

**BAPTISMS IN THE PARISH:** If you have a child due for Baptism please let me know as soon as possible. To avoid any disappointment with dates contact the Presbytery to book your date. If you are first-time parents, you need to contact Sharon Chalk, who will organise a Baptismal Preparation of two sessions, and then I will come and visit you in your homes. Please don't forget to collect your Baptismal Information Form.



**WEDDINGS IN 2018:** If you're planning on getting married this year, the parish needs approximately 6 months' notice! If you're getting married abroad, we need at least nine months' notice please Tel No: 020 8508 3492. Documentation and *Marriage Instruction need s to take place.*



**SCIENCE TUITION:** The Secondary science learning centre is running GCSE and A level science classes at St Teresa's Hall (Chingford) and the Beckett Centre (Woodford) in small groups at just £15 a session. Contact us for more information and to book your child a place: Tel: [07940056928](tel:07940056928) or Email: [Secondaryscience@outlook.com](mailto:Secondaryscience@outlook.com)

**MAISONETTE FOR SALE:** With very close proximity to the Church and the High Street. If there are any parishioners who may be interested in this property please Telephone: 01424 224952

**UTILITY BILLS:** As you can appreciate, during the winter months and especially during the recent cold snap, keeping all our buildings heated and warm is an expensive task. February's Gas bill alone was £870.00, I do try to keep the Church and Parish Hall as warm as possible, when people are using them. Please consider these bills when making your weekly Offertory Contributions. With grateful thanks for your continued generosity.

**IN CASES OF EMERGENCY:** Tuesday is usually Fr. John's Day Off. In cases of emergency please call one of the local parishes, either in Epping – Tel: 01992 572516, or the St. Thomas of Canterbury Friary at Woodford Green – Tel: 020 8504 1688. This would also apply if Fr. John is away for a few days break or on Retreat. All the local funeral directors have a contact number for Fr. John if a funeral needs to be arranged in his absence.

Dear Friends in Christ

Fifth Sunday of Lent 2018

St. John's Gospel was written some years after the Synoptic Gospels and is the fruit of the Apostle's long reflection on the life of Jesus. As he reflected John came to understand Jesus' death on the cross as his 'glory' and his 'hour'. It is remarkable, isn't it, that an instrument of torture and execution, on a hill outside the city of Jerusalem, should become the world's greatest symbol of self-sacrificing love? For John, Jesus was born to die: this was his destiny.



Jesus noted that in nature a kernel of wheat has to be buried in the ground – seemingly to die – before it rises again, producing a sheaf of wheat and many seeds. He was speaking prophetically about the fate he knew awaited him. From death comes life, from dying comes rising, from losing our lives comes finding our lives. This is an important principle of the Christian life: one we are called to appropriate and put into practice.

The season of Lent, and especially Holy Week, affords us the opportunity to focus on Jesus' death, his hour of glory, and seek to penetrate ever more deeply the mystery and message of the cross. Scripture teaches us to view Jesus' death as the power of God. In Paul's words, 'the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God'. Do you experience Jesus' cross as God's grace, power and wisdom?



One way we can know the power of the Cross in our own experience is by examining what it is to boast of. We tend to boast of the external: in power, position, possessions and so on. Paul, however, taught that we should boast of the cross. He said: 'far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world'. In other words, he praised and thanked God for Jesus' cross; he glorified in the cross and rejoiced in it. We can be expectant that, as we glory in the cross, we will experience its power to transform our lives.

Dear Friends in Christ,  
2015

Fifth Sunday of Lent

*It is with great joy this week that we welcome our new Bishop Alan Williams to our parish for his Pastoral Visitation and the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation. Bishop Alan will visit St. John Fisher School for an Assembly with the children. The Mass of Confirmation will take place at 7.00pm where 40 of our young people will receive the Sacrament. This is truly a momentous occasion in their lives of faith, and it has been a great joy to have helped them over the past several months prepare for this great day.*



*On behalf of the Candidates for the Sacrament of Confirmation, I would like to thank our six guest speakers over the past several months. They have certainly given a great insight into the importance and the sacredness of the Sacrament of Confirmation. Also I would like to thank*



*our Catechists, who untiringly turn up to help our young people; To Mark Anthony, the Director of the Programme, Shirley Rooney, Andrew Burrowes, Ferdi Tisi, Mark Poulter, Ian Kendal, Ian McLay, & Aidan Potter. The wonderful input and example of these Catechists is truly inspiring for our young people and, for the whole parish community. Thank you!*

