



23rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME **10th September 2023**

Scripture Reflection Our society seems to admire the rugged individualist, the self-made person, someone who doesn't worry what other people think, the one who sets their own agenda and doesn't wait to be invited to act. Yet we also rather fear individuals like that; we wonder how much they care for the community around them, how kind they will be to vulnerable people. The Bible is very firm about what it is to be human: it is to be part of a community; humankind is made in the image of God, not as isolated individuals, but as male and female, as community. In the Eucharistic Prayer 3: says 'you never cease to gather a people to yourself'. God calls Israel into being, and argues and cajoles and threatens and forgives them, to bring them back into the covenant they keep breaking. Jesus calls people to himself to form a new community, and Matthew chapter 18 contains much teaching by the Master about what sort of community it is. One of the obvious things about community is that we care about each other.

Ezekiel is reminded that as a prophet to the community he has a responsibility to warn people about their behaviour. In the Gospel we see Jesus, the freest Spirit who ever walked this earth, was concerned for proper procedures for dealing with disputes. What the wrongdoer had to learn is that you can't just do your own thing and ignore the community. This isn't the community being oppressive and stifling individual initiatives; it's the community very patiently encouraging the one who has strayed to come back home.

So, we need Community like we need the air we breathe; but Jesus goes on to talk about the power of community: his followers are promised, as Peter was, the power to bind and loose, to be in partnership with heaven. However great and *other* God is, God chooses to work in partnership with us, chooses to give us power such as 'ought' only to belong to God. To put it riskily, but truthfully, the community of Christ's followers on earth has power in heaven. This is shocking to some pious ears, the ears of people who want to stress that God is utterly above us, that we can do nothing without God's grace, now it's perfectly true that God is utterly above us, and that we can do nothing without God's grace; but that doesn't stop God, by his grace, giving the community power with him. And it's all because 'I shall be there with them'. If we believe that Jesus Christ is truly God and

truly human, then we believe that God has chosen to share life with us. We find our meaning and our nourishment in communion with others and with God. We love our neighbour as ourselves and discover that God too is our neighbour.

THE FEAST OF THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

Celebrated every year on 14 September, the Feast Day recalls three events:

The finding of the True Cross by Saint Helena in AD 326 during a pilgrimage she made to Jerusalem; The dedication of churches built by Emperor Constantine on the site of the Holy Sepulchre and Calvary in September AD 335. Finally, the restoration of the True Cross to Jerusalem in AD 629 by the Byzantine emperor Heraclius, after it had fallen into the hands of the Persian Emperor in AD 614 when he waged war on the Roman Empire.

Today, the cruelty of the Cross is not what is exalted, but the Love that God manifested to humanity by accepting death on the Cross: "Who, though in the form of God, emptied himself, taking the form of a slave. This is the glory of the Cross of Jesus!" (Pope Francis

TODAY THERE WILL BE A SPECIAL COLLECTION FOR THE CATHOLIC EDUCATION SERVICE

Catholic schools make up 10% of the national total of maintained schools. There are over 2000 Catholic schools, academies and colleges in England educating over 800,000 pupils. The Catholic Church and the Church of England together provide one-third of all of the schools in the country. The Catholic Education Service (CES) acts on behalf of the Catholic Bishops' Conference to support Catholic education.

RED BOX SCHEME AND MISSIO APPEAL

Many thanks to Red Box holders for their generosity in the July collection where £307.81 was collected from your Boxes.

Also, thank you again for your generous response to Fr Philip's Missio Appeal on 5/6 August. 17 new Red Boxes holders have joined the scheme and your generous cash donations, during the Appeal, were very much appreciated. On behalf of Missio a huge thank you.

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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

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

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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

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.

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 wish to deepen their understanding of the faith. The RCIA programme is held on Tuesdays, at 7.30pm in the parish rooms, in early October 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

THE NEWSLETTER TEAM

As a reminder, if there is anything you would like to see included in the newsletter, please email the following address by the Monday evening of the week you want to see it in print. Thank you baldock@rcdow.org.uk

OPEN EVENING

The St John Henry Newman School warmly invites parents of Year 6 pupils to an Open Evening on Thursday 28th September from 5.30-8.30pm. Prospectuses and Application Forms will be available on the evening. The last tour will be at 7pm and the school will close to visitors once the final

Headteacher's address starts at 7.30pm. There will be opportunities for parents to view the School the following week.

PARISH'S MEN'S GROUP:

This September marks the second anniversary of our enriching Parish Men's Breakfast Sessions. We would like to warmly invite all men of the parish to join us. We meet in the Parish Rooms once a month on a Saturday morning for tea/coffee and pastries/bacon butties at 8.30am. At 9.00am we watch together an episode of the popular trending Christian TV Series 'The Chosen'. This is a high quality and powerful dramatisation of St Matthew's Gospel. Time for light discussion/chat/reflection follows. We finish at 10.30am prompt. Future dates are all Saturdays - 14th October, 11th November and 9th December. (Second Saturday of each month) Do come along!! See Richard M or John B (or phone 07931 761403) for more information

YOUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR:



We pray for the sick and housebound in the parish especially; Patrick & Niels Sarsfield, and for those who care for and support them. We remember those who have died recently, especially Tom O' Shaughnessy and those whose anniversary occurs at this time: John Markey; Margaret Dowdall; Fryderyk Wisniowski; Ann Jones; Magda Horvath; Fr William Ruhman; Phillip Corke; Elizabeth McGarry; Anne Fruithoff; Michael Feeny; Beatrice Watkins.

Sat 9 th	6.30pm	John & Kathleen Walsh
Sun 10 th	8.30am 10.30am	Anne & Frank Foy Jesus Sian RIP
Mon 11 th	10.00am	Francis Anderson
Tue 12 th	10.00am	Betty Collis RIP
Wed 13 th	10.00am	Anne Shaw RIP
Thu 14 th	10.00am	Mass is in St John's School all our welcome - The Exaltation of the Holy Cross Nora & James Balfe RIP
Fri 15 th	No mass	Our Lady of Sorrows

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>