

ST. FRANCIS CATHOLIC PARISH NEWSLETTER

15th March 2020 Third Sunday of Lent (A)

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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 and 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



**ANYONE WHO DRINKS THE WATER I SHALL GIVE WILL NEVER BE THIRSTY AGAIN
(John 4:14)**

When we hear that the Samaritan Woman went to the well at the sixth hour, we need to understand that it means right in the middle of the day, the least popular time to draw water from a well as the sun would be at its peak making the water warm. She is made to feel ashamed probably because of her many 'husbands' and so cannot associate freely with everybody else. Imagine what she is really thirsting for in her life – some real direction, guidance and acceptance. Jesus needed her help to draw water physically to satisfy his thirst and exhaustion, but by offering her the water that satisfies us for ever he was asking her to look inside herself and see all that was needed was faith in him. She embraced him as the Christ with fullness of faith without hesitation and shared this water with everybody else. The living Spring who is Jesus was now dwelling inside her. We receive that Eternal Spring of Jesus in our hearts from Baptism and we must know that it is with him we never need thirst again.

ARCHBISHOP PETER SMITH: As mentioned last week, we are very sad to hear that Archbishop Peter Smith died last Friday. His funeral will take place at St. George's Cathedral Monday 30th March 12.30pm– Grant him eternal rest O Lord.

THE LORD OF ALL HEALING, THE LORD WHO IS OUR SHELTER: Once again we can see there are new practical measures that have taken place to deal the best we can with the development of the Coronavirus. There is to be no shared literature – so hymn books have been stored away and all Mass sheets and newsletters are to be placed in the box on the table at the back of the Church please. Yet let us not be the people of today's first reading constantly moaning at Moses because there was nothing to drink in the desert and even wising they were back in slavery. They felt completely abandoned by God. We know as people of faith that that is not true. We are offering the opportunity to come and spend some time with Jesus from next Friday morning 20th March – Saturday morning 21st March. As the family of God we must know that we are never alone – for the Lord is with us and he has given us each other and one of the most powerful things we are all capable of doing is offering prayer. It is usually at uncertain times that our prayer becomes very focused and energised. Let us offer up our prayer ourselves and the world today as over the next few weeks or so we can expect the Coronavirus Pandemic to develop. Let us come to be with Jesus, The Lord of all Healing, and place this all in his loving hands. When you come to Adoration over the 24 hours next Friday/Saturday maybe bring that intention to the Lord. We must know we are not abandoned for the Lord is with us and invites us to be with him. If you are able to give one hour over those 24 hours then please put your name on the list at the back (First name and then initial of surname, even if you usually come for Adoration on Fridays. We very much appreciate your support and need your prayers. It begins as usual 7am on Friday and finishes with Mass 10am on Saturday. Please see the list in the porch for further details of various devotions (Stations of the Cross, Sacred Heart, Divine Mercy, Rosary) that will take place. May God bless and protect us all.

PAPERWORK: As mentioned earlier, we are currently not using hymn books. Please can you place all used Mass Sheets and newsletters in the box provided at the back of the church and not back in the rack.

We have been asked to advise anybody who is most vulnerable – elderly, weakened immune system, long term conditions like cancer, diabetes or heart conditions – to refrain from large parish gatherings and stay at home.

Anybody with cold or flu symptoms is to be asked to refrain from any Liturgy, public events and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Let us continue to be in each other's prayers.

JOURNEY THROUGH LENT: Please join us on a journey through the Lenten Season, each Saturday afternoon at 4pm. Sessions are stand-alone and will begin with a talk and prayer session for 30-40 minutes in the church..

21 st March	Journey to Conversion	Leonie Urban
28 th March	Journey to Spirituality	Angela Black
4 th April	Journey to Rome	Patrick Horgan

EASTER LILIES: Envelopes and intention sheets are available in the porch for Easter lilies. Please put the names of your loved ones on the slips, put it in the envelope with any donation, and post through the letterbox of Grove House by **Thursday 9th April**. Lilies will be purchased for the Easter Masses. Any donations will be for Masses for the Holy Souls.

REPOSITORY: St Patrick's Day, Mother's Day and Easter Cards now in stock.

