

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.



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.

REQUIESCANT IN PACE: In your mercy please pray for the repose of the souls of Josie Jaego RIP, long time parishioner who passed away recently. The Requiem Mass will take place on Monday 3rd June at 12.15pm Also: Mary Leith RIP, who passed away recently. Her Requiem Mass will be on Wednesday 19th June at 12.15pm at St. Edmund's, with Cremation afterwards at Forest Park Crematorium. We extend our condolences to both families in this time of great loss.

EPHING FOREST FOODBANK DONATIONS: Thank you to all parishioners who have donated items for the Foodbank. Your donations are needed as much as ever at the moment by people in our area who are struggling to put food on the table. Basic staple items are always welcome including the unbranded supermarket basic ranges which can make your generous donations go even further. In May they are in urgent need of the following items: tinned meat, tinned fruit, tinned peas and tinned carrots. Other requested items are UHT milk, powdered milk, Long-life juice, pasta sauce, tinned tomatoes, chocolate, snack bars, toothpaste, toothbrushes, rice and tea bags (80 bag size). Thank you! You can also keep up to date with the Foodbank via their facebook page: www.facebook.com/EppingForestFoodbank/

WALSINGHAM PILGRIMAGE: CANCELLED DUE TO LACK OF SUPPORT.

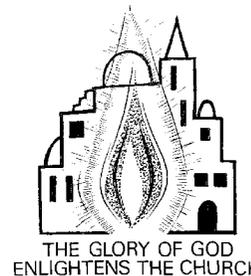
IN CASES OF EMERGENCY: Tuesday is usually Fr. John's Day Off. In cases of emergency please call one of the local parishes, either in Epping – Tel: 01992 572516, or the St. Thomas of Canterbury Friary at Woodford Green – Tel: 020 8504 1688. This would also apply if Fr. John is away for a few days break 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 2019

Two things dominate the human condition: war and fear. The opposite of war is peace; the opposite of fear is courage. Peace, as the Bishops at the Second Vatican Council taught us, is not just the absence of war but an inner tranquillity, the fruit of knowing that we are reconciled with God and justified by the blood of Christ. This peace transcends our understanding and can, if we let it, rule our hearts.

Jesus taught that two significant fruits of being his disciples would be peace and courage. We can know these two blessings in our lives in a real and tangible way. This must be true because Jesus promised: 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid'. Well, that's the teaching and there's the promise, but what of the reality?



Even a cursory examination of our lives can bring to light not peace but an inner turmoil and not courage but timidity. So what is going on? Why is it like this? Jesus promises peace and tells us simply not to be afraid. Why isn't this good enough and why doesn't it work? Well, the truth is it is good enough and it does work – however, we play a part. Our faith isn't magic: it's faith. The key is the Holy Spirit: 'But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you,'



But we can't be reminded of what Jesus said unless we read the Scriptures. So there is a way in which our peace and courage has a relationship with our reading the Scripture. The Spirit counsels us to immerse ourselves in his life-giving Word. Remember this: 'Bibles that are falling apart are often read by people whose lives are not.' Now, that does not mean that those who read the Scriptures do not give in to fear or at times lose their peace, but, because they remind themselves frequently of what Jesus said, the Spirit is able to lead them back to peace. And give them courage.

Dear Friends in Christ,

6th Sunday of Easter 2019

First and foremost I would like to thank all of those parishioners at the 6.00pm who assisted and helped me last weekend when I collapsed; I had not felt well all week, and it had been extremely busy. I was just so grateful that I had been able to get through the First Holy Communion Mass earlier in the day. I suppose there comes a moment when the body says I'm going to shut you down for a bit! During these past days I have slept and rested a great deal, of which I'm grateful. My thanks to all those parishioners who have made contact over these past days and, have sent in cards and greetings. I truly appreciate your thoughtfulness! I'm indebted to Fr. Jim Boothman CMF, who stepped into the breach on Sunday Morning, especially for the First Communicant's Going Forth Mass, he truly did enjoy being back at St. Edmund's. The Bishop has put me on light duties this week, and hopefully I'll be in full swing again very soon. Perhaps this is a little 'wake-up call', telling me I'm not as young as I used to be!

Thank
you so
much

Thank you also to the First Communion Children, who all signed a beautiful Card and sent me in a bottle of wine. Also to the Parents, who so kindly gave gifts to the Catechists and myself at the Going Forth Mass Reception. We truly appreciate your thoughtfulness. I'm really hoping that there are some parents who helped throughout the programme would seriously consider assisting Kathryn and Elena in next year's programme? If you're interested please contact myself or Kathryn.

