



Newsletter

Sunday 15th February
The Sunday Next Before
Lent

*A very warm welcome to
worship in the benefice today*



growing inclusive, intergenerational churches that inspire faith, hope and love

Today's services

Sunday 15th February

8.00am Said Communion, St Mary's

9.30am Sung Eucharist, St Mary's

9.30am Parish Communion, Walford

Music for today's services

9.30am Sung Eucharist, St Mary's

Setting: Mass of St Thomas - *Thorne*

Introit: 603 Bright the vision that delighted

Gradual: 281 Tis good Lord to be here

Offertory: 422 Alleluia, sing to Jesus

Communion: O nata lux - *Tallis*

Post Communion: 709 Light of the minds

9.30 Parish Communion, Walford (Misson Praise)

528 O worship the king

16 All my hope on God is founded

515 O love that wilt not let me go

327 Immortal invisible god only wise

Prayer & readings for today

Collect Almighty Father, whose Son was revealed in majesty before he suffered death upon the cross: give us grace to perceive his glory, that we may be strengthened to suffer with him and be changed into his likeness, from glory to glory; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

First Reading *Reader: A reading from the Second Letter of Peter*

For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received honour and glory from God the Father when that voice was conveyed to him by the Majestic Glory, saying, 'This is my Son, my Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.' We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven, while we were with him on the holy mountain. So we have the prophetic message more fully confirmed. You will do well to be attentive to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by human will, but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

[2 Peter 1:16-end]

Reader: This is the word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Reading

Jesus said: 'For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, "Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents." His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master." And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, "Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents." His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master." Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, "Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours." But his master replied, "You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

[Matthew 15:14-30]

For our prayers

Those who are ill: Terry Harding, Rosie Taylor, Rene Keogh, Helen Wynn, and all who are living with long term illnesses or health problems.

Those who mourn, and those who have died, Doreen Hibbert and Sylvia Greer.

Letter from David

The centre of Christian life is Jesus, and the centre of Jesus's life was prayer. The Gospels repeatedly hint at him escaping from the crowds who often pursued him and even abandoning his disciples so that he could be with God – Luke says that he “would withdraw to deserted places and pray” (5:16). It could be argued that the Lord's Prayer typifies Jesus's way of praying. In its economical wording it provides a perfect model of what prayer can be: it starts with praise and glorification of God, continues with a request to be supplied with just enough for now, and goes on to ask to be brought close to God by having failures forgiven and being spared everything that prevents nearness to God.

A concise summary of these masterly words is Jesus's prayer in Gethsemane before his arrest. As he recognises what awaits him, he utters a few words brief to show his obedience: 'Not my

will but yours be done' (Luke 22:42). This is a perfect model of what prayer can be, and it presents a true challenge for Lent.

David Thomas

News from the Ross Parishes

Toast and Toddle This week the session will be held in St Mary's Hall and will start at **9.30am** on Wednesday 18th February.

Lent 2026 Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, 18th February. This week the 10.00am Thursday Communion will be moved to Wednesday. On Ash Wednesday, there will be Eucharists for the benefice in St Mary's at 10.00am and 7.00pm, with Imposition of Ashes for those who wish.

Lent Course *Entering into Prayer*, the benefice Lent course this year, will explore prayer in its many different forms. The meetings, led by David Thomas and others, take place in St Mary's Hall on Sunday afternoons: 22nd February, 1st March, 8th March, 15th March, 22nd March, 29th March. Tea and coffee are available from 2.30 pm and the sessions last from 3.00pm to 4.30pm. Everyone is welcome to all the sessions or all the sessions you can manage.

Lent Challenge This Lent everyone is invited to use their God-given Talents to increase the church's Ministry and Mission and to raise much needed funds for the church. Take a leaflet, think and pray and then let us know how you may fulfil this challenge. You can find out more on the website: rossparishes.uk/st-marys-lent-challenge/. Have a good Lent.

Doreen Hibbert The funeral of Doreen, a faithful member of St Mary's, will be held in church at 2.00pm on Thursday 19th February. More details from Colin.

Sylvia Greer The funeral of Sylvia, a faithful member of St Mary's, will be held in church at 2.00pm on Friday 20th February.

St David's Day at Walford Church On Sunday 1st March all are invited to keep St David's Day at the Festal Eucharist in Walford Church at 9.30am. There will be a Welsh preacher (speaking in English) and organist, harp music, Welsh readings and prayers, Welsh refreshments, and good hymns for English people too! A reprieve in Lent!

Electoral Roll Ahead of St Mary's Annual General Meeting on 24th March, anyone whose name is not on the Electoral Roll can request to have it added. Many people have joined the congregations of St Mary's recently, so please take this step so you can be involved in decisions that affect life at St Mary's. Forms can be obtained at the welcome desk or by emailing Julian Hallett on hallettjulian@hotmail.com. The closing date for receiving forms is 8th March 2026. If you are already on the electoral roll, don't worry - you will automatically be included.

Music during Lent There will be a new musical setting of the Mass for Sundays at St Mary's during Lent. St Anne's Mass is a setting by one of our most important contemporary composers, James MacMillan. Evident in this and all the pieces by this composer in the choir's repertoire is the "Scotch Snap". This setting has been requested by Saul Robinson, and we're most grateful to him for drawing it to our attention.

Summer Garden Fete Save the date, 6th June! St Michael's Walford are holding a Summer Garden Fete at The Homme, Hom Green. Please put it in your diaries now! More details will follow.

Compline is the final service of the day and is the perfect way to bring your day to a calm and peaceful end. The service is held in St Mary's every Monday and Wednesday at 9.00pm. Everyone is very welcome to share this short but beautiful liturgy (approximately 15 minutes).

Service booklets are available at the back of the church, so please take one if you would like to say the service privately at home. From 15th March, the service can also be followed on Sundays via Zoom. More details to follow.

St Mary's Youth Choir and Club Can you give an hour from 3.30pm on Wednesdays to help with "Connect", St Mary's new Choir Club? Emily Goy would welcome assistants to supervise the young people. If you can give help just a few times a year, contact Mark Sanderson.

This week in the Ross Parishes

Every day	9.00am Morning Prayer by Zoom, rossparishes.uk/morning-prayer
Mon 16th Feb	10.00am Tots in Tune, St Mary's Hall 9.00pm Compline
Tue 17th Feb	9.00am Community Larder and Tea & Toast, St Mary's Hall
Wed 18th Feb	9.30am Toast and Toddle, St Mary's Hall 10.00am Said Communion & Imposition of Ashes for Ash Wednesday 11.00am Ponder & Pray by Zoom 3.30 Choir Club, St Mary's 7.00pm Sung Eucharist & Imposition of Ashes for Ash Wednesday (no Compline service tonight)
Thu 19th Feb	2.00pm Funeral of Doreen Hibbert, St Mary's
Fri 20th Feb	2.00pm Funeral of Sylvia Greer, St Mary's 6.00pm Dice and Decks, St Mary's Hall 7.15pm Adult choir rehearsal, St Mary's

Further ahead

Sun 22nd Feb	3.00pm Lent Course first session, "The many different kinds of prayer"
Wed 25th Feb	12.15pm Lent Lunch, St Mary's
Thu 26th Feb	11.00am-4.00pm Kate Bliss Valuation Day

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