



CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY & ST. AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY



PP: Fr Denis Sarsfield. Parish Office: 01462 893127. Email: Baldock@rcdow.org.uk

15th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME 16th July 2023

The Word's Return

Today's readings, like last week's, ask us to meditate on Israel's response to God's Word—and our own. Why do some hear the word of the kingdom, yet fail to accept it as a call to conversion and faith in Jesus? That question underlies today's Gospel, especially.

Again we see, as we did last week, that the kingdom's mysteries are unfolded to those who open their hearts, making of them a rich soil in which the Word can grow and bear fruit. As we sing in today's Psalm, in Jesus, God's Word has visited our land, to water the stony earth of our hearts with the living waters of the Spirit.

The first fruit of the Word is the Spirit of love and adoption poured into our hearts in Baptism, making us children of God, as Paul reminds us in today's Epistle from Romans, we are made a "new creation" the first fruits of a new heaven and a new earth.

Since the first humans rejected God's Word, creation has been enslaved to futility (see [Genesis 3:17-19](#); [5:29](#)). But God's Word does not go forth only to return to Him void, as we hear in today's First Reading.

His Word awaits our response. We must show ourselves to be children of that Word. We must allow that Word to accomplish God's will in our lives. As Jesus warns today, we must take care lest the devil steal it away or lest it be choked by worldly concerns. In the Eucharist, the Word gives Himself to us as bread to eat. He does so that we might be made fertile, yielding fruits of holiness. And we await the crowning of the year, the great harvest of the Lord's Day —when His Word will have achieved the end for which it was sent.

FRIDAY PENANCE

I wonder if I asked you a question about how you keep Friday as a day of Penance, what would be your answer? In the past we use to eat fish on a Friday, instead of meat, to make an act reparation, in remembrance of Jesus' suffering and death; while Sunday is a day when we remember the resurrection. The Bishops of England and Wales this week have re-established the practice of Friday penance in the lives of the faithful as a clear and distinct mark of their own

Catholic identity. This act of common witness came into effect this Friday, 16 September 2011. **But why are we obliged to practice penance on Fridays?** From the earliest centuries of the Church's history, Friday was dedicated to the memory of the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus Christ, as a day we should make a special effort to practice penance.

Does this mean that we should eat fish on Fridays? There is no requirement for us to eat fish instead of meat on Friday. Our act of abstinence does not mean that we have to eat another particular type of food as the regular substitute for meat on a Friday. The precise goal of penance is not necessarily the avoidance of meat or its substitution with another food but relating the external and common act of penance we do to inner conversion, prayer and works of charity.

Are the bishops placing a greater obligation on Catholics in England and Wales? The only change is that the Bishops have determined that the requirement by all the faithful to do penance on a Friday would be fulfilled by abstaining from meat. Of course, if you are a vegetarian, then you may find another way to fulfil Friday penance. Maybe no 'death by chocolate' desert on a Friday would be adequate! The most important thing is entering into the spirit of Friday penance. It is more a question of intending to accompany Jesus on his way of the cross by small gestures.

*In all of this we need to use our common sense,
Fr Denis*

RCIA COURSE The new session of RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults) begins this year in late September. It is the course of instruction for those seeking to enter the Catholic Church, and may also be appropriate for those Catholics who have been away from the Church and are returning or who wish to deepen their understanding of the faith.

The RCIA programme (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) is held on Tuesdays, at 7.30pm in the parish rooms, in late September and will run until Easter 2023. It will consist of regular weekly meetings. If you would like to find out more please speak to Fr Denis Sarsfield on 01462-893127

RED MISSION BOX HOLDERS

Please could Red Box holders bring in their boxes for counting and place them on the small table at the back of the Church. Many thanks. Pam Winters

Readings Parish Mass Book page 102

RC HOSPITAL

CHAPLAIN: John O'Neil. Please call the Chaplaincy office at the Lister Hospital Contact Tel: Mobile: 07876 526935 Lister 01438 285518,

FOR ALL GENERAL PARISH ENQUIRIES

CONTACT: Parish Office: Tel: 01462 893127

CHURCH HALL HIRE: Please contact parish office 01462 893127

BAPTISM

PREPARATION: For further information please contact the parish office on 01462-893127 .

