

ALL SAINTS NEWS

15th February 2026
Sunday Next before Lent

Lent

In the Church's infancy, Christian initiation, that is, becoming a member of the Church through the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist, only happened at Easter, THE great annual celebration of the Lord's resurrection.

Lent soon became firmly attached to Easter, as the principal occasion for baptism and for the reconciliation of those who had been excluded from the Church's fellowship for apostasy or serious faults. This history explains the characteristic notes of Lent – self-examination, penitence, self-denial, study, and preparation for Easter, to which almsgiving has traditionally been added.

Now is the healing time decreed
for sins of heart and word and deed,
when we in humble fear record
the wrong that we have done the Lord.

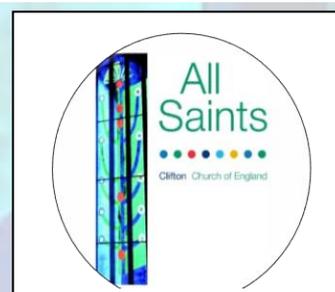
(Latin Office hymn for Lent, before 12th century)

As the candidates for baptism were instructed in Christian faith, and as penitents prepared themselves, through fasting and penance, to be readmitted to communion, the whole Christian community was invited to join them in the process of study and repentance.

Common Worship: Introduction to the season

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The views and opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of the All Saints Church community.



Originally this period of preparation varied in length but the actual forty days was first established in the Church in Jerusalem as a reminder of the forty days that Jesus spent in the wilderness, being tested by Satan, and gradually became normative throughout the rest of the Church. (We might note a slight oddity here as Christ's 40 days of temptation in the wilderness was *after* his baptism whereas it has become a preparation *for* baptism.)

It is only in the English language that this period is called Lent, a term derived from Old English and referring to the lengthening of days at this time of year. In many other languages the name for the season is derived from the number 40, although there are other terms, e.g. *Fastenzeit* (fasting time) in German.

The calculation of the forty days has varied considerably in Christian history, and between Eastern and Western churches. In the Eastern Orthodox Church Lent is characterised as a season of "bright sadness" and begins on Clean Monday lasting 40 days including Sundays until the Saturday before Palm Sunday, (and so does not include Holy Week.)

It is now usual in our Western Church to count the 40 days to the end of Holy Week (not including Sundays), so beginning Lent on the sixth Wednesday before Easter, Ash Wednesday. Ashes are an ancient sign of penitence; from the middle ages it became the custom to begin Lent by being marked in ash with the sign of the cross. Liturgical dress is the simplest possible. Churches are kept bare of flowers and decoration. *Gloria in excelsis* is not used.

The Fourth Sunday of Lent (*Laetare* or Refreshment Sunday) is allowed as a day of relief from the rigour of Lent, (rose colour vestments in place of violet) and the Feast of the Annunciation almost always falls in Lent; these breaks from austerity are the background to the modern observance of Mothering Sunday on the Fourth Sunday of Lent.

The Church of England encourages us to have an eye on the goal of our Lenten journey by giving us on the Sunday before Lent the Transfiguration of Christ. The vision of the glory of Christ given to the favoured disciples, Peter, James and John is presented to us for we are summoned to walk the very same path as they did. We are strengthened with the account of the transfiguration, precisely because we are to travel with Jesus to Jerusalem for ignominy, suffering and death.

On Ash Wednesday we are prepared for the traditional Lenten disciplines of prayer, fasting and almsgiving, noting that these are Jesus' expectations of his followers: he tells his listeners "**when** you pray," "**when** you fast". "**when** you give alms", not "**if**".

When the three year cycle of readings at Mass on Sundays (originally compiled in 1969 in the Roman Catholic Church, subsequently adopted by most denominations in the West with some variations) was designed, there was a desire to restore Lent to its original character as a period of preparation for baptism and reconciliation.

And so the readings chosen for the Sundays in Lent (and especially in Year A of the cycle – this year) expound the nature of the season or have a particular bearing on different aspects of our baptismal vocation. And so the basic themes of the Sundays of Lent are:

Lent I	Resisting temptation
Lent II	Salvation through faith
Lent III	Water of life
Lent IV	Enlightenment
Lent V	Resurrection

As we ponder these themes we shall be thoroughly prepared for the events commemorated in Holy Week beginning with the Lord's entry into the Holy City Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. And by reflecting on our baptismal calling throughout Lent we will be in a very strong position to understand what we are committing ourselves to when we renew our baptismal vows at Easter.



