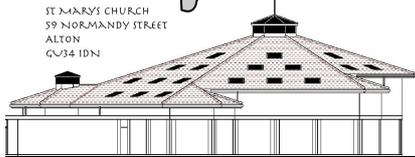


# St Mary's Parish Newsletter

ST MARY'S CHURCH  
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ALTON  
GU34 1DN



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Safeguarding Rep. Mrs. Anne Bothwell  
Contact No: 01420 82030

## MASS INTENTIONS

w/c Sunday 28th February, 2021

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

Year (B 1) (Psalter Week 2)

<b>Saturday</b> 5.30pm	<i>Lent Feria</i> Les Carter, RIP
<b>Sunday</b> 11.00am	<i>Second Sunday of Lent</i> Marie Lowe, RIP
<b>Monday</b> Anstey Convent	<i>St. David</i> <i>Community only</i> Rosa Iniguez Lee, RIP
<b>Tuesday</b> Private Mass	<i>Lent Feria</i> The People of The Parish
<b>Wednesday</b> 9.30am	<i>Lent Feria</i> Mary Catherine Tolhurst, RIP
<b>Thursday</b> St. Lucy's	<i>Lent Feria</i> <i>Community Only</i> Sr. Josephine Ferrachia, RIP Sr. Frances Stavallo, RIP & for the sick
<b>Friday</b> 9.30am	<i>Lent Feria</i> Angel P. Manaois, RIP
<b>Saturday</b> 5.30pm	<i>Lent Feria</i> Johny, RIP
<b>Sunday</b> 11.00am	<b>THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT</b> Deceased members of the Rawlings Family
Confessions:	<i>Please email or call the Parish Office for an appointment</i>

**NO BOOKING REQUIRED FOR WEEKDAY  
MASSES BUT PLEASE CONTINUE TO BOOK  
FOR WEEK-ENDS**

**ST MARY'S  
WEEKLY CHILDREN'S LITURGY  
WILL TAKE PLACE ONLINE  
VIA THE ZOOM PLATFORM  
FROM 24<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2021**

The sessions take place at 10:30am – 10:50am on Sundays, so you are then free to join in with the 11am live-streamed Mass afterwards. To make the sessions as secure as possible, you will need to pre-register through the link to be found on the parish website.

**You will receive an email with an individual joining link and a few safeguarding reminders**

## Second Sunday of Lent

Entrance Antiphon

**Of you my heart has spoken: Seek his face. It is your face, O Lord, that I seek; hide not your face from me.**

First Reading: Genesis 22:1-2, 9-13, 15-18

The sacrifice of Abraham, our father in faith.

Responsorial Psalm

**I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living.**

Second Reading: Romans 8:31-34

God did not spare his own Son.

Gospel Acclamation

**Glory and praise to you, O Christ !**

From the bright cloud the Father's voice was heard: 'This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to him'.

**Glory and praise to you, O Christ !**

Gospel: Mark 9:2-10

This is my Son, the Beloved.

*The Creed is said.*

Communion Antiphon:

**This is my beloved Son, which whom I am well pleased; listen to him.**

*When one has the grace to live a strong experience of God, it is as if one is living and experience similar to that of the disciples during the Transfiguration: a momentary foretaste of what will constitute the happiness of Paradise. No one, however, is permitted to live "on Tabor" while on earth. Indeed, human existence is a journey of faith and as such, moves ahead more in shadows that in full light, and is no stranger to moments of obscurity and also of complete darkness. While we are on this earth, our relationship with God takes place more by listening than by seeing ... And so, this is the gift and duty for each one of us during the season of Lent: to listen to Christ, like Mary. To listen to him in his Word, contained in Sacred Scripture. To listen to him in the events of our lives, seeking to decipher in them the messages of Providence. Finally, to listen to him in our brothers and sisters, especially in the lowly and the poor, for whom Jesus himself demands our concrete love.*

*(Pope Benedict XVI)*

## Special Collection

### Lent Fast Day

A collection will be taken after Masses this week-end (27th & 28th February)  
If you would prefer to make a direct donation then please see [cafod.org.uk/give](https://cafod.org.uk/give)

## SUNDAY MASS—LIVE STREAM

You can now join with the Sunday Mass at St. Mary's as below.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQm0AflgS6wBFM4F331oXWA>

By following this link you will be able to see up-coming streams, past streams and uploaded videos.

