

Mass times and intentions: 17th – 25th February 2024

Saturday	17	FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT 18.00 – D'Souza Family – Thanksgiving
Sunday	18	11.30 – The People of the Parish
Monday	19	No Mass
Tuesday	20	Tuesday of the First Week of Lent 10.00 – Efe Mekako - Birthday
Wednesday	21	Wednesday of the First Week of Lent 10.00 – Mary Rose intentions
Thursday	22	The Chair of St Peter the Apostle 10.00 – Ellen Heneghan RIP
Friday	23	Friday of the First Week of Lent 10.00 – Geraldine McFadden intentions
Saturday	24	Saturday of the First Week of Lent 10.00 – Salvador Fernandes RIP
		SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT 18.00 – The People of the Parish
Sunday	25	11.30 – Elizabeth – God's blessings

- **Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament & Holy Rosary** – Wednesday & Thursday, after the Holy Mass
- **Stations of the Cross** – Tuesday, Friday & Saturday, after the Holy Mass

Mass Intentions / Offerings: Special envelopes are available at the back of Church. If you would like Mass offered on a particular date or anniversary, please let the Parish Priest know well in advance – the sooner the better. Thank you for your co-operation.

Mass Attendance last weekend: 269

Offertory Collection last weekend: £ 763.71

Renovation fund: £ 165.00

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a joyous week and I look forward, very much, to getting to know you all and working with you for the good of our Parish.

CATHOLIC PARISH OF THE DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD

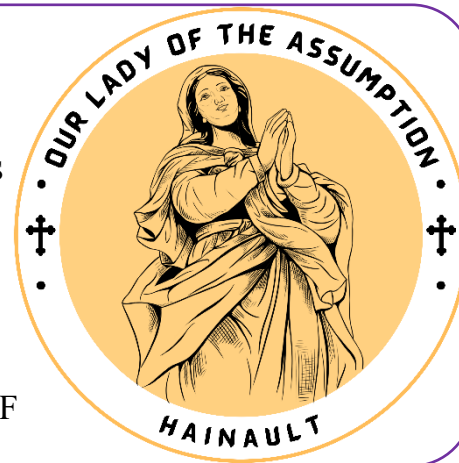
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FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT – 18th February 2024

Parish Mass Book – Sunday Readings – pgs. 148-150

Hymn Book numbers for Sunday Mass

351 – Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us

128 – Come, Lord Jesus, come (v. 1, 3, 5, 6)

185 – Forty days and forty nights

227 – God's spirit is in my heart

Dear brothers and sisters,

Strange as it may seem to us so soon after Advent and Christmas, but this is the first Sunday of Lent. On Ash Wednesday, we began our Lenten Pilgrimage with Jesus as we prepare to celebrate Easter. However, we have some way to go with Jesus and each other before we can experience the joy and new life of Easter.

Our gospel this Sunday sees Jesus being led into the desert. The gospel puts it rather more seriously than Jesus *being led* into the desert! It opens with the words: 'The Spirit drove Jesus into the wilderness (desert) and remained with him for forty days.' Why was Jesus led or driven in to the desert?

The desert in Jewish history is very important. When God freed and saved the People of Israel from slavery in Egypt, they spent forty years in the desert. They wandered and sometimes got lost as they tried to find their way to the Promised Land. This was not an easy journey for them. At times they lost faith in each other and in God. They forgot the promise

that God made with them; 'I will be your God and you will be my people.' As they made their way through the desert, many would have stopped travelling and settled near the closest oasis or watering hole. Some others would have joined other tribes and religions that they met along the way. Famously, when they were at their lowest, they made a statue of a golden calf and began to worship it. They had forgotten where they had come from, what God had done for them and lost sight of where God was leading them.

It is no surprise that we begin Lent with Jesus in the desert. Like his ancestors, he too is tried, tested and tempted. However, Jesus refused to give up or give in so quickly or so easily. Although our gospel for this Sunday is written by St. Mark, the gospel of St. Matthew gives us more information about what might have happened to Jesus. He is tempted with the false gifts of power, prestige and wealth. His power and identity come from God. Jesus knows who he is, where he comes from and where he is going on his own journey. He leaves the desert with these powerful words which he offers us today; 'The time has come, the kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent, and believe the Good News.' What is this Good News that Jesus asks us to hear and believe? It is the good news that each of us is created, loved and forgiven by God.

As we begin our own Lenten journey today, we need to recall and remember that we are not setting out on this journey on our own. God is with us walking by our side every step of the way. When we are tempted, we need to follow the example of Jesus. He did not rely on his own strength. He turned to God and asked for help which he received. We will not be able to walk the Lenten journey on our own. We need to realise that like Jesus, we too need God's help, support, guidance and protection. Whenever we feel tired or ready to give up or give in, we need to turn to God for encouragement. We know that God will be with us during Lent as God was with Jesus when he was in the desert. God will never leave us alone.

Amen!

Refreshments after Sunday Mass

I would like to invite you to join us for refreshments after the Sunday Mass in the Parish Hall. Please join us for a cup of tea or coffee, some biscuits and a chance to meet, socialise and get to know each other.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Confession is available every Saturday during Adoration and Holy Rosary and on request on weekdays during Adoration and Holy Rosary after the morning Mass.

Parish Repository

We stock a wide range of gifts, cards and devotional items. Please put your payment in the box by the gift tables. Fr. Tarciziu will be happy to sign Mass Cards and Bless devotional items.

Church renovation fund

You can make a donation to the Parish, to help with the renovation of our Church, by scanning the QR Code and entering the appropriate amount. Any donation would be most welcome.



Account Name: **Catholic Church Hainault The Assumption**

Sort Code: **40-13-22**

Account Number: **31019244**

Standing Order / Gift Aid

Thank you so much for setting up a Standing Order and taking the opportunity to Gift Aid.

If you have not done so already, please collect your new gift aid boxes/envelopes from the table at the back of the Church. Thank you!

The Season of Lent

The Season of Lent is a period of 40 days during which Christians remember the events leading up to and including the death of Jesus Christ, whose life and teachings are the foundation of Christianity.

It is a time of reflection and of asking for forgiveness, and when Christians prepare to celebrate Jesus's resurrection at the feast of Easter, which comes at the very end of Lent.

CAFOD's Family Fast Day

CAFOD's Family Fast Day in Lent is coming up on **Friday 23rd February**. On this day we are encouraged to eat more simply and to make a donation to CAFOD's appeal for 2024. Envelopes will be handed out after mass. These envelopes can be returned directly to CAFOD. Thank you!