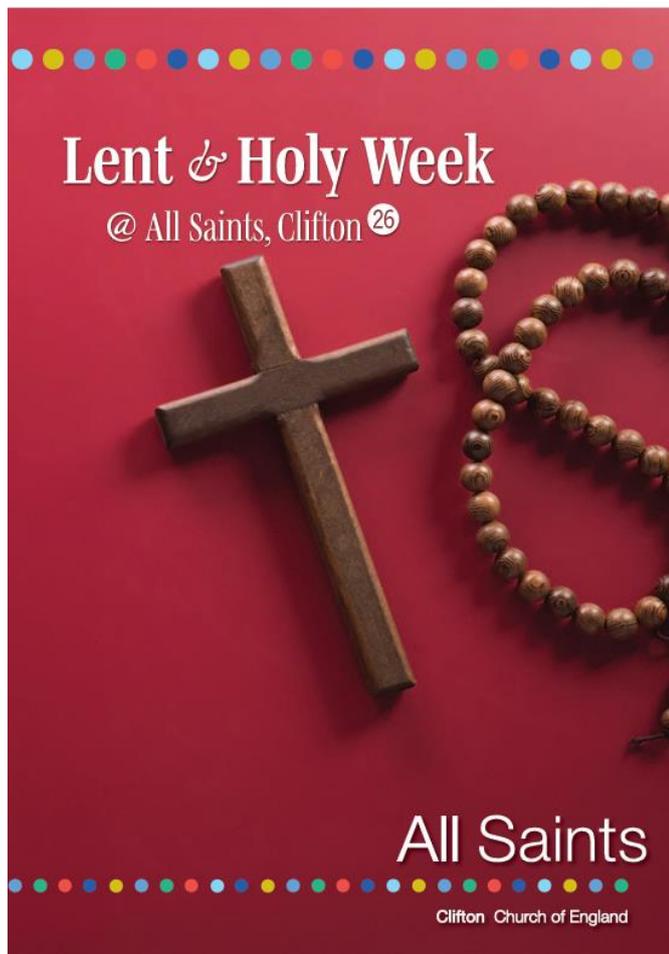
Ash Wednesday

on

18th February

2026

- 10.00am Said Mass with Ashing
- 7.00pm Ash Wednesday Mass – with Ashing



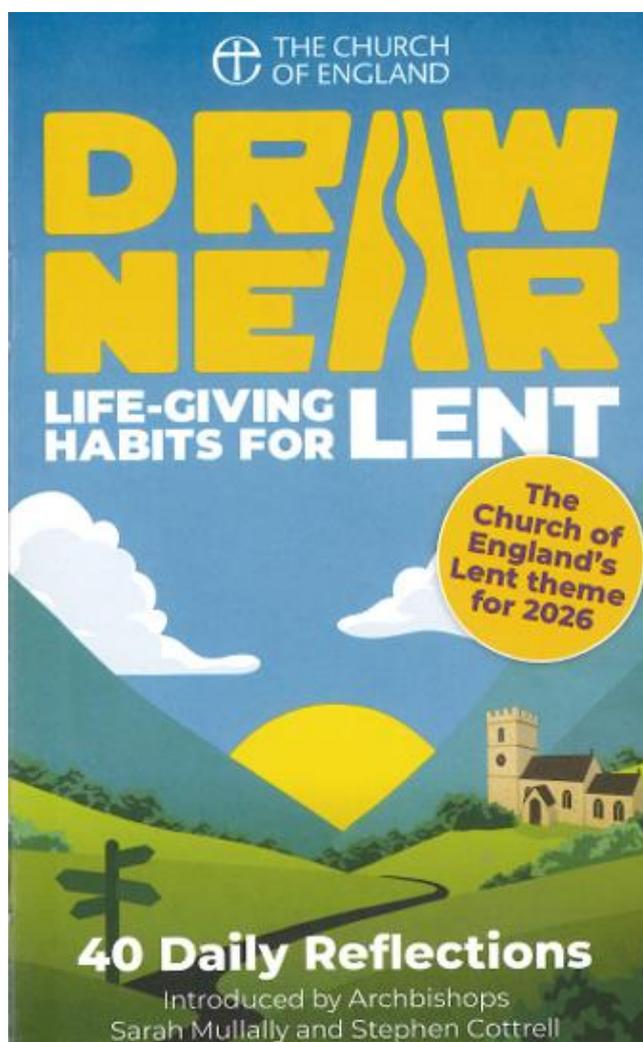
Lent and Holy Week at All Saints

These flyers are available now with all the information about Lent and Holy Week at All Saints and some events in surrounding churches.

**DRAW
NEAR**
LIFE-GIVING
HABITS FOR LENT

The Church of England's theme for Lent 2026 is **Draw Near: Life-giving habits for Lent.**

This year's resources have at their heart the theme of a 'rhythm of life' – habits and patterns which help us grow as disciples of Christ day by day, especially as we prepare to celebrate the great mystery of God's saving love at Easter.

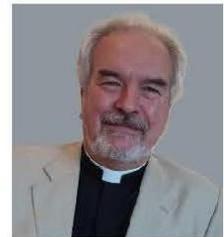


The 2026 All Saints Parish Retreat

Llangasty Retreat House, Friday 15th to Sunday 17th May 2026



Our Parish Retreat will once again be held at Llangasty Retreat House from **Friday 15th to Sunday 17th May 2026**. The retreat leader this year is our own Fr Charles Sutton, Vicar of All Saints, Clifton.