This can also be done directly through the St. Mary's website.

## MARIAN ANTIPHON FOR LENT

*Hail, Queen of the Heavens*

*(Ave Regina Caelorum)*

**Hail, Queen of the heavens,  
hail, Lady of the angels.**

**Root of our salvation  
and our gateway to heaven,  
the light of the world was born to you.**

**Be joyful, Virgin of glory,  
most beautiful of all in heaven.**

**We greet you now, true beauty –  
pray for us to Christ.**

V. Let me praise you, O sacred Virgin.

R. Against your enemies give me strength.

V. Let us pray:

**Grant to us, O merciful God,  
protection against our weakness,  
that we who remember the holy Mother of God,  
by the help of her intercession,  
may rise from our sinfulness,  
through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## Wednesday, 3rd March—Lent Feria

Entrance Antiphon

**Forsake me not, O Lord ! My God, be not far from me !  
Make haste and come to my help, O Lord, my strong sal-  
vation !.**

First Reading *Jeremiah 18:18-20*

*Come on, let us hit at him.*

Responsorial Psalm

**Save me in your love, O Lord.**

Gospel Acclamation

**Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God !**

Your words are spirit, Lord, and they are life;  
you have the message of eternal life.

**Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God !**

Gospel *Matthew 20L:17-28*

*They will condemn him to death.*

Communion Antiphon

**The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve,  
and to give his life as a ransom for many.**

## Friday 5th March—Lent Feria

Entrance Antiphon

**In you, O Lord, I put my trust, let me never be put to  
shame; release me from the snare they have hidden for  
me, for you indeed are my refuge.**

First Reading: *Genesis 37:3-4, 12-13, 17-28*

*Here comes the man of dreams. Come on, let us kill him.*

Responsorial Psalm

**Remember the wonders of the Lord has done.**

Gospel Acclamation

**Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus !**

God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son;  
Everyone who believes in him has eternal life.

**Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus !**

Gospel: *Matthew 21:33-34, 45-46*

*This is the heir. Come on, let us kill him.*

Communion Antiphon

**God loved us, and sent his Son as expiation for our sins.**

## Please remember in your prayers

Adi Morando, Brenda Gregory, Francesca Adams,  
Carol & Margaret Conway, Kate Cradock, Rita Rawling,  
Margaret Collins, Theresa Davies  
Alex Smith, Lily Jones,  
Michael & Jo Rogers, Annie Tomlinson



## CAFOD LENTEN PROJECT

### WALK FOR WATER



The Cafod project this year is to help some of the many people, in the poorest parts of the world, who have very limited access to clean drinking water.

### **The Challenge :**

to commit to walking 10,000 steps a day for 40 days during Lent.

Parishioners of St. Mary's,

**Tim & Ann Cain**

will be taking this challenge.

If you would like to support them you can make a donation via their giving page at:

<https://walk.cafod.org.uk/fundraising/ann-and-tim-walk-for-water>



## Second Sunday of Lent

Every year, on the Second Sunday of Lent, we hear about the Transfiguration of Jesus on the mountain top.

Why? Jesus revealed his glory to the three apostles in order to strengthen them for the journey ahead - the journey to Jerusalem, Gethsemane and Golgotha. The same vision is today offered to us, to strengthen us in our Lenten

Journey of Faith. Last week we heard about temptation:

this week we are driven onwards by a vision of glory that will be ours - the goal of our lives of faith and all that we do as Christians. The transfiguration represents the final destination of our lives, if we are faithful in resisting temptation and living each day as faithful members of Jesus Christ. In our journey of renewal and new commitment through Lent, we are spurred on and encouraged by today's vision to see why the effort is worth it.

***"As Jesus prayed,  
the aspect of his face was changed."***

Lord God,

With all our hearts we beseech you:  
have mercy on your people; spare your people;  
strengthen all people in the struggle against the havoc  
of this pandemic.

Lord our God, without you we are so weak and our  
courage so limited.

Give us your strength; give us your love; give us  
wisdom and skill to continue this fight.

Spare your people, O Lord we pray.

Comfort those who mourn and gather into your  
kingdom all who have died.

We make this prayer through Christ our Lord,  
who died and rose to life, who lives and reigns with  
you, for ever and ever. Amen.

