

PARISH OF ST OSMUND

ST GREGORY + ST OSMUND

Part of the Clifton Diocese: Registered Charity 1170168 Company No 10462074

LENT WEEK 4(A) LAETARE SUNDAY



From Father Anthony

I stood by the sitting room window overlooking rooftops, bare trees and the magnificent cathedral spire. Traffic rumbled below as the sun went down, hazy red in a dusky sky. I was on the phone to a dear friend, Christian by nature, Atheist by belief. He was having a hard time and so was I. Perhaps we had grown in age but not wisdom; despite our different beliefs life could still hurt. We found ourselves, metaphorically, by the roadside of our lives; both in the dark, both blind. 'I wish I could believe what you do', he said. 'Yes', I said, 'but sometimes even belief gets in the way'. What we both needed was the experience of that (*Him*) which is beyond belief.

As we continue in our Lenten desert let's rest by the roadside of our lives. Most of us carry hurt, pain, confusion, bewilderment; most experience darkness or blindness of some sort. The very fact of feeling separate from God (*the Fall*) deprives us of understanding or enlightenment and we miss the mark (*sin*). It's not so much 'who sinned this man or his family' but that perpetual thoughts of separation from God are the sin or blindness. Thought, reason, belief, philosophy, theology, psychology cannot cure this blindness; they cannot restore spiritual sight. At best they can lead us to the roadside; at worst they embed the blindness. Only God, through Christ in Jesus, can restore our sight.

Prayer or meditation is the place where we wait patiently by the wayside of our lives for Him to pass by; because it is within our consciousness that He is found; it is here that He lives; the Guest who never left but remained ignored. When we have become tired of seeking and longing for answers, we will give up; and then perhaps see or feel what is right before us: Him who had never left.

When we recognise or feel His Presence it will feel as if He is joining his soul (*spittle*) with the 'dust' of our earthly experience: transforming us from 'animate beings' into 'life giving spirits'. So let us spend time in prayer or meditation; not asking for anything and with no expectation. For frequent, short periods let's just attempt to be with God for no other reason than *to be with God*: and in the darkness of meditation His Presence will shine becoming our sight!

PASTORAL TEAM

PRIESTS

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PARISH OFFICE

Monday & Tuesday 0900 - 1600

Wednesday CLOSED

Thursday & Friday 0900 - 1600

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salisbury.catholic@cliftondiocese.com

OUR CHURCHES

St Osmund

95 Exeter Street SP1 2SF

St Gregory & the English Martyrs

St Gregory's Ave SP2 7JP

Chapel of the Good Shepherd

Barford Lane, Downton SP5 3QA

NEW TO THE PARISH?

We wish you a very warm welcome.

Please register online

[Click Here](#)

PRESENTATION OF THE CREED & SECOND SCRUTINY FOR THE ELECT

The Elect are those who have reached the final stage of their journey toward full membership in the Catholic Church, which they will enter at Easter through the Sacraments of Confirmation and the Holy Eucharist. The rites celebrated this weekend are rooted in our Sunday Gospel which emphasise turning away from darkness and embracing Christ, the True Light.

At this Friday's evening Mass, the Elect will be entrusted with the Creed so that they - like the Man Born Blind - may proclaim "I believe," renouncing darkness and stepping into the light. In our second reading on Sunday, St Paul reminds us that we no longer belong to darkness, but now we are light in the Lord, and to walk as children of the light, for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true.

The second scrutiny will be celebrated at the 9am Mass at St Osmund's.

Please pray for the Elect of our Parish: **Christopher, Sophie, Luisa and Jennifer.**

POPE LEO XIV PRAYS FOR PEACE

Pope Leo XIV is praying for the cessation of hostilities in the Middle East and has expressed his profound sorrow for all the victims of the recent bombings - for the many innocent people, including children, and for those who were aiding them, such as Father Pierre El-Rahi, the Maronite priest killed in Qlayaa, Lebanon. For [the full statement](#) with a video mourning the death of Father Pierre El-Rahi, please click on the image in the 'Top News' box on our homepage.

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES

Bible Study with the Fathers of the Church - Fr Joseph's group for Young(ish) adults (open to all in their 20s & 30s) meets on alternate Tuesdays at 8pm in St Osmund's Parish Rooms, also available to join online via Zoom. Please email Fr Joseph to be added to the WhatsApp group for notifications.

Family of Faith: Next session is THIS Sunday 15 March after the 9am Masses at the Parish Centre on Exeter Street. The [Family of Faith](#) webpage includes helpful 'signs of readiness' documents for parents discerning their child's readiness for the Sacraments. Online forms for both sacraments are also available.

SHARING OUR FAITH

Journey in Faith – The next session is Sunday 22 March 10.30am at the Parish Centre on Exeter Street. For more including the timetable click on the '[Journey in Faith](#)' button on our home page.

Confirmation 2026 - The next key [Confirmation](#) session is Wednesday 6 May at 6.30pm in the Parish Centre.

