

GRIDIRON

THE WEEKLY NEWSLETTER FOR
THE PARISH OF ST LAURENCE,
LONG EATON

in the See of Oswestry and the Diocese of Derby
www.st-laurence.net

Sunday 8th January 2023
THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD
Last Day of Christmastide
9.30am THE PARISH MASS
Presider and preacher: Father David
5.00pm Music and Readings for Christmastide
with the music group Aitone – all welcome

Welcome to our worship today. Baptised and communicant members of any Christian denomination are welcome to receive Holy Communion; if you'd prefer to receive a blessing, please carry a Mass booklet or hymn book with you when you come to the communion point. Gluten-free communion hosts are available – please let a sidesperson know if you require one. Large-print copies of the Order of Mass and children's Mass Booklets are also available. Refreshments are served after the Parish Mass in the hall – do join us.

Thought for the week

The way to begin healing the wounds of the world is to treasure the Infant Christ in us; to be not the castle but the cradle of Christ; and in rocking that cradle to the rhythm of love, to swing the whole world back into the beat of the Music of Eternal Life.

Caryll Houselander

THIS WEEK at ST LAURENCE

Wednesday 10.00am Mass

Friday 12noon Mass

*Mass is also celebrated at Holy Trinity, Ilkeston,
on Tuesday at 9.30am and on Thursday at 7.00pm.*

Next Sunday 15th January 2023
2ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
9.30am THE PARISH MASS
Presider and preacher: Father David

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

A priest is usually available to hear confessions forty-five minutes before Mass on weekdays, from 8.30am on Sundays, or by appointment.

Music at St Laurence's this morning

*Today's hymns are from **The New English Hymnal***

Introit	58 (t. 512)	The sinless one to Jordan came
Gloria	Gloria 3	
Offertory	52	O worship the Lord ...
Sanctus	Sanctus 3	
Agnus Dei	Angus Dei 2	
Post Communion	49 (2 nd t)	Brightest and best ...
Recessional	47	As with gladness ... *

**The Angelus is recited after the first verse, the hymn resuming after.*

EPIPHANY GIFTS

As is the custom here at St Laurence, if you would like to make an Epiphany gift towards this year's Sacristy expenses, special envelopes are available. Please see Yvonne after Mass.

COVID 19 – IT HASN'T GONE AWAY! OUR RESPONSIBILITY OF CARE FOR EACH OTHER PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

Following the further lifting of restrictions, but in light of the continuing risk of infection, here at St Laurence you are requested to be measured in your contact with others, who may still be anxious and very concerned. **The Sharing of the Peace** will continue in a 'socially-observant' manner – please don't move around the church. The priest will continue to sanitise his hands before distributing the host, and may choose to wear a face visor/covering during the administration.

PRAYERS, PLEASE ...

The Sick: Derek Booth priest, Judy Crisp, Elvena Dew, Steven Elliot, Renée Else, Grace Fouracres, Keith Hann, Kati Hart, Jane Hessey, Julie Hunt, David Joseph, Pauline Lawley, Charlie Needham, Dave Perry, Angela Pown, Rick Savage, Ann Skeldon, Barbara Smith, Bill Turner, Steven Walton, Jemima and Natalie.

The Recently Departed: Raymond Glenn, Andrew Goyns priest, Dorothy Titheridge, Connie Turner.

Anniversaries of death this week: Robert Smith (Sun), John Gott (Mon), Doris Hadfield (Tue), Michael Fouracres (Thu), Emma Hollingsworth (Fri), Thomas Knox (Sat).

This week's spiritual link from New Pilgrim Path:



Who Am I?

'Who am I?' This question has haunted countless generations. The late Henri Nouwen, theologian and bestselling spiritual writer, believed that, for most of us, our response will be linked to what we have, or what we do, or what others say about us. By allowing our self-worth to be determined by external factors over which we often have no control, we are often led to a sense of worthlessness and despair. Nouwen reminds us that we are **human beings**, not **human doings**. The true response to the question is 'I am a beloved daughter of God. I am a beloved son of God'. 'God's words "You are my Beloved"', writes Nouwen, 'reveal the most intimate truth about all human beings, whether they belong to any particular religious tradition or not. The ultimate spiritual temptation is to doubt this fundamental truth about ourselves and trust in alternative identities... I hope that you can hear these words as spoken to you with all the tenderness and force that love can hold. My only desire is to make these words reverberate in every corner of your being, "You are the Beloved!"'. In a powerful recorded talk, he urges that the key task of our spiritual journey is to claim that truth and live a life based upon it. Listen to the talk at www.newpilgrimpath.ie.

Holy Trinity, Ilkeston and St Laurence, Long Eaton *Restoring Holy Communion in both kinds to the people*

I have received information from Bishop Tony with regard to restoring Holy Communion in both kinds to the people at Mass, and propose to do so at principal celebrations where I can be assured of the presence of a Eucharistic Minister to assist with the distribution, with effect from The Presentation of the Lord, 2nd February. That date is chosen not only as it is a principal Feast of the Lord, but also because it is the day of the episcopal ordination of our new bishop, and also because we are hosting the Candlemas celebration for all the local Oswestry parishes at Holy Trinity. Bishop Tony reminds that that reception of the Precious Blood is an entirely personal decision – and that reception of Holy Communion in either or both kinds effects a full reception of Sacramental Grace (as stated in Canon Law). I gather that in the Society parishes that have already reintroduced Holy Communion in both kinds there are many in the congregations who prefer to receive in just one kind, the consecrated host. Given the current rise in COVID infections I suspect that will remain the case for many communicants for the foreseeable future. I do hope this proposal will be acceptable to the congregations at both Holy Trinity and St Laurence.