## **PROPOSED EASTER SERVICES 2021**

### **Thursday, 1st April—Holy Thursday**

8pm Mass of the Lord's Supper  
Watching until 10pm

### **Friday, 2nd April—Good Friday**

3.00pm Solemn Passion Liturgy

### **Saturday, 3rd April—Holy Saturday**

8.00pm, Solemn Easter Vigil

### **Sunday, 4th April**

11am, Mass at St. Mary's

Depending upon requests for places at this Mass, it may be necessary to have an additional Service

#### **Please note:**

All of the above is subject to change

Booking will be required and the opening date will be advised in due course.

### **Supporting your Parish**

As always, we are extremely grateful to those who have continued to financially support St. Mary's through the past year.

With restricted numbers attending Masses, our income has been much reduced. The Car Park is also a major source of income and with many of our patrons no longer commuting, the income from this has reduced by more than half.

Gift Aid also forms a good part of our income so if you are not already a member, please do consider joining the Diocesan Gift Aid Scheme.

#### **For every £1 you give, we can claim back 25 pence.**

Some Parishioners have found it easier to set up Standing Orders or Direct Debits by way of continued support and we would be most grateful if others would consider this.

The Diocese have produced an interactive Direct Debit/ Gift Aid Form and this can be accessed at:

[https://mcusercontent.com/9f45e1d9464cfcb22c391f016/files/4e0f5375-28ac-4466-9f86-634382cbc42d/DD\\_GA\\_Interactive.pdf](https://mcusercontent.com/9f45e1d9464cfcb22c391f016/files/4e0f5375-28ac-4466-9f86-634382cbc42d/DD_GA_Interactive.pdf)

These are the words of Pope Francis, given recently as a meditation on self-esteem, which plays such an important role in all our lives:

**“Rivers do not drink their own water; trees do not eat their own fruit; the sun does not shine on itself and flowers do not spread their fragrance for themselves. Living for others is a rule of nature. We are all born to help each other. No matter how difficult it is ... Life is good when you are happy; but much better when others are happy because of you”.**  
**Pope Francis**

**What a philosophy or motto to have in life ....  
“We are all born to help each other”.**

## **EASTER GIFT BAGS**

*May we please call upon your generosity once again !*

We are requesting donations of  
*Chocolate Treats (perhaps even an Easter Egg)*  
*Small packs of luxury biscuits*  
*A small pot of Spring bulbs*

Our intention for your gifts—to distribute to those who are currently unable to attend Mass, either because they are Vulnerable or isolating for another reason.

These items may be left either in the Church or in the Green Metal Box which is next to the Presbytery entrance.

If you know of anyone who you think would benefit from receiving a Gift Bag this Easter then please email the Office so that they can be included on our list. We would also appreciate offers to help with deliveries.

Thank you

### **The Secret Garden Club**

When weather permits, the ladies and gents of the Secret Garden Club are now looking towards Spring.

If you are planting seeds at home, perhaps you would consider planting an extra pot to donate to the club.

Flowers, vegetable or fruit bush cutting would be gratefully received.

If you would like to join the ladies and gents, please email the office with your contact details.

### ***Gardening God's Way***

Plant three rows of peas:

Peace of mind  
Peace of heart  
Peace of soul

No garden without turnips:

Turnip for meetings  
Turnip for service  
Turnip to help one another

Plant four rows of squash:

Squash gossip  
Squash indifference  
Squash grumbling  
Squash selfishness

Water freely with patience and

Cultivate with love.  
There is much fruit in your garden  
Because you reap what you sow.

Plant four rows of lettuce:

Lettuce be faithful  
Lettuce be kind  
Lettuce be obedient  
Lettuce really love one another

To conclude our garden

We must have thyme:  
Thyme for God  
Thyme for study  
Thyme for prayer



### **Family Activities for Lent**

The Catholic Academies and Schools Office have prepared a selection of resources to support families in marking and celebrating the Lenten season.

The resources include practical activities, Sunday prayers and Stations of the Cross.

The resources can be accessed at

<http://www.casopportsmouth.org.uk/lent/>

We are encouraging schools and families to create an image of one of the stations of the cross for inclusion in the weekly powerpoint.

