

## This Month's Liturgy; March 2020

The month of March opened for us with the first Sunday of the Lenten Season - and so the whole month which lies before us is marked by the purple of recollection, penitence and confession. There are certain notable exceptions to the purple, when white intervenes, Saint Patrick (17<sup>th</sup>), Saint Joseph (19<sup>t</sup>) and the Annunciation of the Lord (25<sup>th</sup> March, nine months before the Feast of the Nativity).

Purple is a royal colour, a colour of penitence but also a colour of matters of significance – we have a saying, 'it was a purple time', that is, it was a significant time, a time or event of importance. Lent is indeed such a time of significance for us all because it invites us to concentrate on **our Baptism** as we walk with the Catechumens and those preparing to celebrate the Sacraments for the first time at Easter.

With no flowers on the sanctuary, the Gloria and Alleluia 'rested' for the season, the austere ashes and the theme of 'have mercy on me God in your kindness', the liturgy seeks to pare things down to their basics – not only to allow us better to **appreciate the basics** but also then to **rejoice** all the more at Eastertide as the white vestments and banners return, the joyous music and flowers are seen and heard and the abundance of the water of Baptism helps us to express the ***Gaudium Paschale*** – the joy of Easter.

In some of our churches you may have been fortunate enough to hear an addition which is made to the Epiphany Mass; a Proclamation was made after the Gospel of the 'high days and holy days' of the year which was about to unfold. It serves to remind the church that the very heart of all that we do is the celebration of the Easter Triduum – Holy Thursday, Good Friday and the Vigil and First Mass of Easter. Perhaps now would be a good time to mark in our diaries the days of the Triduum and to set aside the time needed to celebrate the liturgies of those days in communion with our parishes and communities.

*Each Easter—as on each Sunday—the Holy Church makes present the great and saving deed by which Christ has forever conquered sin and death. From Easter are reckoned all the days we keep holy.*

I wish you a fruitful and enriching Lenten season

Canon Philip