

The Pillars of Lent: Prayer, Fasting, Almsgiving.

Saint Augustine described “Prayers, Fasting and Almsgiving” as the Pillars of Lent. The role of any pillar is to support; from the soft pillar we rest our head on each night to the pillars of the buildings we live and work in; they all support something. Pillars of Lent support our way of living the Gospel. The ideals of prayer, fasting and almsgiving support us on our way of living the Gospel. The ideals of prayers, fasting and almsgiving support us on our whole Christian journey rather than something we inflict on ourselves for just forty days of the year. Jesus summed up the pillars of discipleship “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” (Prayer) “You shall love your neighbour (almsgiving) as yourself (fasting)” Matt 22:37,39. Prayer, fasting and almsgiving remind us to put our relationship right again (conversion).

Prayer, places us into the right relationship with God

Fasting, places us into the right relationship with ourself (our body)

Almsgiving, places us into the right relationship with others (almsgiving).

The Big Lent Walk

You can join CAFOD for the Big Lent Walk in 2026! Challenge yourself to walk 200km over 40 days and raise money to bring life-saving water to people around the world and help our neighbours around the world who face poverty. We are incredibly excited about the Big Lent Walk 2026, and would love for you to join us as we walk, run, roll or stroll 200km in the 40 days of Lent.

In 2026 we are continuing to work with SCIAF, as we take the Big Lent Walk to the whole of Great Britain! Put your faith into action this Lent. Walk, Pray, Fast and Give. Your steps - as an individual, school or parish community group, together with the generosity of your sponsors, and your prayers - are building a better world. A few sponsorship forms are available from the church porch.

A bit of extra motivation
200km is the equivalent of:

- running across 1,953 football fields
- climbing the Shard 645 times
- walking up and down the Channel Tunnel four times. [Sign up now!](#)

LENT PRAYER

Loving God, when our boat is rocked by poverty, illness or disaster, you quiet the waves, and lead us safely to shore. When we work hard, but still go hungry, you walk beside us, calling “cast your nets”, there is enough for all.

Lead us, Lord to play our part in calming the storm
and sharing your gifts so all people may look to the future with hope. Amen.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE PARISH

If you wish to contribute to the Parish Funds, please use these Bank Details. If you are a tax-payer, please request a gift aid declaration form from the parish via email, so that we can reclaim for the parish fund money you pay in tax to the government.

LLOYDS BANK
Mother of God Leicester RCP
SORT CODE 30-94-97
ACC. NO. 01538822

NEW ENVELOPES ARE READY FOR COLLECTION! Please collect your new set of envelopes from the table in the church porch. Please pick boxes with the appropriate name as your number might be different from what you previously had.

FOODBANKS. We are extremely grateful to all the parishioners who donates food for the **FOODBANKS.** It is very much needed. Please continue to donate, if you can.
A huge thank you to all of you!

		<p>Mother of God Greencoat Road Leicester LE3 6NZ</p> <p>☎(0116) 287 5232 ✉mogparish@gmail.com www.motherofgodleicester.co.uk</p>	<p>Parish Priest: Fr Hans Puthiakulangara e-mail: hansps83@gmail.com mob: 07344109949</p> <p>Please note: Fr. Hans' new number.</p>  <p>NRCDT- Registered Charity</p>
<p>Our Schools: Christ the King Primary - 0116 2857261 - www.ctlkeicester.co.uk/ English Martyrs' Secondary - 0116 2428880 - www.emschool.co.uk/</p>			
<p>MOG Safeguarding Officer: Michelle Dempster - 07718279920 - michelleleadempster@gmail.com Parish Hall Bookings: please contact 07586700914</p>			
		<p>Third Week of Lent</p> <p>8th – 15th March 2026</p>	<p>† Stations of the Cross every Friday after Mass</p>
Sunday 08.03	08.30am 10.30am 04.00pm	Holy Mass Syro-Malabar rite Holy Mass - Bridget & Bernard Holohan RIP Holy Mass Syro-Malabar rite	<p>Pope Leo prayer intentions for March 2026</p> <p>Pray that nations move toward effective disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, and that world leaders choose the path of dialogue and diplomacy instead of violence.</p>
Monday 09.03	No Mass		
Tuesday 10.03	09.30am 10.00am	Silent Adoration Holy Mass	
Wednesday 11.03	05.30pm 06.00pm	Silent Adoration Holy Mass	
Thursday 12.03	09.30am 10.00am	Silent Adoration Holy Mass	
Friday 13.03	10.00am 05.30pm	Holy Mass followed by Stations of the Cross Holy Mass Syro-Malabar rite followed by Stations of the Cross	
Saturday 14.03	09.30am 10.00am	Silent Adoration Holy Mass	
Sunday 15.03	08.30am 10.30am 04.00pm	Holy Mass Syro-Malabar rite Holy Mass Holy Mass Syro-Malabar rite	

