



PARISH NEWSLETTER ISSUE NO: 211/2 FEBRUARY & MARCH 2026 | DONATION 30p

Episcopal Rector: Rt Rev Dr Geoffrey S Robinson CJ
Telephone: (01704) 512170
Email: revgeoffreyrobinson@gmail.com

Dear Friends,

I have often wondered just how many people actually believe in Guardian Angels? - Most of us will have seen images of angels on calendars and notecards, magnets and mugs; but, these spiritual beings are not the stuff of greeting card designs. Angels are real and powerful and serve as protectors and ministers of divine care.

Amongst the myriads of angels are guardian angels – special beings who guide and guard every human life. They are “an amazing personal gift, beyond our comprehension,” said one bishop recently in a homily. He actually went on to assert that “Many think that having a guardian angel is ‘too good to be true,’ and so they hesitate to call upon that strong angelic presence as they move through the events of an ordinary day.”

Yet according to the Catechism of the Universal Church, from the moment of conception until a person’s last breath, a guardian angel surrounds each human being with “their watchful care and intercession.” The church actually honours these guardians with a feast day on the Second of October each year. Unfortunately, angels are often confused with fairies and other imaginary creatures; but in reality, angels are affirmed as truth through Holy Scripture and Sacred Tradition. Moreover, their existence was dogmatically declared by the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215.

Created by God as spiritual, non-corporeal beings who possess intelligence and will; angels “have been present since creation and throughout the history of salvation.” Often if we do think of angels, we recall the archangels Michael, Raphael and Gabriel. That really is not surprising, as they are the only angels actually named in the Bible, and each has a unique role in salvation history.

Gabriel, of course, announced to Mary that she would bear the Messiah, but more commonly Guardian angels, those who perhaps we prayed to beside our childhood bed, also have a place in the story of salvation. These guardians, “are entrusted above all with helping humanity come to know and

love God in this life, so as to enjoy eternal happiness in heaven.”

Well, quite recently I came across an article about Pope Benedict XVI who had at least four experiences with his guardian angel throughout his life. The first time took place when Joseph Ratzinger was ill with diphtheria as a child. Doctors said he wouldn’t



survive, but he eventually recovered, and he attributed his healing to his guardian angel. The second time was when he fell into a water tank near where he lived and managed to get out thanks to the help of his guardian angel.

Later, at the end of World War II, Hitler forced all young Germans into the Hitler Youth, and young Joseph was sent to an anti-aircraft unit. But as soon as he could, he fled. He was sick with septicaemia and at that moment ran into some soldiers. His situation was serious because deserting the army was betrayal of the fatherland. But because of his poor state of health they let him go and he was able to get home. In his memoirs, Ratzinger says that it seemed that an angel was protecting him.

In 2009, already as pope, he was going to Castel Gandolfo on vacation with the intention of writing his work *Jesus of Nazareth*. After arriving, he fell down, and his arm had to be put in a cast. Benedict XVI said that his angel allowed this fall, following higher orders, so that the pope could dedicate himself to rest.

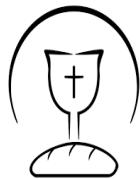
When Journalist Vittorio Messori interviewed Cardinal Ratzinger when he was prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and asked him about the invisible world. Ratzinger answered with an analogy: when you see a person’s eyes you can glimpse what’s going on inside, such as whether that person is sad or happy. You don’t see sadness, but by looking into a person’s eyes you can glimpse something invisible.

Messori then asked Ratzinger if he had seen his guardian angel, and he answered that he had not, that the way this relationship develops depends on the person’s temperament, and that in any case people shouldn’t only communicate with their angel, but rather with God.

There's another important aspect of angels: they are messengers of God. Indeed, Benedict XVI says that angels can be close to us precisely because of their closeness to God. They come to stir up in us what we have forgotten or what is hidden within us: talents, virtues, gifts, good qualities, values etc. Angels actually come to move us, so that all that God has given us may come to light. They come to help us have an encounter with ourselves.

