

A LENTEN & SUMMER PROJECT

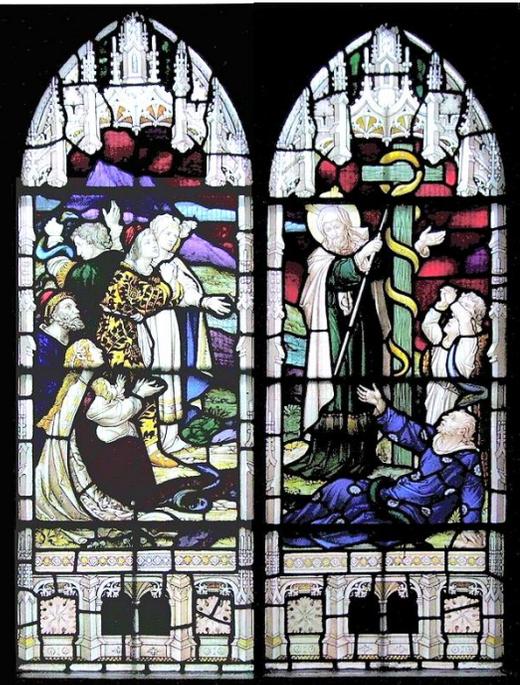
15 February, 2016

On Sunday, 14 February, the First Sunday of Lent, our priest Father David Greenwood read us a Lenten Commission to observe a holy Lent by “self-examination, penitence, prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and by reading and meditating on the word of God.” At the end of the service he introduced our Lenten alms giving project and invited each household to take a plastic bag containing a clear glass cup.

Our first reading for the Sunday service was a reading of a thanksgiving offering from the Book of Deuteronomy and each bag and cup are to build upon the images of that reading. *“... you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from the land that the Lord your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place that the Lord your God will choose as a dwelling for his name. You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time,”* and say *“So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O Lord, have given me.”* You shall set it down before the Lord your God and bow down before the Lord your God.”

The little cup is to collect the spare change that gathers in your house. The brass coins. At the end of each day or on occasion, we are to empty our wallets or change purses of the brass and bronze coins into the cup. Over Lent, each cup should fill up. When that happens it is to be emptied into the plastic bag and the collection resumes. Over and over the cup will fill and be transferred to the bag.

We will do this until Holy Cross Day – 14 September. And then on Sunday 18 September we will bring our coin offerings back to the church. The first scripture reading for Holy Cross reminds us of an earlier offering of brass. From the Book of Numbers, *“The people came to Moses and said, ‘We have*



sinned by speaking against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord to take away the serpents from us.’ So Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said to Moses, ‘Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live.’ So Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of brass and live.” On Holy Cross day we reflect upon the introduction of the caduceus by Moses as an emblem of healing and link it with the action of Christ being raised on the cross as an emblem to bring new life.

And so for the next 31 weeks, we will be gathering our brasses and our bronzes to raise funds for the work and ministry of the church. So that Christ will be proclaimed in word and example, the sacraments will be duly and properly celebrated, the scriptures will be proclaimed, and charitable ministry will be done in thanksgiving, here at All Saints, Marseille.

