

**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.



**LOUGHTON PARISH GIFT AID SCHEME:** Many thanks to all the parishioners who have collected their new Gift Aid Envelopes. The New Financial Year commences this weekend. Would those who have, as yet, not picked up their new envelopes kindly do so as soon as possible? The use of the GA envelopes is extremely important; we are not allowed to claim any tax back if the envelopes are not used. There are always spare envelopes in the porch of the Church.

If you do not belong to the Parish Gift Aid Scheme, and someone in the family pays Income Tax then please consider joining. It is very simple in that we only require you to complete the GA Form with your name and address and Brian Carter will do the rest. Please think seriously about joining the scheme!

We are able to claim back 25pence in the pound for every pound you donate in your envelopes. E.g. if you give £10 per week, we receive an additional £2.50 per week. This certainly mounts up over the financial year.

Brian Carter – Parish Gift Aid Organiser, Tel No: 020 8508 4086

**THY KINGDOM COME:** The Vicariate of Evangelisation, supporting our effort to renew our diocese, has decided to join THY KINGDOM COME 2018 a global wave of prayer for the renewal of the Christian faith. It could not be easier for everyone, of all ages and levels of business, to help our own families, friends, parish, diocese and the nation to renew their friendship with Jesus. All you have to do is to pledge to pray between May 10-20. More information and resources will be made available during the weeks coming up to the event. Meantime, you can log into <https://www.thykingdomcome.global> for more information.

**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,

Second Sunday of Easter 2018

On the 5<sup>th</sup> October 1938, a young religious by the name of Sister Faustina (Helen Kowalska) died in a convent of the Congregation of Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy in Krakow, Poland. Having been born into a very poor farming family, Sister Faustina received only basic education, and so, on entering the convent, she was assigned the most humble and lowly tasks, usually in the kitchen or the vegetable garden.

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1931, however, she began to experience visions of Christ in prayer. She wrote of her first vision in a diary: 'In the evening, when I was in my cell, I became aware of the Lord Jesus clothed in a white garment. One hand was raised in blessing; the other was touching the garment at the breast. From the opening of the garment at the breast there came two large rays, one red and the other pale. In silence I gazed intently at the Lord; my soul was overwhelmed with fear, but also with great joy. After a while Jesus said to me, "paint an image according to the pattern you see, with the inscription: 'Jesus, I trust in you.'"



In another vision Jesus explained the image to her: 'The pale ray stands for the water which makes souls righteous; the red stands for the blood which is the life of souls. These two rays issue forth for the depths of my tender mercy at that time when my agonising heart was opened by a lance on the cross...fortunate is the one who will dwell in their shelter, for the just hand of God shall not lay hold of him.' Today is Divine Mercy Sunday, and through the intercession of St. Faustina we ask for the grace to plumb the depths of God's mercy and love.

*blessed  
are the  
merciful  
for they  
will receive  
mercy*

Pope Francis has made God's mercy almost a motif of his pontificate. He has transformed the noun 'mercy' into a verb, explaining that by receiving God's love, we are 'mercyed', and in showing God's mercy to others, we mercy. 'Mercy', then, is our watchword. Are we merciful as our Father in heaven is merciful?

Dear Friends in Christ,

Second Sunday of Easter 2018

Today we hear in our gospel the post resurrection story of Thomas, who was not present when the Lord first appeared to the Apostles. Thomas is the typical stereotype of those who refuse to believe unless they have physical proof; hence the expression 'doubting Thomas'. But on his encounter with the Risen Lord, his doubt turns to faith, his fear turns to hope. But Jesus quite rightly says to Thomas, 'You believe because you can see me, happy are those who have not seen and yet believe.' In the Life of faith, there is much that we will never fully understand completely, but the fact that Jesus rose from the dead, and showed himself to his disciples and many hundreds of others, is a testament to the power of God, and evokes faith as a response!



Faith is God's gift to each one of us, how we respond to that faith is something which is very personal. In an age that is far less conscious of the sacred and the holy, we see many people walking away from the practice of any kind for formal faith. What we learn and glean from our parents in the practice and understanding of our faith is invaluable; you will never be able to quantify everything learnt along the journey of life and faith, this will help our understanding, and more importantly the commitment that we make to the practice of our faith. WE will hopefully be able to echo the words of our Lord to Thomas: '...happy are we who have not seen, and yet believe!'

**THANK YOU:** This is a note of personal thanks and gratitude for your kindness and generosity this Easter. Thank you for your Easter Offerings and also the greetings cards, and gifts I received. I truly appreciate your thoughtfulness.

*Thank  
You!*

**HOLY WEEK & EASTER:** Once again my gratitude to everyone who helped to make our Holy Week & Easter celebrations so beautiful this year. As you can appreciate a great deal of hard work goes into preparing all the sacred liturgies. I'm sure you'll all agree that the wonderful celebrations were an inspiration to everyone who attended. We are so lucky having a wonderful parish!

May God Bless You All,

*Fr John*

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNION:** Programme will resume again on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> April, with the theme being the Last Supper. There will be three celebrations this year. Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> May at 12noon. Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> May at 1.00pm. Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> May at 12noon. And the Going forth Mass on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> May at 11.00am. Please keep the children in your prayers.



**WELCOME TO THE NORTH AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS:** This weekend we welcome five seminarians, who have been with us for the past week and are returning to Rome on Sunday. Please pray for the students, especially the three deacons who will be Ordained Priests over the next two months.

**OLD PUPILS FROM ST. JOHN FISHER SCHOOL:** Did you (or anyone) leave St. John Fisher School in the 1960's or earlier? Would you (or they) like to make contact with "old" classmates? If so, please contact: Mike Dewar – [mike@mikedewar.plus.com](mailto:mike@mikedewar.plus.com) or Jan Hatt – [jan.hatt@uwclub.net](mailto:jan.hatt@uwclub.net) or Ann McGuinn (was Muldoon) – [annmcguinn@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:annmcguinn@yahoo.co.uk)

**REQUIESCAT IN PACE:** In your mercy please pray for the repose of the soul of Peggy Davies who passed away recently. The requiem mass will be on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> April at St. Edmund's at 12.15pm. Our condolences to her family in this time of great loss.

**LATIN MASS IN EPPING CHURCH:** There will be a Traditional Latin Mass on Saturday the 28th April at 12 noon in Epping Catholic Church, 11 Church Hill, CM16 4RA. All are welcome to savour our glorious heritage. Bring your friends!

**PARISH CHOIR:** You will have heard the beautiful music and choir over Holy Week & Easter. We are always looking for new members to join the choir. If you enjoy singing and music, please make contact with Sue Farrow our music director, you will be more than welcome to join the choir

**FAITH SHARING PROGRAMME:** If you're interested in learning a little bit more about your Roman Catholic Faith, I'm anticipating beginning a faith sharing course commencing in May. This will give you an opportunity to ask questions and explore different aspects of the Roman Catholic Faith. It will be fairly informal, and will take place on Wednesday evenings. If you could let me know your feelings about this I would be most grateful. Anything that can help us learn more about the faith can only be a good thing!

