

St Mary the Virgin
EWELL PARISH CHURCH
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WEEKLY NOTES

18 March 2007

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

MOTHERING SUNDAY

Although in some years we use alternative readings for this Sunday, this year we are sticking to the ones provided for the specific Lenten Sunday itself. At least this way we get as the gospel reading in Year C the much-loved parable of the Prodigal Son. This Sunday has always been in a class of its own, with all sorts of curious features attached to it, and probably the largest collection of semi-official or unofficial names. 'Mothering Sunday' is probably the best-known of these, and, even if the transatlantic secular cult of Mothers' Day has swamped the somewhat obscure original 'maternal inspiration' from the letter to the Galatians (4: 26), no-one is going to say that this is a bad thing. Indeed, lots of people will be in churches today because it is Mothering Sunday, and certainly not because it happens to be the Fourth Sunday in Lent. Traditionally it is also known as Refreshment Sunday, because the gospel of the day used always to be the Feeding of the Five Thousand. The unusual liturgical colour of rose *may* have some connexion with the practice of the blessing of a golden rose by the Pope on this particular day (so it is also one of the two 'Rose Sundays'). It is *Laetare* Sunday, because the ancient Introit at Mass began with the word 'Rejoice'; so will our own Introit hymn today. It is also Simnel Sunday, because simnel cakes (an acquired taste, I always feel) were, and still are, eaten on this day. Basically it is devotionally just 'Mid-Lenten Sunday', a bit of a breather from the general feel of Lent. Perhaps we need it, because we then start to get ready for the really serious business of Passiontide, and our entering into the annual observance of the paschal mystery, as we move with Our Lord through death to life. Devotionally the mood changes abruptly next week to a concentration on the Passion of Christ. There is a paragraph elsewhere in the Notes about one feature of next Sunday, which makes the Sunday one of those liturgical amber lights, telling us that something is indeed just around the corner. And so it is, for one week later is Palm Sunday, and Holy Week will have come around once more. W.R.H.

Our prayers today. We pray today for our own church and parish, and in the worldwide Anglican Communion we are praying today (the day after St Patrick's Day) for the Church of Ireland in its two Provinces of Armagh and Dublin. In the Diocese of Guildford we pray for the work of the department for ministerial training. In the parish we pray for the children of our three Toddler Groups, and for their parents and carers; and in our systematic prayer for those living in the parish we pray today for the people of the people living in Larby Place.

SUNDAY SERVICES

- 0700 MATTINS** Psalms 142, 143
- 0800 HOLY COMMUNION** *Common Worship rite*
Order 1 in traditional language: page 207. Collect of the Day: page 467.
Eucharistic Prayer C: page 219. Other Lenten material: page 308.
- 0930 SUNG EUCHARIST** *Common Worship rite*

Wayfarers and 'Children's Hour'; Crèche available in church.
Order 1: page 167. Collect of the Day: page 395.
Eucharistic Prayer C: page 191. Other Lenten material: page 308.
Setting of the Eucharist: *Darke* in E (Collegium Regale).
Merbecke setting of the Creed today: page numbers below.

The hymns at the Eucharist today all relate to the various aspects of this particular Sunday, as mentioned on the front page of the Notes, and these are indicated in small print at the right-hand side of the line containing the hymn-number.

Introit hymn: 493 [*Laetare* Sunday.]
 Black book: page 167. The Invocation, Greeting, Prayers of Penitence and *Kyrie eleison*.
 Collect of the Day: page 395 *Readings on separate paper.*
 Old Testament Reading from the Book of Joshua.
Remain seated for Gradual Psalm: Hymn 441. [Psalm 122: 'Jerusalem our Mother']
 New Testament Reading from St Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians.
 Hymn 408 (**Second** tune) [*The hymn speaks of the 'new creation' in the preceding reading.*]
 A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke.
 Sermon by *the Vicar*
 Nicene Creed (sung): ***Hymn book: page 833; words only book: page 562.***
 Intercession; then all stand for the Greeting of Peace.
 Offertory hymn: 285; Collection. [Eucharistic hymn for Mothering Sunday, including in the last verse 'Mother Church'.]
 Eucharistic Prayer C: page 191; Proper Preface: page 308
 The Lord's Prayer, etc. back on page 178.
 Hymn at the invitation to Communion: 282. [Refreshment Sunday hymn]
 During the Communion: *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God)
 Anthem: The Lord is my shepherd. *Mawby*
 [Psalm 23: similar but not identical words on page 617]
After the anthem all stand for the Post-Communion Prayer: page 182.
 The Mutual Salutation, the Blessing and Dismissal.
 Hymn: 186. [The praise of the Mother of the Lord]

1100 SERVICE FOR MOTHERING SUNDAY.

All-age service of Christian Family Praise.

