

to cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit because the encounter with God requires absolute purity. He continued: *“Every trace of attachment to evil must be eliminated, every imperfection of the soul corrected. Purification must be complete, and indeed this is precisely what is meant by the Church's teaching on purgatory. The term does not indicate a place, but a condition of existence. Those who, after death, exist in a state of purification, are already in the love of Christ who removes from them the remnants of imperfection”*. The nature of the state of purgatory is that while the souls are temporarily deprived of being in the sight of God in heaven, death has put an end to their ability to sin and this makes them secure of eternal happiness after cleansing. Finally the CCC tells us that the Church commends almsgiving, indulgences, and works of penance undertaken on behalf of the dead and cites the words of St John Chrysostom: *“Let us help and commemorate them..... Let us not hesitate to help those who have died and to offer our prayers for them.”*

- Stephen S.

Entrance Antiphon: Give me justice, O God, and plead my cause against a nation that is faithless. From the deceitful and cunning rescue me, for you, O God, are my strength.

First Reading: Jeremiah 31: 31-34

Responsorial Psalm: 50 Response: A pure heart create for me, O God.

Second Reading: Hebrews 5: 7-9

Gospel Acclamation: Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God! If a man serves me, says the Lord, he must follow me, wherever I am, my servant will be there too. Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God!

Gospel: John 12:20-30

Memorial Acclamation: We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

Communion Antiphon: Amen, Amen I say to you: Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains a single grain. But if it dies, it bears much fruit.



Fifth Sunday of Lent, Cycle B, 2024 Weekly Reflection:

From Suffering to Redemption: (2) Purgatory: The Catholic Church's official doctrine on purgatory, based on the Council of Florence (1439) and the Council of Trent (1563) is summarised

in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (“CCC”) in this way: *“All who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven. The Church gives the name Purgatory to this final purification of the elect...”* Further the Council of Trent made clear that the penitential system of the Church is such that penitential works are part of true repentance; and that the doctrine involves as its necessary consequence a belief that the sinner failing to do penance in this life may be punished in another world so as to be eternally united with God.

To add more context and explanation we can look at some scriptural passages and early Church writings and tradition. That there is a third state between Heaven and Hell, which we call Purgatory, is the reason why we pray for the deceased. Otherwise, such prayers would be pointless. In the Old Testament Book of 2 Maccabees it states: *“For had he not expected the fallen to rise again, it would have been superfluous and foolish to pray for the dead, whereas if he had in view the splendid recompense reserved for those who make a pious end, the thought was holy and devout. Hence, he had this expiatory sacrifice offered for the dead, so that they might be released from their sin.”* Praying for the dead is part of the earliest church tradition and is mentioned in 2nd/3rd century writers such as St Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen and St Cyprian. In the “City of God” St Augustine said: *“But temporary punishments are suffered by some in this life only, by others after death, by others both now and then; but all of them before that last and strictest judgment.”*

Although there are many representations of purgatory as a place, it is better understood as a state. Pope St John Paul II said in 1999 that we are invited



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**17- March-2024
Fifth Sunday of Lent**

Eucharistic Prayer – II or III

R.C DIOCESE OF SHREWSBURY REG. CHARITY No.234025

Saturday (Vigil) 6.00pm

Sunday 8.30am

Parishioners

10:00am

Monday 10.00am

Tuesday 9.30am

Wednesday 9.30am

Thursday 9.30am

Friday 9.30am

Saturday 11.30am

John Malony (Sick)

12.30pm Baptism: Baby Leo

Saturday (Vigil) 6.00pm

(British Summer time begins)

Sunday 8.30am Palm Sunday of the Passion of Our Lord

10.00am

Parishioners

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Confessions - Every Saturday at 11.00am. Morning Prayers 9.15am -Tuesday to Friday

Bishop Mark's Parish visitation. We thank Bishop Mark for his visitation to the parish last weekend. Thank you to all those who helped to set up the hall and to serve the refreshments. Thank you very much for your presence in the hall after each Mass, meeting the bishop and making him welcome.

Irish Coffee morning and St Patrick Day celebrations this Sunday (17th March) after the 10.00am Mass. **All are welcome!** Those who can help please telephone Kevin on 584430

Family Fast and Lenten offerings: There is opportunity for generous giving from the fast for which **CAFOD envelopes** are available at the back of church. These can be returned via collection plates or sent directly to CAFOD's head

office. Donations can be done online at www.cafod.org.uk/lent or by using a CAFOD envelope.

Lenten Alms can be offered in the church wall box marked **-Lenten Alms.**

On Saturday 23rd March at 11.00am: Mary's Way of The Cross in the Church.
Sacred Paschal Triduum: Holy Thursday 7.00pm (Washing of the feet and the Mass of The Lord's Supper) No morning Mass. **Good Friday: 3.00pm** (The Celebration of The Lord's passion and veneration of the Cross/Congregation will be invited for a genuflection or a deep bow). **Holy Saturday 7.00pm** (Easter Vigil and the First Mass of Easter/ Service will start outside the church with the blessing of new fire) **Easter Sunday Mass at 8.30 am and 10.00am**

The red framed notice in the porch lists the services and readings for Holy Week. Please sign your name if you can volunteer for readings or the washing of feet on Maundy Thursday. **NEW READERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME.**

Gift Aid Envelopes: The envelopes for the tax year 2024/25 are available for collection in the church porch. Please do not use until April 7th and please use the correct dated envelope for the week you are giving.

Attention all Gift Aid Donors: The tax year 2023/24 has ended and the Parish will soon be undertaking the process of claiming back the Gift Aid refunds on donations made in the tax year. If your circumstances have changed and you no longer pay income tax (or if for any other reason you do not wish to remain in the Gift Aid Scheme) please let Fr. Mathew or Louise Jones know as soon as possible, otherwise it will be assumed you have paid sufficient income tax for the Parish to reclaim Gift Aid on donations made in the last tax year.

Church Offertory and Gift Aid Explained: If you pay tax and are not in the Gift Aid Scheme you could help the parish by enrolling. For every £1.00 you donate HMRC gives the parish 25p. All that it involves is giving your name and address on a Gift Aid declaration form. No other details are required. There is no minimum amount or fixed amount, you don't have to give every week and you can stop or start as you like. The only stipulation is that the money has to be placed in a Gift Aid envelope or, preferably to save the volunteer counters' time, paid by standing order or cheque. If you would like to join the Gift Aid Scheme, please contact Father Mathew or Louise Jones.