



# RAF ROMAN CATHOLIC

## LENT 2021 UPDATE



*'Lent comes providentially to reawaken us, to shake us from our lethargy.'* – Pope Francis

Welcome to the Lent 2021 update for the RAF Roman Catholic Community. I hope that this update finds you and your loved ones well as we journey together, not only in navigating a roadmap to a return to some normality, but also to the great feast of Easter when Christ rose triumphant from the dead. During this season of Lent, Catholics everywhere are encouraged to prepare for Easter by purifying the body and soul. Lent is a time of reconciliation, fasting, abstinence, prayer, and almsgiving or undertaking other spiritual and corporal works of mercy. I hope that you will be able to join with one of the events or initiatives outlined in this update. I especially want to invite you to take part in the on-line session taking place on Saturday 13 March with a theme of 'Spiritual Resilience: Praying Through the Storm'. More details below. My prayer is that all of us will find concrete ways to fully experience this season of Lent.

**Rev (SqN Ldr) Deacon Dave Skillen, RAF Principal Roman Catholic Chaplain**

**...Events...Events...Events...Events...**



*Spiritual Resilience:  
Praying through the Storm*  
DEVELOP A SENSE OF PURPOSE IN LIFE AND MISSION

**Online group guided session**  
An initiative of the Principal Roman Catholic Chaplain for any member of the RAF Whole Force Community regardless of faith background.

**Saturday 13th March 2021  
1000-1215**

Delivered by Fr Kelvin Ekhoegbe of the Order of Discalced Carmelites, UK

To register your interest in joining this session please contact either of the following by 11 Mar 21

The RAF PRCC Padre Dave Skillen  
David.Skillen100@mod.gov.uk

The RAF PRCC Pastoral Assistant Jem Wynne  
rafprccpastoralassistant457@outlook.com

### **Spiritual Resilience: Praying through the Storm – 1000-1215 Saturday 13 March 2021**

Do you wish to develop a sense of purpose in life and mission? You are invited to take part in an on-line group guided session led by Fr Kelvin Ekhoegbe of the Order of Discalced Carmelites. The session will comprise of a presentation on spiritual resilience, shared reflection, and guided prayer. Spiritual resilience is one of the 4 areas of resilience, alongside physical, mental, and social, that the RAF is keen for individuals and formations to develop. To register your interest in joining the session, which is free and open to any member of the RAF Whole Force community regardless of faith background, contact either the RAF PRCC Padre Dave Skillen ([David.skillen100@mod.gov.uk](mailto:David.skillen100@mod.gov.uk)) or the RAF PRCC Pastoral Assistant Jem Wynne ([rafprccpastoralassistant457@outlook.com](mailto:rafprccpastoralassistant457@outlook.com)) by 11 Mar. Places are limited so please register your interest early.

### **Bishopric of the Forces Retreats 2021**

Are you in need of stillness and sanctuary? Scripture gives us many examples of our Lord Jesus withdrawing from noise and bustle to pray and to gain respite (Mark 3:7, Luke 5:16). Subject to Government restrictions, there is the opportunity to find that same peace at one of the 3 Bishopric of the Forces Retreats planned for 2021:



- Belmont Abbey, Hereford
- Worth Abbey, Sussex
- Ampleforth Abbey, Nth Yorks

- 21 – 24 Jun 21
- 4 – 7 Oct 21
- 29 Nov – 2 Dec 21



DIN Reference 2020DIN01-124 gives more details. In the meantime, to express an interest or to receive an application form, contact [Caroline.Routledge475@mod.gov.uk](mailto:Caroline.Routledge475@mod.gov.uk) or [rafprccpastoralassistant457@outlook.com](mailto:rafprccpastoralassistant457@outlook.com).

### **Chrism Mass -1200 Tue 23 March 2021 RC Cathedral of St Michael & St George, Aldershot**

The annual Chrism Mass brings together the Bishop, priests, deacons and lay people of the Armed Forces to celebrate the blessing of the oils of catechumens, chrism, and the sick. In line with Government guidelines, the Cathedral remains open for public worship. Those local to Aldershot are invited to attend the Mass in person which will be live streamed on Zoom. Details of the Zoom invitation can be found [here](#).



## RAF Annual Mass – 1100 Sunday 18 Apr 2021 RC Cathedral, Aldershot

The first RAF Annual Mass will take at 1100 on Sunday 18 April at the RC Cathedral of St Michael and St George in Aldershot. A new initiative for 2021, the annual Masses provide an opportunity for those from the whole RAF RC family to gather together to worship and share in the Eucharist in the presence of Bishop Paul Mason, the RC Bishop to the Forces, and the RAF Principal Roman Catholic Chaplain alongside his Chaplains and the faithful.

Those local to Aldershot are invited to attend the Mass in person which will be live streamed on Zoom. Details of the Zoom invitation can be found [here](#). A second RAF Annual Mass is planned for Thu 21 Oct 2021 at the Central Church of the RAF, St Clement Danes in London. More details to follow.



## Unlocking the Mystery of The Bible – on-line course starting Thu 22 April 2021

You are invited to take part in an on-line Bible study course called 'Unlocking the Mystery of The Bible'. The course will run over 8 sessions on a Thursday evening starting on 22 April and finishing on 17 Jun (no session on 3 Jun). Starting at 1930 each session lasts for about 90 minutes. The course, facilitated by the RAF RC Chaplains and open to the RAF Whole Force community, is one of a series offered by [Ascension Press](#). Unlocking the Mystery of the Bible shows how the 14 narrative books of the Bible tell the complete story of our salvation from Adam and Eve to Christ and the Church.

To register your interest in joining the course contact either the RAF PRCC Padre Dave Skillen ([David.skillen100@mod.gov.uk](mailto:David.skillen100@mod.gov.uk)) or the RAF PRCC Pastoral Assistant Jem Wynne ([rafprccpastoralassistant457@outlook.com](mailto:rafprccpastoralassistant457@outlook.com)).



## Bishop of the Forces Lenten Letter

Read Bishop Paul Mason's Lenten Letter [here](#).



## CAFOD Lent Fast Day

Lent is a traditional time for giving alms to charity. Further details of CAFOD's (the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development) Lent appeal can be found [link](#).

## Papal Reflections (1)

To mark the eighth anniversary of Pope Francis' election, the Edinburgh Jesuit Centre will be hosting a series of talks each Tuesday in Lent by prominent Catholic voices exploring the teaching of The Holy Father. The talks continue at 1930 on Tuesdays throughout Lent. Further details [here](#).

## Papal Reflections (2)

These words of Pope Benedict XVI, spoken on the occasion of the World Youth Day in Madrid in 2011, resonate with us during this time of global pandemic:

*Dear friends, may no adversity paralyse you. Be afraid neither of the world, nor the future, nor of your weakness. The Lord has allowed you to live in this moment of history so that, by your faith, his name will continue to resound throughout the world.*

## And Finally....

If you would like to know more about Catholic life in the RAF, or wish to be added to our database and receive updates about RAF Roman Catholic life, IMP, HCPT etc, get in touch with Jem at [RAFPRCCPastoralAssistant457@outlook.com](mailto:RAFPRCCPastoralAssistant457@outlook.com). To contact the RAF PRCC, Padre Dave Skillen to say hello, request prayers, or to know more about Catholic life in the RAF use [David.skillen100@mod.gov.uk](mailto:David.skillen100@mod.gov.uk).

Check out the revamped [website of The RC Bishopric of the Forces](#).