



## TIMES OF THE LITURGY

**Sunday** - 7.45am - Lauds | 8.15am - Low Mass | 9.15am - Dominican Rite Mass (Extraordinary Form) | 11am - Sung Conventual Mass | 6pm - Low Mass | 7pm - Vespers.

**Monday - Friday** - 7am - Lauds | 7.30am - Conventual Mass | 6.15pm - Devotions and Meditation | 6.30pm - Vespers. On Fridays in Lent, Stations at 6.50pm. [N.B. First Fridays of the month, Vespers in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament with a period of Adoration from 6.15pm.]

**Saturday** - 9am - Lauds | 9.30am - Conventual Mass | 4.30-6pm - Confessions | 6.15pm - Sung Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary | 6.30pm - Vespers.

## THIS WEEK

Sun 6 **LENT V**

Mon 7 *feria*

Tue 8 *feria*

Wed 9 *feria*

Thu 10 *feria*

Fri 11 *feria*

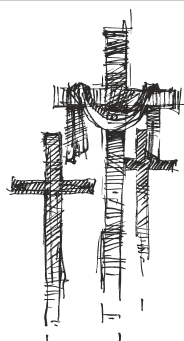
Sat 12 *feria*

Sun 13 **PALM SUNDAY OF THE  
PASSION OF THE LORD**

## SUPPORT US

Our ministry relies on the generosity of our friends and supporters. If you would like to support us make a donation in the cloister, visit our website, or speak to or email the bursar, Fr Albert.

[cambridge.bursar@english.op.org](mailto:cambridge.bursar@english.op.org)



## EASTER LITURGY TIMES

Please see the reverse of the Newsletter for the times of the Easter Liturgies.

## A LENTEN DAY OF RECOLLECTION FOR WOMEN

Saturday 12 April 2025 10am-4pm at 155 Huntingdon Road Cambridge CB3 0DH. The day will begin at 10am with coffee/tea and will include reflections on the theme. Mass, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and Confessions in the course of the day, ending with Benediction and Vespers. Light refreshments available. Suggested donation £15. For further information please contact Sr. Angela Mary <angelamleydon@gmail.com> or 0796809175.

## EASTER FLOWERS

**Special collection today for Easter flowers.** Donations can be made in cash using the basket outside the chapel, or online, marking the donation For Flowers.

## SAFEGUARDING

Blackfriars Cambridge operates in accordance with Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and the Safeguarding Policies of the Catholic Church in England and Wales at all times. Our Lay Safeguarding Representative is Emanuela Di Pietro. She can be contacted on 07516 667752 or at <safeguardingrepresentative.cambridge@english.op.org>. The local safeguarding friar is Fr Gregory Pearson, OP. He can be contacted on 07724 062971 or at <gregory.pearson@english.op.org>. Alternatively, the Religious Life Safeguarding Service can be contacted on 0151 5562311 or <safeguarding@religioussafeguarding.org> if you have any concerns.

## DAY FOR MARRIED COUPLES

Bishop Peter invites all married couples in the Diocese to attend the annual Marriage Celebration Mass on Saturday 14 June at 11.30am at the Cathedral of St John the Baptist in Norwich. All are welcome! Those who are celebrating significant anniversaries (one year, five years and every multiple of five years thereafter, until 60 years where we celebrate each year thereafter) will receive a certificate from the Bishop. Refreshments will follow the Mass. For more details and if you would like to register please go to: <<https://www.rcdea.org.uk/marriage-mass-registration/>>. Please direct all questions to the Marriage and Family Life Coordinator: <[mflcoordinator@rcdea.org.uk](mailto:mflcoordinator@rcdea.org.uk)>.

