

## The Six Holy Habits (5) Sacrament Of Reconciliation

Bishop Philip writes...

In the last Pastoral Letters, I have been encouraging everyone in the Diocese to adopt The Six Holy Habits: (1) Sunday Mass; (2) daily prayer; (3) Friday penance and works of charity; (4) fortnightly visit to the Blessed Sacrament; (5) monthly Confession; and (6) to join a small support-group. This week we consider the fifth Holy Habit: going to the Sacrament of Reconciliation once a month.



St. John in his First Letter says: "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just; he will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" (1 John 1: 8-10). The Sacra-



ment of Reconciliation is the sacrament of conversion: "it makes present sacramentally Jesus's call to conversion" (Catechism 1423). It is a beautiful, life-changing encounter with the merciful Heart of Jesus, "usually followed by peace and serenity of conscience with strong spiritual consolation" (Council of Trent). If we have committed a serious sin, we should go to confession as soon as we can. The Church obliges us to confess our grave sins. But the sacrament does not exist only for the remission of mortal sins, but so that through more frequent confession people who are "good" can become "better." It is like a spiritual check-up or a booster in which we encounter Jesus personally and the mercy of God as well as His help and inspiration.

I often recommend to penitents that they avail themselves of the Sacrament of Penance every few weeks, say once a month or every two months. "Without being strictly necessary, confession of everyday faults (venial sins) is nevertheless strongly recommended by the Church. Indeed the regular confession of our venial sins helps us form our conscience, fight against evil tendencies, let ourselves be healed by Christ and progress in the life of the Spirit" (Catechism 1458). Regular confession helps fight the temptations we struggle with.

One of the secrets of a good confession is a thorough examination of conscience. To see in a dark room, we need a light. So before setting off to meet the priest, we need to pause and ask the Holy Spirit to shine the

light of Christ in our heart and mind, that we may know our sins and make a good confession. I was always taught to remember a list of things in my mind, but these days it's often easier to make a simple note or list on a piece of paper, as this helps keep things focused without drifting away into unnecessary contexts and explanations etc

### Striking The Rock

Though they saw His mighty deeds, in their thirst they grumble and put God to the test in today's First Reading—a crisis point recalled also in today's Psalm.

Jesus is thirsty, too in today's Gospel. He thirsts for souls (see [John 19:28](#)). He longs to give the Samaritan woman the living waters that well up to eternal life.



These waters couldn't be drawn from the well of Jacob, father of the Israelites and the Samaritans. But Jesus was something greater than Jacob (see [Luke 11:31-32](#)).

The Samaritans were Israelites who escaped exile when Assyria conquered the Northern Kingdom eight centuries before Christ (see [2 Kings 17:6, 24-41](#)). They were despised for intermarrying with non-Israelites and worshipping at Mount Gerazim, not Jerusalem.

But Jesus tells the woman that the "hour" of true worship is coming, when all will worship God in Spirit and truth.

Jesus' "hour" is the "appointed time" that Paul speaks of in today's Epistle. It is the hour when the Rock of our salvation was struck on the Cross. Struck by the soldier's lance, living waters flowed out from our Rock (see [John 19:34-37](#)).

These waters are the Holy Spirit (see [John 7:38-39](#)), the gift of God (see [Hebrews 6:4](#)).

By the living waters the ancient enmities of Samaritans and Jews have been washed away, the dividing wall between Israel and the nations is broken down (see [Ephesians 2:12-14,18](#)). Since His hour, all may drink of the Spirit in Baptism (see [1 Corinthians 12:13](#)).

In the Eucharist, the Lord now is in our midst—as He was at the Rock of Horeb and at the well of Jacob.

In the "today" of our Liturgy, He calls us to believe: "I am He," come to pour out the love of God into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. How can we continue to worship as if we don't understand? How can our hearts remain hardened?

By Scott Hahn



English Martyrs  
Vale of White Horse  
Pastoral Area

PARISHES OF  
**THE ENGLISH MARTYRS, Didcot**  
**ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, Wallingford**  
[www.didcotandwallingfordcatholicchurches.org](http://www.didcotandwallingfordcatholicchurches.org)  
Office email: [office@didcotandwallingfordcatholicchurches.org.uk](mailto:office@didcotandwallingfordcatholicchurches.org.uk)  
(Parish Office Hours Tuesday—Friday 9am to 1pm approximately)

Telephone: 01235 812338  
15 Manor Crescent, Didcot OX11 7AJ  
Fr Dominic Adeiza email: [dadeiza@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:dadeiza@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

## THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT YEAR A (Psalter WK III)

### Entrance Antiphon Cf. Ps 24:15-16

My eyes are always on the Lord, for he rescues my feet from the snare. Turn to me and have mercy on me, for I am alone and poor.