Speaking to young people, Benedict XVI urged them to feel the presence of angels and to let themselves be guided by them. He encouraged married couples to have frequent recourse to the help of their guardian angels in order to grow in their constant witness of authentic love.

So perhaps we should all consider joining the angels; to do so will allow us all to enter into regular communication with God. *Ed.*



HOME COMMUNION & ANointing of the SICK & HOUSEBOUND

Please contact Bishop Geoffrey if you need a home visit.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK:

Sheila Hogarth | Ruth Barr | Lesley Fudge | Thelma Thompson | Clarice Shaw | Sally Hayes | Bishop Gerard & Pam Crane | Brian & Brigitte Duffett | Eileen Duffy | Geoff Lamb | Bev Chester | Shelley Coulter | Thelma Dunkley | Sylvia Holgate | James Hardman | Alex Wiseman | John Illingworth | Harry Seymour | Lawrence & Penny Bellwright OSR | Joyce Kelford | John Beesley | Pauline Bayley | Michael Rogers | Carol (Caz) Arnold | The Park Family (Mary, Matthew, Charlotte & Edward) | Julie Corner | Elaine & Phillip Coope | Ray & Jean Wilde | Deacon Adrien Sulo | David Bainbridge | John & Gwen Simons | Maureen Fitzgerald | Stanley Lewis | Gordon McFarlane | Norma Cropper | Bridget (Bridy) McConnell | Fr Baltasar, priest (Spain) | Lorna Meredith | Stuart & June Price | Pauline Weatherall | Gordon Buchanan | Isobel & Grahame Smith | Dawn Adair | Martin Sparkes | Annis Buchanan | John Jackson | Max & Christine Kitchen | Farrar Campbell | Graham | John & Anya Sharpe | Valerie Hogarth | Chris Emmott | Hannah Lewis-Salmon | Stanley Wesley | Angela Basak | Christine Smith ||

CARTOON CORNER:



*Sorry I left before
your homily was over.
- but I was
sleepwalking.*

HOLY MASS WITH ANointing OF THE SICK

Takes place on **Sunday 29th March (Palm Sunday)** at the Oratory of Christ the King, Southport at 11.00am. Please note that - BRITISH SUMMERTIME BEGINS - The Clocks move one hour forward.

AUNTY FANNY'S RECIPES – HOT CROSS BUNS

1. Lightly grease a 10" square pan or 9" x 13" pan.
2. Mix the rum or apple juice with the dried fruit and raisins, cover with plastic wrap, and microwave briefly, just till the fruit and liquid are very warm, and the plastic starts to "shrink wrap" itself over the top of the bowl. Set aside to cool to room temperature. Note: If you worry about using plastic wrap in your microwave, simply cover the bowl with a glass lid.
3. Keep the fruit set aside. Weigh your flour; or measure it by gently spooning it into a cup, then sweeping off any excess. Mix together all of the remaining dough ingredients (including the eggs and the egg yolk from the separated egg). Knead the mixture, using an electric mixer or bread machine, until the dough is soft and elastic. It'll be very slack, sticking to the bottom of the bowl and your hands as you work with it (greasing your hands helps). Mix in the cooled fruit and any liquid not absorbed.
4. Let the dough rise for 1 hour, covered. It should become puffy, though may not double in bulk. Take it a step further
5. Divide the dough into billiard ball-sized pieces, about 3 3/4 ounces each. A heaped muffin scoop (about 1/3 cup) makes about the right portion. You'll make 12 to 14 buns. Use your greased hands to round them into balls. Arrange them in the prepared pan.
6. Cover the pan, and let the buns rise for 1 hour, or until they've puffed up and are touching one another. While the dough is rising, preheat the oven to 375°F.
7. Whisk together the reserved egg white and milk and brush it over the buns.
8. Bake the buns for 20 minutes, until they're golden brown. Remove from the oven, carefully turn the buns out of the pan (they should come out in one large piece), and transfer them to a rack to cool.
9. Mix together the icing ingredients, and when the buns are completely cool, pipe it in a cross shape atop each bun.



