

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.



Food Bank

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 July they are in urgent need of the following items: tinned fruit, tinned vegetables, UHT milk, powdered milk, long-life juice, pasta sauce jars, tinned tomatoes, small jars of coffee, chocolate bars, washing liquid, ladies deodorant, washing up liquid, rice pouches for the microwave 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/

ALTAR SOCIETY: We need some new helpers in the Altar Society to look after the care of Parish Church. If you can give an hour or so once a month please see Fr. John or Sharon Fitzmaurice.

CATHOLIC NEWSPAPERS: There are a variety of Catholic Newspapers and Magazines in the Porch of the church. Why not invest in one of them?

ADVANCED NOTICE: It is over 45 years since our Parish Organ had a complete overhaul; we keep a diary of every Organ visit and tuning. Unfortunately there are some serious issues with the organ, and if they are not resolved fairly soon, were going to find ourselves in difficulty. The engineers will be working on the organ at the end of September for three weeks.

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,

Fifteenth Sunday of the Year 2019

Catholic Social Teaching has largely owned the parable of the Good Samaritan and in a way rightly so, because it highlights the care and solicitude we owe every human being, but particularly those in dire need physically, emotionally or spiritually. However, ask yourself, if you will, whether there is a deeper meaning to the parable. Are we missing something? Is the parable simply about being good and kind and decent to your neighbour? We can be sure; absolutely sure in fact, that because Scripture is divinely inspired, there are always layers of revelation to uncover and a deeper meaning behind every verse.

Some of the early Fathers of Scripture scholarship, such as Origen, St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, discerned in the parable of the Good Samaritan a much deeper meaning than helping our neighbour. They approached the parable allegorically – in other words, as a device in which the characters or events represents or symbolise real people and real events and communicate a hidden and profound message. Approaching Scriptures allegorically can open up deeper and deeper layers to its meaning. Some theologians dislike this approach because they fear that we can read into the text significance which the original author did not intend. But they themselves often approach Scripture in the wrong way, studying and discussing it like a Shakespeare play or another ancient text. Scripture is the divine Word of God and by its very nature there are always hidden depths to plumb.



So, for today, let us consider an allegorical understanding of the parable. Jerusalem represents heaven and Jericho the earth or the world. The robbers are the devil and the demons. The priest represents the Torah (the Jewish law) and the Levite the Prophets. The victim beaten, bruised, wounded and left half dead by the roadside is you! The Good Samaritan is Jesus, and the donkey is Christ's body, which bears the weight of the broken body of the victim or this terrible robbery on the open highway. Finally the inn represents the Church, our place of healing and sanctuary. The Good Samaritan's promise to return is a reference to Jesus' coming again in power and glory.

Dear Friends in Christ
Year

15th Sunday of the

FLOWER FESTIVAL: I would like to take this public opportunity of expressing my sincere and grateful thanks to all of our parishioners who have participated in our first Flower Festival here in the parish. Also to several outside contributors, Cribbs Funeral Directors, The Florist on Church Hill, Northfield Garden Centre Waltham Abbey. As you see there are an incredible variety of beautiful flowers and arrangements. There are some wonderful innovations and colourful displays! The beauty of flowers certainly lifts the spirit, and makes us reflect on the creator of all nature. Please feel free to visit the church at any time, throughout the week; hopefully the flowers will last for a good while.



KEEP CALM AND ENJOY RETIREMENT **INVITATION TO OUR RETIRED COMMUNITY:** The children of St. John Fisher school choir would like to invite retired members of the parish community to a mini-concert on Tuesday 16th July at 4.00pm. They will be telling the story of The Selfish Giant through song as well as performing a hymn by John Rutter. Refreshments will be served afterwards. For details please call the school office 020 8508 6315 or speak to Kathryn Poulter on 07919 208266.

FORMING INTENTIONAL DISCIPLES MONTHLY MEETING: Monday 15th July at 8.00pm in the Parish Hall. I call upon all parishioners who are involved in the FID programme to attend this important meeting, and to any other members of the Parish Community, who would like to help with some of our forthcoming events. We're hoping to plan an open BBQ for the parish and the local community in September. Obviously forward planning is necessary. This needs to be organised really well, and the more help we have the better! Please come along:

Our Parish Evangelisation Team (PET) meets monthly to:

1. Pray together;
2. Reflect on, and to discuss, opportunities to spread the Good News among our own parishioners and the wider community;
3. Plan and organise a wide range of activities in our parish;
4. Help each other to develop our faith and our relationship with Jesus Christ through words and actions.