FEED THE HUNGRY AT EASTER: Thank you for your very kind donations which are much appreciated by recipients. Please continue to send regular donations. For Easter, we are collecting Easter eggs, biscuits, cakes and luxury items to give to the families we support locally and any surplus will go to the St Francis Centre in Poplar for disadvantaged children. There will be a special collection of these items on the weekend of **28th/29th March** at all Masses.

THE SANTA MARTA GROUP: is an international initiative of the Catholic Bishops throughout the world working in partnership with the police and other agencies to bring an end to human trafficking – a form of modern-day slavery. Kent area is highlighted as one of the many 'Hot Spots' in the UK. The Santa Marta Group, seeks to create awareness of the trafficking situation and abuses that go on within the agricultural sectors around Kent, but they need the help of some volunteers from our parish to achieve their aim, and are appealing for volunteers to be trained to assist in creating awareness of the problem in our parishes. The volunteers will be commissioned to go to parishes to help promote the campaign. The training will take place on Saturday, **28th March 2020** at The Hermitage, More Park, West Malling, Kent, ME19 6HN-10.00am to 2.30pm. Please, bring a packed lunch. If interested please speak to your parish clergy.

CALLING ALL CHILDREN AGED 4 TO 11: You are invited to join our group called **Fledglings** - a group of children, aged 4 to 11. **The next meeting is on the 18th April 2020.**

ST.FRANCIS QUIZ NIGHT: 25th April 2020 at 7.30 URC Hall-£8 per person and all proceeds will go to the St Francis Hall Development Fund. Maximum number of team members is 8. To book your table complete the short form which you will find in the Church porch and hand it in to the Parish Office. Tables will be allocated on a "first come first served" basis. If you cannot get a team together, come anyway and we will find a team for you on the night. Bring your own supper and drinks. There will also be a raffle and donations of prizes would be gratefully received.

Last weekend: 1st Collection: £1,564.81 <i>plus an average of £340 Standing Orders</i> 2nd Collection: £1,008.09	2nd Collection today: DEW Association 2nd Collection next week Sick and Retired Priests Fund
<i>Thank you for your generosity Parish Lottery winner – Week 11 – Number 81 – Prize £25-</i>	

MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS

Sunday 15th March (HMP)	6.00pm (Sat)	<i>Special Intention</i>
	9.00am	<i>Varkey Kurian RIP</i>
	10.15am	<i>People of the Parish</i>
	10.45am	<i>Private Intention</i>
	4.00pm(Polish)	<i>Private</i>
	6.00pm	<i>John Fitzgibbon RIP</i>
(Preston Hall)	9.00am	<i>Stuart McLeod RIP</i>
Monday 16th March	10.30am	<i>For the Pope and all Clergy</i>
Tuesday 17th March	10.30am	<i>Michael Broderick RIP</i>
Wednesday 18th March	10.30am	<i>Canon Joseph Simmons RIP</i>
Thursday 19^h March	10.30am	<i>Private Intention</i>
Friday 20th March	10.30am	<i>In reparation for abortions in Brewer St</i>
	8.00pm	<i>Denise RIP</i>
Saturday 21st March	10.00am	<i>John Considine RIP</i>
Sunday 22nd March (HMP)	6.00pm (Sat)	<i>Private Intention</i>
	9.00am	<i>Kevin Maher RIP</i>
	10.15am	<i>People of the Parish</i>
	10.45am	<i>Herbert Parker RIP</i>
	6.00pm	<i>Private Intention</i>
	9.00am	<i>John McElroy RIP</i>
(Preston Hall)		

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:

Sydney Mendes, Jane Dee, Mary Hull, Anne Donoghue, Alan Fairley, James Forde, Bridget Delaney, Kathleen Augood, Philomena Policelli, A, James Walder, William Carmichael, Roy Watson, Subyla Mendes, Christina Jeyes, John Dillon, Karol Trabik, Louis McSweeney, Patricia Skelton, John Maskall, Basil Curtis, Joanna Child, Alfred Smallbone, Antonio Martignetti, Teresa Sexton, Alfred Grigsby, Derek Vince and Concetta Smitti.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS: During the Season of Lent we will be praying the Stations of the Cross every Monday 11am after morning Mass and every Friday 7.15pm (English and Polish). We will also be having Stations of the Cross at Preston Hall 8.50am every Sunday journeying along two or three at a time.