



St Peter's Catholic Church

London Road, Gloucester GL1 3EX

Tel: 01452 523603

Parish website: www.stpetersgloucester.org.uk

Diocesan website: www.cliftondiocese.com

CLIFTON DIOCESE (a Company Limited by Guarantee registered in England and Wales under number 10462076.
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Parish Priest:

Monsignor Liam Slattery VG

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Permanent Deacons:

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Parish Secretary:

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Parish Office:

Tues, Wed, Fri -9.30am-2.30pm

Thurs-12.00pm-5.00pm

Parish Safeguarding Representatives:

Jim Harris & John Bond

Schools

St Peter's Catholic Primary School:

Tel: 01452 524792. Web: www.st-peters-pri.gloucs.sch.uk

St Peter's Catholic High School & Sixth Form Centre

Tel: 01452 520594. Web: www.st-petershigh.gloucs.sch.uk

5th April 2020 – Palm Sunday (Year A)

Mass Intentions this Week

During this week Fr Liam will say a daily private mass at the altar in the memorial chapel in St Peter's Church for the following intentions:

Palm Sunday: People of the Parish.

Monday: John Conlon *RIP*.

Tuesday: Fred Gyde *RIP*.

Wednesday: Fr John Quinn *RIP*.

Holy Thursday: Intentions of all Priests.

Easter Vigil: Those awaiting baptism and reception into full communion with the Catholic Church

Easter Sunday: Irene Eastment *RIP*

Church Closure

St Peter's Church and the Parish Office are now closed until further notice.

Holy Week 2020

With all churches closed and public masses and liturgies suspended there will be no public celebration of the Holy Week Liturgies this year. Many of the faithful will be aware of their Easter Duties; that is to receive Holy Communion during the Easter Season and by custom, to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation beforehand. As it is not possible for the faithful to receive Holy Communion at this time, and into the future, **the Bishops of England and Wales have dispensed the Easter Duties for the year 2020**. The Bishops have asked that all should make a Perfect Act of Contrition at this time.

Live Streaming from Clifton Cathedral for Holy Week

Palm Sunday: Mass at 9.30am. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy Week: Mass at 9.30am. Holy Thursday: Mass of the Lord's Supper at 8.00pm. Good Friday: Stations of the Cross at 12noon. Liturgy of the Lord's Passion at 3.00pm. Holy Saturday: Easter Vigil at 8.00pm. Easter Sunday: Mass at 9.30am. Those tuning into these liturgies are encouraged to have the following with them, a green branch for Palm Sunday, a crucifix for Good Friday and an lighted candle for the Easter Vigil. These liturgies can be can be accessed through the diocesan website (cliftondiocese.com) or through churchservices.tv.

Watching on Holy Thursday

St Chad's Cathedral in Birmingham will be the focus for national coverage of Watching on Holy Thursday and can be accessed through www.stchadscathedral.org.uk.

Easter Sunday

Cardinal Vincent Nichols' celebration of Easter Mass next Sunday will be broadcast on all local BBC Radio Stations across Britain at 8.10am.

Suggestions for celebrating Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday at home

These suggestions are offered as a starting point for us to think about how we might celebrate at home, according to our own circumstances. It is also an encouragement to be imaginative and meaningful for the circumstances in which we find ourselves. If you are alone, and many will be, know that you are united with others doing the same. We are united in the love God has for us all as we find a new way of being Church at this time.

Holy Thursday 9 April 2020: At sunset or early evening have a simple meal together, including bread and wine, if possible. Beforehand, maybe earlier in the day, read 1Corinthians 11:23-26 and John 13:115. During the course of the meal talk about what Jesus was doing when he was celebrating the Passover. Talk together on what the washing of the feet in John's gospel means for us today, in how we show love for one another. It might be possible to choose a specific act you could engage in over the Easter period, e.g. contribute to a food bank or charity, write or phone someone, make it a unique gesture that suits your family, or your circumstances. Finish with a prayer thanking God for all we have been given.

Good Friday 10 April 2020: At 3pm, if possible, gather together with a cross in the middle of the gathering. Read together, John 18:1-19:42. (If children are present tell the story in an age appropriate way rather than reading the text.) Spend some time quietly and pray for the pain and suffering of our world. Depending on how many are there, it might be good to encourage everyone to share and pray for where they see suffering at present. Finish with an Our Father.

Easter Sunday 12 April 2020: As early in the morning as is possible for you make and have a very special breakfast. Decorate the table, including in the decorations a symbol of new life, possibly a plant, and home baked bread. Read, Matthew 28:1-10 either before breakfast or during it. Finish with a prayer asking God to enable us to live "Do not be afraid..."

