

The week ahead...

Saturday 24 February Vigil Mass for Second Sunday of Lent	5:00pm	Mass: Dorothy Dowdle and pro populo
Sunday 25 February Second Sunday of Lent	NO MASS	
Monday 26 February Monday of Lent 2	NO MASS	
Tuesday 27 February Tuesday of Lent 2	6:30pm	Mass: Mary Patterson, Vera Kitching & Alice Egglestone
Wednesday 28 February Wednesday of Lent 2	9:30am	Mass: Kevin John Noble
Thursday 01 March <i>St David, Bishop, Patron of Wales</i>	9:30am	Mass: David Moyes
Friday 02 March Friday of Lent 2	7:00am	Mass: Private Intention
Saturday 03 March Vigil Mass for Third Sunday of Lent	5:00pm	Mass: Vida Ramm and pro populo



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Second Sunday of Lent 25 February, 2018

“...his clothes became dazzlingly white...”

THOSE OF YOU who have children, or work with children, will know the importance of positive reinforcement and encouragement. I still remember lecturers in my teacher training over thirty years ago stressing the importance of positive reinforcement when it is warranted. Its effects are longer lasting and promote healthy self-esteem. This is in contrast to showing indifference to work or behaviour that is good, or focusing solely on reprimanding that which is bad.

It would appear that Jesus is using a similar modus operandi in the Gospel this weekend: the famous incident of the Transfiguration. There is no general consensus among biblical scholars about the meaning behind the Transfiguration but many believe that it gave a boost to the disciples who beheld it (those closest to Jesus: Peter, James and John) at a crucial time in their relationship with Jesus. The disciples witnessed a foretaste of the Resurrection and so of the hope that lay ahead even as they had to journey with Jesus to Calvary.

An understanding of the Gospel in this way requires a little context. The Transfiguration was not an isolated incident in the life and ministry of Jesus. Six days prior to the Transfiguration, Jesus had told the disciples about his impending death and resurrection. We hear that “he said all this quite openly.” (Mt 8:32) Peter, always impetuous, finds it difficult to correlate his understanding of the Messiah with what Jesus is saying. Not unsurprisingly, he tells Jesus this and Jesus responds with the famous words: “Get behind me, Satan! Because the way you think is not God’s way but man’s.” (Mk 8:33) Jesus then goes on to speak to a gathering of his disciples and others, telling them that being his follower involves taking up the cross and following him, to say nothing of losing their lives in order to save them (Mk 8:34-35).

And so six days later we witness Jesus going up a high mountain and being transfigured before their eyes. Clearly, after having heard Jesus’ words just a few days earlier, some encouragement was not unwelcome. In the drama of his transformation before their eyes, the disciples know that whatever pain and suffering will be involved in following Jesus, ultimately it would be worth it – better things awaited them in the form of resurrection and eternal life.

Lent is a time for us to focus on transformation too. Just as the disciples were encouraged by the amazing transformation or transfiguration of Jesus and the promise and hope it held out for them, so too it holds out great hope for us, for we are also disciples of Jesus no less than Peter, James and John. But those disciples knew the pain of their own transformation, a necessary step in their journey of heeding the call of Jesus, “Come, follow me.”

We cannot focus on the transformation that we trust awaits us after our earthly life without being prepared to embrace the transformation that is necessary here and now. Certainly, the transfiguration is an encouragement for us, but it is not without an obligation on our part to be open to the change Jesus wants to effect in us for our true fulfilment. Every day throughout the year we are presented with opportunities for transformation but Lent is an ideal time to engage with such opportunities at a deeper level.

Let us resolve to do so, that we may, as we were at our baptism, meet our Lord clothed in a garment that is “dazzlingly white.”

Wishing you a blessed Lenten season

Fr Robert



Confessions available after all Masses or by appointment

MINISTRIES
Saturday 24 February

Eucharistic Ministers
 Helen Musham, Jane Smith
 Wilf Lavery

Readers
 Rowan Payne
 Pat Middleton

Children’s Liturgy
 Maria Griffiths
 Joanne Lidster

Welcomers
 Paul & Anne Kelly

Music
 Joe Lennox, Rowan Payne
 & Choir

MINISTRIES
Saturday 03 March

Eucharistic Ministers
 Ambrose & Pauline Burnside
 Judith Bulmer

Readers
 Brendan Payne
 Ann Canavan

Children’s Liturgy
 Maria Griffiths
 Helen Riddles

Welcomers
 Angela Harmston
 Christine Tracey

Music
 Bill Wilkinson & Choir

The Second Sunday of Lent

Should you have any items for the bulletin or wish to have it emailed to you, please contact the parish via phone or email. Contact details are on the front of the bulletin. Items need to be submitted by **12:00noon on Thursday**.

We pray for our beloved deceased, including....



Dorothy DOWDLE

Terence MORDUE

Norah PINKNEY

Please remember in your prayers those who are sick and housebound in our parish....

*Mary Spears, Rose Crick,
 Maureen McCrann, Doreen Carroll,
 Margaret Pouton,
 Pat Harrison,
 Tom Taylorson and
 Sylvia Kelly*



LAST WEEKEND’S COLLECTION

Gift Aid: £235 Loose Plate: £191
TOTAL: £426

Mass Attendance: 149

DIOCESE OF HEXHAM AND NEWCASTLE
 CHARITY NUMBER 1143450