*Immediately after the Confirmation Mass, Bishop Alan will greet all the parishioners as they leave the Church. All the Confirmandi and their families are invited into the parish hall for light refreshments; this will be an opportunity to have a personal photo with Bishop Alan. This is also open to any parishioner who wishes to come in for a cup of tea.*

*In the afternoon I will be meeting one-to-one with Bishop Alan; we will be reviewing the whole parish. A Pastoral Visitation of a Parish is a wonderful opportunity to show the chief Shepherd of our Diocese how the Community of Faith continues to grow in this little pocket of the Lord's vineyard.*

May God Bless You All,

**ALTAR SOCIETY:** We are always in need of new members for the parish Altar Society. The Altar Society in this parish has been in existence for many years; they have done such sterling work through the years, and I'm truly grateful to all the members for keeping our churches in such a beautiful condition. If you are able to give an hour or so once a month, please see Veronica Short or any member of the Altar Society. Thank you!

**CHURCH CLEANING FOR EASTER:** Will take place on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March at 9.30am. If anyone is able to come along and give a hand, you would be most welcome, you don't have to belong to the Altar Society, just come along. There will be a cup of tea or coffee available as well.



**NEW PARISH WEBSITE:** The New Parish Website was set up recently. My grateful thanks to Stephen Richardson for doing this for us. You can now access the Weekly Newsletter through the website. The more people who use the website the greater publicity it will give to our parish and the Catholic Church. Please have a look at the Website



**JOURNEY OF FAITH PROGRAMME – RCIA:** We have now completed the formal instruction of our candidates in the Journey of Faith Programme. It has been a wonderful time of spiritual growth and discovery as we have journeyed together over the past several months. Samantha Gell & Lorraine Leith will be received into Full-Communion with the Roman Catholic Faith on Holy Saturday night, which is the high-point of our Holy Week celebrations. Please pray for both of them as they take this very important big step in their faith journey!

If you know of anyone who may be interested in the Roman Catholic Faith, and who would like to know more about the faith, please contact Fr. John at the Presbytery Tel No: 020 8508 3492. The RCIA Programme runs every year; it is a systematic instruction in the Roman Catholic Faith.

JOURNEY  
OF  
FAITH

**BRITISH SUMMER TIME BEGINS  
NEXT WEEKEND  
CLOCKS GO FORWARD ONE HOUR**

## SUNDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2018

**CONFIRMATION REHEARSAL:** Will take place on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30pm Candidates & Sponsors need to be present. Followed immediately by Penitential Service. For our young Confirmandi.

**PARISH CHOIR:** As you know we are very fortunate to have a new Parish Choir Director and Organist, Susan Farrow, and it really does make a difference to our Parish Liturgies. Susan now has two Choir rehearsals a week, Wednesday evening 7pm till 8.00pm and Saturday morning 10.30am till 11.30am. We are looking for new choir members. There are a number of the members from the Contemporary Music Group who also sing in the Parish Choir, everyone is welcome! If you enjoy singing and music, and you want to enrich our Parish Liturgical Celebrations please come along to the rehearsals and Sunday 11.00am Mass. At present the Choir is rehearsing for Holy Week & Easter.



**NOTE TO EVERYONE IN THE CONTEMPORARY MUSIC GROUP:** As the first Sunday in April is Easter Sunday (1<sup>st</sup> April), Susan will be leading the Parish Choir for this special feast day, so the next Mass for our group will be the first Sunday of May (6<sup>th</sup> May); this doesn't however mean that our

singers can have a rest until then! Between now and then, we have Bishop Alan's visit for our Confirmation Mass on Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> March, our Holy Week services and our Easter Vigil and Easter Day Masses.

Fr. John and Susan would be very grateful if as many of our singers as possible could sing at these services with the Parish Choir to add voice to these special occasions. Some of you already do sing with the Parish Choir and all our singers who can join them would be made very welcome. Please look out for the practises that Susan will be holding over the next few weeks and try to attend them if you can. Thanks very much.

