO WHEN YOUR LENT PLAN FAILS

 ACCEPT IT ACCEPT IF AND HOW YOUR PLAN HAS FAILED	 GO TO CONFESSION MAKE AN EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE AND START OVER	 GET BACK UP REMEMBER YOUR LENTEN RESOLUTIONS AND BEGIN AGAIN	 WHAT WENT WRONG? PONDER ON THE SERIES OF EVENTS THAT LED YOU HERE	 PRAY PRAYER HELPS YOU REVIVE YOUR SOUL. LISTEN TO GOD'S VOICE
 FAST FASTING ENABLES US TO DOMINATE OUR DESIRES	 GIVE ALMS WHEN WE GIVE ALMS, WE DO OURSELVES AND OTHERS A GREAT THING	 LISTEN FOLLOW THE ADVICE FROM THE PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE	 FOCUS FOCUS ON ACCOMPLISHING WHAT YOU SET OUT TO DO	 ASK FOR HELP LEAN ON YOUR FRIENDS, PRIEST, MENTORS, AND FAMILY



Loving God, during the sacred season of Lent, bring us closer to you. Prepare a place in our homes and heart for silence and solitude, so that we may re-discover the grace of a prayer-full life. Help us to fast from those things that threaten the well-being of body and soul and remind us of the grace of simplicity. Enlarge our hearts so that we give to those in need and in so doing, re-discover the grace of gratitude and generosity. May this season be a grace-filled time to rekindle our love for and faith in you. Amen.

Lent Quiz

1. How many days are there in Lent?
2. What was the original meaning of the word "Lent"?
3. What is the first day of Lent called?
4. What do we call the day before Lent begins?
5. What colour vestments does the priest wear during Lent?
6. What prayer of the Mass is omitted during Lent?
7. What word is never said or sung during Lent?
8. What do Catholics abstain from eating on Fridays during Lent?
9. On what days are Catholics required to fast during Lent?
10. What snack originated during Lent because it contains only flour, water and salt?
11. What food was traditionally eaten the day before Lent begins?
12. What Irish saint's feast day takes place during Lent?
13. On what Sunday during Lent does the priest bless palms?
14. What event in the life of Jesus do the palms recall for us?
15. On what day during Lent does the Bishop bless holy oils for the year?
16. How many Stations of the Cross are there?
17. How many times does Jesus fall in the Stations?
18. Who helped Jesus carry his Cross?
19. When does Lent officially end?
20. What is the Triduum?



Answers to Newsletter Issue 10 will be published in Issue 11 or email Karen at: ArmyRCPAA21@gmail.com

Answers to Newsletter Issue 8/9: Across: Gabriel, Nazareth, Luke, Augustus, Isaiah. Down: Myrrh, Eighty, Swaddling, Westward, Messiah, Magi, Star.

'On the Ground'

A Report from one of our newly Commissioned Chaplains - Deacon John Power CF



I have been based at The Royal Lancers (Queen Elizabeths' Own) in Catterick, North Yorkshire since July 2021 and it is my first posting as chaplain. From day one, I have been made to feel very welcome and felt quite at home surprisingly quickly. However, I had a little surprise on my first day - I was informed that in 4 weeks time I would be going on Exercise to Germany with the whole regiment. If I am honest, after only recently commissioning from Sandhurst I was filled with a little worry! However,



my worries were to be unfounded as the 4 weeks that I spent in Germany were a real blessing because it afforded me the opportunity to get to know the soldiers and officers closely. I believe that this experience has helped me in understanding how I can be as effective as possible as their Padre. Being on exercise and joining the regiment in the field was also a very valuable experience as I was able to appreciate how the military training that I received at Sandhurst played out in the realest possible scenario.

A highlight of my visit to Germany followed a meeting with the Auxiliary Bishop of Paderborn, Bishop Matthias Konig. He invited me to participate in Mass in the Dom Cathedral to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the ordination of Permanent Deacons in Archdiocese of Paderborn; it really was a special occasion.



Since being back at the Unit, I have undertaken many services both at my own Regiment, the wider Royal Lancer Lancer Community and also for different Regiments in the Catterick Garrison. Our Christmas Carol Service was cancelled (due to COVID) with an hour to spare and so I hastily

arranged a Service on the Tank Park which will live long in my memory for all of the right reasons! I have also had the pleasure of baptising the son of one of the members of the regiment. As a new chaplain I am really fortunate being based in Catterick Garrison as there are many other chaplains who have either recently commissioned or have served for quite some time. We meet for prayer each week and they have been a great source of advice and support as have my colleagues at Brigade level. These times of shared prayer and fellowship have been crucial in maintaining the balance of identity and connectedness to God in a role which can sometimes see you pulled in many different directions and faced with various unpredictable and challenging situations.

