

**Important National Day of Reflection on the 1st Anniversary  
of the First National Lockdown**

Dear brothers,

I enclose the Statement from the President and Vice-President of the Bishops' Conference of England & Wales. It concerns the National Day of Reflection which the Prime Minister has asked for on the 1st anniversary of the first lockdown back in March 2020.

You will see that Cardinal Vincent and Archbishop Malcolm have asked that, as Catholics, we make this day, 23 March 2021, a day of prayer and reflection and that as many of our churches as possible are open for private prayer. We are asked to encourage parishioners to make a visit and to pray for the various needs, sorrows and hopes that have emerged this past year.

I would ask you to respond as generously as you and the parish team of stewards can manage. If you can call upon stewards for only part of the day, then please ensure that those times are advertised to parishioners so that those who wish can pop into church for private prayer. Please also encourage those who are unable to come to church, or who do not wish to do so, to keep this day as a day of prayer and reflection in their own homes. You may wish to stream a short time of prayer to support this. With prayer and gratitude for all you do,  
Right Reverend Patrick McKinney, Bishop of Nottingham

**National Day of Reflection Tuesday 23rd March**

A day of reflection to mark the anniversary of the UK's first Covid lockdown and to remember those who have died during the time of pandemic. It is important that we all come together to reflect on our collective loss, celebrate the lives of the special people no longer here, support those who've been bereaved and look towards a much brighter future.

5.00pm Leicester Council of Faiths Zoom Vigil with local Faith Leaders  
<https://tinyurl.com/ygzq3ptv> Meeting ID 825 4728 3024 Passcode LCOFCOVID

**8.00pm Beacon of Remembrance.** You are invited to take part in this nationwide act by beaming phones, candles and torches into the night sky. Take a moment to connect and reach out to someone who is grieving the loss of a loved one by writing a card, sending an email or having a chat on the telephone. Create a colourful poster for your window showing your support for the Day of Reflection. Place Spring flowers in your window - a sign of better days to come and our belief in the Resurrection of Jesus.

**Bishop Patrick's Lenten Talks...** You are invited to join Bishop Patrick and people from across the diocese this Lent in reflecting on our relationship with God. To be a disciple of Jesus means to know and love him, but to also know we are known and loved by him too. Bishop Patrick will give two talks on Zoom exploring God's Love for us and how we can respond to it. **Thursday 25th March at 7pm:** Knowing the Love of God (understanding our identity as God's sons and daughters). Each talk will include input from Bishop Patrick, a time for questions and answers, and small group discussion. You can register for one or both talks on the diocesan website: [www.dioceseofnottingham.uk](http://www.dioceseofnottingham.uk).

	<p><i>Mother of God Greencoat Road Leicester LE3 6NZ</i></p> <p><b>(0116) 287 5232</b> <a href="mailto:mogparish@gmail.com">✉mogparish@gmail.com</a> <a href="http://www.motherofgodleicester.co.uk">www.motherofgodleicester.co.uk</a></p>	<p><i>Parish Priest: Fr. George Thomas <a href="mailto:gchelackal@gmail.com">gchelackal@gmail.com</a></i></p>  <p><i>NRCDT- Registered Charity</i></p>
<p>Our Schools: Christ the King Primary - 0116 2857261 - <a href="http://www.ctk.ik.org/p_Home.ikml">www.ctk.ik.org/p_Home.ikml</a> English Martyrs' Secondary - 0116 2428880 - <a href="http://www.emschool.co.uk/">www.emschool.co.uk/</a></p>		
	<p><b>Fifth Sunday of Lent - 21st March 2021</b></p> <p><b>Words for the Week: Create a clean heart in me, O God.</b></p>	
<p>Sunday 21.03</p>	<p>10.30am 4pm</p>	<p>English Mass Malayalam Mass</p>
<p>Monday 22.03</p>	<p>No Service</p>	
<p>Tuesday 23.03</p>	<p>10am</p>	<p>Holy Mass <b>National Day for reflection</b></p>
<p>Wednesday 24.03</p>	<p>6pm</p>	<p>Holy Mass</p>
<p>Thursday 25.03</p>	<p>10am</p>	<p>Holy Mass</p>
<p>Friday 26.03</p>	<p>10am</p>	<p>Holy Mass</p>
<p>Saturday 27.03</p>	<p>10am 5.45pm</p>	<p>Holy Mass Malayalam Mass</p>
<p>Sunday 28.03</p>	<p>10.30am 4pm</p>	<p>English Mass Malayalam Mass</p>

**Father George is offering Holy Mass from Mother of God Church. Available at <http://Facebook.com/gchelackal> <http://motherofgodleicester.co.uk>**

**LENTEN PRAYER**

**Almighty and Everlasting God, You have given the human race  
Jesus Christ our Saviour as a model of humility.  
He fulfilled Your will by becoming man and giving His life on the Cross.  
Help us to bear witness to You  
by following His example of suffering and make us worthy  
to share in His Resurrection.  
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son.  
Amen.**

**Pope Francis March Intention- Sacrament of reconciliation.** Let us pray that we may experience the sacrament of reconciliation with renewed depth, to taste the infinite mercy of God.

