

**St Mary the Virgin
EWELL PARISH CHURCH
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WEEKLY NOTES

25 February 2007

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

It is fair to say that the Litany in the Book of Common Prayer is not exactly one of the most jolly features of Church of England worship, but then it was never meant to be so. Historically it is significant, because it is the first example of an official English language liturgical text in the Church of England. It arrived in 1544, some five years before the first Book of Common Prayer. Apart from one or two small pieces of tinkering it has remained unchanged ever since. It was meant to be said on Sundays, Wednesdays and Friday after Mattins throughout the year. Nowadays it tends to be used mainly during the penitential seasons, and one of the ways of doing so is in Procession before the Sunday Eucharist, and this is what we normally do here on the First Sunday in Lent. Some form of Litany was apparently chanted by St Augustine's monks as they entered Canterbury when they arrived in 597. When I was a choirboy we used to have this feature on *all* Sundays in Advent and Lent – except Palm Sunday – and we were by no means unusual in doing so; it was still the case at St Martin's Roath, when I was first ordained. The opening section is clearly penitential, and, since a key aspect of the season of Lent is the deepening of our life of penitence, this reminds us at the start of our worship that Lent is a serious business. The expression 'miserable sinners' has over the years displeased many, but 'miserable' is used in the sense of 'wretched' rather than 'gloomy'; and it is pretty basic to the Christian faith that Christ came to save us from our sins, so we ought not to be too snooty about the 'miserable sinners' bit. The remainder is intercessory, and covers a very wide range of petitions. There is a catch-all clause towards the end: 'that it may please thee to have mercy upon all men.' When it occurs before the Eucharist it is usual to finish at 'Lord, have mercy upon us', since that is also the first chant of the 'ordinary' of the Eucharist; so *Kyrie eleison* both concludes the Litany and begins the Eucharist. A modern-language Litany is a feature of *Common Worship*, and we had that here during the Liturgy of Penitence at the evening Eucharist on Ash Wednesday. Several composers have set the Prayer Book text to music (I think of Tallis, Loosemore, and Wanless), but the simple plainsong melody we are using today has a beauty of its own. So the Litany before the Eucharist today reminds us that Lent is now really under way, that we stand constantly under the judgement of God and come to seek his mercy and forgiveness, that we have a duty to pray for one another, and that, by using this text, we can in our worship 'bring out of our treasures things new and old.'

Although the Litany is a sober affair, it does not mean that our music has to be dirge-like in Lent. Some of the hymns today, notably 453 and 65 at 0930, and 359 at Mattins are clear – even hearty – reminders of rather more positive aspects of the Christian life. However, there are serious ones too, like *Jesu, lover of my soul* and *Just as I am*, and they will be on in due course as well. W.R.H.

Our prayers today. We pray for our own church and parish, and in the worldwide Church we pray today in the Anglican Communion for the Church in the Province of Hong Kong. In the diocese, we pray for the work of the Department for Mission, Evangelism and Parish Development. Within the parish we pray for the grace to keep a good Lent, and for God's blessing to rest upon all that is attempted during this holy season, both by the worshipping community as such and also by individual Christians in particular. In our systematic prayer for the people of the parish we pray for those who live in the Kingston Road.

SUNDAY SERVICES

0800 & 1200 HOLY COMMUNION

Common Worship rite

Order 1 in traditional language: page 207. Collect of the Day: page 465.
Eucharistic Prayer C: page 219. Other Lenten material: page 308.
The Lenten Course of sermons by the Vicar at 0800 on the general title of
'Christ Outpouring' begins today* not next Sunday. The first sermon is
entitled, *'Christ fasting.'*

* The details in Ewell Parish News were arranged before the Vicar and Dr
Miller exchanged dates for the 8 o'clock service. Dr Miller will be the
celebrant on 11 March.

0930 LITANY AND SUNG EUCHARIST

Common Worship rite

Wayfarers and 'Children's Hour'; Crèche available in church.
Order 1: page 167. Collect of the Day: page 393.
Eucharistic Prayer C: page 191. Other Lenten material: page 308
Setting of the Eucharist: *Viadana*, *Missa l'hora passa*.
There will be a two-minute (or less) rehearsal of the responses for the
Litany, before the Eucharist begins.

The Litany in Procession (Book of Common Prayer): black book, page 115.

The Litany is sung to the *Sarum* melody. It continues as far as *'O Christ, hear us'* on page 119. It is usual to stand – or otherwise to kneel – for the Litany. However, if this amount of standing seems excessive do sit down, and stand again at *'Son of God'* (page 119).

The Litany concludes with *Kyrie eleison* (Lord, have mercy), and the **Sunday**

Eucharist begins with the Mutual Salutation and the Collect of the Day.

Collect for the First Sunday in Lent: page 393.

(Readings on separate paper. The psalm is not being used this year.)

Old Testament Reading from the Book Deuteronomy.

Gradual hymn: 64

New Testament Reading from St Paul's Letter to the Romans.

Hymn 67

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke.

Sermon by *the Vicar*

The fourth of a course of sermons on *The Lord's Prayer*.

No.4: Kingdom come. *'Thy kingdom come.'*

Nicene Creed: page 173, followed by the Greeting of Peace.

(No Intercession or Prayers of Penitence today; these were covered by the Litany.)

Offertory hymn: 453 Collection.

Eucharistic Prayer C: page 191; the Lord's Prayer, etc. back on page 178.

Hymn at the invitation to Communion: 382.

During the Communion: *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God)

Anthem: By the waters of Babylon.

