

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.

REQUIESCAT IN PACE: In your mercy please pray for the repose of the soul of 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 the family in this time of great loss!

EPPING 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/

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY: 'QUARANT HORES' – FORTY HOURS EUCHARISTIC ADORATION Commencing with holy mass on Thursday 4th July and concluding with Solemn Benediction on Saturday 6th July.

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,

Pentecost Sunday 2019

At Pentecost, the Apostles underwent a kind of baptism. It was as if they cast off their old clothes to be robed anew in the resplendent and radiant white garment of the Holy Spirit. The idea of being clothed in a resplendent and radiant garment reminds us of Christ's Transfiguration on Mount Tabor: 'And as he was praying, the appearance of his countenance was altered, and his raiment became dazzling white'. There is a profound connection between the transfiguration on the mountain and the transformation on Pentecost morning. The Holy Spirit changed and changes everything! The Spirit has and always will astonish, amaze and astound us.

One of the greatest works of the Holy Spirit was the Second Vatican Council. Pope John XXIII, the Council's prophet and visionary, had an acute sense of the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church and in us all. One of the wonderful fruits of the Council was its teaching documents. As one example, *Lumen gentium* says the following about the Holy Spirit: 'Whenever the Spirit intervenes, he leaves people astonished. He brings about events of amazing newness; he radically changes persons and history...It is not only through the Sacraments and the ministrations of the Church that the Holy Spirit makes holy the people, leads them and enriches them with his virtues. Allotting his gifts according as he will, he also distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank... He makes them fit and ready to undertake various tasks and offices for the renewal and building up of the Church'. (para 12)



Being filled and renewed in the power of the Spirit is an invitation we cannot refuse. To receive the gift of the Spirit we bow our heads in expectation of God's blessing. We make this prayer conscious of our sin, weakness and failure, for the Spirit is poured out not when we are strong but when we cry out in need and supplication.

Dear Friends in Christ,

The Solemnity of Pentecost

Today, the Feast of Pentecost is known as the birth of the first Pentecost, the promise that Jesus had made to them and give them the strength and courage to "Go and proclaim the Good News". It's the same Holy Spirit that directs the Church and our lives of faith today. At the heart of our Community is the presence of Jesus Christ, and his guiding Holy Spirit. We should never underestimate the power of that Spirit in our lives of faith.



The renewal of the Church is placed very much into the guiding influence of the Holy Spirit. As you know the Church is not static, it is a 'pilgrim Church' on the move. And the Holy Spirit is there to assist and help us as we come to a deeper knowledge and understanding of the person of Jesus Christ. Today, let us pray once again for an increase in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in our own lives of faith. 'Veni Sancte Spiritus – Come Holy Spirit!'

FORMING INTENTIONAL DISCIPLES: Our Monthly meeting will take place on Monday 10th June at 8.00pm in the Parish Hall. Could all of those members to kindly make a special effort to attend the monthly meetings? We are trying to work our way forwards in preparing the parish for the future; the people are the parish, and your contributions in these monthly meetings is important and highly respected. Sadly the phenomenon of the late 20th century, and this 21st century is that more and more people are leaving the practice of their Catholic Faith. The Intentional Disciples Programme is designed to help those who remain to deepen their commitment to Jesus Christ, and continue to live the life of faith on a daily basis. I truly believe that this is the greatest challenge of the age in which we live. The meeting on Monday 10th June is open to the whole parish community. There are many, who joined us at the beginning, but who no longer come; could I appeal to you to renew your commitment and be part of this programme.

May God Bless You All This Week,

PARISH FINANCES: No priest likes talking about parish finances. It has become very apparent over the past year or so that the weekly Offertory has dropped dramatically, especially in the last few weeks; and last weekend was a clear example of the downturn in the

regular weekly giving. We received £1,084.34 last weekend. Unfortunately if this trend continues we will not be able to pay our weekly salaries to the employed staff. As you know I didn't replace our parish secretary, and now do all the Office Administration myself, I also did not take my own salary of £690.00 for the last quarter. As the offertories have been so low, I have been trying to keep costs to a minimum, but we are still not meeting our monthly targets. The Diocesan Monthly Quota is £2,200.00 which is automatically debited every month. Utilities - as you all know are astronomical, and with such large buildings to light and heat this is no mean task. As you know, I have always maintained that our Church should be warm, especially during the winter months. Monthly salaries work out to about £1,400.00. Capitation to Trinity Catholic High School was £1,410.00. Altar Wine for Mass £384.40. Altar Candles & Votive Candles £341.53. Supply Priest £250.00

