

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: After 40 years of service to our parish and also the Chingford parish, Brian Carter has decided to retire as our Parish Gift Aid organiser. He has been truly loyal and enthusiastic in his endeavours to ensure that the parish is able to benefit from this scheme. As Brian is now approaching 80 years of age, I feel that he has certainly done his bit for the life of the church here in Loughton, and deserves his retirement! On behalf of the whole community, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to him for such incredible service to the parish and the diocese, in the area of Gift Aid.

APPEAL FOR NEW GIFT AID ORGANISER: I am now looking for a new Gift Aid Organiser; Brian is willing to stay on until we find someone new. If you feel you could serve the parish in this area please contact Fr. John 0208 508 3492 or Brian Carter 0208 508 4086 for more information as to what is involved with this ministry to the parish. Thank you!

CONFIRMATION PHOTOS: Below is a link to the webpage where picture files can be viewed of the confirmation. The images should be available to towards the end of next week. Also below is the password to enter the website. The cost per picture file is £15.00 and people may share and print the picture file as they wish. The website will have further details of how they can pay for the picture files and how they will be sent. <https://stephenpoverphotography.pixieset.com/confirmationmass2018/> Gallery Password: gdX7tDCyTC If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to ask. Stephen Pover. Tel No: 07973383985 Website stephenpoverphotography.com

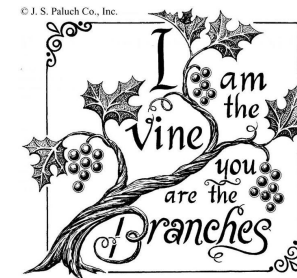
IN CASES OF EMERGENCY: Tuesday is usually Fr. John's Day Off. In cases of emergency please call one of the local parishes, either in Epping – Tel: 01992 572516, or the St. Thomas of Canterbury Friary at Woodford Green – Tel: 020 8504 1688. This would also apply if Fr. John is away for a few days break 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 Easter 2018

The vine is frequently used in the Old Testament as a symbol of Israel. Israel is the vine, but Jesus is the true vine. Developing this analogy of the vine we learn that we are branches and branches need pruning. We cannot produce fruit, the fruit of the Holy Spirit, unless we are pruned. Furthermore, we cannot produce fruit unless we remain in the vine.

Now in nature a branch doesn't have much choice but to remain attached to the vine and because of this can produce the fruit of the vine – the grape - which gives us the blessing and fruit of wine. In the spiritual life, however, we can easily separate ourselves from the vine, and in order to remain with the vine (Christ) we enter the doorway of faith and take up the battle of prayer. The idea or notion remaining in Christ is about practising the presence of God. We tend to think that professional religious people – monks, religious sisters, the clergy – find it easier to 'remain' in Christ than we do. Their vocation obliges them to say the Daily Office and to cultivate an active prayer life. However, lay people are called to do the same. We may not say the Divine Office (although many do), but we can certainly practice the presence of God during our day.



Now we all this isn't easy – we are easily distracted and often side-tracked. We can start off our day with the best intentions, but before we know it, the day is dragging us downwards, not upwards, and God's presence seems very far away indeed. What are we to do when this happens? The answer will shock you: laugh, smile and rejoice. God knows we are easily distracted, God knows that we need help and strength to live in his presence.

John 15:7
If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.



God isn't shocked by our weakness but rather assures us that when we are weak, then we are strong. We remain in God's presence through taking simple steps, little gestures, and easy movements. Pray during the day today, 'Lord have mercy on me a sinner.' Or, 'Lord, send forth you Spirit and renew the face of the dearth.' These simple prayers over time, if we persevere, will allow us to live and abide in God's presence during the day

Dear Friends in Christ,

Fifth Sunday of Easter 2018

This weekend, I would like to welcome once again Fr. Kieran Dodd, who has kindly offered to supply for me while I take a very belated Easter break. Sadly, this may well be the last time Fr Kieran is able to come and supply in the parish, as he has taken up a new assignment as Chaplain to a Convent of Nuns. I would like to take this public opportunity of expressing my sincere and grateful thanks to Fr. Kieran who, for over twelve years, has been coming to our parish. It's extremely difficult finding a substitute priest these days, so my gratitude is heartfelt! He has been a tremendous friend to me for nearly forty years, and the fact that he has been supplying throughout our diocese for so many years is truly wonderful! Fr. Kieran will be 86 years of age on 5th May, so we wish him many happy returns. I hope and pray that he will be very happy in his new assignment with the Little Company of Mary Sisters in Westcliff-on-Sea. Please keep him in your prayers.



JOURNEY
IN
Faith

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 on Wednesday May 9th at 8.00pm in the Parish Retreat.

