



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



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

24th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME **17th September 2023**

EVANGELII GAUDIUM SUNDAY (THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL)

The Third Sunday in September, formerly called Home Mission Sunday, is now Evangelii Gaudium Sunday. Named after Pope Francis' first (solo) Apostolic Exhortation on the Joy of the Gospel in 2013, the day offers the Catholic community in England and Wales the opportunity to be joyous in proclaiming the faith - seeking new ways of understanding the faith and reaching out to others. The Holy Father urged the entire Church to embark on a new chapter of evangelism, stating that the Church must understand itself as a community of missionary disciples, who are "permanently in a state of mission".

Scripture reading

In our moral lives a readiness to forgive is probably the most difficult goal of all. Many people struggle with the idea of forgiving those who have done us serious, especially irreparable, harm. The secular world often endorses the idea that some offences are 'beyond forgiveness', which we ought to know is untrue from our faith in an all-merciful Father. In the list of moral priorities there is probably nothing higher than the duty to forgive. Our own ultimate fate may depend on it. As an act of omission, it may not appear to be a serious sin. When someone has harmed us it may seem that this very fact exonerates us of all responsibility towards that person. St Paul takes a very different view - we are in fact responsible for each other since, in his words, 'we live for the Lord' not for ourselves. If we don't forgive others how can we ourselves be forgiven, asks the ever-pragmatic author of Ecclesiasticus. For him 'fear of the Lord' is the highest wisdom and the reality of divine judgment trumps any wounded feelings we may nurse. This book was written long before Jesus was born, around the beginning of the 2nd century BC, just before King Antiochus Epiphanes began to persecute the Jews. So, Christ's teaching on the need to forgive was informed by Jewish tradition which had been evolving over centuries into an ever more just and humane code. To this day Orthodox Jews not only ask forgiveness of God on the Day of Atonement; they also practice asking forgiveness three times of those whom they may have offended. As with the acquisition of any virtue practice is necessary if we are to become people ready to forgive offences. If we too practised asking others for forgiveness more

often we might find it easier, in turn, to forgive. One of the difficulties we all have with forgiveness is not so much our inability to forgive at all but the often half-hearted or prejudiced way we do it. It can be easier to forgive those whom we favour and we may quickly find excuses for their ill behaviour. It can also be more difficult to forgive offences from those closest to us if we feel deeply wounded. At the same time, we may resent much smaller things in people we just don't like or with whom we don't get along. So it's easy to be unfair in the way we forgive and, as the gospel tells us today, forgiveness is ultimately a question of justice - we owe it to others to forgive them - it's what God expects of us. When we find it difficult to forgive we should ask ourselves if it's just our wounded pride. Perhaps that failure to forgive is even helpful spiritually - if it reveals the superficial nature of our own love of neighbour.

Of course, we cannot be expected to love in the perfect 'disinterested' way that God loves all of his creatures. It's also natural for us to prefer those closest to us. That is why the Gospel gives us a very pragmatic reason for forgiving other people. Christ knows that we find forgiveness difficult - so he advises us to forgive if only in order to be forgiven ourselves. We would be foolish not to take that advice to heart. Being unforgiving is, in the end, a bit like meanness, not sharing what we ourselves enjoy. Of course, it helps when we begin to reflect on our own sins, and how generous and forgiving God has been to us.

It is not, then, the sins that we ourselves have committed that pose an obstacle to our salvation but rather something less obvious, much easier to overlook - a refusal to embrace the universal nature of divine mercy and its implications for the way we relate to each other. Jesus tells St Peter 'you must forgive seventy-seven times', in other words 'without end'. We have nothing to fear from the judgment of God as long as we don't end our lives with a heart hardened against another person or still bearing grudges. It may not be easy completely to forgive another person; but practice makes perfect and the grace to do that is there for the asking.

CONCERT AT THE METHODIST'S CHURCH

There will be an Autumn Concert held at Baldock Methodist Church on Friday 22nd September at 7.30pm. Entry is free and all are most welcome. Holy Trinity's own choir will be taking part. There will be a retiring collection in aid of the Christian Initiative to Schools.

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

Readings Parish Mass

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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.

RCIA COURSE

The new session of RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults) begins this year in early October. 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, and will run until Easter 2024. It will consist of regular weekly meetings. If you would like to find out more please speak to Fr Denis Sarsfield on 01462-893127

OPEN EVENING

"The Saint John Henry Newman School warmly invites parents of Year 6 pupils to an Open Evening on Thursday 28th September, from 5.30 - 8.30 pm. Prospectuses and Application Forms will be available on the evening. The last tour will be at 7:00pm. and

the school will close to visitors once the final Headteacher's address starts at 7:30p. There will be opportunities for parents to view the School the following week.

PARISH'S MEN'S GROUP:

This month sees the second anniversary of our enriching Parish Men's Breakfast Sessions, so we warmly invite all men of the parish to join us. We meet in the Parish Rooms once a month on a Saturday morning with 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 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: Joan Anthony; Mary Hill; Sr Catherine Mulvaney; Patrick Hodnett; Peter Burke; Margaret Pringle; Edith Hudston; Anne Hibberd.

Sat 16 th	6.30pm	Leatrice Small
Sun 17 th	8.30am 10.30am	Evangelii Gaudium Day Katy Wills Intention Rosita Sian RIP
Mon 18 th	10.00am	Stan Bain RIP
Tue 19 th	No mass	
Wed 20 th	10.00am	Dan Ryan RIP
Thu 21 st	No mass	ST MATTHEW, Apostle & Evangelist
Fri 22 nd	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>