May I appeal to all those who use the Parish Gift Aid Scheme to kindly use your envelopes on a weekly basis. If you forget your envelope, there are plenty of spare ones in the porch; all we need is your GA number or your name. Without the use of the envelope, we will lose the claim of the tax return. The tax Return from the Inland Revenue is 25 pence in the pound. Over twelve months, this can build up to quite a bit. Sadly not everyone attends mass on a weekly basis; therefore, we also miss out on the weekly contribution from these parishioners. Could I ask Parishioners who Gift Aid to seriously consider using the Standing Order option, at least if you are unable to attend Holy Mass, the parish doesn't miss out on your weekly contribution to the Lord? As you can see and appreciate these are difficult times! I really don't know what to do anymore; I've tried my best to encourage all those who attend Holy Mass to seriously consider your weekly contribution to the Lord. Put your contribution into the perspective of your everyday expenditure – there are many luxuries we avail ourselves of, eating out, which is not cheap these days. A Bottle of Wine, a pint of beer, a take-away Pizza, or any other carry-out meal. If we make our weekly contribution in line with these luxuries I think this is a reasonable gift to God. Please reflect on these sentiments, because they are important. Thankyou!

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? I recently received the annual Capitation Bill from Trinity Catholic High School £1,410.00. This means, that the parish pays £10 per head for each of the 141 students attending the school. Each child given a place in the school was on the grounds that the families honestly and truthfully stated that they were weekly practicing Roman Catholics. If I

see 30 of these children at weekly mass, I'm being generous! As a Parish Priest it grieves me that many of these children and their families don't come to the Church anymore, or make any contribution to the life of this parish community. The benefits of A Roman Catholic education have been afforded to thousands of children in this parish through the years, and it's so sad that people would use the system and then walk away from the Church and the practice of the faith! Every Parish Priest experiences this scenario in their parishes. What can we do? Where has personal integrity and honest gone? Sadly the Weekly practice of the faith for many has become a negotiable reality. The whole concept of obligation means precious little anymore! Please reflect on these important sentiments!

FIRST COMMUNION CHILDREN: Once a child makes their first Holy Communion, the Catholic obligation and commitment to attend weekly Sunday Mass is binding. This doesn't only apply to our first communicants, but to everyone; this has always been the teaching of the Roman Catholic Faith and has never changed. To be part of the worshipping community of believers is the greatest gift we have from the Lord, to share in his Eucharistic celebration.

NEW ALTAR SERVERS: Could I ask all of the parents of our First Holy Communicants this year to encourage your sons and daughters to think about becoming Altar Servers. This is a wonderful way of serving God at a very young age, and also serving the community of faith. We are fortunate enough to have a wonderful team of servers who faithfully attend weekly mass and attend the altar for the celebration of the Eucharist. If your child would like to start serving, please speak to Fr. John, and he will arrange for them to receive Albs and cinctures. Our two MC's will assist in training them, and helping them in the early weeks of serving.

NEW YOUNG READERS: We also need some new Lectors (Readers) at Mass. I would like to encourage some of our young teenagers to seriously think about this request. If you are interested in Reading God's Word at one of the Sunday Masses on a regular basis, once again, please see Fr. John. To bear witness to Christ by proclaiming his Word is truly a great honour and privilege. We will help you to prepare for public reading!

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

Bible Study


on Wednesday 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. **First Theme:** How relevant are the values of the Gospel in the Twenty First Century? And do they affect my life as a Roman Catholic. Are there alternatives to the Gospel?

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 also be a MUSIC WORKSHOP on Saturday 15th June in the Parish Hall from 10.00am 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

ST. JOHN FISHER SCHOOL PTA PRESENTS: Annual Summer Fair Saturday 6th July 2019 – 12Noon to 3.30pm. Entry £1.00. There will be Inflatables, Grand Auction, Falconry, BBQ, Raffle, Traditional Games, Plants for Sale, Craft Stalls, Sweets, Pimms, Face Painting, Performances, Ice Cream, Football Academy. Please come along and support our Parish School Fair

THE 'FORTY HOURS' EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

4th - 6th July 2019

**Sponsorship of Candles in remembrance
of deceased loved ones.**

