

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her.
Be joyful, all who were in mourning;
exult and be satisfied at her consoling breast.

Cf. Is 66: 10-11

COLLECT

O God, who through your Word
reconcile the human race to yourself in a wonderful way,
grant, we pray,
that with prompt devotion and eager faith
the Christian people may hasten
toward the solemn celebrations to come.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the
Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

FIRST READING

A reading from the Book of Samuel. 1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a

In those days: The Lord said to Samuel, 'Fill your horn with oil, and go. I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.' When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, 'Surely the Lord's anointed is before him.' But the Lord said to Samuel, 'Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.' And Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, 'The Lord has not chosen these.' Then Samuel said to Jesse, 'Are all your sons here?' And he said, 'There remains yet the youngest, but behold, he is keeping the sheep.' And Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send and get him, for we will not sit down till he comes here.' And he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. And the Lord said, 'Arise, anoint him, for this is he.' Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. And the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon David from that day forward.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 23(22):1-3a. 3b-4. 5. 6. R.1

R. The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures
where he gives me repose.
Near restful waters he leads me;
he revives my soul.

He guides me along the right path,
for the sake of his name.
Though I should walk in the valley of the shadow of death,
no evil would I fear, for you are with me.
Your crook and your staff will give me comfort.

You have prepared a table before me
in the sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell
for length of days unending.

SECOND READING

A reading from the First Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians. Ephesians 5:8-14

Brothers and Sisters: At one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light, for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true, and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, 'Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.'

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL

Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus.
I am the light of the world, says the Lord;
whoever follows me will have the light of life.
Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus.

John 8:12

GOSPEL

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

(Shorter form)

At that time: As Jesus passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. And his disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' Jesus answered, 'It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.' Having said these things, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud and said to him, 'Go, wash in the pool of Siloam' (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

The neighbours and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, 'Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'It is he.' Others said, 'No, but he is like him.' He kept saying, 'I am the man.' So they said to him, 'Then how were your eyes opened?' He answered, 'The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, "Go to Siloam and wash." So I went and washed and received my sight.' They said to him, 'Where is he?' He said, 'I do not know.'

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, 'He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see.' Some of the Pharisees said, 'This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.' But others said, 'How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?' And there was a division among them. So they said again to the blind man, 'What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?' He said, 'He is a prophet.'

The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, 'Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?' His parents answered, 'We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.' His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, 'He is of age; ask him.'

So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, 'Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner.' He answered, 'Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.' They said to him, 'What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?' He answered them, 'I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples? And they reviled him, saying, 'You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.' The man answered, 'Why, this is an amazing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshipper of God and does his will, God listens to him. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.' They answered him, 'You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?' And they cast him out.

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Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' He answered, 'And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?' Jesus said to him, 'You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you.' He said, 'Lord, I believe', and he worshipped him. Jesus said, 'For judgement I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.' Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, 'Are we also blind?' Jesus said to them, 'If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, "We see", your guilt remains.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

We place before you with joy these offerings,
which bring eternal remedy, O Lord,
praying that we may both faithfully revere them
and present them to you, as is fitting,
for the salvation of all the world.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

The Lord anointed my eyes: I went, I washed,
I saw and I believed in God.

Cf. Jn 9:11,38

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

O God, who enlighten everyone who comes into this world,
illuminate our hearts, we pray,
with the splendour of your grace,
that we may always ponder
what is worthy and pleasing to your majesty
and love you in all sincerity.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

John 9:1-41

Our Faith on Sunday

GOSPEL REFLECTION



In this Sunday's gospel Jesus gives sight to the man who was blind from birth. His is a physical blindness, but we also encounter the spiritual blindness of the

Pharisees which Jesus condemns because they are convinced that they can see. There is a physical blind spot located on the retina at the back of the eye but we can also speak of a spiritual blind spot; and the more we deny its existence, the more we confirm its presence. And since I cannot see my own blind spot, I must open myself to Jesus who alone can remove it. Jesus came into the world so that "those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind". With the latter it is a self-inflicted blindness caused by spiritual pride; the pride of those who can see the speck in the eye of their neighbour but refuse to see the log in their own eye. At the beginning of this gospel account the disciples wanted to know from Jesus what sin caused the man to be born blind. At the end of the passage Jesus makes it clear that the real sin is the presumption of being

without sin and therefore of rejecting the light who came into the world. It is like saying: "I can already see so what do I need the light for". Lent is the time to come to terms with the fact that we are all spiritually born blind. Is not this the cause of all the wars that have been with us from the dawn of history? Wasn't this the reason why Cain could not see that he was his brother's keeper? Let us ask God in this Lenten season to open our eyes so that we can see every neighbour as a brother or sister to be loved as God loves each one of us.