We have sent an email to all those that signed up at the meetings. If you have not received it, please email markpoulter70@hotmail.com for further details.

May God Bless You All This Week,
THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS RAPIDLY APPROACH: The holidays are a wonderful time for all the family to relax and charge our batteries. After the academic year ends, there is usually a mass exodus from the parish, as families take their annual leave and travel on holiday. Whether or abroad or at home, this is an extremely important time of the year. It goes unsaid, that everyone needs some rest and relaxation!

But the holidays are a never a holiday from God or our faith. The life of faith doesn't follow an academic time-table, and our obligations and commitment to share in the Weekly Celebration of the Holy Eucharist are binding. This has always been the teaching of the Roman Catholic Faith. Personally, I always find that the summer holidays are a wonderful time to experience the Catholic Church in many other countries and continents. There are sometime wonderful cultural practices and customs, such as wonderful processions, and fiestas, especially in Mediterranean countries, that celebrate the great religious feasts, such as the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary on the 15th August. Also in the Continents of the Americas and Africa, there are incredible cultural experiences of the Catholic Faith. This allows us to see how universal the Church is; and wherever we go, no matter how large or small a place may be, you'll nearly always find the Catholic Church.

Also, if you're remaining in the UK, I have a Catholic Directory of parishes in England & Wales, with the details of all parishes and mass times. This information can also usually be found through the internet, just google the place name of your holiday and Catholic Church. Have a wonderful holiday and a good rest!

CALLING ALL PARISHIONERS: I'm making an appeal especially to our Seniors to seriously consider attending an additional weekday mass once or twice a week. The mass is the great act of thanksgiving, as we grow older, and perhaps have a little more time on our hands, it would be truly wonderful to have more people at the weekday masses. Our numbers have diminished through the years. Please consider coming along. You'll always be welcome!

ADVANCED NOTICE: The Parish Newsletter during the month of August will be a single page and produced fortnightly. As all of the programmes suspended during the summer recess, and many people are on holiday, our numbers are somewhat reduced! If you have any information for over the

summer newsletter, can you let Fr. John have it as soon as possible please; also if you have mass intentions please let us have them also! Thank you!

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME

2019/2020: My sincere and grateful thanks to all the parents who came to see me this week in preparation for your child's First Holy Communion in May 2020.

It was good to have been able to speak with you in advance of the Programme commencing in September. This is going to be a small year; looking at the Baptismal Register there were fewer baptisms that particular year. I presume that I have seen all those who desire their children to be enrolled in the Sacramental Programme 2019/2020. If anyone has forgotten or omitted to make an appointment, could you kindly do so immediately? Please phone Fr. John. Tel No: 020 8508 3492. Pre-requisites: a) Baptised practicing Catholic, attending weekly mass. b) That you live in the Parish. Any outsiders will need a letter of reference from their Parish Priest. c) That the child is already attending Mass with their parents. This is a really serious commitment that you undertake. The practice of your faith is fundamental to this programme for the children. Many parishes have adopted a weekly check-in register which is signed at the end of holy mass by the Parish Priest for each candidate. Sadly, some enrol in the programme, and often don't attend the weekly celebration of the Holy Mass. If there are any problems with these requirements please see Fr. John.



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

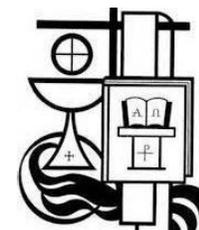


receive Albs and cinctures. Our two MC's will assist in training them, and helping them in the early weeks of serving.

PARISH LITURGY COMMITTEE: Tuesday 16th July at 7.30pm Parish Retreat. Would all Committee Members kindly be in attendance. Thank you!

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!