### First Reading: Ex 17:3-7

**Responsorial Psalm:** Ps 94

"O that today you would listen to his voice!

"Harden not your hearts.

**Second Reading:** Rom 5:1-2,5-8

### Gospel Acclamation: Cf. Jn 14:23

**Praise to you, O Christ, King of Eternal Glory!**  
Lord, you are really the saviour of the world: give me the living water, so that I may never get thirsty.

**Praise to you, O Christ, King of Eternal Glory!**

**Gospel:** Mtt:4:1-11

**Communion Antiphon:** Cf. Jn 4:13-14

For anyone who drinks it, says the Lord, the water I shall give will become in him a spring welling up to eternal life.

### SATURDAY 11th March

9:30 Mass at English Martyrs, Didcot...Bill Tracey RIP Eileen Lambert) Rosary for Peace and no confessions at English Martyrs, Didcot

4:30pm Adoration & Confessions will take place prior to the Vigil Mass at St John's Wallingford

5:00pm Vigil Mass St John's - Albert Tracey RIP (Eileen Lambert)

5:50pm Adoration before Vigil Mass at English Martyrs, Didcot Charlse Tracey RIP (Eileen Lambert)

6:30pm Vigil Mass English Martyrs, Didcot - Father Philip Harris

### SUNDAY 12th March Second Sunday of Lent

9:00am Mass English Martyrs, Didcot - Tyson Serrant RIP (Jan Baptiste-Grant)

11:00noon Mass St John's, Wallingford - Olivet John-Baptiste (Jan Baptiste-Grant)

### TUESDAY 14th March

6.00.am English Martyrs, Didcot.....Pellin Marffy RIP (Edward Acton)

11:30am St John's, Wallingford. **Stations of the Cross**

12:00noon Mass St John's, Wallingford, - Father Philip Harris

### WEDNESDAY 15th March -

9:30am English Martyrs, Didcot - Our First Holy Candidates and their parents

### THURSDAY 16th March -

6.00.am English Martyrs, Didcot...Pellin Marffy RIP (Edward Acton)

9:30am Mass at St John's Wallingford - Ambulance Drivers

### FRIDAY 17th March - St Patrick

9:30am Mass, English Martyrs, Didcot - William & Kate Johns RIP (A. Johns) ..**Stations of the Cross**....6.p.m

### SATURDAY 18th March

9:30 **No Mass** at English Martyrs, Didcot....St Cyril of Jerusalem ....**NO MASS**.....**NO MASS**

4:30pm Adoration & Confessions will take place prior to the Vigil Mass at St John's Wallingford

5:00pm Vigil Mass St John's - Our deceased priests and deacons

5:50pm Adoration before Vigil Mass at English Martyrs, Didcot

6:30pm Vigil Mass English Martyrs, Didcot - Annie Furlong's intention (A. Johns)

### SUNDAY 19th March Fourth Sunday of Lent

9:00am Mass English Martyrs, Didcot - Our First Holy Candidates and their parents

11:00noon Mass St John's, Wallingford - Thanksgiving (Canonical Erection) --The Blessed Marie Eugene (Armelle Bellher)

In your prayers, please remember: Jenny Evans, Mary Guinan, Maureen & John Logan Ann Tomline, Joan Walker, Terry Appleyard, Joan Russell, Joan Turner, Nina Oakes, Jacob Oakes, Jidechi Ejiofor, Pat McLoughlin, Margaret Healy, Barry Molloy, David Woodley, Annie Furlong, Regina Papadopolus, Fr Philip Harris, all the sick and housebound.



### Święconka—The Blessing of Easter Baskets

The blessing of the Easter baskets is one of the most enduring and beloved Polish traditions on Holy Saturday. It is called Święconka. This special event takes place in many of our parishes across the diocese because of our Polish families who enrich our parish and liturgy. Are you Polish? Do you want to organize or be part of those to organise it on Holy Saturday, April 8th at 11 a.m? Speak or write to Father Dominic.



### Catechesis for Communion under Both Kinds

The Bishops' Conference have decided that a suitable time for the resumption of Holy Communion received under both species would be at the Mass of the Lord's Supper in Holy Week 2023, given the theological significance of the celebration. Our bishop has shared with us a note on catechesis, prepared by Bishop Patrick McKinney of the Diocese of Nottingham in preparation for the permissive reintroduction of Holy Communion under both species in Holy Week. This season of Lent provides an opportunity to offer a formation on the Eucharist. Formation was a key theme in the

synodal responses across the country and the leaflet he has produced is aimed at helping people to deepen their understanding of the Mass, which lies at the heart of our Catholic faith. The leaflet is deliberately short in content so as to encourage people to read and reflect prayerfully on each section writes Bishop Philip Egan. Visit the parish website to download or read this document for formation.

### Are You Registered In The Parish

When you register or fill out the parish membership form, you gain a sense of belonging and identity in the parish community. It is a commitment to practice your faith.