POPE FRANCIS' ENCYCLICAL
FRATELLI TUTTI
BROTHERS AND SISTERS ALL



THE ULTIMATE FOUNDATION

275. It should be acknowledged that "among the most important causes of the crises of the modern world are a desensitized human conscience, a distancing from religious values and the prevailing individualism accompanied by materialistic philosophies that deify the human person and introduce worldly and material values in place of supreme and transcendental principles".²⁶⁴ It is wrong when the only voices to be heard in public debate are those of the powerful and "experts". Room needs to be made for reflections born of religious traditions that are the repository of centuries of experience and wisdom. For "religious classics can prove meaningful in every age; they have an enduring power [to open new horizons, to stimulate thought, to expand the mind and the heart]". Yet often they are viewed with disdain as a result of "the myopia of a certain rationalism".²⁶⁵

264. Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together, Abu Dhabi (4 February 2019): L'Osservatore Romano, 4-5 February 2019, p. 6.
265. Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium (24 November 2013), 256: AAS 105 (2013), 1123.

Jubilee of Seminarians
Meditation Pope Benedict XVI Angelus
2 March 2008

Let us reflect briefly on the account of the man born blind (Jn 9: 1-41). According to the common mentality of the time, the disciples take it for granted that his blindness was the result of a sin committed by him or his parents. Jesus, however, rejects this prejudice and says: "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be made manifest in him" (Jn 9: 3). What comfort these words offer us! They let us hear the living voice of God, who is provident and wise Love! In the face of men and women marked by limitations and suffering, Jesus did not think of their possible guilt but rather of the will of God who created man for life. And so he solemnly declares: "We must work the works of him who sent me.... As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world" (Jn 9: 5)... Dear brothers and sisters, let us allow ourselves to be healed by Jesus, who can and wants to give us God's light!





Catholic Parish of Eastbourne & St Leonards

Churches of St George - Polegate & St Wilfrid - Hailsham

Parish Clergy: Fr Rory Kelly, St Wilfrid's Presbytery, South Road, Hailsham, BN27 3JG

Parish Secretary: Jackie **Parish Office:** St Wilfrid's Presbytery, South Road, Hailsham, BN27 3JG

Hours: Mon, Wed & Fri 9am-12.30pm **Email:** hailsham@abdiocese.org.uk **Telephone:** 01323 841504

Website: <https://saintsgeorgeandwilfrid.co.uk>

Safeguarding Co-ordinator: Maria, 07873 759962

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER: 15 MARCH 2026

Fourth 'Laetare' Sunday of Lent

Sun 15th	9am	St George	-	Mass: Parish Communities' Intention
	10.30am	St Wilfrid	-	Mass: Sybil Knox RIP
Mon 16th	12noon	St Wilfrid	-	Funeral: William Lynch
Mon 16th	2.30pm	St George	-	Rosary Group - All Welcome
Tues 17th		St George	-	No Mass
Wed 18th	10am	St Wilfrid	-	Mass: Michael Hodgson RIP
Thurs 19th	10am	St George	-	Stations of the Cross & Liturgy of the Word

Fifth 'First Passion' Sunday of Lent (Next week is Holy Week)

Sun 22nd	9am	St George	-	Mass: Parish Communities' Intention
	10.30am	St Wilfrid	-	Mass: Christopher Glynn RIP
	3pm	St George	-	Station of the Cross

Confession on request before and after Mass or at other times by arrangement with Father Rory.

Unable to attend mass? The 10.30am St Wilfrid's mass is livestreamed when possible and can be accessed via the Parish Website or via the following: <https://saintsgeorgeandwilfrid.co.uk/online-masses-and-recordings/>

Facebook: https://m.facebook.com/gary.westcar#_=_

Newsletter items: Please send to Jackie at hailsham@abdiocese.org.uk, tel.841504 or by hand marked NEWSLETTER, to Fr. Rory's House by 9am Wednesday.