The cost is £250pp for the whole weekend, and includes accommodation and all meals. As always, the retreat will follow a scheduled programme, based around the daily offices and a number of presentations. However, you can choose entirely what you want to join in with – some just use the time to rest! **The Parish Retreat is always a silent retreat** (from after supper on the first evening, until before lunch on Sunday), **but you are of course free to talk in your rooms or anywhere outside in the grounds of the retreat house.**

Numbers are limited, so **book now** by adding your name/contact details to the Sign-up Sheet in the Church porch OR by sending an email to Helen (helen@helensutton.com)

*NB. The full cost @ £250 will be due by Friday 1st May & is non-refundable.
Information emails/letters will be sent out a week beforehand, with full payment information and the programme for the weekend.*

See the All Saints website for full information on this year's retreat via the link & QR code below:

<https://tinyurl.com/2yyc8ynr>





Taizé for Lent at All Saints

Sunday, 15th February, 5.00 pm

Please come and enjoy a cup of tea (or coffee) followed by a simple, meditative service based on the worship practised by the ecumenical Taizé community in France (www.taize.fr).

Everyone is welcome - all those who have a Christian faith and those who struggle to believe.

This will be a contemplative service in a relaxed, candlelit setting, with beautiful chants, prayerful silence, and short readings. Taizé chants are repeated many times to help quiet the mind and enable reflection. You are free to join in with the singing or drop out at any point.

Tea will be served from **4.30 pm**. The Taizé service starts at **5.00 pm** and will last around 45 minutes.

(image copyright © Ateliers et Presses de Taizé, 71250 Taizé, France)

The All Saints Bar - Everyone's welcome

Open after Mass every Sunday up-stairs in the Randall Room, the Bar provides a good opportunity to meet and get to know one another in a relaxed social environment.

We have a 'club licence' which enables us legally to sell alcoholic drinks. There is an annual subscription of £1 on you first visit, or you can be 'signed-in' as a guest.

We offer a wide range of alcoholic, 0% and soft drinks at low prices - and we are still able to make a profit. At our annual AGM, Bar members can decide prices and donations. Last year we donated £1100 to All Saints, the Sudanese Students Fund and the USPG Lent Appeal. Watch out for this year's AGM in the Spring.

The Bar continues to play an important part in the social life of All Saints. We're open to all. Why not pay us a visit? You'll be very welcome.

Janice Hopkins
Bar Steward

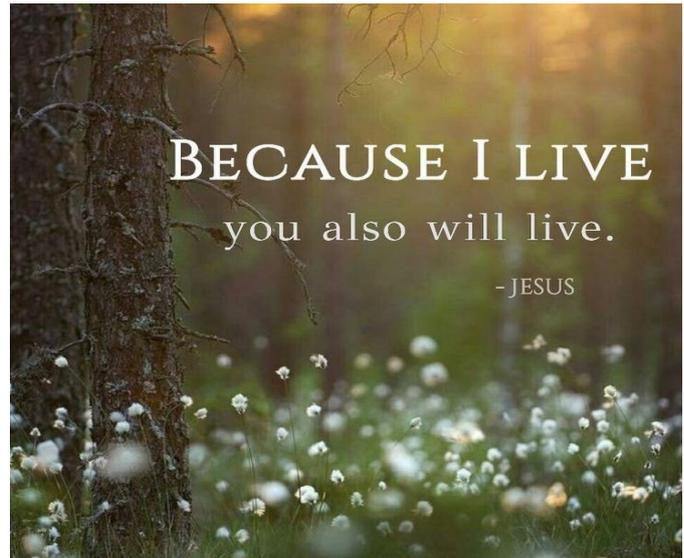


Prayers Requests

'In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live.'

(John 14: 19).

Please let Fr Charles know of anyone who would like to be remembered within the weekly prayer list or anyone who you would like to be remembered in prayer.



Those of the parish and our hearts whom we remember in our Prayers:

Sunday

Tabitha Clark, Ruth and Richard Harding, Katie Norman, Neal Gordon, Joyce Shepherd, Cynthia Ashford Nicky Epinay Sarah Jean Bradford Andrew French Swarna Simpson Jenny Oates Sister Rosie Martin Rogers Gillian Clark William and Lincoln Debbie Gibbs Sue GayLard – Hughes Aiden Downton Lucy Briggs- Owen Sara Maitland Jenny Jennings

Monday

Sathia Aruliah Susie King

Tuesday.

Pam Parker Oussama and Claire Sader

Wednesday

Katrina and Katherine King, Philip Miles, Samantha Tucker, Maureen Mumford Vy and Angel Wray Jennie Williams

Thursday

Remie Clarke

Friday

Charlotte Hopkins, Caroline Semon, Nadine Benn The O'Sullivan family

Saturday

The Departed

Hugh Farry Lucille Osafa Mary Whittington Diana Verity Rhona Bennett Tim Draycott Arthur Cleaver Jonathan Welland Gwladys Hughes Antony Keyworth-Berridge Alice Teitz

Years' Minds - this week we remember:

Mike Saunders Jill Masefield Jeanne Callow. Bernice McCabe

