SAINT HELEN'S PARISH

5th SUNDAY of LENT

SEASON of LENT & *EASTER*

6th April 2025

"Look, I am Doing Something New!"

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: (*Psalter:* Week 1)

Isaiah 43: 16 – 21.

Behold, I am doing a new thing, and I will give drink to my chosen people

Response: **Psalm 125.**

R/. What great deeds the Lord worked for us,
indeed we were glad.

When the Lord brought back the exiles of Sion,
we thought we were dreaming.
Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
on our tongues, songs of joy.

Then they said among the nations,
'What great deeds the Lord worked for them!'
What great deeds the Lord worked for us!
Indeed we were glad.

Bring back our exiles, O Lord,
As streams in the Negeb.
Those who are sowing in tears
will sing when they reap.

They go out, they go out, full of tears,
bearing seed for the sowing;
they come back, they come back, with a song,
bearing their sheaves.

Philippians 3: 8 – 14.

For the sake of Christ I have offered up the loss of all things, becoming like him in his death.

Acclamation for the Gospel:
Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.
Even now, says the Lord,
return to me with all your heart,
for I am gracious and merciful.
Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

John 8: 1 – 11.

Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.

THE WORD THIS WEEK

A New Thing! Liberation:
Not just the old story of the Exodus from Egypt - now the People of God are being brought home from exile.
What marvels the Lord works for us! Indeed we are glad.
Not that the struggles are over – but the resurection fills Paul (and us) with the hope of heaven.
Not that our sinning is over – but The mercy Jesus brings and shares gives us hope and grace to get over it, and find our true freedom with the woman he alone forgives.

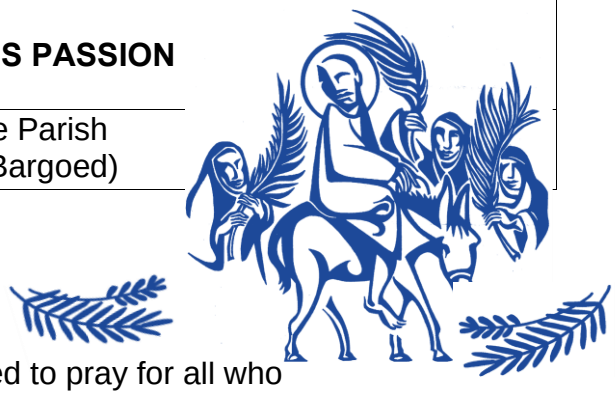
Prayer of the Faithful: *R/.* Lord, have mercy.

Preface: of Lent i ***Eucharistic Prayer:*** ii ***Acclamation*:** Save us, Saviour.

DON'T FORGET – AND DON'T MISS OUT! ***EASTER****, feast of our salvation:*
Maundy Thursday Mass of Our Lord's Supper -7.30pm; **Good Friday** Celebration of Our Lord's Passion, 3.00pm; **Holy Saturday** VIGIL AND MASS OF EASTER, 8.30pm.

MASS AND SERVICES THIS WEEK:

Sat 5th April	**5.30pm**	**FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT** for the People of the Parish
Sun 6th April	**10.00am** **11.45am**	for Prisoners of Conscience for the People of the Parish (Bargoed)
Mon 7th April	9.45am 10.00am	Morning Prayer of the Church Lily & Francis (TT)
Tues 8th April	9.45am 10.00am	Morning Prayer of the Church John Gibson
Wed 9th April	9.45am 10.00am 2.00 – 4.00pm	Morning Prayer of the Church GJ Intention (CR) Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
Thurs 10th April	9.45am 10.00am	Morning Prayer of the Church Pauline Thomas (SVP)
Fri 11th April	6.30am 12.30pm 7.00pm	Holy Souls (VT) Requiem for Stanco Dernulk (Bargoed) The Way of the Cross (Saint Catherine)
Sat 12th April	**5.30pm**	**PALM SUNDAY** **of OUR LORD'S PASSION** Private Intention
Sun 13th April	**10.00am** **11.45am**	for the People of the Parish David Hicks (GH) (Bargoed)



THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:
Saturday 4.30pm – 5.15pm, Sunday 9.00 – 9.45am,
or at any time by arrangement with the priest.