Local Catholic Education Contacts: St Thomas a Becket Nursery School: Tel 01323 725977

St Thomas a Becket Primary School: Tel 01323 737221 St Richard's Catholic College, Bexhill: Tel 01424 731070

USEFUL PARISH INFORMATION

St Wilfrid's Planned Giving Contact (01323) 832577

St George's Planned Giving Contact (01323) 832577

St George's & St. Wilfrid's

Finance Committee Treasurer Monika Beaver

Chairperson of the Finance Committee Gerry Palmer

ALL CORRESPONDENCE VIA THE PRIEST'S HOUSE PLEASE

Polegate Hall Hire (01323) 504753

Hailsham Hall Hire: (01323) 841504/Email at above address

Make your offertory donations go further! By simply signing up to the Gift Aid scheme, we can claim back an extra **25p** on every £1 you donate – **at no extra cost to you.** To join, contact Gerry today: pfc.hailsham@abdiocese.org.uk

Parish Safeguarding Reps:

St George's: Maria - 07873759962

St Wilfrid's: Maria - 07873759962

CROSSLINK CHURCHES TOGETHER, HAILSHAM: Volunteer needed contact Father Rory

Churches Together in Polegate/Willingdon/Hampden Park/Hydneye Contact: Anne Bowe Tel: 07808 175455

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS those who are unwell & those named in the books in our churches

Amy Jenkins, Lily May, Joshua Hardy, Peter & Teresa Zurenkas, Anne Holt, Margaret, Rosie Tuson, Lilian Summers, Sue Nye, Tom Woodrow-Spencer, Laurey Stimpson, Nicole McCutchan, Nellie Oakshott, Jean Molloy, Alan Smith, Julie Martin, Holly Leone, Gill Standen, Letty Booth, Thomas Pailey, Thomas Guy, Michael O'Regan, Richard Streeter, Patricia Delaney, Graham, Pamela Swanston, Jean & Chris Littlewood, Jean Skelton, Jennifer, Peter Mitchell, Madeleine Waters, Andrew and Gerry Page.

Warm Welcome! We're glad to have you at Mass, especially visitors.

New to the parish or looking to reconnect? Fill out a welcome form in the porch or speak to Fr. Rory - we'd love to meet you and help in any way!

Thank you from CAFOD:

Thank you for your generous support to Family Fast Day. You have raised an amazing £690 to help families in Zimbabwe and South Sudan grow food despite drought and floods. A further £80 would fund 10 floating vegetable beds. It's not too late to donate. Please pick up a CAFOD envelope or visit [Lent Appeal 2026](#). You can also sponsor Gerry and Teresa Palmer, each walking 200km in 40 days for the CAFOD Big Lent Walk. Sponsor forms are at the back of church or donate online. All funds go directly to CAFOD. (QR code is for our Lent walk)



Parish Spring Fair on 28th March – We Urgently Need Your Help

Our Spring Fair is fast approaching, but at the moment we simply don't have enough items or volunteers to run many of the stalls. Without more help in the next week, some of our most popular stalls may not be able to open.

If you are able to help in **any** of the following ways, it would make a real difference:

Items we urgently need

- Bottles and Gifts for the Tombola
- Nearly new toys and games
- Books
- Good quality bric-a-brac
- Jams and Preserves
- Spring Items such as Easter Cards, plants, bulbs, and small garden tools
- Homemade cakes (on the day)

Volunteers needed

- People to run stalls
- Helpers for set-up and clearing away
- Bakers for the cake stall

Even **one bag of items or one hour of your time** helps make the day possible.

Please bring donations to church this Sunday or contact pfc.hailsham@abdiocese.org.uk if you can help with a stall.

Our parish fair is not only a wonderful community event but also an important fundraiser for the life of the church — **but it can only happen with your support.**

Thank you to everyone who has already offered help. If you have been meaning to sign up, **now is the time.**

Join me in supporting Mary's Meals!