## Gospel Readings for Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

### 1st Reading - Jeremiah 31:31-34

The days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers the day I took them by the hand to lead them forth from the land of Egypt; for they broke my covenant, and I had to show myself their master, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD. I will place my law within them and write it upon their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer will they have need to teach their friends and relatives how to know the LORD. All, from least to greatest, shall know me, says the LORD, for I will forgive their evildoing and remember their sin no more.

### Responsorial Psalm - Psalms 51:3-4, 12-13, 14-15.

**R. Create a clean heart in me, O God.**

Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness; in the greatness of your compassion wipe out my offense. Thoroughly wash me from my guilt and of my sin cleanse me. **R.**

A clean heart create for me, O God, and a steadfast spirit renew within me. Cast me not out from your presence, and your Holy Spirit take not from me. **R.**

Give me back the joy of your salvation, and a willing spirit sustain in me. I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners shall return to you. **R.**

### 2nd Reading - Hebrews 5:7-9

In the days when Christ Jesus was in the flesh, he offered prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered; and when he was made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

### Gospel - John 12:20-33

Some Greeks who had come to worship at the Passover Feast came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, "Sir, we would like to see Jesus." Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honor whoever serves me. "I am troubled now. Yet what should I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But it was for this purpose that I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it and will glorify it again."

The crowd there heard it and said it was thunder; but others said, "An angel has spoken to him." Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come for my sake but for yours. Now is the time of judgment on this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out.

And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself." He said this indicating the kind of death he would die.

**An Act of Spiritual Communion** can help us and the priests we see online celebrating Mass in empty Churches frequently encourage us to ask for Our Lord's guidance by offering prayers like this one written by St. Alphonsus Liguori in the 18th century.

My Jesus,

I believe that you are present in this Holy Sacrament  
of the altar. I love you above all things and I passionately desire  
to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,  
come spiritually into my soul so that I may unite myself wholly  
to you now and forever. Amen

**Words of the Holy Father:** Within the image of Jesus crucified is revealed the mystery of the death of the Son as the supreme act of love, the source of life and salvation for humanity of all ages. By his wounds we have been healed. To explain the meaning of his death and resurrection, Jesus uses an image and says: "unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit" (Jn 12:24). He wants to explain that his extreme fate – that is the cross, death and resurrection – is an act of fruitfulness – his wounds have healed us – a fruitfulness that will bear fruit for many. And what does losing one's life mean? That is, what does it mean to be the grain of wheat? It means to think less about oneself, about personal interests and to know how to "see" and to meet the needs of our neighbours, especially the least of them.

### Bible Verse of the day - Fifth Sunday of Lent

Jesus said to his disciples: "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honour whoever serves me." Matthew 10:37-39; Mark 8:34-38; John 12:22-26

**LACY Sunday 21st March at 4pm:** Young People's Liturgy via Zoom on the theme "Mary and Joseph saying YES" Link information ID 833 8950 5705 and Passcode 322285 We hope you will come and join us and meet with other young people who may be preparing for Confirmation and who share our Faith and love of God.

**300 Club 14<sup>th</sup> March:** £50 M-F McKay (65). £25 K Kenny (136), N Phelan (132).

**CAFOD Lent Appeal** This Lent in lockdown, you and your parish can help transform lives! Abdella has to walk ten hours a day to find water to keep his family alive. By sharing [Abdella's story](#) with your parish at livestream Masses, in the e-bulletin and via social media, you can raise life-changing funds. You can also give via text. Text LENT to 70460 to donate £10\*. \*Texts cost £10 plus one standard rate message you'll be opting in to hear more about CAFOD's work and fundraising via telephone and SMS. If you'd like to give £10 but do not wish to receive marketing communications, text LENTNOINFO to 70460. For more information, please see CAFOD's Privacy Policy: [cafod.org.uk/Legal-information/Privacy-notice](http://cafod.org.uk/Legal-information/Privacy-notice)

**Every Friday during Lent -11am -Stations of the Cross.** This Lent, we will walk through the Stations of the Cross online in a prayerful journey of transformation in solidarity with people living in poverty around the world. Join us as we meditate on Christ's journey to the cross, following themes of justice, poverty, mercy, friendship and hope. [Register to join us.](#)