PARISH PRAYER LIST: In our prayers we are asked to pray for all who are sick, in hospital or at home, the long-term housebound, and also for their carers:

John Maguire	Carol Beech	Sandra & Christopher Bray		Mary Gordine
Pauline Richards	Margaret Jones	Carol Morrissey	Frank Price	Anne Morgan
Pat Starynski	Katrin Merry	Albert Carley	Mary Everson	Loraine Cahill
Gwyn + Margaret Bishop		Ann Head	Keith Jones	Mary Brown
Katherine Partenie	Dafydd Thomas	Terrence Miles	Lorna Elliot	Michael Thomas
Mary + Alan Conant	Johanna + Brian Greenaway		Monica Skillen	Anthony Bromley

Please Pray also for John Gibson who died on Tuesday after a long illness. We offer our Condolence to Patricia and her family.

And Please Pray for Violet ('Vi') Zadnik, who died on Wednesday evening fortified by the rites of the Church. We pray also for Anne, Julie, and all her bereaved Family.
May Vi and John rest in peace, and rise to (Easter) glory.

THE MASS OF THE CHRISM this year will be in Saint Joseph's co-Cathedral, Swansea, 11.30am on Tuesday 15th April.

THE THIRD READING of the "**Assisted Suicide Bill**" is due on Friday 25th April. To ensure the defeat of this motion we are all asked and encouraged to write to our MP to ask him to vote against it.
'*Not Dead Yet*', a network of disabled people who oppose 'assisted suicide', has produced postcards, available in the porch, presenting evidence-based reasons to oppose the bill, and urging MPs to vote against it. Please take one, add your name, and the MP's (Chris Evans) and post it. Thank you.

WELCOME to the **PUPILS AND STAFF OF SAINT HELEN'S SCHOOL** who will lead our celebration of the Mass on Saturday evening.

The Scrutinies continue, for our Candidates for Communion, and for all of us serious about turning back to God and seeking ever deeper Communion with God in the Body of the Risen Christ at Easter

The SVP meets in the small meeting room on Monday at 5.30pm.

THE PARISH DEVELOPMENT TEAM meets on Monday, 7.00pm, S.M.R.

THE FAMILIES PREPARING FOR COMMUNION meet on Tuesday, 6.30, to continue exploring God's infinite and merciful love, and how we celebrate, tap into, and grow in it in the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

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THE SINGING GROUP practices for Easter on Thursday, 6.30pm, to continue exploring God's infinite and merciful love, and how we celebrate, tap into, and grow in it in the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

THE CANDIDATES SEEKING CONFIRMATION will meet again this Thursday 7pm, also to look at and prepare for The Paschal Triduum.

THE FRIDAY LENT LUNCHES continue this Friday, 12 noon, in Wesley Methodist Church. Come to join with fellow Christians in support of Christian Aid.

THE LENT WAY OF THE CROSS this Friday will be in Saint Catherine 7pm.

CAERPHILLY COMMUNITY CHOIR are holding a concert in memory of Brian on **Friday** in **Van Road Church, Caerphilly**. It starts at 7.30, tickets £10 to include refreshments and raffle tickets. All proceeds will go to Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue, the members of which are all volunteers. They were not able to save Brian that day, but they worked tirelessly to find him for us.

On Saturday 10am, **THE FAMILIES PREPARING FOR COMMUNION** will put their learning into practice in the celebration of **the SACRAMENT of RECONCILIATION**, for a first time for the children, as a renewal of the gift for their parents and older siblings:

Next Sunday is **PALM SUNDAY of OUR LORD'S PASSION**.
Mass will start outside (weather permitting) with the Blessing and Procession of Palms, a joyful entry into the celebration of Christ's Saving work through Holy Week and the Great ThreeDays of passion, Resurrection, and New Life.
There will also be a retiring Collection for the **S.V.P.**

The next Parish Lunch is will be **Wednesday 16th April** at 1.00pm. Please add you name to the list at the back of the church. We look forward to seeing you.