I am hosting an event on Friday 20th March at 11 am, in Willingdon. We will listen to one of the lectures on the course "Life Lessons from the Great Books," debate the topic and collect donations for Mary's Meals (marysmeals.org), a charity that provides school meals to children in some of the world's poorest countries. It costs just £19.15 to provide a child with meals in a place of education for a whole school year. Giving £2, £5, £10 or more can help fund meals for many children. Please, call Mercè on 07855452741 for more details and to confirm attendance.

OUR NEW PARISH

The New Parish will be overseen by a Clergy Team, moderated by Fr Kevin Dring. The team will work closely with Hub Secretaries, Hub Leadership Groups and lay representatives to support pastoral planning, governance and the shared mission of the Parish. The West Hub covering Eastbourne, Polegate, Hampden Park, Hailsham and the East Hub; St Leonard's, Hastings, Bexhill, Battle and Rye.

East Hub Secretary: Elizabeth Fitch

stleonards@abdiocese.org.uk 01424 602077

West Hub Secretary: Cheryl Wood

eastbourneolor@abdiocese.org.uk 01323 723222

New Parish Website: www.eastbourne-stleonards.org.uk

A&B Walking Pilgrimage Taster April 2026: A pilgrimage taster, based in the village of Old in their home county of Northamptonshire. This will be the traditional mini pilgrimage/pilgrimage reunion format of 2 nights in a hall, with a walk and evening meal on the Saturday. All are welcome, especially those who have not been on one of our pilgrimages before! The dates are Fri 17th – Sun 19th April.

The full details are in the [invitation / booking form](#). The easiest way to apply is probably to cut and paste the booking form into an email, add your responses and email it to mini26@thepilgrims.org.uk. Please email if planning on the walk only.

St Patrick's Day Tea – Sunday 22 March

Come and join us after the 10:30 Mass at St Wilfrid's for a warm and cheerful St Patrick's Day Tea. We'll have Irish music, tea, and plenty of cakes, and a chance to enjoy good company together.

There may even be a little singing and dancing for those who feel inspired.

Everyone is very welcome — do come along and celebrate with us!

Sunday Charity Breakfast: Our next Charity Breakfast will be Sunday **29th March** after mass at St George's when we will be supporting "Smile Train". We hope you, your family and friends can support this.

Parish Over 50's Club: We next meet on Thursday 26th March, 2-4pm, Anyone over 50 is welcome, just turn up on the day.

Prayer for the Election of a Bishop

O God, eternal shepherd,

who govern your flock

with unfailing care, grant in your boundless fatherly love

a pastor for your Church

who will please you by his holiness

and to us show watchful care.

Through Christ our Lord

Amen

Dates for your Diary:

Sun 22 March, After 10.30am Mass, St Patrick's Day Tea, St W's

Thurs 26 March, 2-4pm - Over 50's Club, St W's Hall.

Fri 27 March, 11-12pm - Parish Bereavement Gp, St W's Hall.

Sat 28 March, 10am-2pm - Spring Fair, St W's Hall.

Sun 29 March, 10am - Charity Breakfast, St G's Hall.

Fri 3rd April, Family Stations of the Cross, St W's.

Sun 12 April, After Mass - St G's Quarterly Com Mtg, St G's.

Thurs 16 April, 6-7.30pm - 1st Holy Com Mtg, St W's Hall.

Wed 13 May, 6-7.30pm - 1st Holy Com Mtg, St W's Hall.

1st March - Mass Attendance: St W's 134 St G's 80

NEW PARISH UPDATE:

now we are without a Bishop, some are wondering how this affects the journey of change we are all on in the Diocese to become new larger Parishes. Already, before Archbishop Richard left us, 3 of the 11 Deaneries of the Diocese had legally become new Parishes (Brighton & Hove; Guildford, Weybridge). For the rest of us we are asked to keep momentum on our journey of preparing, so that when a new Bishop is appointed, we will be in good shape. Certainly, a new Bishop will bring "fresh eyes and ears" to some of the detail of how we come together as new Parishes, but he will no doubt be committed to keeping the spirit of the Pastoral Plan. In our own Deanery (Eastbourne to Rye) we have lots of work underway to help us share and collaborate together in good and helpful ways.