

ST. FRANCIS CATHOLIC PARISH NEWSLETTER

8th September 2019 Twenty-Third Sunday (C)

126 Week Street, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1RH Tel. 01622 756217

Email: maidstone@rcaos.org.uk Website: www.stfrancisparish.org.uk

Parish Priest: Fr Liam Gallagher

Assistant Priests: Fr Pawel Sobol, Fr Damian Esene

Deacon: Rev Ian Black

Parish Office hours: 9.00am – 12.00pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

Catholic Schools

St Francis Primary School: Queen's Road, Maidstone, ME16 0LB 01622 771540

St Simon Stock Secondary School: Oakwood Park, Maidstone, ME16 0JP 01622 754551

BORN FREE

At the beginning of a Baptism ceremony, the minister makes the sign of the cross on the child's head and asks the parents and godparents to do the same. Maybe some of you still do that when you take your child to bed. This reflects the times of the Roman Empire when people were captured and sold on the market as slaves. They were taken home and marked by a brand or a seal to show who you belonged to. Their lives were no longer their own but completely in the possession of their purchaser. They were now slaves! What may seem so barbaric and archaic is still happening today in our own land – human trafficking has now become today's modern slavery. We are rightly outraged by such practises because we are born to be free. There is nothing that the human spirit desires more than anything than freedom – the opportunity to live our lives as free people. There is the cry of Freedom in all of us, but we must be sure where we find it. When we are marked with the sign of the cross at our baptism, it is God saying, 'you are mine.' Contrary to being purchased on a market, we have been reborn into eternal freedom with Christ. Nothing can chain down a human spirit that has been set free by Christ's love. In today's Second Reading, St Paul continues to write in captivity, '... I am still a prisoner of Jesus Christ wearing these chains.' Yet he has never felt so free belonging to Jesus Christ. No matter the shackles they placed on him or the walls that surrounded him, he knew the gift of true freedom that is never dependent upon what trials or persecutions you experience in life. It is based upon the freedom of fear, even of death itself. What fears chain us down in life? Let Christ take them away and know the joy of true freedom.



WELCOME: We are delighted that another priest has been appointed to join our parish clergy. Fr. Damian Esene will be arriving this coming week and I know you will all make him very welcome.

ADORATION: We are very grateful to all who give an hour of their time every Friday for Adoration and our Parish Adoration Team who organise it. If you think you can give one hour every Friday between 7am-10pm for prayer at our church then please do come along and speak to one of the team members.

MICHAELMAS DAY: On **Sunday 29th September** there will be an extra opportunity for Mass in the Parish. Mass will be celebrated at **Saint Michael's (old) Church**, near East Peckham, TN12 5NG, at 12.30. There is limited parking at the Church. Extra parking available at Saint Michael's House, TN12 5NH, with a five minute walk to the Church.

ARE YOU SEEKING AN ANSWER TO YOUR MANY QUESTIONS? R.C.I.A WILL HELP YOU:

If you are a non-Catholic or know somebody who is non Catholic but wishes to find out more about the faith; or maybe you are baptised a Catholic but have not progressed any further with Confirmation, then let us invite you to come to our R.C.I.A. group. **The 1st session is on 10th September at 7.30pm in the Priests' House.** If you think that this is something you would like to do then please approach one of the clergy after Mass and they will be happy to help you. There is no commitment in enquiring.

PARISH SUNDAY LUNCH: A Sunday lunch has been arranged for the parish for 22nd September at Mumu's. It will be £20 per head. If you wish to come for what will be a splendid afternoon feast of friendship then please give your payment in an envelope marked clearly with your name in to the parish office.

CALLING ALL CHILDREN AGED 4 TO 11: You are invited to join our group called **Fledglings** - a group of children, aged 4 to 11, who attend a variety of primary schools and are united by being part of St Francis' parish community. We meet on the 3rd Saturday of every month, sometimes in between, for games, crafts, activities and to learn about our faith, with a team of leaders and our priests. We meet at St Francis Primary School, Queen's Road, Maidstone, ME16 0LB. Children may be left at 10 am and collected at 3pm, but can generally fit around another Saturday activity. All that is required is a smile and something for a shared lunch. For further details please ask a member of the Clergy Team or one of the musicians at Mass. **The next meeting is on 21st September 2019**

WANT TO MEET UP? All are very welcome to come, meet new people and have some fun.

First Monday of the month - 11.00am Bowling at Lockmeadow

Second Monday of the Month - after 10.30am Mass there is coffee in The Society Rooms

Every Monday 1.30pm – 3.30pm there is Scrabble at Leah's Bistro in the High Street.

Every Wednesday 10am -12pm - Line Dancing in the URC Hall down Week Street.