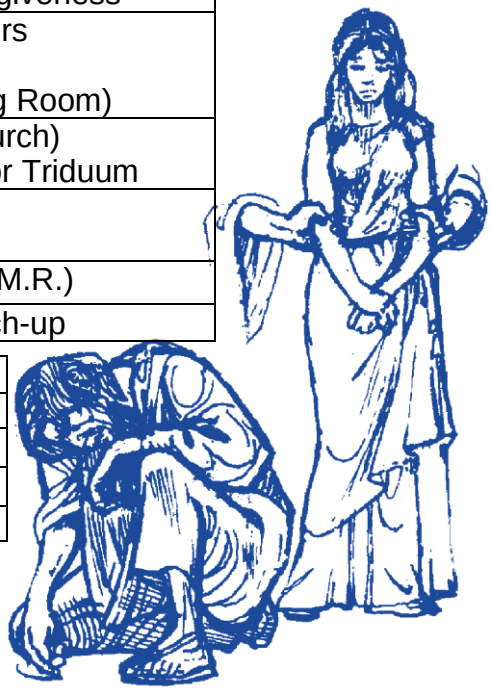
THANK YOU to all who generously donated clothing and other items last weekend.
The next collection will be on the weekend of 26th / 27th April.

Started at Cardinal Newman in 1976 ? Come to a reunion, Alfred Bar, Ponty, May 2nd, 7pm.

SAINT HELEN'S COMMUNITY CENTRE – THIS WEEK:

Date	Time	Event
Sun 6th April	11.00 am 12 – 5pm	Tea, Coffee and Catch-up Party
Mon 7th April	9.15am 1.30 pm 4.30 pm 5.30pm 7.00pm	Parents and Toddlers Sweaty Mamas Fame Factory S.V.P. Parish Development Team
Tues 8th April	10.00 am 1.00pm 6.30pm	Music Appreciation Art for beginners Communion Families: Forgiveness
Weds 9th April	9.15am 3.30pm 7.00pm	Parents and Toddlers Taekwondo Book Club (Small Meeting Room)
Thurs 10th April	6.30pm 7.00pm	Singing Group (in Church) Confirmation Preparation for Triduum
Fri 11th April	1.00pm 4.00pm	History Dance
Sat 12th April	10.30am	Secular Carmelites (S.M.R.)
Sun 13th April	11.00 am	Tea, Coffee and Catch-up

COLLECTIONS	29th / 30th March
Gift Aid standing Orders	£ 527.00
Non Gift-Aided Standing Orders	£ 172.00
Loose	£ 315.11
TOTAL	**£ 1,014.11** **Thank you**



THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH

Part 1: **THE PROFESSION OF FAITH.**

Section 2**: The Creeds** Article 3 **"He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, and was born of the Virgin Mary"** **Paragraph 1: The Son of God Became Man**

II. The Incarnation

(467) We confess that one and the same Christ, Lord, and Only-Begotten Son, is to be acknowledged in two natures without confusion, change, division or separation. The distinction between the natures was never abolished by their union, but rather the character proper to each of the two natures was preserved as they came together in one person (prosopon) and one hypostasis. (*Council of Chalcedon: DS 302*). *Catechism of the Catholic Church 1992*

"In 2025, the Year of Jubilee, we will also celebrate the anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, the First Ecumenical Council, at which the symbol of the faith (Creed) that unites all Christians was formulated. The preparation and joint commemoration of the 1700th anniversary of this event should be an opportunity to deepen and confess together our faith in Christ and to put into practice forms of synodality among Christians of all traditions".

Parish Directory

Priest: Revd. John Kelly 20 883192

Safeguarding Officer: cmben@hotmail.com **SVP:** 07704 292 945 **Hall Bookings:** 07533 082601

Bereavement support: 20863450 **Music:** 07971848734. **Piety shop:** 0777659744

CAFOD: 07726968374 / 07791318809 **Marriage Care:** appointments@marriagecare.co.uk

Saint Helen's School: 20852532 **Cardinal Newman School:** 01443 494110

email: **caerphilly@rcadc.org** Website: **www.sthelenscaerphilly.com**

Saint Helen is a Parish of the Archdiocese of Cardiff-Menevia, a Registered Charity, No. 117727