Father David

**THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST LAURENCE
DEACON AND MARTYR
LONG EATON**

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Items for inclusion in The Gridiron ...

*should be sent to Father David by **Wednesday evening**, please.*

Father David's rest day this week is Saturday.

A FORWARD IN FAITH PARISH IN THE SEE OF OSWESTRY AND



The Society
under the patronage of Saint Wilfrid and Saint Hilda

About today's Mass readings:
THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD, YEAR A

First Reading: Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7

Jesus knew the scripture; it was the only book he would have known. When he heard the Voice from heaven and he experienced the Spirit of God coming upon him, he must immediately have thought of this passage from Isaiah. He was, then, this mysterious Servant of the Lord about whom the scripture spoke. He was to bring Israel back to the Lord. He must have known that the Servant was to suffer and to reach his fulfilment only through bitter suffering and death for others. This realisation must have been with him throughout his ministry, a dark shadow and a challenge to service. At the same time it was a confirmation of the love of the Father who was 'well pleased' in him. This was to be the model for all Christian suffering. We all know someone – we may even have experienced it ourselves – who has to suffer lovingly and generously in caring for others. The awesome privilege of suffering after the model of the Servant who is Jesus must draw respect and comfort for those who serve in this way. It is a confirmation of God's love for them.

Second Reading: Acts 10:34-38

St Peter was making this speech at the house of the Roman centurion, Cornelius. Peter himself was still reeling from the shock of being told that foods (like pork) which he had, as a faithful Jew, all his life, considered unclean were perfectly acceptable. Now he is about to welcome into the Church a non-Jew, a gentile! Before he could even finish his speech, the Holy Spirit came down on Cornelius and his household, just as the Spirit had come down on the disciples at Pentecost. All this is the consequence of the coming of the Spirit on Jesus at his baptism. That was when Jesus began his mission, which is so strikingly described here as 'the good news of peace'. Religion, and even Christianity, has so often been the cause of strife and quarrelling, rivalry between different Christian churches, rivalry between the the three Abrahamic faiths: Jews, Christians and Muslims. We easily forget that the Spirit of Jesus is the Spirit of peace, openness, welcome. The Spirit of Jesus does not build barriers but dissolves them, does not inflict wounds but heals them, does not push people away but embraces them. It's a call to action for each one of us: is this the community of Christ which I am trying to build in those around me or do I prefer a cosy individualistic pseudo-Christianity that puts me rather than Jesus at the centre?

Gospel Reading: Matthew 3:13-17

The account of the baptism of Jesus in Mark, the earliest gospel, is also the simplest. In Mark the Voice from heaven is addressed to Jesus himself, and there is no sign that others heard it; it is an experience of Jesus: 'You are my Son'. In Matthew, however, the Voice is addressed to the bystanders: 'This is my Son'.

This makes the private revelation into a public scene, a declaration that Jesus' work is about to begin. In the same way our baptism is a public scene, a declaration that we are committed to Christ in his Church – even if most of us don't remember it. Matthew also records the little dialogue of John's unwillingness to baptise Jesus. Why should Jesus enter into the community of repentance which John was forming? He was no sinner. It was, however, a gesture that Jesus was entering fully into the condition of all humanity. He shared fully in human nature, the nature of a fallen humanity. At the outset of his ministry he must show this, for only so could he redeem the fallen human race. Jesus is not merely passive, for he himself joins with John in making the positive step: 'We must do all that righteousness demands'.

A saint for this week: St Aelred of Rievaulx **12th January**

St Aelred was born in Hexham in around 1109. His family was well connected and at an early age he was sent into the service of King David of Scotland. There he rose to the position of Master of the Royal Household. In time he became attracted to the religious life, but he was also much attached to the life he lived at court and to King David himself. It took a considerable personal struggle for him at the age of 24 to give up his secular pursuits and to enter the newly founded Cistercian monastery of Rievaulx in Yorkshire in 1133. At 34 he moved from there and took charge of a new foundation in Lincolnshire. But within four years he had returned to Rievaulx as Abbot where he remained for the rest of his life. He died on this day in 1167.

Aelred is remembered both for his energy and for his gentleness. His writings and his sermons were characterised by a deep love of the Scriptures and by a very personal love of Christ 'as friend and Saviour'. He was sensitive and understanding in his dealings with his fellow monks and under his direction the monastery at Rievaulx grew to an extraordinary size. He did not enjoy robust health and the last ten years of his life were marked by a long and painful illness. His position as Abbot required him to travel on visitation to monasteries not only in England and Scotland but even in France, and the physical suffering and exhaustion which this incurred seems to have been considerable. A contemporary account of the last year of his life describes him as being left helpless on his bed unable to speak or move for an hour after celebrating his morning Mass.

Aelred was a singularly attractive figure, a man of great spiritual power but also of warm friendliness and humanity. He has been called the St Bernard of the North. His literary legacy includes his great treatise, ***On Spiritual Friendship***, which has its roots in his own reputedly great gift for human friendship.