CAFOD <https://cafod.org.uk/Fundraise/Walk-for-Water>

**Leicester at the Cross:** will this year take place on Good Friday, 2nd April at 6.00pm on YouTube. This will be an inspiring evening of worship, readings, performance and prayer with the musicians and ministers of many churches from our city and county. Subscribe to "Praying for Leicestershire" on YouTube [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYtBDeBQ\\_TriMLgvr9Ym4A](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYtBDeBQ_TriMLgvr9Ym4A)

**Vacancy:** The Nottingham Roman Catholic Diocesan Education Service is seeking to appoint a Deputy Director of Education who will provide a strategic lead in the areas of Catholic Life, Formation, Inspection, Religious Education and Collective Worship. For further information / application pack or if you wish to arrange an informal conversation with the Director of Education, please contact Julie Sweeney: [julie.sweeney@nottingham-des.org.uk](mailto:julie.sweeney@nottingham-des.org.uk) Closing date 30 March 2021.

### Parish Finances

A letter from the Diocesan Finance Secretary has been received by all parishes in the Diocese. The letter has been sensitively written, aware and empathising with many Parishioners, whose jobs may not be there for them, and the resulting consequences for many in the future. He also writes about Parish income at this time, with our Church doors closed and no public services, no Masses on Sundays, no Parish income. He is fully aware that Churches and Church property has to be maintained, that bills will have to be paid etc. etc., and all this despite no regular parish income at this time. He realises that many parishes may struggle. He has suggested that perhaps Parishioners, who are regular givers to the Church plate, either by weekly envelope or by cash directly into the Collection basket, might consider, if they are in a position to do so, of paying by direct debit from their bank account. This would ensure a continuous income for the parish on a weekly basis, and would help to alleviate the current financial income for the Parish.

For those who might like to do so, or to consider that possibility.

**Our Account Name: MOTHER OF GOD LEICESTER RCP -  
Account number: 01538822 - Sort code: 30-94-97.**

Please include your name as a reference so that we know where the funds have come from and what they are for. Thank you for your attention and consideration to this possibility.

### Reweaving the parish.

A couple of weeks ago 30 people joined the first 'open evening' for Here: Now: Us. It was a great opportunity to share impressions of the impact of the pandemic on the life of our respective parishes, and the steps we can take out of lockdown and into mission. In the breakout discussions, one parish group found an arresting and inviting image for what lies ahead. It is time, they felt, to 're-weave' the parish. The edges might be frayed; the fabric might have worn thin, and we might find a hole or two where once there was a person, or a family. But with care and creativity, nothing is beyond repair. New colours can be added, and new hands might join the work. The tools and threads are Scripture, Catholic social teaching and each other's gifts and skills. That is the invitation of Here: Now: Us, and of Caritas, which will be launched at Pentecost. Another Open Evening for Here: Now: Us takes place on Tuesday 13 April - and there is a link in this edition of Grapevine to book your place. And you will find other opportunities to reweave the parish, the common good, and even the damaged web of Creation.



Apologies that the link to Two's Company, the telephone befriending model for churches, didn't work in the last issue of *Grapevine*. Click the link, and it should work this time [Find out here about Two's Company](#)

### Join our Team Laudato Si'!

Training to inspire your parish and diocese to care for creation. Find out more on 30 March. Training starts on 14 April. [Let us know if you'd like to join on 30 March](#) [Click here to find out about the training](#)

### Here: Now: Us

is a three-part programme to help you put your faith into action, bring Catholic social teaching to life, and build your parish into a confident, outward-looking community. For you, your faith, and your parish, it offers a three-stage journey out of lockdown with fellow Catholics from around the diocese. [Book here for the 'Here: Now: Us' Open Evening on 13 April](#)

### Allegations of modern slavery in Leicester.

Bishop Patrick has welcomed reports that an official inquiry is due to be launched into allegations of modern slavery. The clothing giant, Boohoo, is coming under increasing scrutiny following allegations of exploitative practices at its factories in Leicester and is now facing an investigation into its practices by the US Customs and Border Protection. Bishop Patrick said: "I was disturbed to hear of allegations of labour exploitation in some of Leicester's clothing factories and I welcome reports that an official investigation is due to be launched." As Pope Francis has previously said, 'every human being is a free person destined to live for the good of others in equality and fraternity. Every person, and all people, are equal and must be accorded the same freedom and the same dignity.' "The Diocese of Nottingham and the wider Catholic Church in England and Wales will continue to fight for the human dignity of each individual and support international efforts, to hold to account, anyone who violates this inalienable right."

From CBCEW