There is a separate leaflet for this service today.

1800 Evening Prayer (in the Parish Room).

In church this week.

Tuesday 1000 **Holy Communion**
 1930 for 2000 '*Tuesdays at Eight*': Discussion led by *the Reverend Dr Patrick Miller* on the general title, '**Life (and Death) Matters.**' This week: **Do we need the Church? Is belief a matter for the individual rather than an institution?** Coffee from 1930.

Other events and notices.

Wednesday 1030-1200. **Coffee Morning** in the Church Hall. A warm welcome to anyone who cares to join us. This is the regular weekly slot for members of the congregation to have a nice period of quality time together, and to welcome anyone else who might care to drop in. Regular members of the congregation who haven't been before will be especially welcome; they will see familiar and friendly faces. And why not stay on for:

LENT LUNCH
IN THE CHURCH HALL
12.15 TO 13.45
Admission £3
There will be a 'Bring and Buy' and a Raffle.
IN AID OF ST MARY'S LENT PROJECT
FOR OUR TWINNED PARISH IN GUYANA.

Any contributions towards the Raffle and the 'Bring and Buy' would be very welcome.

The new **Christian Stewardship Envelopes** are available for collection today. They are in two baskets in the Welcome Area.

Also still available in the Welcome Area are some **Lent Boxes** in aid of our Lent Project; twelve, in fact. It is not too late to take one. The boxes are on the table by the display in the Welcome Area about our twinned parish in Guyana, where they plan to build a new church some miles up country for the aboriginal community of Amerindians. The Guyana flag is bedecking the table.

Passiontide veiling. Although it seems strange, the traditional way of drawing attention to the cross at this particular time of year is by hiding it. The method of hiding is simply to veil the crosses in purple. Pictures and statues can also get veiled, but that is for a different reason: to minimise decoration in church as the season becomes increasingly solemn. This was a normal feature at St Mary's before my time, but the actual material was so awful (rather like torn black muslin) that I quietly disposed of it, and in any case the custom was then in decline, and, interestingly, no-one seemed to notice that the veiling was no longer in use. Curiously enough the practice is now starting to return – these things tend to be cyclic, and Passiontide veiling never actually died out – and, since we have a certain amount left over of the new purple taffeta which is on the three altars, we shall have *some* Passiontide veiling as from next Sunday. It is removed just before the Easter Vigil starts. Those who attend the lovely evening Eucharist of Maundy Thursday will recall that the altar cross on the reredos is veiled in *white* for that very special occasion. That will still be the case, though any other crosses remain in purple. Traditionally in medieval England (though not generally elsewhere) crosses and images were veiled right throughout Lent in fustian, a sackcloth-like rig, which was embroidered in red with small crosses and other images of the Passion: spear, nails, cockerel, crown of thorns, etc. This may still be seen in some places; for some reason several cathedrals seem quite fond of it, perhaps an aspect of what has been (slightly unkindly) called 'British Museum Religion'. W.R.H.

The Electoral Roll. This note is appearing regularly, and perhaps a bit boringly, for a few weeks. However, the church's Electoral Roll has to be *completely* revised every six years, and it has to happen *this* year. The official notice is now up. The Electoral Roll is the effective 'register' of a local parish church, and all who normally attend the particular church should be on it. Unlike the position in 'normal' years, *everyone has to make a new application this time*. It would be sensible for members of the regular congregation to fill in the simple application form as soon as possible; they are being given out with the Weekly Notes. I appreciate that there is an element of nuisance in having this with the Notes each week, but then not everyone comes every Sunday. If you have already filled in a new form, please replace the unwanted one in the box on the book trolley. Completed forms should be put in the blue box in the Welcome Area. W.R.H.

Has anyone an unwanted **basic telephone**, which we might use as a stand-by in the office? In the event of any troubles arising with our main system, it is possible to plug in an ordinary telephone into the dedicated computer-line. If anyone has been upgrading recently, and has an ordinary telephone going begging, we should be glad to hear of it. Please tell the Vicar or the Administrator if you can help.

Next Sunday. The Fifth Sunday in Lent. Services are at the usual times. At 1100 there will be the **Reading and Music of the Passion**, a chance to meditate and reflect as one complete version of the Passion is read (this year it is St Matthew), together with some of the music of the Passion which will occur at various points in Holy Week. There will also be the monthly 1200 Eucharist, and at 1800 there will be Stations of the Cross.

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