**VOLUNTEERS FOR PLAYGROUP:** Parents, Grandparents, Carers, members of the parish. We are in urgent need of more volunteers to help at our Parent & Toddler group which meets every Thursday morning term-time 9.45am – 11.30am in the Church Hall. This is a really lovely friendly group which is invaluable to the young children of our parish. If you can help in any way please get in touch. We appreciate that volunteers cannot be there every week. You can pop into the Parish



Hall one Thursday to register or e.mail Andy on [andrew.godsave@ntlworld.com](mailto:andrew.godsave@ntlworld.com)

### OUR HOLY LENTEN SEASON

**2018:** As we rapidly approach Passiontide and our Holy Week of the Church's liturgical year, we are conscious of the journey that we have been making during this Holy Lenten Season. Lent is our opportunity to spiritually unite ourselves more intimately to Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Saviour. We ultimately know where this journey is going to lead us. The realisation that there is no Easter Sunday without Good Friday; no Resurrection without Crucifixion is our Salvation. The Saving action of Christ on the Cross is the ultimate sacrifice that Jesus could make on behalf of sinful humanity; and he does it willingly offering himself to His Father in a completely selfless act of love. This once and for all action we celebrate every time we gather around the Altar of the Lord; he continues to give his Body and Blood to us as his eternal gift of love; and we are uniquely honoured and privileged to share in his life. His desire is for us to live in his love.

### HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE



**HOLY WEEK:** Hopefully, this Lenten Season has been an opportunity to deepen our relationship with the Living Lord. As we retrace those final steps of Jesus during Holy Week, we truly enter into the Paschal Mystery of his Life, Passion, Death & Resurrection.

If you have never been to any of the Holy Week ceremonies, I entreat you to seriously think about it this year. The very powerful liturgy walks us through the final week of Jesus' life here on earth commencing on Palm Sunday. If you know of someone who may be lapsed from the regular practice of their Catholic faith, please encourage them to come back to church for this Holy Week; convey to them the importance of the life of faith and to be part of this family of faith is totally enriching and life giving!



Holy Week

**LENTEN PARISH PENITENTIAL SERVICE:** As part of our preparations for Easter, we should think seriously about celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Our Penance Service will be on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March at 8.00pm, with visiting priest to help with Confessions. Parents,



please bring your children. Our Catholic obligation is to fulfil our Easter duties, meaning that we should go to Confession at least once a year! All of us need to feel the Lord's loving forgiveness in our lives.

**PARISH GIFT AID SCHEME**

The end of the Financial Year is almost upon us and the New Boxes of Envelopes are ready for collection by those parishioners who belong to the Gift Aid Scheme. I will be outside the Church after all the Weekend Masses 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> March & 24<sup>th</sup>/25<sup>th</sup> March. I shall be grateful if you will please kindly collect your new boxes after the masses on those weekends.

A large proportion of parishioners now belong to the Gift Aid Scheme and the Inland Revenue returns 25p in the pound which raises over £20,000 per year for the parish at no cost to the parishioners. However, only about 60% of the parishioners who belong to the scheme use their envelopes every week, which results in a considerable loss to the parish. If you forget your envelope there are spares at the back of the Church. Just write your number on the envelope or your name if you've forgotten your number.

If you do not belong to the Gift Aid Scheme and pay tax, please give it some serious consideration and join the scheme. All that's required is the completion of a form with your name and address. The parish can then claim back the tax you have paid on your donations such as Offertory Collection, Second Collections, Mass Offerings, and any other donation that you make to the Church. A large number of parishioners now make their Offertory Collection by Standing Order, which means that they do not have to remember to use an envelope. Just ask me and I will give you the appropriate form. You will be given a small box of envelopes for second collections. E.g. Christmas & Easter Offerings, Cafod, etc. If you belong to the Gift Aid Scheme and no longer pay tax, then please let me know and I will cancel the arrangement.

The ongoing running costs of the parish is continually rising, utilities, water, heating lighting in all the properties. Maintenance of all our buildings, the monthly diocesan quota of £2,186.00, Please keep these things in mind, and please join the scheme!

On behalf of Fr John thank you for your continued support  
Brian Carter – Parish Gift Aid Organiser. Tel No: 020 8508 4086

**Lilies at Easter 2018**

*Every year at Easter we remember  
our deceased loved one by decorating  
the Church with White Lilies.*



*If you would like to have a stem of lilies placed in  
the arrangements throughout the Easter Season,  
in memory of a deceased loved one, relatives or friends.  
Please complete this form below and return to the  
Presbytery in an envelope by Maundy Thursday 28<sup>th</sup>  
March 2018*

.....  
*St. Edmund of Canterbury:* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Names: of those remembered:* (Please print clearly)  
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*Amount enclosed* £..... *Gift Aid No:*.....

*From:*.....

**ALL DONATIONS CAN BE GIFT AIDED**

**Please Use Your Spare Gift Aid Envelopes**