Through Lent as a Parish we have been looking at extracts from
The Final Report of the Synod on Synodality,
an invitation and opening of the whole of our Church life to all of us, the Baptized,
to listen together to the Holy Spirit and take ownership, participate and be the Church.
This is the fifth extract:

Part IV - An Abundant Catch
The Conversion of Bonds

The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish…. Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. (John 21:8,11)

The nets cast upon the Word of the Risen one yielded a bountiful catch. All the disciples work together, hauling in the net; Peter plays a particular role. In the Gospel, fishing is an action undertaken together: everybody has their own particular task, different but coordinated with the others. This is the synodal Church in action – it is founded on bonds of communion that unite us and with space for all peoples and all cultures. In a time when there is great change occurring in the way we conceive of the places where the Church is rooted and on pilgrimage, we need to cultivate new forms of the exchange of gifts and the network of bonds that unite us. In this, we are sustained by the ministry of the Bishops in communion amongst themselves and with the Bishop of Rome.

The proclamation of the Gospel awakens faith in the hearts of men and women and leads to the foundation of the Church in a particular place. The Church cannot be understood apart from its roots in a specific territory, in that space and time where a shared experience of encounter with the saving God occurs. …. Thus, synodal conversion calls each person to enlarge the space of their heart, the heart being the first place where all our relationships resonate, grounded in each believer's personal relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church. This is the starting point and the condition of any synodal reform of the bonds of our communion and the spaces where we are Church.

The experience of rootedness means grappling with profound socio-cultural changes that are transforming the understanding of place. 'Place' can no longer be conceived in purely geographical and spatial terms but evokes, in our time, one's belonging to a network of relationships and to a culture whose territorial roots are more dynamic and flexible than ever before. … Living in such contexts, the Church is called to rebuild community life, to put a face to faceless entities and to strengthen relationships in this milieu. To this end, we must not only continue to value still useful structures; we also need "missionary creativity" to explore new forms of pastoral action and identify concrete processes of care.

For a variety of reasons, our times are marked by a growth in population mobility. Refugees and migrants often form dynamic communities, including of religious practice, rendering multicultural the places in which they settle. … The inhabitants of destination countries, too, find the welcoming of newcomers challenging. All … are called to build intercultural communities.

The opportunities that the internet provides are reshaping relationships, bonds and boundaries. (Yet) nowadays, we often experience loneliness and marginalisation, even though we are more connected than ever. … We are not well prepared for this and ought to dedicate resources to ensure that the digital environment becomes a prophetic space for mission and proclamation. … The internet, constituted as a web of connections, offers new opportunities to better live the synodal dimension of the Church.

These social and cultural developments challenge the Church to reconsider the meaning of 'local' in its life and to review its organisational structures so that they can better serve its mission.
The relation between place and space leads us also to reflect on the Church as "home". When it is not thought of as a closed space, inaccessible, to be defended at all costs, the image of home evokes the possibility of welcome, hospitality, and inclusion. Creation itself is our common home, where members of the one human family live with all other creatures.

The Church is also the People of God walking with Christ, in it everyone is called to be a pilgrim of hope. The traditional practice of pilgrimage is a sign of this. Popular piety is one of the places of a missionary synodal Church.

The parish community that gathers in the celebration of the Eucharist is a privileged place of relationships, welcome, discernment and mission. … What characterises the parish is that it is a community that is not self-selecting. People gather there from different generations, professions, geographical origins and social classes and status.
By placing a special emphasis on Christian initiation and offering accompaniment and formation, the parish community will be able to support people in the different stages of life in fulfilling their mission in the world. In this way, it will become more evident that the parish is not centred on itself but oriented towards mission.

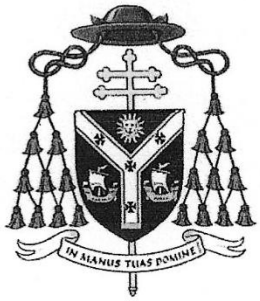
A synodal style allows local Churches to move at different paces. Differences in pace can be valued as an expression of legitimate diversity and as an opportunity for sharing gifts and mutual enrichment.

How has our Parish Congregation changed in the last 20 years?

