

Thought for the week

1st Sunday in Lent Year B,

18th February 2018

Lent began last Wednesday. Today's gospel tells us that Jesus endured 40 days and nights of fasting and was then tempted by the devil when He was at His weakest. However, He prevailed and He shows us how we can succeed with Him at our side.

Lent is a special time in the church as we are urged to emulate our Blessed Lord. We are asked to fast so as to restrain too many earthly desires.

We are asked to give alms to help us see the goods of this world as gifts from God through which we can show His glory. It is not easy to follow these paths, but as a parish we have several ways to help us.

Deacon Brian is holding study sessions of the gospel of Mark on Tuesday mornings in his house. This is how we could learn more about Holy Scripture.

Father Michael wishes to hold the Stations of the Cross on a Sunday morning at 10.00.a.m before the 10.30 Mass throughout Lent.

We could volunteer to help at the Snack and Chat Lunch for people in the parish who need to see other people and feel happy.

We could support the Women's World Day of Prayer- being held in our own church on March 2nd at 6.30.

We can attend the Passover Supper on 22nd March and experience how the Jews marked this feast.

We can help a homeless person on the streets of Reading.

There are many homeless people and not all are drug addicts, drunkards or charlatans. There are genuine cases. If you drop a pound into their bag or cup, this Lent why not stop and chat, as I did recently.

I met a man called Ian who told me he receives no benefits as he is not from this area- if he gets £20.00 in a day from donations he can pay for a shelter - if not he sleeps rough in the doorway of John Lewis, because there is a camera there. He was a lab technician and lost his job when his marriage failed. He does go to the drop-in centre, but as we know that is not open every day and you cannot sleep there. He would love to do any sort of work and is not on drugs or drink now, although he admits he was a year ago.

Maybe I am wrong to believe him, but I wonder what Jesus would have said and done? Let us start by just acknowledging their presence as fellow children of God- we cannot help them all I know, but if we do nothing else in Lent, let us strive to show others how we believe and love Christ and He loves us: then not only would Lent be successful but with God's grace we could carry it on through life.

Let us pray to be true sons and daughters of God through Jesus, His son

A Parishioner