Baptism Preparation. The next course starts Sunday 12 April after the 9am Mass at St Osmund for three consecutive Sundays, contact the Parish Office to join or click the '[Registration](#)' button on our homepage.

Priests' Retirement Fund - Next weekend we also have a retiring collection for the Priests' Retirement Fund. This annual collection helps support our sick and retired priests. It allows the diocese to help retired priests living on their own, and if needed care home fees. Your generosity is much appreciated. To enhance the value of your gift, special gift aid envelopes will be available in all our churches this weekend - please use one if you are a taxpayer.

Polish Mass in March – will NOT take place this weekend but has been moved, exceptionally, to the 3rd Sunday of the month which is NEXT **Sunday 21 March** at the changed time of **4pm**.

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EMHCs) An amazing number (40!) EMHCs were commissioned or recommissioned on **Saturday 7 March**. The afternoon was led by **Fr Joseph**, beginning with a talk followed by training videos and a Q&A session. The commissioning took place during the **5pm Mass at St Gregory's**. Our EMHCs serve both at Mass and by taking the Blessed Sacrament to care homes and to the housebound. If you feel called to join this important ministry, please speak to one of our clergy or contact the **Parish Office**. Full training will be provided. If you know of a housebound or sick parishioner who would like to receive communion please let us know. Following this meeting, Fr Joseph is asking ALL EMHCs (whether you were able to attend or not) to complete a short [online questionnaire](#).

CHRISM MASS in Clifton Cathedral on Wednesday 1 April. A coach has been booked to travel to the Chrism Mass and is filling up fast. So far 25 of 36 seats are now booked so act now if you'd like to join them. Timings are expected to be similar to last year: departing St Osmund's at 7.20am, St Gregory's 7.35am with a pick up at Amesbury library at 7.55am. Mass is at 11am. If you would like to join our priests and deacons on the coach, please book your place by completing the [online booking form](#). The cost is £19 per person.

Rosary in Salisbury Cathedral - Friday 20 March- The Rosary is prayed by Catholics and Anglicans in Salisbury Cathedral on the third Friday of each month at 12 o'clock. The next meeting will be on Friday 20 March in the Trinity Chapel. If you would like to join us we meet in the cathedral Refectory 1130-1150 before going into the Cathedral.

First Friday Talks – The talk from last Friday which featured a video presentation by Fr Stephen Wang on 'The Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist' is available on our website, click on '[First Friday Talks](#)' on our homepage.

Vigil Mass in Czech and Slovak – next Saturday 21 March 6pm at St Osmund Fr Tomas Krejci will hear Confessions from 5pm in English and Czech/Slovak followed by the Mass and refreshments in the Parish Rooms after Mass.

SCORE update. At the March committee meeting a total of £8,400 in grants was shared by 3 charities: The Bridge Youth Project; MANDO; and Rise:61. Please look at the '[SCORE](#)' page under '[Parish Life](#)' on our website for full details. Thank you for your generous contributions to SCORE.

Lenten Talks Join us for a thoughtful series of [talks](#) inspired by the popular reflections of Fr Stephen Wang. **Every Tuesday in Lent from 7.30–9.30pm** at the Parish Centre beginning with light refreshments. There is plenty of parking, no booking is required — simply come along and take part.

Choir for the Easter Triduum in St Gregory's & St Osmund's. The next get-together will be next Wednesday 18 March in the Parish Rooms at St Osmund at 6pm followed by one on Wednesday 25 March. Recordings of the music to learn at home are available for those who don't read music. Contact the parish office if you're interested or just turn up!

Easter Egg Donations! We are delighted to announce that we will once again be able to host an Easter Egg hunt for children after the 9am Masses on Easter Sunday at both St Osmund and St Gregory. Donations of (individually-wrapped little ones, not full-size!) Easter Eggs will be gratefully received in your chosen church. Please hand your eggs into the welcomers at each of our Churches or to the Parish Office during the week.

Decriminalisation of Abortion. The House of Lords is debating an extreme amendment to the Government Crime & Policing Bill, which would allow women to self-induce an abortion at any stage. Please act to stop this proposal by using the SPUC's tool to write to members of the Lords <https://spuc.org.uk/campaign/abortion-decriminalisation>

Prayers for Justice & Peace Salisbury Cathedral Trinity Chapel on 18 March at noon led by the Rev Jonathan Plows.

Salisbury Churches celebrate 'Christian Aid at 80 Years' Join us for a short celebration with the children of St Osmund's (and St Martin's) Primary Schools, gathered around the rowan tree funded by our churches. Thursday 19 March at 2.30 pm in Churchill Gardens, near the car park and toilet block on Southampton Road. All welcome.

