

Draw Near to God in Holy Week

This year in Lent we have been reflecting on how we can 'draw near' to God through returning to the basics of our faith – our life of prayer, worship, bible reading and service. This year we can once more seek to draw near to God by committing ourselves to walk with Jesus through Holy Week. At the heart of our community of faith is that journey to the Cross and then the empty tomb of Easter Day. Jesus invites us, his friends and disciples, to walk with him as he makes that journey. In that journey we recognise a reflection of the journey of our lives, full of joy and sorrow, moments of challenge and suffering, as well as love and care. Jesus walks with hope through this week just as we seek to live in that same hope. We are encouraged to simply be with him through those days and create the time and space to stand at the foot of the cross and gather at the tomb so that we can draw near to his love.

Each day there will be opportunities for us to come together in worship at special services. Some will be aware how special and important the services are; for others it will be a new experience, and for some it will be something we need to re-engage with.

Perhaps this year we could all make that extra effort to draw near and commit ourselves to walk together from the joy of the Palm Procession to the discovery of the Risen Christ on Easter Day

We had hoped to be welcoming a **guest preacher** to help us reflect on this journey, but sadly they have had to withdraw through ill health. However, Fr Bob will lead us in reflections on **Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evening at 7pm** there will be a Mass with hymns. On Monday & Tuesday at St Mary's and on Wednesday at St Faith's

At **St Mary's** from Maundy Thursday to Easter Day **Fr Bob will also be our preacher** and help us to reflect on the events we are sharing in and how they affect our lives today. St Faith's will have their own pattern for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday – and then we will be together to celebrate the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday at St Mary's at 8.30pm.

Please see below for full details and consider what you might do and how you may draw near, journeying with Christ in Hope and help us build a community of prayer together during Holy Week this year.

Saturday March 28th Messy Holy Week at St Mary's

10am Arts, crafts and activities helping us explore Holy Week ending with a free lunch at 11.30am

Sunday March 29th Palm Sunday



9.30am Those who can please **join us at St Faith's Church in Crasswell Street** as we walk with **Palm crosses**, streamers and a band and begin the journey to the Cross ...



10am We gather as a **Parish at St Mary's** to 'welcome' Jesus as the crowds welcomed him into Jerusalem. We also hear the Passion Narrative to help us recall the events that we are about to share in

Monday March 30th I I am Stations of the Cross at St Mary's

We will use the 14 images around the Church to reflect on the journey made on Good Friday from Pilate to the Cross and the tomb

7pm Mass & Reflection at St Mary's (live streamed)

Tuesday March 31st 9.30am Mass followed by 'Draw Near'

discussion at St Faith's

7pm Mass & Reflection at St Mary's (live streamed)

Wednesday April 1st Noon Mass followed by **Fellowship Lunch**

and by 'Draw Near' discussion at St Mary's

7pm Mass & Reflection at St Mary's (live streamed)

Maundy Thursday April 2nd



At our services we reflect on the events of the Last Supper – the washing of the disciples' feet; Jesus breaking bread and sharing the cup inviting us to do this in remembrance of him and then he asks us to 'watch and pray with him' in the Garden of Gethsemane till he is betrayed by Judas.

At St Faith's 6pm Eucharist of the Last Supper

ending with a short watch and vigil of prayer

At St Mary's 7.30pm Eucharist of the Last Supper

and watch of prayer till Midnight. Please sign list in Church if you can cover some of the watch of prayer ...be good to have 2 or 3 people for every 15 min slot



Good Friday April 3rd



Our churches are stripped and empty – our focus is on the Cross and all it stands for and means. We hear the reading of the events of the first Good Friday in John's Gospel; we reflect on the cross, pray at the foot of the cross and end in stillness receiving the Body of Christ

At St Mary's I am Children and Young People gather to share in activities and art and craft to reflect on the day – ending with Hot Cross Buns



1pm A series of **reflections** – interspersed with silence – **on the Cross** (at 1pm, 1.15, 1.30 and 1.45pm)

2pm The Liturgy of the Cross (ends at 3pm)

At St Faith's 2pm The Liturgy of the Cross

Holy Saturday April 4th

If you can help prepare our churches for Easter – please contact Revd Wendy May for St Faith's– or for St Mary's come along from 9am and there will be plenty to do!



As a Parish we all gather for one of the most beautiful and special service of the year as we gather in darkness and then welcome the coming of the light of Christ as we with joy and light celebrate his new life!

**8.30pm The Vigil of Readings
and First Mass of Easter (ends about 10pm)**

Easter Day April 5th

At St Faith's 9.30 am Mass of Easter Day

At St Mary's 8am Book of Common Prayer Eucharist

10am Sung Mass for Easter and Baptisms

4pm Choral Evensong and Benediction