

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.



FAREWELL TO MRS PATRICIA BRYSON: On behalf of the parish I would like to bid a fond farewell to Patricia Bryson, retiring Headteacher of St. John Fisher School, who has relocated to Ireland. In a few short years Mrs Bryson & her staff took our school back to its 'Good' rating from Ofsted. She has been a wonderful Headteacher and leader in our school, and she will be sadly missed. Please continue to pray for the New Headteacher.

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.

JOURNEY IN Faith

JOURNEY OF FAITH PROGRAMME: The Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults is a Roman Catholic instruction programme in the Faith. This programme commences at the beginning of September and runs through until the following Easter. If anyone is interesting in learning more about the Roman Catholic faith possibly with the view of being received into full communion with the Catholic Church and receiving the Easter Sacraments, please see Fr John as soon as possible. It is a systematic programme of instruction, involving weekly meetings, covering every aspect of Catholicism, Scripture, Moral Teachings, Catholic Devotions, and Prayer etc. It's always really good to have several enquirers on each programme. There are many people who attend mass weekly who are not yet Catholics, I would ask you to consider seriously the possibility of enrolling in this programme this September 2019.

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,

Third Sunday of Easter

Although deeply spiritual and theologically profound, St. John's Gospel records some very personal moments in the life of Jesus, such as when he wept at the death of Lazarus, and the incident recorded in today's Gospel when the risen Lord cooked his disciples a fish for breakfast, inviting them to 'Come and have breakfast'. We learn that God cares for us body and soul. By death the soul is separated from the body but our hope is that they will be reunited on the last day. The resurrection of Jesus revealed the nature of this new body – a risen body, infused with God's light and life, and not prone to sin and death.

The breakfast story leads into the fascinating exchange between Jesus and Peter in which the fisherman was asked three times to feed the Lord's sheep. What did this mean? It meant that as the Rock he was called to ensure that believers were fed with nourishment of Christ. We see this in Peter's first letter. Like new-born babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good. One way we can literally feed off this pure spiritual milk is by praying and studying Peter's two letters. When we do this we draw directly from the original rock on which the Church was built, the pure well of our salvation.



If we do not feed we grow weak, and unhealthy. The same is true in our spiritual lives and the staple diet from which we feed is prayer, the Scriptures, the teachings of the Church (the Magisterium) and lectio divina (spiritual reading). Supremely we feed from the Eucharist, food for our soul, and food which is good for this life and the next. God has given us rich sources of spiritual food – we do not live in a parched and weary land, but rather a banquet of teaching and spiritual life has been prepared for us. Just as with our physical bodies, eating on the run is not ideal; we need to carve out time and space to be with the Lord.

Lord, I give you praise and thanks for the table from which we feed – the Word of God, the tradition of the Church, and the source and summit of our faith, the Holy Eucharist.

Dear Friends in Christ,

3rd Sunday of Easter

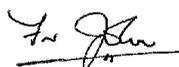
FIRST HOLY COMMUNION CELEBRATIONS 2019: Next weekend 11th/12th May we will have our first two Holy Communion Celebrations. This is a truly wonderful time in the life of each child preparing to receive Jesus for the first time in the Holy Eucharist. After several months of preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation & the Holy Eucharist, the children have reached their special day! It is a day that they will never forget. Please keep the children and their families in your thoughts and prayers over the next week. Rehearsals for the First Holy Communion masses will take place on Wednesday 8th May commencing at 4.00pm for group 1 (Saturday 11th May); 5.00pm for group 2 ((Sunday 12th May); 6.00pm for group 3 (Saturday 18th May). On Sunday 19th May at the 11.00am Mass, all three groups come together for the Going Forth Celebration.

I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my sincere and grateful thanks to Kathryn Poulter & Elena Manara and our many young helpers who have worked so hard with the children since last September. Their dedication and commitment is exemplary, and a real service to Almighty God and the Church. I would also like to thank the many parents who attended weekly sessions with the children. I'm really pleased that you have been able to see how we teach the programme.

We have prepared the children well; it is now up to the parents to ensure that once they have made their First Holy Communion, the children continue to attend Sunday Mass weekly and fulfil their Catholic Obligation. A way for the children to become involved with the life of faith and the Church is to become an Altar Server. If there are any of the children who would like to join our Altar Servers, please speak to Fr. John as soon as possible.