Please keep in your prayers all the sick and housebound people of the parish. We continue to pray for Ukraine and its people, for the people of Palestine and Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Sudan, Iran and The Middle East and for all the war-torn countries in the world. We also pray for the people that have been affected by Environment Disasters.

Cycle of Prayer during Lent, we pray for these intentions:

- Candidates for the Sacraments; especially on the Sundays of Lent
- Women;
- The Needy and Hungry of the World;
- Penitents and Wanderers.

Mass Intentions. One of the great gifts we can give to someone is to have a Mass offered for their intention or for the repose of their soul. To request a Mass please use the envelopes found at the back of the church. Please state if the Mass is for a deceased person, birthday or any special intentions. Thank you.

Please take this newsletter home with you.

Background on the Gospel reading according to John 4:5-42.

Jesus reveals himself to the Samaritan woman at the well.

On this Sunday and the next two Sundays, we break from reading the Gospel of Matthew to read from John's Gospel. The Gospel of John is the only Gospel not assigned to a particular liturgical year. Instead, readings from John's Gospel are interspersed throughout our three-year liturgical cycle.

In today's Gospel, the dialogue between Jesus and a woman from Samaria is among the lengthiest and most theological found in Scripture. The most startling aspect of the conversation is that it happens at all. Jesus, an observant Jew of that time, was expected to avoid conversation with women in public. The animosity between the Jews and the Samaritans should have prevented the conversation as well. The woman herself alludes to the break from tradition: "How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" Yet Jesus not only converses with the woman, he also asks to share her drinking vessel, an action that makes him unclean according to Jewish law. The initial conversation between Jesus and the woman is better understood if we consider the importance of water, especially in the climate of Israel.

At first, the woman understands Jesus' promise of "living water" in a literal sense: "Sir, give me this water, so that I may not be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water." With no running water, the daily trip to the well by the women of the community was of paramount importance. The women of the town would have travelled to the well in the early morning, but this woman came to the well at noon, the hottest time of the day. The timing of her visit is a clear sign that she is an outcast within the Samaritan community. We learn in her conversation with Jesus that she is an outcast because of her "many husbands."

Behind the conversation lies the animosity and rivalry between the Jews and the Samaritans. Samaritans shared Jewish ancestry, but Samaritans had intermarried with foreigners when they lived under the rule of the Assyrians. Samaritan religion included worship of Yahweh, but was also influenced by the worship of other gods. When the Jews refused Samaritan help in the building of the Temple at Jerusalem, the Samaritans eventually built a temple for themselves at Mt. Gerizim (the same mountain mentioned by the woman at the well). Like the Jews, the Samaritans believed that a Messiah would come.

The high point of the conversation is when Jesus reveals himself to her as the Messiah. His answer to the Samaritan woman's questions about worship is meant to predict a time when worshiping in truth and spirit will become the way to worship. After the conversation, the Samaritan woman becomes a disciple. Even though she is an outcast and not a Jew, she returns to her town to lead others to Jesus and to wonder whether she has found the Messiah. The Samaritan townspeople return with her to meet Jesus for themselves, and many are said to come to believe in him.

The significance of the encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan woman has many levels. The first is personal: The woman is herself converted to belief in Jesus as Messiah because he knows her sin but speaks with her just the same. The second is social: Having come to know Jesus as the Messiah, the Samaritan woman becomes an evangelist to her own people. The third level of the story is educational: Jesus uses his encounter with the Samaritan woman to teach his disciples that God's mercy is without limit. The disciples return from their shopping quite confused to find Jesus talking with a Samaritan, and a woman at that! But the conversion of the Samaritan townspeople is a foretaste of the kind of open community that will be created among those who believe that Jesus is the Messiah.

Alphonsus Owen RIP, died on 20th February. His funeral will take place at St. Patrick's Church on Tuesday 24th March at 11am, then to Gilroes Crematorium. Our sincere and deepest condolences to his family and friends.