Any submissions can be sent to  
[rdare@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:rdare@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

### Join us for Prayer and Praise

Thursday nights over the next weeks of lockdown, from 7.30 til 8.30, I'd like to **invite you online or in person to join me and the Cathedral clergy** for an Hour of Prayer and Praise for these intentions.

The service is called

**Verso L'Alto: Reach to the Heights!**

Join us this Thursday by the Cathedral [live-stream](https://www.portsmouthcathedral.org.uk/live-mass.php)  
<https://www.portsmouthcathedral.org.uk/live-mass.php>

to pray for all our intentions, for our safety, for our Diocese, for the sick and for resolution of the crisis.

*Bishop Philip*

### Tea with Mary—every Saturday at 5pm

The Marian Franciscans are launching a brand new "Tea with Mary" series on Lectio Divina, during this extended Year of the Word. "Tea with Mary" is a live-show broadcast by the friars every Saturday at 5.00pm, on Radio Immaculata

YouTube Channel [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCi9ki8jUh3-H\\_W-ssXxd9Og?reload=9](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCi9ki8jUh3-H_W-ssXxd9Og?reload=9) and Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/radio.immaculata>

The icon of "Tea with Mary" on Lectio divina can be indeed Our Lady at the Annunciation, when She 'heard' the Word, 'obeyed' it with Her faith, and eventually 'made' it Her own flesh and blood. Join us for a cuppa and invite your friends!

### Called and Gifted – Now Online!

The Called and Gifted Team is very pleased to announce that the Called and Gifted discernment process is now available ONLINE.

With the support of Bishop Philip and the Catherine of Siena Institute in the US, the team has created a new C&G website with links to both the Diocesan website and the Institute's high quality teaching videos. The new website not only explains the benefits of discerning your spiritual gifts (charisms) it also includes personal testimonies for each charism and an easy-to-use booking process that enables participants to purchase access to the videos (stage 1), book their online personal discernment conversation (stage 2) and book a place on a small discernment group (stage 3).

See the new website

<https://www.calledandgifted.org.uk/>

The website can also be accessed via the C&G pages of the Diocesan website.

### Lent - A Time of Hope and Healing

The light and promise of Eastertide shines ever more brightly in the darkness. To help support you on your Lenten journey this year Our Lady & St Edmund of Abingdon parish invites you to join them for their Lenten 'Hope and Healing' Prayer and Reflections by Zoom.

Beginning on Thursday 18th March the course will continue every Thursday throughout lent and will include a variety of reflections, scripture, Sycamore films, and the opportunity for prayer. Everyone is welcome to join all or any of the sessions and people can choose whether to participate in various discussions and sharing or can simply listen and reflect if they prefer. Click on the image for more details. 'Hope and Healing' will be hosted by the parish RCIA team and anyone interested should contact Pauline on [pehanley@hotmail.com](mailto:pehanley@hotmail.com) or call 07506 753085 to register for the Zoom link.

### Family Activities for Lent

*Catherine Hobbs, Director for Education, shares news of resources for Lent from the Catholic Academies and Schools Office...*

The Catholic Academies and Schools Office have prepared a selection of resources to support families in marking and celebrating the Lenten season.

The resources include practical activities, Sunday prayers and Stations of the Cross.

The resources can be accessed

<http://www.casoportsmouth.org.uk/lent/>

If any families would like to create an image of one of the stations of the cross for inclusion in the weekly

Power Point then please send them to:

[rdare@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:rdare@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

and keep looking to see if yours gets included.

### The National Novena to St Joseph

will take place from 10<sup>th</sup>- 18<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at **St Joseph's Church in Maidenhead**. If you are able, and if it is possible to attend, Masses are on Wednesday to Friday (10-12 March), at 7.30pm, Saturday, 13 March at 10am, Sunday, 14 March at 11.00am, Monday –Thursday (15-18 March) at 7.30pm.

If you are unable to attend but would like to join in from home, for the first time this year, Masses from **St. Joseph's Church** will be available to follow on Zoom and YouTube via the parish website: [stjosephsparish.co.uk](http://stjosephsparish.co.uk)

and the Mill Hill website

[www.millhillmissionaries.com/novena](http://www.millhillmissionaries.com/novena),

where you will also find the Novena prayer leaflet.