\*Registration enables the parish priest and staff to get to know you better, to welcome you and to minister to you. This is especially important during a time of crisis so that the pastoral staff can attend to your spiritual needs and the needs of your family.

\*Registration helps you stay connected with your parish and helps your parish stay connected with you. Providing your contact information is important so that parishes provide you timely updates via email, direct mail, phone, etc. Also, if you use offertory envelopes, online giving or the digital plate, the parish may be able to claim 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you give, if you are registered tax payer. Once you are registered, please notify the parish office of any changes in address or phone number. Your date is SAFE.

\*Registered active members are eligible for sponsor/godparent validation.

\*Registered active members are sometimes eligible to rent parish facilities.

Census numbers may determine how many priests are assigned to a parish and how many Masses and enrichment programs are planned and scheduled. Culled and adapted from Saint Anne Catholic Church Rock-Hill website.

### Bishop Philip Invites You To Join Him For A Lent Reflection

At 7.30 pm next Thursday 16th March, Bishop will deliver his last online Lent Reflection. The reflections last about 40 minutes and are covering the topics of faith, hope and charity. You can sign-up on the Diocesan website: <https://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk>

### Fostering With Oxfordshire County Council

Our carers stories are all different but what they all provide is just the same: support, security, and safety with a sprinkling of love! Just like one of our foster carers, Ruth: 'I always subscribed to the misconception that I needed to be older, financially secure and even possibly in a partnership to foster but the truth is, almost anyone can foster.' The important thing is that you've got love to give a child.

**Interested?** If you'd like to find out more, our fostering team would love to hear from you - email [fostering@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:fostering@oxfordshire.gov.uk) or phone 0800 7835724...[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/fostering](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/fostering)

### Wallingford Emergency Food Bank

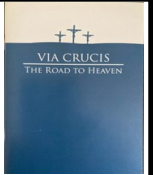
To help match donations of food with the needs of clients, Wallingford Food Bank (WEFB) is making use of the Bank the Food app, which can be downloaded to your smartphone. If you have the app on your phone when you go in to stores that are linked to the app – currently Waitrose in Wallingford and the Co-op in Benson – your phone will ping. If you want to donate you can then open the app and it will tell you which items the Food bank is currently short of. There is a short film, narrated by Joe Lycett, explaining the app, which you can find at: <https://www.bankthefood.org/notjustbakedbeans/>

WEFB is extremely grateful to the people of Wallingford and the surrounding villages for their generous support. *Paul Fletcher*



### Via Crucis Booklets

We desperately need copies of the Via Crucis (The Road to Heaven) booklets produced by the diocese in 2016 for use during the Stations of Cross on Tuesdays and Fridays. Do you have copies sitting on your shelves? Kindly consider bringing them to the Church for others who may want the use of them. Come join us every Tuesday at 11:30a.m...St John's Wallingford, Friday at 6p.m ....The English Martyrs, Didcot.



### MISSION BOXES

We can thank you enough for helping missionaries all over the world with Missio Red Box. You can never imagine the peoples and places you have impacted by this. Please can these be brought into churches as soon as possible or before end of Easter. If difficult please let Parish Office know, and collection can be arranged. MANY THANKS AND GOD BLESS. Charles



### We Have Gone Digital



The digital plate is here. You will find our new DIGITAL COLLECTION PLATE, contactless terminal at the back of the church. Just use your contactless debit/credit card or smart phone/ device to make a donation. It is just one more option to giving.

Simply choose the amount you wish to donate and hold your card onto the reader. You can also opt-in for Gift Aid to increase your donation by 25%. If you are a UK taxpayer then donating with Gift Aid means that we can claim an extra 25p for every £1 re-

ceived.

Contactless donations are simple to administer, secure and convenient. Thank you for supporting our Church.

### Clergy Assistance Fund

Our Second Collection on Sunday 19th March is for the Clergy Assistance Fund, which re-sources the invaluable work of the Department for Clergy Team. The Team of four is responsible for looking after the welfare, ongoing formation and personal support of our clergy, from the early days of ordination all the way into retirement. It organises retreats, ministerial formation days, courses, and sabbaticals. It is the principal mechanism through which the Bishop looks after the wellbeing of the clergy.

As a Diocese, we are responsible for supporting the seventy-diocesan clergy in active ministry, forty-seven from religious orders, the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham or overseas, and forty-two in retirement, who with dedication and care serve our parishes, chaplaincies, schools, outreach and mission: bringing people closer to Jesus Christ through His Church.

We rely on your commitment and generosity to do this. If you would like to give a gift to this collection, parishioners can donate using their gift aid envelopes or online at <https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/campaign/clergy-assistance-fund-second-collection-2023>. This collection will close on 4th April. Thank you for your support.