LITURGY THIS WEEK

Year A-2 Lent Week 4 & Psalter 4

Saturday 14 March

10:00 St Osmund MASS Colin O'Farrell RIP

First Mass of Sunday

17:00 St Gregory MASS Gerry Kinsella RIP

SUNDAY 15 MARCH LAETARE SUNDAY

09:00 St Osmund MASS Intentions of David & Penny O'Brien

09:00 St Gregory MASS All Holy Souls

11:00 St Osmund MASS Deacon Stephen Bowler

12:30 St Osmund Ordinariate MASS

16:30 Holy Redeemer Syro-Malabar MASS

18:00 St Osmund MASS People of the Parish

Monday 16 March

10:00 St Osmund MASS Christopher Turner RIP

TUESDAY 17 MARCH SAINT PATRICK, PATRON OF IRELAND

10:00 St Osmund MASS John & Margaret Stone RIP

All Day Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

17:30 St Osmund Benediction

18:00 St Osmund Ordinariate MASS

Wednesday 18 March

10:00 St Gregory MASS Julia in sickness

THURSDAY 19 MARCH SAINT JOSEPH SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

10:00 St Osmund MASS Jese Titubou RIP

All Day Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

12:00 Downton MASS Frank Farley RIP

17:30 St Osmund Benediction

Friday 20 March

10:00 St Gregory Rosary

17:20 St Osmund Stations of the Cross

18:00 St Osmund MASS (G) Baby Vandenhoff RIP

Saturday 21 March

10:00 St Osmund MASS Mrs Anne Brookes RIP

First Mass of Sunday

16:00 St Osmund Polish MASS

17:00 St Gregory MASS Tony Brady RIP

18:00 St Osmund Czech/Slovak MASS

RECONCILIATION

St Gregory: Saturdays 4.30pm until Mass

St Osmund: Saturdays 9.30am until 12 noon and by appointment

PRAYER & SCRIPTURE

PAPAL PRAYER INTENTION FOR MARCH

For disarmament and peace

Let us pray that nations move toward effective disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, and that world leaders choose the path of dialogue and diplomacy instead of violence.

CLIFTON DIOCESE

We pray for the parish of St Peter (Gloucester).

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Beth Newman, Darren Barnes, Anthony Scouller and Orlando Saraze who died recently, and all those whose anniversaries of death occur at this time. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

We also pray for all those in our parish currently facing ill-health that they will be granted comfort, healing and strength.

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE:

Psalm Response

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Gospel Acclamation

Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus.

I am the light of the world, says the Lord; whoever follows me will have the light of life.

Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus.

SACRAMENTS

BAPTISMS Please request using this online [form](#). For more information contact Deacon John Proctor or Deacon Stephen Godwin.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION If you have a child who is coming to Mass regularly, for whom preparation for First Communion may be appropriate, please [register](#) your interest in our Family of Faith programme.

CONFIRMATION 2027 For children who are year 9 or above please visit the Confirmation [page](#) our website.

MARRIAGE Please speak to a priest for guidance at least six months in advance of your hoped-for wedding date.

FUNERALS Do your family know your wishes with regards to your funeral? Registered parishioners can provide these details which are stored confidentially with your parishioner record and can be given to families at the appropriate time.

Contact Désirée: salisbury.catholic@cliftondiocese.com

PRAYER FOR PEACE

God of peace, Father of all, in this hour of fear and violence draw near to every family living under threat.

Protect the innocent, shelter the displaced, comfort the grieving, heal the wounded, and strengthen all who bring relief and care.

Turn the hearts of leaders from pride and anger. Give them wisdom, restraint, and courage, that the weapons may fall silent and honest negotiation may begin.

Save the peoples of the Middle East from a widening war.
Guard Christians and all religious minorities,
and keep hatred from hardening into lasting division.

Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ,
make us peacemakers in our homes, our schools, and our communities.
Bless our Lenten prayers and sacrifices,
and let them bear fruit in mercy, justice, and reconciliation.

Mary, Queen of Peace, pray for us.

Saint Joseph, protector of families, pray for us.

Saint Francis of Assisi, pray for us.

Amen.

Our Bishop,
Bosco MacDonald is calling the whole of the Clifton Diocese to prayer for peace in the Middle East. He has issued a statement which you can read online [here](#) or on our church noticeboards if you do not have access to the internet.

LENT & HOLY WEEK LITURGY

Stations of the Cross - Fridays during Lent 5.20pm at St Osmund prior to the 6pm Mass.

TUESDAY 31 MARCH

Deanery Penitential Service 7pm St Gregory with several priest for Confessions.

WEDNESDAY 1 APRIL

Chrism Mass 11am Clifton Cathedral

Book your place on the coach

HOLY THURSDAY 2 APRIL

Tenebrae 10am St Osmund

Mass of the Lord's Supper 7pm St Gregory

GOOD FRIDAY 3 APRIL

Stations of the Cross 9am St Gregory

Tenebrae 10am St Osmund

The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ 3pm St Gregory & St Osmund

Stations of the Cross 6pm St Osmund

Ecumenical Walk of Witness 10.30am Starting at Salisbury Cathedral (West Door)

HOLY SATURDAY 4 APRIL

Tenebrae 10am St Osmund

Easter Vigil 9pm St Osmund