You can also join in by praying the daily Novena prayer, which will be in your Novena prayer leaflet. You are welcome to send in your petitions and/or to request a printed Novena prayer leaflet. Please write to the **Novena Director, 41**

**Victoria Road, Liverpool, L37 1LW,**

or email [novenamhm@gmail.com](mailto:novenamhm@gmail.com).

### Lent - A Time for Renewal

Joan Kent, Chair of the Parish Council at Sacred Heart Hook shares news of some forthcoming events in the parish.

Sacred Heart Church in Hook are hosting a series of talks and courses and we warmly welcome you to join us for a

Lenten talk with Sr Valentina from Verbem Dei on 4th March.

[Hope in the Pandemic - A Lenten talk from Sr Valentina on Thursday 4th March @ 7.45pm](#)

Lent is time for renewal. Join us to learn how this time can help us to journey through this Pandemic. How the Pascal Mystery, Jesus' life, death and resurrection, can bring meaning to what we are living and make us bridges of hope.

[Let it Be](#)

Our next joint scheduled course is going to be a CAFE series called Let it be, all about Our Lady.

Commencing Monday 26th April for 5 weeks.

The Cafe sessions involves watching a video and discussions in smaller groups.

If you would like to learn more about either of these events, please contact Joan Kent on

[jkent@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:jkent@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

# Message of the Holy Father Francis for Lent 2021

## “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem” (Mt 20:18).

### Lent: a Time for Renewing Faith, Hope and Love.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Jesus revealed to his disciples the deepest meaning of his mission when he told them of his passion, death and resurrection, in fulfilment of the Father’s will. He then called the disciples to share in this mission for the salvation of the world.

In our Lenten journey towards Easter, let us remember the One who “humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross” (Phil 2:8). During this season of conversion, let us renew our *faith*, draw from the “living water” of *hope*, and receive with open hearts the *love* of God, who makes us brothers and sisters in Christ. At the Easter vigil, we will renew our baptismal promises and experience rebirth as new men and women by the working of the Holy Spirit. This Lenten journey, like the entire pilgrimage of the Christian life, is even now illuminated by the light of the resurrection, which inspires the thoughts, attitudes and decisions of the followers of Christ.

*Fasting, prayer and almsgiving*, as preached by Jesus (cf. Mt 6:1-18), enable and express our conversion. The path of poverty and self-denial (*fasting*), concern and loving care for the poor (*almsgiving*), and childlike dialogue with the Father (*prayer*) make it possible for us to live lives of sincere faith, living hope and effective charity.

#### **1. Faith calls us to accept the truth and testify to it before God and all our brothers and sisters.**

In this Lenten season, *accepting and living the truth revealed in Christ* means, first of all, opening our hearts to God’s word, which the Church passes on from generation to generation. This truth is not an abstract concept reserved for a chosen intelligent few. Instead, it is a message that all of us can receive and understand thanks to the wisdom of a heart open to the grandeur of God, who loves us even before we are aware of it. Christ himself is this truth. By taking on our humanity, even to its very limits, he has made himself the way – demanding, yet open to all – that leads to the fullness of life.

*Fasting, experienced as a form of self-denial*, helps those who undertake it in simplicity of heart to rediscover God’s gift and to recognize that, created in his image and likeness, we find our fulfilment in him. In embracing the experience of poverty, those who fast make themselves poor with the poor and accumulate the treasure of a love both received and shared. In this way, fasting helps us to love God and our neighbour, inasmuch as love, as Saint Thomas Aquinas teaches, is a movement outwards that focuses our attention on others and considers them as one with ourselves (cf. *Fratelli Tutti*, 93).

*Lent is a time for believing*, for welcoming God into our lives and allowing him to “make his dwelling” among us (cf. *Jn* 14:23). Fasting involves being freed from all that weighs us down – like consumerism or an excess of information, whether true or false – in order to open the doors of our hearts to the One who comes to us, poor in all things, yet “full of grace and truth” (*Jn* 1:14): the Son of God our Saviour.

#### **2. Hope as “living water” enabling us to continue our journey.**

*The Samaritan woman at the well, whom Jesus asks for a drink*, does not understand what he means when he says that he can offer her “living water” (*Jn* 4:10). Naturally, she thinks that he is referring to material water, but Jesus is speaking of the Holy Spirit whom he will give in abundance through the paschal mystery, bestowing a hope that does not disappoint. Jesus had already spoken of this hope when, in telling of his passion and death, he said that he would “be raised on the third day” (*Mt* 20:19). Jesus was speaking of the future opened up by the Father’s mercy. Hoping with him and because of him means believing that history does not end with our mistakes, our violence and injustice, or the sin that crucifies Love. It means receiving from his open heart the Father’s forgiveness.