This will give you an opportunity to ask questions and explore different aspects of the Roman Catholic Faith. It will be fairly informal. 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! In advance of the programme, if parishioners could submit some areas of interest that they would like to know more about. Rather than me setting the agenda for this faith sharing, it would be good coming from you. If I know in advance, it will give me an opportunity to gen up on particular aspects of theology and scripture.

MISSIO UK. Association for the Propagation of the Faith: Next Weekend 5th / 6th May we welcome Fr. Tony Chantry MHM, who will be making a very special Mission Appeal on behalf of the APF (Red Mission Boxes). Many parishioners already have mission boxes in their homes. I ask you to extend a warm welcome to Fr. Tony, who is a native of the diocese, and who is the National Director of the APF. He will preach at all the masses this weekend, and explain clearly where your donations go in the area of Evangelisation especially in the Third World.

May God Bless You All

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION: First Communion meeting on Sunday 29th April at 10.00am in the Parish Hall. There will be three First Holy Communion Celebrations celebrations this year: Saturday 12th May at 12noon Group 1. Sunday 13th May at 1.00pm, Group 2. Saturday 19th May at 12noon, Group 3. The Going forth Mass is on Sunday 20th May at 11.00am. The rehearsals for First Holy Communion will take place on Wednesday 9th May, 4.00pm for Group 1. 5.00pm for Group 2. 6.00pm for Group 3. Please keep the children in your prayers at this very special time. My ongoing thanks to Kathryn Poulter and her team of young helpers, who have been exceptionally faithful and loyal throughout the whole programme



MAY IS THE MONTH OF MARY: The month of May is rapidly approaching; it is the "month which the piety of the faithful has especially dedicated to Our Blessed Lady," and it is the occasion for a "moving tribute of faith and love which Catholics in every part of the world [pay] to the Queen of Heaven. During this month Christians, both in church and in the privacy of the home, offer up to Mary from their hearts an especially fervent and loving homage of prayer and veneration. In this month, too, the benefits of God's mercy come down to us from her throne in greater abundance" (Paul VI: Encyclical on the [Month of May](#), no. 1). Please enter into the spirit of Mary's month; perhaps you can pray a decade of the rosary each day as a family; at the end of each weekday mass a decade of the rosary will be prayed in the church.

CONTEMPORARY MUSIC GROUP: Practice takes place on Monday, 30th April (6.30pm musicians / 7pm singers) to go over the hymns and music for the 11am Mass on Sunday, 6th May. As we've had a big gap since our last practise, It would be much appreciated if as many of you as possible could come along on 30th April and also be there for the Mass on 6th May. Many thanks. Please don't forget that everyone is welcome to join the Parish choir every week. New singers and musicians are also very welcome to join us!

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS: Every September we begin a new RCIA (Journey of Faith) Programme, for those who may be interested in learning more about the Roman Catholic Faith, possibly with the view of receiving the Easter Sacraments. If there is anyone interested, or you know of anyone who might be interested, could you ask them to get in touch with Fr. John, Tel No: 0208 508 3492. Thank you!

PARISH FINANCES: A few weeks ago we had an appeal from Carlos Camacho regarding the Parish Gift Aid Scheme. A few new people have joined the scheme. If you are a Tax Payer and you regularly contribute to the Weekly Offertory, and, as yet do not belong to the Gift Aid Scheme, I ask you to seriously consider joining as soon as possible. We are able to claim back 25pence in the pound for every pound you donate; e.g. if you contribute £10 per week, with Gift Aid envelopes we claim back an extra £2.50. At the end of the year, this amounts to a considerable sum. In truth the offertories have diminished over the past few years; but the bills still keep coming in. I have just paid the Gas Bill for March £872.50 for all our buildings. The Monthly Diocesan Quota is £2,260.00. The Incoming Offertory for March did not meet the outgoing by approximately £4,500.00. This cannot be maintained on a monthly basis! Obviously, I'm very aware of families' financial situations. If you're in a position to be able to increase your offertory contribution this would be greatly appreciated!

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

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 or Jan Hatt – jan.hatt@uwclub.net or Ann McGuinn (was Muldoon) – annmcguinn@yahoo.co.uk

CONFIRMANDI: I would like to encourage our recent Confirmandi to become more involved in the life of the Church. You may feel you have something to offer to God and the Church; please don't be shy to come forward. I hope you have had an opportunity to read the little book we gave

you of your questions, answered by Mark Anthony. It really is a powerful resource in understanding your Roman Catholic Faith.

ST EDMUND'S PARISH HALL: Is available for hire for children's parties etc. If you're interested in hiring, please contact Mrs Antonella Thorpe via the presbytery Tel No: 0208 508 3492

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

THY KINGDOM COME: The Vicariate for 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.