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



THE ANNUAL DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES: will feature on Lourdes TV (www.lourdes-france.org/en/tv-lourdes/) at 22.00 (UK time) on Monday 22nd July when we are part of the Marian (Torchlight) procession and at 09.30 (UK time) on Tuesday 23rd July, when we celebrate Mass at the Grotto. In addition, each day from Monday 22nd to Friday 26th July the BCYS (Brentwood Catholic Youth Service) will be offering "Virtual Pilgrimage" clips and highlights from Lourdes, including homilies from Bishop Alan and priests of the Diocese. You will find all these on the website www.bcys.net. The website is being refreshed this Friday, 19th July, with new resources and links for youth leaders and catechists: have a look!

NOTE TO EVERYONE IN THE CONTEMPORARY MUSIC GROUP: Our next practice will be on Monday, 29th July (6.30pm musicians / 7pm singers) to go over the hymns and music for the 11am Mass on Sunday, 4th August.

Please do try to be at the practice, even if it's for a short while. Thanks.

St Edmund & St Thomas More, The Immaculate Conception and St Thomas More and St Edward Parish Partnership

An update of our Parish Partnership Discussions

Representatives from the Parishes of Loughton, Epping and Waltham Abbey have established regular meetings to discuss and explore our future as a partnership of Parishes.

Questions from the Diocesan Parish Partnership Plan have been used as a structure for our deliberations.

In principle we think we should remain as 3 individual parishes collaborating through sacramental provision and feel strongly that we need to protect and nurture our communities.

In the mid-term, we hope to have 2 Masses in each parish over the weekend with 3 Masses across the parishes over the weekend, as a longer term goal.

Week day Masses should take part in each parish at least once a week. Flexibility will be needed with regard to funerals etc... but there is usually time to inform parishioners through newsletters and social media.

There is the possibility of a Care Scheme (there is already an ecumenical scheme in existence which could be approached) for anyone who is inconvenienced getting to Mass by new arrangements.

Our aim is that parishes should remain open. However, there is some question over Nazeing. Mass currently takes place in a C of E church and that should continue while there are enough priests and resources to meet the needs of those parishioners. However, it is important to 'drip feed' parishioners so that they know what the future may hold.

We need to consider 'What structures could be put in place to facilitate a Priest's life and make it more manageable?' In Canon Law, the Priest is responsible for everything so a central committee with sub committees in each parish is important.

A Youth Mass is planned in Loughton on Sunday 22nd September. This is a great opportunity to involve the youth and dates have been set for the planning process.

For Consideration

- How do we communicate all the proposals to the parishioners?
- Education - The centrality of schools in the process
- Spiritual Needs of the Vulnerable
- Integrated and co-ordinated approach to leadership

PARISH GIFT AID SCHEME: Runs in every parish. The principle behind the scheme is to encourage the Faithful people of God to make a weekly commitment in faith to its parish through financial contribution. This is your weekly gift to God and is used to defray the costs of running a parish. Every householder is completely aware of the increasing costs of everyday living, and how we have to budget the annual income. The Gift Aid Scheme means that for every £1 you give, we are able to claim back at the end of the Financial Year an additional 25pence per £1. But using the Gift Aid envelopes is essential, and without your envelope there is no additional income. Manifestly, there are occasions when parishioners do forget their envelopes, in fact I've noticed that many people leave their box of envelopes in their cars. But there are additional spare envelopes in the porch, and all we need is your Gift Aid number or your name.

Our Gift Aid Organiser Maria Mosquera recently sent all who Gift Aid a letter, giving a breakdown of your contributions over the past financial year; this will assist you in your Annual Tax Return. If you have any problems with this, please contact Maria directly, as I do not have access to the Gift Aid information. Also if you would like to join the Scheme, and are a Taxpayer, it doesn't cost anything, other than your name and address, and of course your weekly contribution. It is possible to set up a Standing Order through your Bank this will ensure that your Weekly Contribution for the support and upkeep of the Parish is ensured! Application Forms can be found in the Porch of the Church, please feel free to take one and return completed to the Presbytery

It should be pointed out that all your contributions can be Gift Aided. Your Weekly Offertory contribution; Mass Intention requests; Donations for flowers; Forty Hour Candles; Special Collections; CAFOD; Any charitable contribution that you make; Any Special Donations to the Church; as long

as you are a Taxpayer, and are signed up to the Parish Gift Aid Scheme, all of the above apply!

For any further information please speak to Maria Mosquera or Fr. John