Mawby

By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept, when we remembered thee, O Zion. As for our harps, we hanged them up upon the trees that are therein. For they that led us away captive required of us then a song and melody in our heaviness: 'Sing us one of the Songs of Zion.' How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? (*Psalm 137: 1-4*)

After the anthem all stand for the Post-Communion Prayer: page 393.

The Mutual Salutation, the Blessing and Dismissal. Hymn 65.

Note: This vigorous Lenten hymn is a sort of dialogue, the second half of each verse 'replying' to the first half. In verses 1–3 it is all about temptation or 'the tempter' and the Christian'. In verse 4 Jesus is represented as encouraging us to 'fight the good fight.' Do enjoy this confident hymn with its robust tune.

Welcome to any visitors or newcomers to St Mary's today. Please make yourselves known, and join us for coffee in the church hall across the road between the 0930 and 1100 services.

1100 CHORAL MATTINS

Sermon by *the Vicar*.

Responses: page 8.

Music: *Plainsong* (Latin note)

Venite (sung *in full* during Lent).

Hymn: 359 [Tune: 322]

Psalm 119, verses 1-16 *Obedience to the law of the Lord.* Page 279

First Lesson: Jonah 3.

Readings on a separate paper.

Benedictus: page 11

Second Lesson: St Luke 5: 27-39.

Hymn 71

The Creed and the Greeting; then all kneel for the Lord's Prayer, the

Responses and the three Collects (the first Collect on page 61).

Anthem: Call to remembrance.

Farrant

Call to remembrance, O Lord, thy tender mercies and thy loving-kindness, which have been ever of old. O remember not the sins and offences of my youth, but according to thy mercy think thou on me, O Lord, for thy goodness. *(Psalm 25:3,4)*

Prayers.

Hymn 353; Collection.

The Blessing.

1800 Stations of the Cross. This is at present the only Sunday evening during Lent, apart from Holy Week, when there will be Stations. Another Sunday evening slot may be made available, if it is requested.

In church this week.

Tuesday 1000 **Holy Communion**
 1930 for 2000 **Life (and Death) Matters.** Lent discussion led by *the Reverend Dr Patrick Miller*. This week: **Death and then what? Eastern and Western attitudes towards 'Life after Death.'**

Thursday 1200 **Yr Offeren** (*The Eucharist in Welsh on St David's Day.*)

Friday 1200 **Holy Communion**
 At the additional midday Eucharist on Fridays in Lent the Passion according to St Mark will be read in serial form as the Holy Gospel.

Other events and notices.

Tuesday 1930 for 2000 **'Tuesdays at Eight'**: see above at 'In church this week' for the discussions led by *Dr Patrick Miller*.

Wednesday 1030-1200 **Coffee Morning** in the church hall. Tea-drinkers should not feel excluded: the leaf is provided as well as the bean. A pleasant and relaxing time with familiar and friendly company. It is an open occasion; anyone can come. This week there will be a **Bring and Buy Sale.**

Saturday Saturday morning wedding appointments until 1300. (If possible please avoid telephoning during this time.)

The Vicar will not be in the parish most of Wednesday. During the daytime he will be in Guildford at another Continuing Ministerial Education session. This one is on Canon Law, and he goes to this one each year partly as someone with a bit of input on the subject. The clergy are expected to go to at least one such session each year. This will be the Vicar's second one already this year, and he does not plan to go to any more. In the evening he will be at an event organized by the parish 'cell' of the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham at All Saints, Margaret Street. The Vicar is a Priest-Associate of the Shrine, but this invitation was unexpected.

The Shrove Tuesday Party was a delight. Our thanks are due many people who worked so hard to make it all happen; we are particularly grateful to David and Jenny Dance for making all the detailed arrangements, to Valerie Smither and her band of caterers, who provided such splendid and seasonal fare, and to Lloyd and Promilla Mullen who entertained us so magnificently. A really lovely evening.

The Electoral Roll. Whilst this may well appear to be something of a bore, the church's Electoral Roll has to be *completely* revised every six years, and for some reason which I have not grasped (but to do with Synod Elections, I think) it has to happen *this* year, which is not the sixth year but the fifth. Anyway, we have to do it. The official notice is now up; the key sentence is: '**All persons who wish to have their names entered on the new Roll, whether their names are entered on the present Roll or not, are requested to apply for enrolment not later than Monday, 2 April 2007.**' The new Roll comes into operation two days later. It would be sensible for members of the regular congregation to fill in the somewhat basic application form as soon as possible; there are plenty in the Welcome Area. W.R.H.

Next Sunday. Morning services at the usual times, with sermon at 0800 on '*Christ Listening.*' The 0800 service will also be the quarterly celebration according to the rite of the Book of Common Prayer. The fifth sermon in the course on *The Lord's Prayer* takes place at 0930 on the title '*Our bread.*'

This is another Sunday when there is something distinctive at 1100. There will be the first of two services of Choral Mattins, incorporating certain Stations of the Cross and with related choral and organ music by J S Bach. There are some copies of next the service leaflet available in the Welcome Area after the 0930 service today for the benefit of anyone who would like a preview. There will be three short conducted meditations (and no sermon) on the three falls of Jesus on the Way of the Cross. The second of the two services will be at 1100 on Palm Sunday morning. I have been glad to see several people staying on for a second service in recent weeks, when there has been something special on at 1100, and I hope these two services will be seen as a special Lenten feature this year. I shall be conducting next week's meditations at the service, and Iain McKillop will be doing so on Palm Sunday. W.R.H.

Sharing the love of Christ, the Light of the world, with the people of Ewell.