A hot cross bun is a spiced bun, usually containing small pieces of raisins and marked with a cross on the top, traditionally eaten on Good Friday in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, South

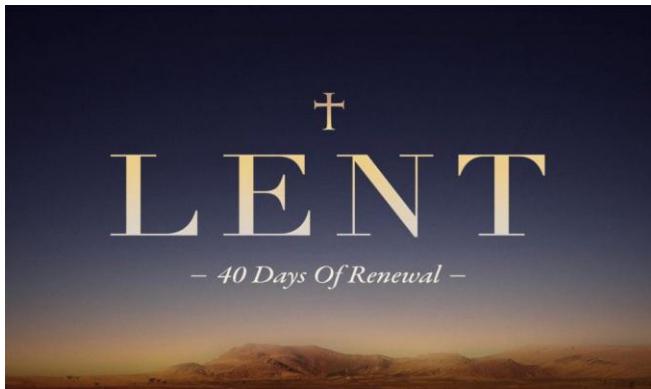
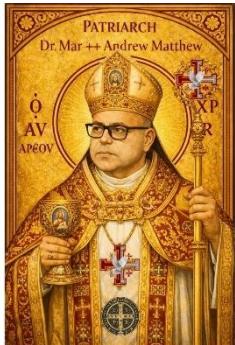
Africa, Canada, India, Pakistan, Malta, the United States, and the Commonwealth Caribbean. They are available all year round in some countries, including the UK. The bun marks the end of the season of Lent and different elements of the hot cross bun each have a specific meaning, such as the cross representing the crucifixion of Jesus, the spices inside signifying the spices used to embalm him

ASH WEDNESDAY – 18th February 2026

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, a 40-day period of fasting, repentance, and spiritual preparation leading up to Easter. It is observed by many Christian denominations and involves the application of ashes on the foreheads of worshippers, symbolizing grief over sin and humility before God. The ashes are traditionally made from the burned palm branches of the previous year's Palm Sunday celebrations. The day is a time for reflection, prayer, and fasting, preparing Christians to celebrate the resurrection of Christ at Easter.

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR PATRIARCH ANDREW'S VISIT TO THE UNITED KINGDOM

We are delighted to announce that our Patriarch will be visiting the United Kingdom in August 2006. Plans are in the early stages at present, although it is likely that he will be accompanied by two newly consecrated bishops for South America. Here in England a return visit to South Mymms will take place, where the first Patriarch Arnold Harry Mathew is buried. Whilst in the United Kingdom, both Patriarch's together will Share their Lines of Apostolic Lineage. Our Bishop Lau from Cameroon in Africa will be present for part of the Patriarch's stay in the country.



WHAT IS LENT ALL ABOUT, AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Lent serves as a crucial time of spiritual growth and introspection for Christians. By dedicating this season to prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, believers engage in

a structured reflection of their lives, aligning their hearts more closely with the teachings of Jesus. Lent is a significant season in the Christian liturgical calendar, observed by many denominations as a time of reflection, penance, and spiritual growth. It lasts for 40 days, not including Sundays, leading up to Easter Sunday—the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. While its practices and observances may vary among different Christian traditions, the essence of Lent remains a period of preparation and renewal, inviting believers to deepen their relationship with God.

The Origins and History of Lent

The history of Lent dates back to the early Christian church, with roots extending all the way to the 4th century. Initially, Lent was seen as a time for new converts to prepare for baptism during the Easter Vigil. Over time, however, it evolved into a universal practice for all Christians, reflecting the importance of repentance and renewal in the faith. The 40-day duration is significant, mirroring Jesus's 40 days of fasting in the desert, as described in the Gospels. This parallel serves to emphasize themes of sacrifice, temptation, and spiritual fortitude, encouraging Christians to engage deeply with their faith.

