

The Parishes of St Saviour and The Ascension, Portsea

February 2021

Dear Friends,

As you read this Christmas will seem a distant memory, but the Christmas season officially lasts forty days and ends with the feast of The Presentation of the Lord, commonly known as Candlemas, which this year we will keep a day late on Wednesday 3rd February with a Sung Mass at St Saviour at 11.30 a.m. This Mass will include the customary blessing of candles and procession. We are fortunate that the Government have allowed churches to remain open for worship during the current lockdown and so our doors remain open for all who are able to attend. Since the beginning of the year we have held a single Parish Mass at 11am every Sunday, alternating between the two churches, and this will continue until further notice. Thank you for your willingness to travel to the 'other' church and if you need transport please ask, or if you are really unable to travel please make your Communion at one of the weekday Masses, which continue as usual.

We are deeply grateful for your financial support of our parishes. Those who give through the weekly envelope scheme should now have received the new packs. Please can I remind you of the importance of giving your set amount in each envelope, even if you save them up and return them to church at once – we make our annual budget based on pledged giving and rely on this to pay our Parish Share and keep our buildings open. Thank you also to those who give through the Parish Giving Scheme or by Direct Debit. Sadly our income from fundraising, social events and hall hire has been severely affected by the pandemic and therefore we are particularly reliant on your donations at the present time, if you are able to consider increasing your giving, even if just in the short term, that would be much appreciated.

The three Sundays before Lent are known as Septuagesima, Sexagesima, and Quinquagesima (Latin for 70, 60, and 50 days before Easter). These three Sundays remind us that Easter approaches and that the Lenten season of penitence, in which we have time to review our lives and prepare for the joy of Easter, are close upon us. The Gesima Sundays, in fact, mark a kind-of pre-Lenten season, a period of Ordinary Time between the joys and thankfulness of Christmas and Epiphany, and the introspection of Lent, to be followed by the greatest joy of all at Easter. The Prayer Book Collects for this season are sombre, with references to punishment for our sins and petitions for merciful deliverance from adversity. These perhaps reflect in part the times in which they were written, times of barbarian invasions, of famine, war, and pestilence. Sadly, the pandemic has reminded us that despite all the modern conveniences we enjoy, dangers over which we have no control are still very much present in the world today, breathing down our necks and weighing upon us and our society. A dual theme however, runs through these Collects, on the one hand there is danger and adversity, but there is also consolation and salvation through God's grace and loving kindness.

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, falling this year on Wednesday 17th February. There will be a Sung Mass with Imposition of Ashes at St Saviour at 11.30 a.m. (there will not be an evening Mass this year). In the current circumstances a Lent Course will not be possible, but a special booklet will be available with suitable prayers and devotions, and if you did not get a chance to read last year's Lent Book 'Ten years in a Portsmouth Slum' you might be able to find time this year!

Finally on a personal note, Elizabeth and I are most grateful for all the messages, cards and gifts in advance of our marriage on Saturday 6th February at 1 p.m., +Norman our Bishop will be celebrating the Nuptial Mass at The Ascension. Unfortunately due to the current regulations it will not be possible for a congregation to attend, but a live broadcast will be available on the internet. This will not be publicly available so if you would like to watch please send an e-mail and I will make sure you are sent the details, and please remember us in your prayers on that afternoon.

With my love and prayers,



Fr Benjamin.

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Calendar for February 2021

Monday 1 st	10.00am	Low Mass (BCP)	St Saviour
Tuesday 2 nd			
Wednesday 3 rd	THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD (<i>tr.</i>)		
	11.30am	Sung Mass with Candlemas Ceremonies	St Saviour
Thursday 4 th	6.00pm	Evensong & Low Mass	The Ascension
Friday 5 th	6.00pm	Evensong & Low Mass	St Saviour
Saturday 6 th	1.00pm	Pontifical Nuptial Mass	The Ascension
Sunday 7 th	THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (SEXAGESIMA)		
	11.00am	Combined Family Mass	The Ascension
Monday 8 th		<u>No Mass</u>	
Tuesday 9 th			
Wednesday 10 th	11.30am	Low Mass	St Saviour
Thursday 11 th	6.00pm	Walsingham Devotions & Low Mass	The Ascension
Friday 12 th	6.00pm	Evensong & Low Mass	St Saviour
Saturday 13 th			
Sunday 14 th	THE SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (QUINQUAGESIMA)		
	11.00am	Combined Parish Mass	St Saviour
Monday 15 th	10.00am	Low Mass	St Saviour
Tuesday 16 th			
Wednesday 17 th	ASH WEDNESDAY (Day of Obligation)		
	11.30am	Sung Mass with Imposition of Ashes	St Saviour
Thursday 18 th	6.00pm	Evensong & Low Mass	The Ascension
Friday 19 th	6.00pm	Evensong & Low Mass	St Saviour
Saturday 20 th			
Sunday 21 st	THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT		
	11.00am	Combined Parish Mass with Litany	The Ascension
Monday 22 nd	10.00am	Low Mass	St Saviour
Tuesday 23 rd			
Wednesday 24 th	11.30am	Low Mass	St Saviour
Thursday 25 th	6.00pm	Evensong & Low Mass	The Ascension
Friday 26 th	6.00pm	Evensong & Low Mass	St Saviour
Saturday 27 th			
Sunday 28 th	THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT		
	11.00am	Combined Parish Mass	St Saviour
	6.00pm	Solemn Evensong & Benediction	The Ascension