

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,

Sixth Sunday of Easter 2018

There is a lovely Jewish proverb which captures, as only proverbs can, something so true about love: 'Love thy neighbour, even when he plays the trombone.' Imagine that neighbour playing his old trombone late into the evening – it would truly be hard to have very warm feelings for him, let alone love him, wouldn't it? Love, rather like forgiveness, is a great idea until we really have to dig deep and love.



GK Chesterton said: 'We make our friends; we make our enemies; but God makes our next-door neighbour.' The problem is – and it really is a problem – that, for the Christian, love isn't an option or a fanciful idea we can take or leave: it's a command. Jesus says so very clearly: 'This is my command: Love each other'. And if this weren't hard enough, the pinnacle of love, its very height and essence, isn't half-heartedly tolerating people, putting up with them or bearing with them, it's laying down your life for them. This is the kind of 'greater' love we are called to. Jesus said: 'Greater love has no one than this; to lay down one's life for one's friends.'

This is so challenging, so utterly beyond us, so difficult and frankly impossible that if we truly understood the call to love, we would throw up our hands in despair, sigh deeply and say, 'This is impossible.' Nevertheless, if we were open to the Holy Spirit we would hear him say to us: 'What is impossible for you, for man, is possible with God.' For perhaps the key to understanding love, the self-sacrificing *agape* love of the gospel, which is prepared to love your enemy, who just happens to also be your neighbour, is that we can't love like this without God's grace and power. Perhaps we only truly begin to love when we reach the end of ourselves and recognise our complete inability to love in a self-sacrificing, giving-our-lives-for-others kind of way.



'Next to the Blessed Sacrament itself, your neighbour is the holiest object presented to your senses. If he is your Christian neighbour, he is holy in almost the same way, for in him also Christ, vere latitat – the glorifier and the glorified, Glory himself, is truly hidden.' (C.S. Lewis)

Dear Friends in Christ,

Sixth Sunday of Easter 2018

We extend a very warm welcome this weekend to Fr. Tony Chantry MHM, who is the National Director of the Association of the Propagation of the Faith. Fr. Tony will be making an appeal on behalf of the APF. The Association for the Propagation of the Faith (APF) assists each of the Catholic Church's mission dioceses to provide pastoral care and preach the Gospel effectively. The APF works in England and Wales with the Mill Hill Missionary Society. Funds for the Missions are collected through the famous red collection boxes. Please be as generous in your response as possible. With grateful thanks!

THE SOLEMNITY OF THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD: Next Thursday 10th May, we celebrate this great Solemnity of the Lord. After Forty Days of Post Resurrection appearances, the Lord Jesus gave his final instruction to the Apostles: '...to go out to the whole world and proclaim the Good News...'. This is significant, because it is the returning home to the Father, in order that Jesus could send his Holy Spirit to the Apostles. The Spirit would be that perfect love that Jesus had showed them by making the self-sacrificing gift of himself on the Cross on Calvary, becoming the Lamb of Sacrifice that takes away the sin of the whole world. This once and for all offering of him becomes for us the means whereby Salvation is preached and proclaimed, and that we are invited to share in the New Life of the Christian Faith. This is real Easter faith, the Paschal Mystery explained; as we respond by proclaiming Jesus as Lord & Saviour, so our lives of faith are enriched and strengthened by Jesus Christ himself.



THE ASCENSION - HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION: There will be four masses on this day. 9.00am, 12.15pm & 8.00pm at St. Edmund's, and 10.00am at St. John Fisher School. A Holy Day of Obligation has the same status as a Sunday Mass, therefore, there is a spiritual obligation to attend Holy Mass.

MARY'S MONTH OF MAY: Please try to pray the rosary, or celebrate some Marian devotion during the month of May. A decade of the Rosary will be prayed at the end of each weekday mass throughout this month. Parents, this would be a wonderful time to talk to your children about Mary's important role in God's plan of Salvation.

May God Bless You All,

JOURNEY
IN
Faith

FAITH SHARING PROGRAMME: If you're interested in learning a little bit more about your Roman Catholic Faith, We begin our 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. 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 get on with particular aspects of theology and scripture. Email – loughton@dioceseofbrentwood.org

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION: First Communion meeting on Sunday 6th May at 10.00am in the Parish Hall. There will be three First Holy Communion 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



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

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

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

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

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