RCIA COURSE: The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults programme consists of regular weekly meetings; if you would like to find out more please speak directly to Fr. Denis.

ST. JOHN'S SCHOOL is our Catholic Parish Primary School. Parish families are welcome to visit and have a tour of the school. Contact the School Office or the Head teacher, Mr Tom Timson 01462 892478

The school website is <http://www.stjohns4.herts.sch.uk/index.html>

NEWSLETTER

Please submit items for inclusion, preferably by Tuesday evening, by either emailing the parish email address (baldock@rcdow.org.uk) or handing them to Fr. Denis. Thank you

VATICAN NEWS

Remember that you can keep up with all the latest news from The Vatican at the Official Vatican Network www.news.va/en.

Your SAFEGUARDING REPRESENTATIVES

have responsibility for promoting good and safe practices in all activities involving children, young people, and adults at risk. Please Contact: Patricia Cusack & Colette Murphy Baldocksg2@safeguardrcdow.org.uk Baldocksg3@safeguardrcdow.org.uk

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION 2024 PROGRAMME (OPEN TO ANY CHILD IN YEAR 3 OR ABOVE)

On Saturday 16th September, between 10.00am and 11.30am, a parent's drop in at the Parish Rooms. During this time, you will meet with Fr. Denis and complete your child's application form for First Holy Communion. If your child was not Baptised in Baldock please bring their Baptism Certificate with you. The sessions will commence in November 2023 and the children will make their First Holy Communion in May 2024. If you have any questions please contact Fr. Denis

CHURCH CALENDAR



BLESSING OF THE GRAVES IN BALDOCK CEMETERY

On Sunday 13th August, Father Denis will lead a small service at Baldock Cemetery, which is just off The Sycamores, next to The Orange Tree Pub. He will bless the graves of all our loved ones. If you wish to attend, please be there at 12.30.

YOUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR:



We pray for the sick in the parish especially, Niels Sarsfield, Patrick Sarsfield and for those who care for and support them. We

remember those who have died recently, and those whose anniversary occurs at this time: Edward Kerrigan; Andrew Kelly; Helena Tutak; Catherine Scanlon; Mary Brigid Smith; Maria Grant; Dorothy Hutton; Martha Bridgeman; Denis Francis; Daniel Huggins and Norman Biggins.

Sat 15 th	6.30	Francesco & Raffaella Piccilo RIP
Sun 16 th	8.30 10.30am	Bonita Targett Stewart & Annie Anthony
Mon 17 th	10.00am	Daniel Laver
Tue 18 th	10.00am	Gill Stevenson's intentions
Wed 19 th	10.00am	
Thu 20 th	10.00am	Daniel Huggins RIP
Fri 21 st	No mass	

Please note that mass intentions as set out above may not always be read out, but the intention is offered.

Holy Hour: Saturday 5.15 - 6.15 pm

Confessions: Saturday 5.45 - 6.15 pm

Or by appointment with Fr. Denis.

Family Mass: 1st Sunday 10.30 am

Fr. Denis is still celebrating the Vigil Mass online at 6.30 pm every Saturday night & Sunday Mass at 10.30am. All are accessible through the Parish Facebook page: *Catholic Church of the Holy Trinity and St Augustine of Canterbury*. For more information, please go to the Parish website.

THE WEDNESDAY WORD IS AVAILABLE VIA

<http://www.wednesdayword.org/school/index.htm>

A Summertime Prayer

Father, Creator of all, thank You for summer!

Thank you for the warmth of the sun and the increased daylight. Thank You for the beauty I see all around me and for the opportunity to be outside and enjoy Your creation. Thank You for the increased time I have to be with my friends and family, and for the more casual pace of the summer season. Draw me closer to You this summer. Teach me how I can pray no matter where I am or what I am doing. Warm my soul with the awareness of Your presence and light my path with Your Word and Counsel. As I enjoy Your creation, create in me a pure heart and a hunger and a thirst for You. Amen.

TEA AND COFFEE (& BISCUITS) AVAILABLE



AFTER 10.30 MASS EVERY SUNDAY