PARISH PILGRIMAGE TO WALSINGHAM: Saturday 1st June 2019. Once again I invite the whole parish community to consider joining us on this pilgrimage to Walsingham. It is one of oldest Marian Shrines in the world, dating back nearly a thousand years. The approximate cost for the coach will be £15 per person. You will need to bring a packed lunch; there will be places to purchase teas & coffees. We will be leaving St. Edmund's Car Park at 8.00am and leaving Walsingham at 5.30pm. Mass will be celebrated at 12Noon, luncheon will follow, and then we will have a walking procession along the Holy Mile praying the Holy Rosary. You will have the opportunity to do some shopping in the little village of Walsingham, and also to visit the Anglican Shrine. Please sign up of the Board in the Porch

With Peace and Easter Blessing,



WELCOME TO FR JIM BOOTHMAN: There will be many who remember Fr Jim Boothman, who was an assistant priest in this parish nearly 40 years ago. I would like to thank him most sincerely for supplying for me this weekend so I could get an Easter break.

THE PARISH REPOSITORY: will be open after all masses this weekend, with a special table of First Holy Communion items; Statues, crucifixes, cards, medals, rosaries, prayer-books etc. It will also be open on the day of the rehearsals in the Church, Wednesday 8th May 4pm onwards



Christian Aid Week Collection for Sierra Leone. Christian Aid Week this year is 12th – 18th May. The theme is reducing maternal and infant deaths in Sierra Leone, which is the most dangerous place in the world to have a baby: every day 10 women die while giving birth. Christian Aid is building clinics and training nurses in Sierra Leone so mothers can deliver their babies safely. This year, with the other churches in Loughton, we will be raising money specifically to fund that work. The Loughton Christian Aid team have organised several collections during the week and we need helpers to rattle a collecting tin for an hour in Loughton High Road or at Loughton Station or Woodford Station. St Edmund's is an important part of that effort, can you help? The four collections will be: Woodford Station, Thursday 9 May (4.00-8.00pm); Loughton Station, Thursday 16 May (4.00-8.00pm); Loughton High Road, Sunday 12 May (9.30am-1.00pm) and again on Saturday 18 May (10.00am-4.00pm). Please offer to help us by contacting Iain McLay, 02082819125, or email Keith Aldred at keith@akaldred.plus.com and volunteer for one hour collecting.

FORMING INTENTIONAL DISCIPLES: Our next meeting will take place on Monday 13th May at 8.00pm in the Parish Hall. Once again I encourage as many parishioners as possible to attend this meeting. We are trying to the best of our ability to emphasise the importance of Evangelisation here in our parish; you too can be a part of this process, please help us!

FAITH SHARING & BIBLE STUDY: One of the groups to come out of the Forming Intentional Disciples forum is a Faith Sharing & Bible Study series.



This may be of interest to some of our parishioners. If you would like to know more about your faith, and of course, the sacred scriptures, please come along on Wednesday 15th 22nd 29th May; 12th 19th 26th June at 7.30pm in the Parish Hall. The first three will be on faith sharing, the second three on Bible Study.

LOUGHTON PARISH GIFT AID SCHEME: Sincere thanks to all those parishioners who have collected their Gift Aid Boxes which came into effect on the 8th April. However, there are still a large number of boxes which have not been collected and I would ask those parishioners to collect them as soon as possible.

In addition, there are several small boxes for those parishioners who pay their Gift Aid by Standing Order. It is important to use these boxes as the Second Collections, e.g. Christmas & Easter Offerings, etc., lose quite a lot of money because the Special Envelopes are not used.

It is pleasing to note that the majority of parishioners now belong to the Gift Aid Scheme which produces last year, and extra amount of just under £22,000.00 (and costs absolutely nothing, other than your name and address), which helps considerably towards the upkeep of the Church, the Parish Hall, The Presbytery and all the grounds. Obviously, we still have to maintain the St. Thomas More Site until its disposal. The ongoing increasing expenses of utilities and general maintenance are a great drain of parish finances. Also the Diocesan Quota has been raised again this year to over £26,000.00.

Although there are spare envelopes at the back of the Church many parishioners forget to use their own envelopes. If you do use the spare envelopes please remember to put your Gift Aid number or your Name on it.

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 I will do the rest.

On behalf of Father John, thank you to all parishioners who belong to the Gift Aid Scheme.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fr John', with a horizontal line underneath.