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## CONTACT YOUR MP

**Please pick up an “Assist us to live, not to die” postcard from the cloister and send it to your MP.**

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## PASTORAL LETTER FROM CARDINAL NICHOLS

Cardinal Vincent Nichols has issued a Pastoral Letter on assisted dying. You can also read the letter here: <<https://rcdow.org.uk/cardinal/homilies/pastoral-letter-on-the-terminally-ill-adults-end-of-life-bill/>>

## A FIRST-CENTURY MORAL PANIC: JOHN 8. 1-11

When we come to Mass next Sunday it will be to hear the Passion gospel, the story about mercy and forgiveness. Here already is a story about accusation and about judgement for us to listen to before hearing the story of Jesus accused and judged. Today also we read from the book of the prophet Isaiah and hear him cry out, “God is doing a new thing, forgetting the past and never calling your sins to mind, can’t you see it?” St Paul is also read, where he says, “I forget the past and strain forward for what is to come, the prize to which God calls us in Christ.”

Just now I’m preparing to make my Easter confession. It’s that sacrament that comes as a gift to us, as a way of preparing for and entering in to the “new thing” that God is doing. We ask the heavenly Father’s judgement, that is his mercy. Sometimes they call it our Easter duty, though we don’t always do stuff because it’s a duty. The bright young Catholics who hardly mention duty, come gratefully to this sacrament, drawn by Our Lord who invites: “Come to me and you will find rest for your souls.” But the poor defeated woman in this story was dragged along to judgement in a quite involuntary way, she was made to stand there in front of her accusers. And we too may have our accuser, only it is an internal one, it is conscience. “Conscience is the aboriginal vicar of Christ, a prophet in its information, a monarch in its peremptoriness, a priest in its blessings and anathemas” wrote St John Henry Newman.

Conscience itself asks to be examined. But civil life, life together, also reminds us that every failing of ours has its effects, sometimes painful ones. When the offender has to appear in front of the press photographers, she has her comeuppance, other delinquents are warned of the consequences of what she did, and the public sense that justice is satisfied (more or less). It reaffirms the state and bolsters the social consensus. Our own country makes a preferential option for prison (the Church makes a preferential option for the poor). Prison works, doesn’t it? As you know I spent 17 years in the service of prisoners, do I believe prison works? I require more notice of that question!

“They compound for sins they are inclined to, by damning those they have no mind to”, which seventeenth-century wit was it who said that? Our own century is just as censorious, don’t you think?

Jesus also is pressed to subscribe to the consensus. The moral law has absolute primacy and is to be upheld. If he does not agree he stands condemned as a rebel and a mad anarchist, a man with no moral sense and a danger to society. Hadn’t he better display some moral outrage?

What did Jesus do? He bent down so as to write on the ground. Or is it that he wrote on the ground so as to bend down? So as to escape their hot angry glare, he withdrew his own gaze?

What else? He who is himself the Word won’t say a thing. What was it he wrote? It could have been a verse of Scripture, maybe “what I desire is love, not sacrifice.” It could just have been a doodle. Nobody knows. He wrote in the dust; it got blown away two thousand years ago. A real genuine Jesus autograph, lost and gone for good, and all we ever got was this Holy Shroud?

I think his silence is golden. He just lets their insistent questioning of him come to a head, the outburst of indignation work itself out. When they are through he looks up and says, Let the one who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her. He goes back to his scribbling and lets his words sink in. The older people present are the first to take the point and sidle away. Is it that they are the ones who know themselves best? or just those whose grubby past is best known to the others (which of us doesn’t have a history, after all)? The first to leave are those who normally would get the chance to throw the first stone, for we always let our elders have first go, don’t we? In any case these are the ones who find they just can’t declare themselves sinless in front of everybody, though they had been prepared to declare her sinful in front of everybody, so one by one they give it up as a bad job and slink away until not one is left. It’s so much easier to root for capital punishment when you don’t expect to inflict it with these hands.

You may have spotted the fact that the scribes and Pharisees who have worked up the moral outrage are all males. They brandish the law of Moses that says only women are to be stoned to death for adultery, not men. In this case the man involved hasn’t even been produced. It’s all the woman’s fault, so it is. Jesus won’t fall for this alleged justice with its double standards. Now he is left alone with the woman in front of him. Just the two of them, Jesus and the woman, all alone, face to face.