SOLEMNITY OF THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD INTO HEAVEN: Thursday 30th May. This is a Holy Day of Obligation. Forty days after the Resurrection, the Lord Jesus took the Apostles to the top of the Mount of Olives, and in their presence after their final instruction, "to go out into the whole world and proclaim the Good News", he was taken up into Heaven, to assume his rightful place at the Father's right hand. The Solemnity of the Ascension is a Holy Day of Obligation; meaning it has the same status as a Sunday, and therefore, we have the obligation to attend one of the masses on this day. Masses will be at 9.00am, 12.15pm and 8.00pm at St. Edmund's. As it is School half-term there will be no School Mass.



My God Bless You This Week,

Fr. John

THE PARISH REPOSITORY: will be open after all masses this weekend, there are some special cards for young people who are sitting exams at this time of the year. Wishing all our young people the best of luck in their A Levels and GCSE's!

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

Bible Study

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 29th May; 12th 19th 26th June at 7.30pm in the Parish Hall. The first three will be on Bible Study, the second three on Faith Sharing. At our second Meeting on Wednesday we will be looking at the Gospel for next Sunday (7th Sunday of Easter). Please bring your Bible with you. Fr John will give an introduction to the whole concept of Bible Study and how we can explore the Sacred Scriptures at greater depth.

SCOUT GROUP BBQ & FAMILY FUN DAY: will take place on Saturday 22nd June, 12.00pm onwards at Gilwell Park. Tickets are £5 each, children under 5 free. There will be many activities available for parents and children and the evening will end with singing by the campfire. Everybody is welcome; please see scout group leaders to book places or call Iain McLay, 02082819125. _

CONTEMPORARY MUSIC GROUP: There will be no rehearsal for the music group this week; but the Contemporary Music Group will play at next Sunday's 11.00am Mass 2nd June. There will also be a MUSIC WORKSHOP on Saturday 15th June in the Parish Hall from 10.30am onwards. Would members of the Contemporary Music Group kindly put this date in your diaries!

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS: If anyone is interested in learning more about the Roman Catholic Faith, possibly with the view of receiving the Easter Sacraments at Easter 2020, please contact Fr. John to talk about the RCIA – Journey of Faith Programme. It is a systematic programme of the Catholic Faith from the Scriptural & Moral teachings of Jesus Christ, to the celebration of the Sacraments & the Sacred Liturgy; to understand the whole meaning of the Eucharist; Distinguishing the Old & New Testaments; to learn about the Blessed Virgin Mary & the Company of Saints; the different methods of prayer and meditation; the meaning of 'The Church' and what it means to be a member of the Church – Ecclesiology; the four last things, death, judgment, heaven & hell. Tel No: 020 8508 3492

STEWARDS OF THE GOSPEL – PARISH PARTNERSHIPS: The three parishes, Loughton, Epping & Waltham Abbey have met for a third time this week, looking forward in preparation for our Partnership Plan in the years ahead. We are looking at areas of pastoral ministry where we can work together; whether it be on an administration level or sacramental level. The reality is that there are most definitely fewer priests, and this forward planning is necessary to maintain the life of faith in all of our parishes. The encouragement of more lay involvement is key and essential to this process

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS:

There are many people who attend our weekly Mass who are not members of the Roman Catholic Faith, but often, by association, marriage etc, have affiliated themselves to our community. I would like to extend to you the opportunity of learning more about the Roman Catholic Faith through the Journey of Faith (RCIA) Programme. This is a systematic programme of learning about all aspects of Catholicism, from the Scriptural & Moral teachings of Jesus Christ, to the celebration of the Sacraments & the Sacred Liturgy; to understand the whole meaning of the Eucharist; Distinguishing the Old & New Testaments; to learn about the Blessed Virgin Mary & the Company of Saints; the different methods of prayer and meditation; the meaning of 'The Church' and what it means to be a member of the Church – Ecclesiology; the four last things, death, judgment, heaven & hell. The true meaning of the Paschal Mystery. A guided tour of the Church explaining everything. I would like to invite anyone who may be interested in this programme to speak with me, and hopefully seriously consider this Journey of Faith, possibly with the view of receiving the Easter Sacraments in 2020. Programme begins in September. Tel No: 020 8508 3492

JOURNEY
IN
Faith

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