I have been blessed in this first six months of ministry, I have joined a great regiment who see the Padre as integral to their welfare and support. It has been a steep learning curve and I know that there is so much more to come. Please remember in your prayers the chaplains and their families who serve in the Royal Army Chaplains' Department that God will grant us wisdom, courage and humility as we minister to those we serve.



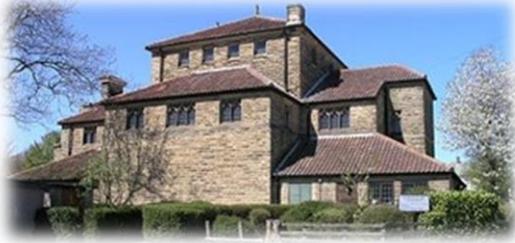
Deacon John Power leading the service for the Feast of St Eligius, Patron Saint of the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME)

"We remember in our prayers...."

A vigil for Mrs Alison Lesley Gosnell took place at The Cathedral Church of St. Michael and St. George, Aldershot on Thursday 30th December 2021 followed by the Funeral Mass, to celebrate her life, on Friday 31st December 2021. Many of you will know that Alison was the wife of Fr. Nick Gosnell VG, Cathedral Dean, Mother, Mother-in-law, Grandmother, Sister, Aunt and friend to many. We remember Alison and all her family in our prayers. Eternal rest grant upon her O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her. May she rest in peace. Amen.



'Around Our Churches'



On Gaudete Sunday (12 Dec 21) Bishop Paul (Bishop of the Forces) conferred the sacrament of Confirmation on two

young people (Agnes and Mary) and gave First Holy Communion to six children of the faith community at St. Joan of Arc, Catterick Garrison.

Fr. David Smith is the Chaplain at St. Joan of Arc and also pictured is Mrs Ann Bradshaw who was the childrens' catechist. Please keep them all in your prayers as they continue their faith journey.

Whilst at St. Joan of Arc the Bishop also blessed the new statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus that sits magnificently on the altar of the Sacred Heart and the Holy Souls, commemorating the Fallen of the Afghanistan Campaign (2001 - 2014).



Fr David Smith pictured at St. Joan of Arc with some of the children from Carnagil School in Catterick Garrison at the Christingle Service held in December.





On 28th November 2021, Fr. Paschal Hanrahan celebrated the Baptism of two siblings, Rasiosateki Michael & Karalaini Theresa Tagivetaua at Our Lady Queen of Peace, Bulford Camp.



Fr. Paschal Hanrahan, Rasiosateki & Karalaini Tagivetaua



Karalaini & Rasiosateki Tagivetaua



The Cathedral Church of St. Michael and St. George
Aldershot.



The Nativity Crib at the Cathedral.

Photograph courtesy of Mr Ben Casey.

*Visit to the Papal Nunciature
25th November 2021
London*



In November 2021, Military Chaplains who had served on OP HERRICK in Afghanistan were invited to attend a meeting with the Apostolic Nuncio to Great Britain in London.

Those in attendance pictured Right to Left: Fr. Paul McCourt (Army), Fr. Paschal Hanrahan (Army), Fr. David Conroy (RN), Fr. Nick Gosnell, Archbishop Claudio Gugerotti, Bishop Paul Mason, Dcn Neil Galloway (RAF), Fr. David Smith (Army) & Fr. Stephen Sharkey (Army).

Other News.....

Last November at the RBL Festival of Remembrance in the Royal Albert Hall, Veteran Military Chaplains were joined by the Prime Minister.



From Right to Left: Rev. Martin Gough (National Chaplain to the Royal British Legion), Rev. Monsignor Phelim Rowland (Parish Priest St Mary's Hampstead), Prime Minister Boris Johnson, Rev Fr. Michael Fava (Parish Priest at St Joseph's Newbury).

Event >>>



Chrism Mass

Tuesday 5th April 2022 at 1200 hrs

The annual Chrism Mass brings together the Bishop, Priests and Deacons and Lay People of the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force to celebrate the blessing of the oils of Catechumens, Chrism and the Sick. The Chaplains will renew their priestly vows and commitment in front of the people.

Further details can be obtained from:

Mrs Diane Restall, Tel: 01252 348234 or Email: Dianerestall654@mod.gov.uk

International Military Pilgrimage Lourdes 2022



The UK Contingent will depart for the International Military Pilgrimage to Lourdes on Thursday 12th May 2022, returning Monday 16th May 2022.

