



Newsletter: 31st January 2021

Dear All,

I always like to hear about the different customs and traditions in many parts of the world covered by our Ethnic Chaplaincies, Eparchies and Missions. This week I had this account of Ba'ootha Fasting from Dr Subhi Zora of the Chaldean Chaplaincy

Dear Monsignor McHugh

I hope you are safe and well.

I thought of writing to you about what's happening in our Chaldean church during these three days of Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday (25/26/27 of January 2021).

We have just completed three days of fasting. This fasting from all meals and animal produced foods altogether is called Ba'ootha Fasting. It commemorates the 40 days of fasting which the people of Nineveh three millennia ago had done in response to Jonah's call for repentance. God then forgave their wrongdoing and sins and saved their kingdom from destruction.

Every year, three weeks before the start of Lent, we do this fasting. Our Church, along with some other Eastern Churches, do this fasting with prayers as a sign of religious commitment and devotion to the Holy Trinity, God the Father, The Son and the Holy Spirit.

Great occasion to celebrate.

Best wishes and God Bless.

SUBHI.

You will recall last Sunday's First Reading at Mass was the account of Jonah's calling the people to repentance. Our thoughts and prayers are focusing on "Nineveh" in the light of the upcoming visit of Pope Francis to Iraq early March, which is now in some doubt because of recent bomb attacks.

I have heard from Archbishop Bernard about the likely impact of the new Right to Settle in the UK being offered to those leaving Hong Kong in the light of the mainland government's increasing control over the territory. It is estimated that at least 130,000 people could enter through this route during the first year, constituting one of the largest movements of people to the UK in recent history. Many of those could be Catholic, and the Hierarchy would like to see a network of "Welcome Churches" ready to welcome them. Fr Joseph Liang, the Chinese Chaplain, will be discussing this with Archbishop Bernard and me in the coming weeks. I will keep you in the picture.

I am sending you my Homily/Reflection for this weekend in the hope that it may assist you with your own preparations. I refer to the Audience Talk of Pope Francis this week, where he addressed "The Bible, the place where God meets Man." You may like to access it on the Internet; I found it very practical and inspirational as usual!

With prayers and all good wishes,

Mgr Daniel McHugh

Monsignor Daniel McHugh

Co-ordinator for Ethnic Chaplaincies in the Archdiocese