Please contact the parish office for more details

FEED THE HUNGRY: You may wonder where all your generous donations end up being used. Apart from supporting the Day Centre in Kightrider Street to look after the homeless, our parish supports families who, having struggled to pay their bills, have little left for food. Help is also now being given to ease the transition of those who are being housed after years on the streets. Education, in terms of prioritising bills, health care and

reducing dependency on drink/drugs is greatly assisted by donations of bread, milk, toilet rolls, washing capsules and tinned meat, apart from other goods. Petty theft has also shown a marked reduction as people become part of the community rather than on the edge. Please continue with your very valuable donations. Furniture, household goods and toiletries are also very welcome. Any questions may be directed through the clergy or the musicians at Mass. Thank you.

DAY OF RENEWAL: This will be taking place at St. George’s Cathedral SE1 6HR on Saturday 5th October 2019 9.45am-4.45pm. The day will involve various inspirational speakers with a Healing Service and Mass celebrated by Archbishop Kevin McDonald. There is a poster in the porch for more details.

CHAPEL CHALLENGE: The future of our priesthood depends upon the existence and upkeep of our Seminary, St John’s near Guildford Surrey. It is where the past three Parish Priests of St. Francis studied and has been responsible for the formation of priests for 125 years. They are now looking for some help with the cost of re-decoration and refurbishment of its Chapel, dedicated to the Sacred Heart. There are no funds available for this much needed work which will cost in the region of £350,000. If you can help in any way, please send a cheque made payable to ‘St John’s Seminary’ addressed to: Mgr Gerry Ewing, St. John’s Seminary, Wonersh, Guildford, Surrey, GU5 0QX. Any contributions are gratefully received, Thank you. Photographs of the condition of the Chapel can be seen in the church porch.

HEART OF KENT HOSPICE: Please come and join us at our Musical-Thon in support of Heart of Kent Hospice on Saturday 5th October from 10.00 am – 5.00 pm at Grove Green Community Centre Maidstone ME14 5BT (next to Tesco Car Park). You will enjoy a full day of music from choirs, pianists, violinists, guitarists, groups, soloists and bands. Food and drink are available on the day along with a raffle, tombola, guess the name of the teddy, cakes to buy and much more. For more information contact: e-mail musicalthon15@gmail.com or Heart of Kent Hospice on 01622 790195. Entry by donation

<p>Last weekend: 1st Collection: £1,560.16 <i>plus an average of £330 Standing Orders</i> 2nd Collection: £676.80</p>	<p>2nd Collection today: Catholic Education Services 2nd Collection next week Home Mission</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Thank you for your generosity</i> Parish Lottery winner – Week 10 – Number 262 – Prize £20</p>	

MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS

Sunday 8th September	6.00pm (Sat)	<i>Bernard Burns RIP</i>
	9.00am	<i>Tommy Farrell RIP</i>
(HMP)	10.15am	<i>People of the Parish</i>
	10.45am	<i>Henry and Susan Simmons RIP</i>
	6.00pm	<i>In reparation for abortions in Brewer St</i>
(Preston Hall)	9.00am	<i>June Wood RIP</i>
Monday 9th September	10.30am	<i>Mary Lester RIP</i>
Tuesday 10th September	10.30am	<i>David Walsh RIP</i>
Wednesday 11th September	10.30am	<i>Agnes Houghton RIP</i>
Thursday 12th September	10.30am	<i>Timothy French RIP</i>
Friday 13th September St. John Chrysostom	10.30am	<i>Jan Salamonczyk RIP</i>
	8.00pm	<i>Holy Souls</i>
Saturday 14th September The Exaltation of the Cross	10.00am	<i>Private Intention</i>
Sunday 15th September	6.00pm (Sat)	<i>People of the Parish</i>
	9.00am	<i>Tina and Vivian D'Silva RIP</i>
(HMP)	10.15am	<i>Holy Souls</i>
	10.45am	<i>Pauline Gilman RIP</i>
	4pm Polish	<i>Damian RIP</i>
	6.00pm	<i>Private Intention</i>
(Preston Hall)	9.00am	<i>Holy Souls</i>

Confessions: *Monday – Friday 10am – 10.15am*

Saturday 10.30am – 11.15am, 5.30pm – 5.45pm

Exposition of Blessed Sacrament: *Friday 7am – 10pm*

Rosary: *Monday – Saturday after morning Mass*

Morning Prayer: *Every Saturday 9.30am*

We remember in our prayers those whose anniversaries occur at this time:

Mary Sancto, Antoni Jankowski, Lydia Stone, Tom Horsom, Tony King, Filippo DiFranco, Frances Blackeby Philomena O'Hare, Harry Taylor, Albert Driver, William Donovan John Simmonds, Bernard Willis, Thomas Forbes-Amer, Margaret Maguire, Freda Packer, Douglas Smith, Wilfred Duarte, Jane Haydon, John Moran, Seamus Kearney, Joseph Quinn, Paul Butcher, Anthony Moran, Frederick Wakeford, Joseph Babalola, Sheila Priestley, Mary Lester, Arthur O'Dea, Mark Howard, Robert Wells, Lycia King, Jackie Sexton, John Johnson, William Paterson, Francis Brennan and Maria Carpenter.