Serving personnel may obtain details from their Military Chaplain or from the Pilgrimage Organiser:
Father Nick Gosnell, Cathedral of St. Michael and St. George, Queens Avenue, Aldershot, Hampshire
GU11 2BY. Tel: **01252 315042**

The Travel agents are Tangley Tours, Pilgrim House, Station Road, Borough Green, Kent TN15 8AF.
Tel: 01732 886666

Camino de Santiago

The Camino de Santiago, known in English as the Way of St. James, is a network of pilgrims' ways or pilgrimages leading to the shrine of the apostle Saint James the Great in the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia in northwestern Spain, where tradition holds that the remains of the apostle are buried.

RC Bishopric of the Forces

Camino de Santiago Pilgrimage

15 - 22 September 2022



For more information or to request an application form please contact
Padre Neil Galloway.

Neil.Galloway101@mod.gov.uk

Bishopric of The Forces Retreats

Are you in need of stillness and sanctuary? Scripture gives us many examples of our Lord Jesus withdrawing from noise and bustle to pray and to gain respite (Mark 3:7, Luke 5:16). Subject to Government restrictions, there is the opportunity to find that same peace at one of the Bishopric of the Forces Retreats planned for 2022:

To express an interest or to receive an application form, contact:

Caroline.Routledge475@mod.gov.uk or rafprccpastoralassistant457@outlook.com



Douai Abbey, Berkshire 15 - 18 Mar 22 (TBC)



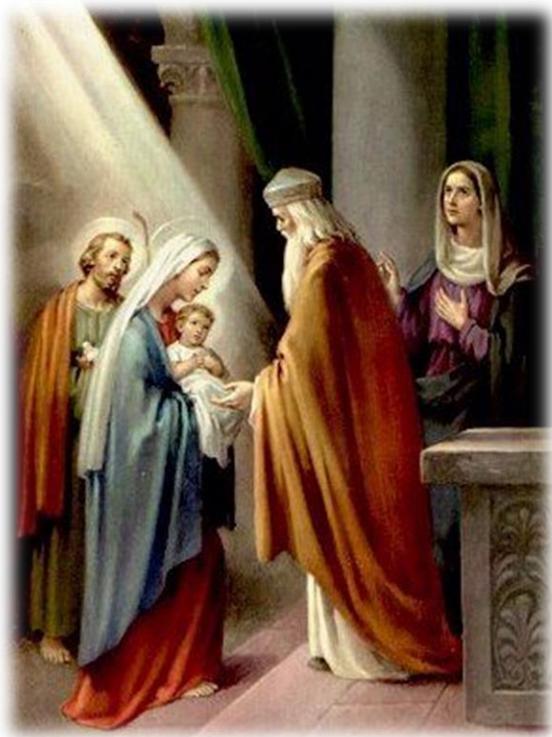
Belmont Abbey, Herefordshire 20 - 23 Jun 22 (TBC)



Worth Abbey, West Sussex 3 - 7 Oct 22 (Confirmed)



Ampleforth Abbey, North Yorkshire 28 Nov - 1 Dec 22 (Confirmed)



Key Dates in February & March

The Presentation of the Lord – *2nd February*
St Josephine Bakhita, virgin, ‘Day for Victims of
Trafficking & those who work to combat it’ – *8th*

February

Our Lady of Lourdes, ‘World Day for the sick’ – *11th*

February

The Chair of St Peter, Apostle – *22nd February*

St David, Patron of Wales – *1st March*

Ash Wednesday – *2nd March*

1st Sunday of Lent – *6th March*

2nd Sunday of Lent – *13th March*

St Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary- *19th*

March

3rd Sunday of Lent – *20th March*

The Annunciation of the Lord – *25th March*

4th Sunday of Lent – *27th March*

An excellent website with weekly reflections on all the upcoming Sunday readings can be found at:
<https://www.tarsus.ie/>

CATHOLIC MILITARY ASSOCIATION the official network for Defence Catholics



We exist to support Catholics in the UK Armed Forces.

We are a lay association of the faithful whose members cooperate to support Catholicism in the UK Armed Forces. We strive to inspire one-another in the Faith, to grow through prayer and the sacraments, and to offer up our sufferings, persevering together in the universal call to holiness.

We are the official Defence Catholic Association, formally approved by the Right Reverend Paul Mason, Bishop of the Forces. We are a member of the Defence Christian Network.

We are serving personnel, helping others. Find us at: <https://www.catholicmilitaryassociation.org.uk/>

Information.....

If you wish to know more about Roman Catholic matters within the Army Faith Community, please contact: **Mrs Karen Horn MBE** Pastoral Administrative Assistant (PAA) to PRCC(A) at: ArmyRCPAA21@gmail.com