How do we welcome, involve, and settle new members? How do we learn from and celebrate their gifts and cultures?

Do we place sufficient 'emphasis on Christian Initiation, and offer accompaniment and formation' to new-Catholics, to new Parishioners, to our children, to our young families, to the retired ….?

ARCHBISHOP *of* CARDIFF - MENEVIA



ARCHESGOB CAERDYDD - MYNYW

Pastoral Letter on the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill
for the weekend of 5/6 April 2025 - Fifth Sunday of Lent

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I speak with you today about the process in which our Parliament is currently considering legalising assisted suicide through the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill. As indicated in my previous message about this, Catholics maintain a principled objection to this change in law recognising that every human life is sacred, coming as a gift of God and bearing a God-given dignity. We are, therefore, clearly opposed to this Bill in principle, elevating, as it does, the autonomy of the individual above all other considerations.

There will be a vote on this Bill in Parliament later this month to see if it progresses further. This will be a crucial moment and I, together with all the Bishops of England and Wales, am writing to ask your support in urging your MP to vote against this Bill at that time.

There are serious reasons for doing so. At this point we wish not simply to restate our objections in principle, but to emphasise the deeply flawed process undergone in Parliament thus far. As bishops, we wish to remind everybody that it is a fundamental duty of every MP to ensure that legislation is not imposed on our society which has not been properly scrutinised and which will bring about damaging consequences.

The Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill will fundamentally change many of the key relationships in our way of life: within the family, between doctor and patient, within the health service. Yet there has been no Royal Commission or independent inquiry ahead of its presentation. It is a Private Member's Bill. The Bill itself is long and complex and was published just days before MPs voted on it, giving them inadequate time to consult or reflect upon it. The time for debate was minimal. The Committee examining the Bill took only three days of evidence: not all voices were heard, and it comprises an undue number of supporters of the Bill. It is a sad reflection on Parliament's priorities that the House of Commons spent far more time debating the ban on fox hunting than it is spending debating bringing in assisted suicide. This is no way to legislate on such an important and morally complex issue.

One consequence of this flawed process is that many vital questions remain unanswered. Can MPs guarantee that the scope of the Bill will not be extended? In almost every country where assisted suicide has been introduced the current scope is wider than was

originally intended. What role, if any, will the judiciary have in the process? We were told that judicial oversight was a necessary and vital part of the process; now we are told it is not needed at all. What will protect the vulnerable from coercion, or from feeling a burden on family? Can the National Health Service cope with assisted suicide or will it, as the Health Secretary has warned, cause cuts elsewhere in the NHS? Can MPs guarantee that no medical practitioner or care worker would be compelled to take part in assisted suicide? Would this mean the establishment of a 'national death service'?

In contrast to the provisions of this Bill, what is needed is first-class, compassionate palliative care at the end of our lives. This is already provided to many in our society but, tragically, is in short supply and underfunded. No-one should be dispatched as a burden to others. Instead, a good society would prioritise care for the elderly, the vulnerable, and the weak. The lives of our families are richer for cherishing their presence.

I am sure that you will share these concerns. It is now clear that this measure is being rushed without proper scrutiny and without fundamental questions surrounding safeguards being answered. This is a deeply flawed Bill with untold unintended consequences.

Every MP, and Government, has a solemn duty to prevent such legislation reaching the statute book. This, tragically, is what may happen. So, I appeal to you: even if you have written before, please make contact now with your MP and ask them to vote against this Bill not only on grounds of principle but because of the failure of Parliament to approach this issue in an adequate and responsible manner.

In his Letter to the Philippians, from which we heard in the Second Reading today, St Paul reflects on the difficulties and responsibilities of life. He speaks of 'pressing on' and 'striving' for the fulness of life promised in Christ Jesus. Yet he is totally confident in his struggles because, as he says, 'Christ Jesus has made me his own'.

We too have many struggles. We too know that Christ Jesus has made us his own. So, we too press on with this struggle, so important in our times. Thank you and pray for me.

Yours devotedly,

+ Mark O'Toole

Most Rev Mark O'Toole
Archbishop of Cardiff-Menevia

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