*In these times of trouble*, when everything seems fragile and uncertain, it may appear challenging to speak of hope. Yet Lent is precisely the season of hope, when we turn back to God who patiently continues to care for his creation which we have often mistreated (cf. *Laudato Si’*, 32-33; 43-44). Saint Paul urges us to

place our hope in reconciliation: “Be reconciled to God” (2 *Cor* 5:20). By receiving forgiveness in the sacrament that lies at the heart of our process of conversion, we in turn can spread forgiveness to others. Having received forgiveness ourselves, we can offer it through our willingness to enter into attentive dialogue with others and to give comfort to those experiencing sorrow and pain. God’s forgiveness, offered also through our words and actions, enables us to experience an Easter of fraternity.

In Lent, may we be increasingly concerned with “speaking words of comfort, strength, consolation and encouragement, and not words that demean, sadden, anger or show scorn” (*Fratelli Tutti*, 223). In order to give hope to others, it is sometimes enough simply to be kind, to be “willing to set everything else aside in order to show interest, to give the gift of a smile, to speak a word of encouragement, to listen amid general indifference” (ibid., 224).

*Through recollection and silent prayer*, hope is given to us as inspiration and interior light, illuminating the challenges and choices we face in our mission. Hence the need to pray (cf. *Mt* 6:6) and, in secret, to encounter the Father of tender love.

*To experience Lent in hope* entails growing in the realization that, in Jesus Christ, we are witnesses of new times, in which God is “making all things new” (cf. *Rev* 21:1-6). It means receiving the hope of Christ, who gave his life on the cross and was raised by God on the third day, and always being “prepared to make a defense to anyone who calls [us] to account for the hope that is in [us]” (1 *Pet* 3:15).

#### **3. Love, following in the footsteps of Christ, in concern and compassion for all his the highest expression of our faith and hope.**

*Love rejoices in seeing others grow*. Hence it suffers when others are anguished, lonely, sick, homeless, despised or in need. Love is a leap of the heart; it brings us out of ourselves and creates bonds of sharing and communion.

“‘Social love’ makes it possible to advance towards a civilization of love, to which all of us can feel called. With its impulse to universality, love is capable of building a new world. No mere sentiment, it is the best means of discovering effective paths of development for everyone” (*Fratelli Tutti*, 183).

*Love is a gift* that gives meaning to our lives. It enables us to view those in need as members of our own family, as friends, brothers or sisters. A small amount, if given with love, never ends, but becomes a source of life and happiness. Such was the case with the jar of meal and jug of oil of the widow of Zarephath, who offered a cake of bread to the prophet Elijah (cf. *1 Kings* 17:7-16); it was also the case with the loaves blessed, broken and given by Jesus to the disciples to distribute to the crowd (cf. *Mk* 6:30-44). Such is the case too with our almsgiving, whether small or large, when offered with joy and simplicity.

*To experience Lent with love* means caring for those who suffer or feel abandoned and fearful because of the Covid-19 pandemic. In these days of deep uncertainty about the future, let us keep in mind the Lord’s word to his Servant, “Fear not, for I have redeemed you” (*Is* 43:1). In our charity, may we speak words of reassurance and help others to realize that God loves them as sons and daughters.

“Only a gaze transformed by charity can enable the dignity of others to be recognized and, as a consequence, the poor to be acknowledged and valued in their dignity, respected in their identity and culture, and thus truly integrated into society” (*Fratelli Tutti*, 187).

Dear brothers and sisters, every moment of our lives is a time for believing, hoping and loving. The call to experience Lent as a journey of conversion, prayer and sharing of our goods, helps us – as communities and as individuals – to revive the faith that comes from the living Christ, the hope inspired by the breath of the Holy Spirit and the love flowing from the merciful heart of the Father. May Mary, Mother of the Saviour, ever faithful at the foot of the cross and in the heart of the Church, sustain us with her loving presence. May the blessing of the risen Lord accompany all of us on our journey towards the light of Easter.

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 11 November 2020, the Memorial of Saint Martin of Tours

**Francis**