Good Friday – Universal Prayers:

During the liturgy on Good Friday afternoon there is a specific form of prayer used. In extraordinary circumstances an extra prayer can be added. This has been mandated this year as follows: *For the afflicted in time of pandemic Let us pray also for all those who suffer the consequences of the current pandemic, that God the Father may grant health to the sick, strength to those who care for them, comfort to families and salvation to all the victims who have died. Almighty ever-living God, only support of our human weakness, look with compassion upon the sorrowful condition of your children who suffer because of this pandemic; relieve the pain of the sick, give strength to those who care for them, welcome into your peace those who have died and, throughout this time of tribulation, grant that we may all find comfort in your merciful love. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

RIP

We ask your prayers for those who have died recently:

John Conlon, who died suddenly at home this week.

Fred Gyde, who died this week in GRH

Irene Eastment, Claire Cuffe's mother who died peacefully this week

Fr John Quinn, a retired priest of your Diocese who died in Amesbury this week.

We remember those who have asked for our prayers: Ian Cahill, Andrea Brushneen, Cheryl Loy, Sharon Williams, Michael Hercules, John Wood, Mary Wood, Leonard Slatter, Sue Hartnett, Phil Gammond, Mandi Stokes, Theo Montague, Margaret Coleman, Vera Watson, Patricia Walsh, Cecilia Edwards, Veronica Burke, Janet Diaco, Linda Northway, Rebecca Northway, Kitty Smith, Ben Wilkinson, Jackie Hutt, Steve Prosser, Kitty Daly, Peter Hagan, Frank Kelly, Mary Philomena Mayo, Marie O'Connor, Baby Monroe Cserna-Ochai, Jennifer Morrissey, Kathleen Neely, Joan O'Connell, Milvia Sepede, Eileen Mary Parsons, Pat O'Ryan, Fr Liam Slattery, Christopher Browne.

Year of Communion - Sunday April 5th – Palm Sunday

Spiritual writer, Henri Nowen, tells the story of an old man who, noticing a scorpion caught in the tangled roots of a tree, stretches out and tries to free the scorpion. The scorpion reacts by stinging his hand. He recoils in pain but tries once more. He continues to do this while his hand grows more and more bloody and swollen. A passer-by sees what is happening and laughs, shouting across to him, 'Silly old man, don't you know it is the nature of the scorpion to sting. That ugly creature will kill you if you keep on.' The old man stares back at him and replies, 'Just because it is the nature of the scorpion to kill, why should I give up my nature to save?' The all-consuming compassion and love of Jesus is reflected in this story. The death of Jesus was the ultimate act of sacrifice to save us. Through the very bloody and inhumane suffering of one man, we have been given life. Today is a day to glorify the Lord and to be with him in his pain, so that we may also share in his victory.

From Fr Liam

A number of years ago I, like so many people, had the wonderful privilege of going on Pilgrimage to the Holy Land. One of my abiding memories of the time spent there was the night visit to the Garden of Gethsemane when the gates were locked to the general public. Kneeling beneath the star studded sky by one of the over two thousand year old olive trees, whilst contemplating the Agony of Jesus in that place was a very moving experience.

As I did so, I couldn't help but wonder where God was for Jesus that night in his agony, distress, and fear in what lay ahead of him; in his initially not wanting to go through what the Father was asking of him, and in his loneliness and isolation in finding the disciples asleep, the same ones who would soon abandon him. Where was God? He was there where Jesus was in all he was experiencing and in all he had to endure, just as he was with him on Calvary as he cried out in the utter sense of being abandoned at his darkest and most painful hour. God was there, where His Son was, always.

In this time of the Coronavirus many will ask, Where is God?

God is where you are, in your fear, your loneliness, your isolation, your agony, anguish, and your grief, in whatever it is your feeling at this time. But just as Jesus had to endure his time of suffering and death before coming to the glory of the resurrection, we too have to endure before we see the glory of the Father's life through his love, healing and mercy revealed to us, here in this present life and in the life to come.

One of the pews in St Peter's Church where I like to sit, is beneath the ninth station, where Jesus falls for a third time. Surely Jesus wanted to be left there, face in the dust, little or no energy to go on?

But he is compelled to get to his feet again and carry the cross the remainder of the journey, believing in the Father's love for him, a love greater than the suffering and death to be endured. In the love of the Father, Jesus could never be lost to suffering and death, even the most agonising of suffering and death!

In this time of trial, we place our trust in that same love. Mary, the Mother of Jesus shows us how. When she meets her Son on the Way of the Cross, her eyes meet his in a tender embrace, her heart reaches out to his, her strength becomes his strength and his strength hers.

Mary, maybe without fully understanding, knew that the Father's love for her Son was greater and would not let his suffering and death end in ultimate darkness. Mary is there to meet us in all we are journeying through to be our strength. With her, we know that the Father's love for us his children will not lead us into darkness but to light, even when we don't understand or maybe fully believe. This is our journey with Jesus in this Holy Week.

God is where we are.