It is only to him that the penitent sinner must come. It is only to the Lord that we have to come. When I have sins to confess, and who has not, I shall meet with him and I shall meet only him. There are just the two of us. We are left alone, in communion with one another. What do we know of him, what is he looking for? First of all, he loves us to pieces. He has come looking for us all the way from the heart of the Father.

How shall I know what to say in confession? The great commandment of the law is, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your mind and all your strength, and you shall love your neighbour as yourself – you shall treat the others in your life, with that dignity and respect with which you want to be treated yourself. He has everything to say about that, about doing your justice, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, forgiving the offender. If there are other matters that trouble the soul, they belong there, as failures in love alone. Or they are the stuff of moral panic and not worthy of mention, unless you happen to be Immanuel Kant.

At this point Christ our redeemer, friend and brother looks at her and speaks tenderly to her for the first time. They have come face to face, the poor frightened woman and the one to whom the Father has given all judgement in heaven and upon earth. There is no other. What does she see in him but the sweet compassion of the heart of God, that sets her free? "I don't condemn you. Go now and sin no more." So the Lord does a new thing: no need to recall the past, no need to think about what was done before. She must forget the past and strain ahead for what is still to come, like St Paul running to the finishing line.

The story then is not saying, what the scribes and Pharisees would like to convict Jesus of saying, there is no sin and no judgement, and therefore no penance and no confession of sins. The story isn't saying let yourself off that Easter duty one more time. It certainly does not tell us, they have built a bypass round the sacrament of penance, no-one need go there any more. It says something very different and far greater: that in Christ Jesus there is no condemnation. "I do not condemn you. Go and sin no more." Forgiveness deals with the past so as to open to us the future, our future in Christ, who has opened wide his arms to us upon the cross, and revealed the resurrection, he himself the Way to the Father.

Praised be Jesus Christ today and for ever. Amen.

fr Bob Eccles, OP

## - HOLY WEEK & EASTER, 2025 -

### **SUNDAY 13 APRIL - PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD**

7.45am - Lauds | 8.15am - Low Mass | 9.15am - Dominican Rite Mass | 11am - Sung Conventual Mass | 6pm - Low Mass | 7pm - Vespers. Palms blessed and distributed at each of the Masses.

### **MONDAY 14, TUESDAY 15, AND WEDNESDAY 16 APRIL**

Liturgy times as usual. Chrism Mass on Tuesday 15 April at 11.30am at Norwich Cathedral.

### **THURSDAY 17 APRIL - HOLY THURSDAY**

7.30am - Office of Readings & Lauds | 6pm - Mass of the Lord's Supper, *followed by* Watch at the Altar of Repose until Midnight.

### **FRIDAY 18 APRIL - GOOD FRIDAY**

8am - Tenebræ (Office of Readings & Lauds) | 3pm Solemn Liturgy of the Passion of the Lord.

### **SATURDAY 19 APRIL - HOLY SATURDAY**

8am - Tenebræ (Office of Readings & Lauds) | *from* 4.30pm Confessions | 6.30pm Vespers.

9.30pm - Vigil of the Resurrection of the Lord in the Holy Night.

### **SUNDAY 20 APRIL - EASTER SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD**

7.45am - Lauds | 8.15am - Low Mass | 9.15am - Dominican Rite Mass | 11am - Sung Conventual Mass | 6pm - Solemn Vespers. NOTE NO EVENING MASS.

### **MONDAY 21 APRIL - WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER**

9am - Lauds | 9.30am - Conventual Mass | 6.15pm - Rosary and Meditation | 6.30pm - Vespers

**All Liturgy Times return to normal from Tuesday 22 April.**

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## THE PRIORY OF ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

Blackfriars, Buckingham Road, Cambridge. CB3 0DD.

[www.blackfriarscambridge.org.uk/](http://www.blackfriarscambridge.org.uk/) | Phone: +44 (0) 1223 741251

Please send any enquiries to [prior.cambridge@english.op.org](mailto:prior.cambridge@english.op.org) | To request a Mass to be said for a specific intention visit

<<https://www.blackfriarscambridge.org.uk/mass-service-times/request-a-mass/>>