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THE ARCHDIOCESE *of* BIRMINGHAM

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Approaching the Fifth Sunday of Lent

'I am the resurrection and the life.' (John 11:1-45)

This reading gives us glimpses of hope. But it is easy to focus on Jesus' own resurrection and miss other important elements in this reading.

Let's take Mary, for example. She is mentioned first, so it is possible she was the eldest in the family of the three siblings (Mary, Martha and Lazarus).

Inexplicably at first, Jesus does not respond to the heartfelt plea of the sisters, and Lazarus dies. Four days on, there is still mourning, and Mary seems paralysed.

She remains seated in the house even with the news of Jesus' proximity. This will echo with many of us who have lost a loved one. Grief triggers inner exhaustion, a near paralysis that turns us into the shadows of ourselves. Even rumours of eternal life seem to be too distant to spur us into action.

A reflection on the 5th Sunday of Lent by M.C Benitan, evangelist.

www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/news



Holy Week in your Parish

Have you considered how you will keep Holy Week holy this year?

The ceremonies beginning with Palm Sunday and then the Sacred Three Days (Triduum) of Holy Thursday evening, Good Friday afternoon and Holy Saturday

evening are some of the most beautiful and precious moments of prayer in the whole year.

Find out the times of these ceremonies in your parish, and try to attend, especially if you have not been to them before.

Mass of Chrism in St Chad's Cathedral – Wednesday of Holy Week at 11.30am

On the Wednesday of Holy Week each year, the priests and bishops of the Archdiocese gather with Archbishop Bernard to renew their priestly promises and for the blessing of the Holy Oils that will be used in the Sacraments of the Church across the Archdiocese over the coming year.

All are welcome to the Mass of Chrism.

(Please note that the Cathedral Car Park is not available for general use on this day.)



Easter Monday Masses

Mass will be celebrated in the following areas of the Archdiocese on Easter Monday at 10am:

- St Chad's Cathedral - Celebrant: Archbishop Bernard Longley
- Sacred Heart, Tunstall, Stoke on Trent - Celebrant: Bishop Stephen Wright
- St Osburg, Coventry - Celebrant: Canon Paul Fitzpatrick

All are welcome.



CSAN Statement on the Illegal Migration Bill

Last week, Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN) made a statement on the Illegal Migration Bill:

"We at Caritas Social Action Network are profoundly concerned about the Government's Illegal Migration Bill, introduced in the House of Commons on 7 March 2023.

"This Bill, if passed, will not only deny those people fleeing war and persecution their right to seek safety in the UK and apply for asylum, but will punish them, based on how they came here, not whether they need protection. This would amount to an asylum ban."

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Bishop Stephen new Chair of Trustees for CAFOD

The official aid agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales has announced Bishop Stephen Wright as its new chair.



Bishop Stephen is an Auxiliary Bishop of Birmingham and has served as a member of the CAFOD board since February 2021. His tenure will begin from Easter 2023.

He said:

“It is a privilege to be following in the footsteps of Bishop John, who has been a tireless champion for CAFOD over the years. He has steered the organisation remarkably well, standing in solidarity with the poorest communities around the world.

“I look forward to doing the same, working alongside our talented and committed trustees, employees, partners, volunteers, and supporters.

“Pope Francis’ call to care for our common home lies at the heart of CAFOD’s work. Our Catholic Christian mission is to serve our sisters and brothers throughout the world who are in need, recognising this can only be achieved by caring for the environment too. May the Lord continue to bless this work.”

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'Eternity' - what's next?

What happens to us after we die? How can a knowledge of eternity help us to live well now?

Join The Art of Dying Well for an interfaith conversation about eternity at the Niksham Centre, Soho Road, Birmingham on **Thursday 27 April**.

Speakers include:

- The Most Reverend Bernard Longley, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Birmingham
- Rabbi Yossi Jacobs, The Chief Minister of the Birmingham Hebrew Congregation, Singers Hill Synagogue
- Simon Romer, Teacher of Buddhism
- Anjana Shelat, Midland region coordinator of Hindu Mandir Network UK, Trustee at Shree Laxmi Narayan Temple
- Dr. Gopinder Sagoo, from the Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewa Jatha community in Birmingham

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Ecology and Creation Theology Symposium: Exploring a sacramental worldview

In light of the ongoing interest in Ecology, this one-day Symposium at St Mary's College, Oscott on **Saturday 29 April from 9am-7pm** is an opportunity to discuss its context within a theology of creation with reference to Scripture, Christology, Mariology, Eucharistic theology, Sacramentology, Christian spirituality and participative metaphysics.

Papers will focus on:

- the relationship between Christ and Creation
- a philosophical understanding of the relationship between God and Creation
- The relationship between Mary, Creation and the Sacraments
- Human beings and God in everyday life (providence)
- The place of human beings in relation to all Creation (integral ecology)

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Applications open for young leaders Holy Land pilgrimage

If you are between 21 and 35 you can apply to the British Trust for Tantor for this fully-funded ecumenical pilgrimage in April 2024.

The British Trust for Tantor offers grants for study programmes and research at the Tantor Ecumenical Institute in Jerusalem. Next year, however, it is organising a fully funded ecumenical pilgrimage for a group of thirty 21-35 year-olds who exercise some sort of leadership role within a church context.

Applications close **Sunday 30 April 2023**.

<https://cte.org.uk/applications-for-young-leaders-tantor-pilgrimage/>



Young Adults Crosswalk

An event for young adults during **Holy Week (1 - 6 April)** organised by the Lay Community of St Benedict (LCSB).

Make a pilgrimage from Wolverhampton (St Christopher at Codsall) to Cefn Lea in Wales, where the Lay Community have their Easter retreat.

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Journeying through Lent

"Lenten penance is a commitment, sustained by grace, to overcoming our lack of faith and our resistance to following Jesus on the way of the cross."- Pope Francis

Prayers, reflections, family activities and more for your Lenten journey are now available on the Archdiocese website page for Lent and Easter.

www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/lent-and-easter

Work for the Kenelm Youth Trust

The Kenelm Youth Trust is currently recruiting for two positions:



- Retreat Centre Director: for July 2023 start.
- Digital Ministry Worker: for August 2023 start.

Closing date for applications is **Tuesday 11 April**.

www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/jobs



Quick Wins to help reduce parish costs

The Property Team's Building Maintenance Surgery on **Thursday 30 March** at 2pm will be looking at providing your parish with the tools to make small changes to help save you money.

If you have any ideas or thoughts that have worked for your parish, which you would like to share with the group please bring them to the surgery.

If you wish to attend, please email rcaobproperty@rcaob.org.uk and we will send you a link to join.

Tom and Tarnia are always available for any property related matters, just drop us an email:

Tom Stockwell: tom.stockwell@rcaob.org.uk

Tarnia McAlester: tarnia.mcalester@rcaob.org.uk



Supporting your parish

You have asked us how you can continue giving to your parish.

Parishes still greatly need your support.

We do though recognise that many parishioners may be struggling financially, and there is no expectation to give where you are unable to do so.

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www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/support-our-work



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