The word "Lent" itself derives from the Old English word "lencten," meaning "spring," which reflects the season of renewal and rebirth. As nature begins to awaken from winter's slumber, so too do Christians prepare for the celebration of new life in Easter. The season offers a striking contrast to the joyous celebration of Easter, serving as a stark reminder of the path of suffering and sacrifice that preceded the resurrection.

What Happens During Lent?

Lent is characterized by practices that foster spiritual growth, reflection, and community. Traditionally, Christians observe Lent through three primary pillars: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

1. Prayer: Incorporating additional prayer into one's routine is a central aspect of Lent. Many believers seek to connect deeper with God through personal devotion, corporate worship, and scripture study. This focus on prayer encourages individuals to reflect on their relationship with God, seeking guidance and strength as they navigate their spiritual journeys.

2. Fasting: Fasting is perhaps the most recognizable practice associated with Lent. Many Christians choose to give up certain foods or habits as a way of practicing self-discipline and focusing on spiritual matters. This act of sacrifice serves as a reminder of Jesus's fasting in the wilderness and underscores the importance of penance and humility. However, fasting can also take on a broader meaning, inviting individuals to consider what in their lives may be hindering their relationship with God and to seek to replace those distractions with more meaningful pursuits.

3. Almsgiving: The third pillar, almsgiving, emphasizes the importance of serving others and being charitable. Many Christians use Lent as an opportunity to give back to their communities, whether through donations, volunteering, or advocating for the marginalized. This practice not only transforms the lives of others but also fosters a spirit of gratitude and interconnectedness among believers.

The Importance of Lent for Spiritual Growth

Lent serves as a crucial time of spiritual growth and introspection for Christians. By dedicating this season to prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, believers engage in a structured reflection of their lives, aligning their hearts more closely with the teachings of Jesus. This journey of self-examination often reveals areas needing improvement, inviting individuals to confront weaknesses, biases, or distractions that may impede their faith journey.

Moreover, Lent beckons Christians to remember their dependence on God's grace. The practice of fasting, in particular, reminds us of our material needs and spiritual hunger, inviting an acknowledgment that true sustenance comes from God alone. By reorienting their focus during this season, believers can experience a transformative renewal of faith, allowing them to enter into the joyous celebration of Easter with a more profound understanding of Christ's sacrifice and resurrection.

Lent and the Journey Toward Easter

As with any significant journey, Lent culminates in a moment of high importance: Easter. The weeks of preparation create a deeper appreciation for the events of Holy Week leading to Easter Sunday.

Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday mark pivotal moments that recount Christ's last supper, crucifixion, and the profound stillness before the resurrection. Coming out of Lent bolstered by prayer, fasting, and service, Christians enter into Easter filled with hope, joy, and gratitude for the new life offered through Jesus's resurrection.

Celebrating Easter is an acknowledgment not just of Christ's victory over death but also of the transformative work He accomplishes within believers' hearts during Lent. The season prepares Christians to receive this gift more fully, encouraging them to carry its message of hope and renewal into their lives, and into the world, throughout the remainder of the year.

Conclusion: Embracing Lent's Spiritual Significance
In summary, Lent is a significant time for Christians, offering opportunities for deep reflection, repentance, and renewal of faith. The practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving are designed to lead believers into a closer relationship with God, preparing them for the celebration of Easter and the realities of the resurrection. Engaging fully in the Lenten season allows individuals to reflect on their spiritual lives, recognize the power of grace, and

emerge with hearts renewed and ready to celebrate the new life offered in Christ. By embracing the spiritual significance of Lent, Christians can experience profound transformation, ultimately leading to a richer, more vibrant faith journey.

Name: _____

The Holy Bible Word Search



© Monsterwordsearch.com

