

February 2023

On the 22nd day of this month (February) we keep ASH WEDNESDAY and the beginning of our Lenten preparation for the great feasts of Easter. We say **Feasts** of Easter because ,just like Christmas, when we have spent so much time preparing (40 days) Easter is not just a one-day Celebration but it sets off a 'chain reaction' ...Resurrection leads to Ascension and to the giving of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.... and then the **time of Pentecost** in which we are living, the time of the Holy Spirit who leads us to the complete truth of who Jesus is and who teaches us in turn how to 'translate' that truth into our own way of living.

No sooner were the Christmas Puddings removed from the shelves than the Easter Eggs appeared – and so the society around us (or at least the shopping aspect of it !) moved on relentlessly to ' the next big thing '. However as we said about Advent so also we say about Lent – SLOW DOWN, PACE YOURSELF and let the Season shape **you** rather than the other way around ! One very practical way of letting this happen is to take the Liturgy of each day of the season of Lent as our reading and reflecting material.... If you have a daily missal then use that, there are publications such as *Magnificat* - or else you might have access through an App on your computer or mobile phone; however we do it, we can allow the Liturgy of the Church to enrich our days. The prayers, reflections and Scripture readings which go to make up the Liturgy of the Church are the distillation of centuries of prayed experience - so we can readily rely on it as a sure guide for our own praying in this Year of Our Lord 2023 and our deepening of closeness to the God who wishes to be so close to us.

A pure heart create for me, O God

Put a steadfast spirit within me

(*from Psalm 50 – used at the Ash Wednesday Mass*)

A fruitful and blessed Lent.

Father Philip