300 Club Sunday 1st March: £50 C Fernandes. £25 M Pepler (216), P Fox (259).

Sunday Collection 1st March: £327.42.

CAFOD Collection: 339.47.

NDCYS: The Summit Deanery Retreat Days Mickleover Youth Service on Saturday 14th March 2026 1pm onwards at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, 36 Uttoxeter Rd, Mickleover, Derby DE3 9GE. This free retreat day, led by the Briars team, is inspired by the lives of the newly canonised Saints Carlo Acutis and Pier Giorgio Frassati. Young people attending the retreat day will have the opportunity to explore the lives of Saints Carlo and Pier Giorgio through a series of games, inputs and interactive workshops. The day will culminate in the celebration of Mass with the parish community with music ministry led by the Briars team. [Book your space here!](#)

Women's Retreat. After the great success of previous events, we are delighted to invite you to our Lenten Women's retreat at Holy Family, Allestree, Blenheim Drive DE22 2LG, on Saturday 21st March. This retreat offers a meaningful opportunity for women from across the Diocese to come together, deepen their faith, and reflect more intentionally during Lent. Led by Sr Susan Richert, the day will focus on exploring The Great Women of the Old Testament, women whose courage, trust, and openness to God continue to inspire us today. [Find out more](#)

The Nottingham 40 Days for Life, praying for an end to abortion, runs between Wednesday 18th February and Sunday 29th March. During these 40 days of Lent pro-lifers will be: praying for an end to abortion in our community near the main abortion clinic in Nottinghamshire; offering peaceful witness to God's love and the possibility of healing; offering practical, non-judgemental help to women who may want to consider an alternative to abortion, and offering support for post-abortive women. More information is at: 40daysforlifefenotts@gmail.com.

Urgent: last chance to lobby Lords to stop decriminalisation. The House of Lords is currently debating an extreme amendment to the Government's Crime and Policing Bill, which would allow women to self-induce their own abortions for any reason, and at any gestation. The last chance to remove this amendment will be at Report Stage, expected on the 11 or 17 March. Find out more and use SPUC's tool to write to members of the House of Lords by going to <https://spuc.org.uk/campaign/abortion-decriminalisation/>.

The Leicestershire Eucharistic Ministers Renewal Day for 2026 is on 28th March at St. Joseph's Catholic Church, 12, Goodwood Rd., Leicester LE5 6GS. It will be led by Father David Cain and Deacon O'Looskan which will begin at 10:30 am with tea and coffee followed our first talk and will finish between 3 - 3:30pm. We realise that some of you may no longer be able to travel. Registering: (please try to do this by 14th March, if you can - thank you.) You may register as an individual or as part of a Parish group. Email Mrs M Hunt mchunt2310@btinternet.com.

Pilgrimage to Lourdes 2026. If you are interested in joining as a helper with HCPT Group 512 Ratcliffe pilgrimage to Lourdes 2026 leaving on Friday 10th July and returning on Friday 17th July, staying at Hosanna House, please contact Mairead Collins on 07999542253 for further details. Many thanks.

The Diocesan Youth Service (NDCYS) is taking a group of young people and young adults to Lourdes, France as part of the Diocesan Pilgrimage in July 2026. If you are aged 16+ and unable to go with your school, or a young adult who would like to be a small group leader, we encourage you to download the information pack and apply at ndcys.com/Lourdes.

Forming Catholic Student Leaders: Two summer courses exploring faith, ethics and leadership for sixth form students, offered by the Christian Heritage Centre at Stonyhurst. Join us for 6 days in the beautiful Ribble Valley to explore themes linked to The Common Good (Year 12, 10-15 August) and to The Human Ecology (Year 13, 5-10 July). Meet new friends, discuss and share with peers, tutors and academics, learn new skills, develop your relationship with Christ, build your character. www.christianleadershipformation.com. **Called to Love, 2 - 3 May 2026:** A retreat for singles, dating and engaged young adults who want to think more deeply about relationships and the call to marriage. A relaxed weekend with input, prayer, discussion and social, as well as the opportunity to meet like-minded others! This year's retreat will have as its theme masculinity and femininity. Runs from Saturday 2nd to Sunday 3rd May, with the option of staying Friday night. <https://christianheritagecentre.com/events/called-to-love/>