



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



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

## 30<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME 29<sup>th</sup> October 2023

### A REFLECTION ON THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

**G**od created us out of love and calls us to love in return. This is the most basic calling of every human being. One of the ways that people live that call to love is by getting married. The Church believes that the intimate sharing of life and love that many married couples enjoy is a gift from God. It is part of what God intends for many people.

By 'marriage' the Church means the exclusive, mutual and permanent commitment of a man and a woman to each other to share the whole of their lives together. For the Church the aims of marriage are firstly, the happiness and well-being of the couple and secondly, having children and bringing them up. A couple may not be blessed with children but their love enriches the lives of those around them. The Church teaches that marriage is for life and unconditional. In the Church's understanding of marriage, there is no "maybe" or "for the time being" or "as long as you don't". It is "for better or worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health, until death".

Marriage between two baptised Christians has a special significance for the Church. Christ, by becoming one of us and by his death on the cross, established a new and everlasting covenant between us and God. When two Christians give themselves to each other in marriage, they too establish a covenant or bond between themselves. The Church teaches that this bond is not only a sign of Christ's self-gift –

**It is a sacrament of that love.** In other words, it makes Christ's love present here and now in a concrete way. It is Christ who raises marriage between the baptised to the dignity of a sacrament. While it is the couple who establish the bond, it is Christ who makes it a sacrament between the baptised.

During the marriage ceremony the priest's task is to receive the vows. It is the couple who establish the bond when they both give consent. Marriage is always a public matter and this is why the consent should be given before witnesses. For a Catholic, it should also be before the Church's priest because just as the other sacraments are part of

the life of the Church, so too is marriage. If a Catholic gets married in a registry office the marriage is not valid in the eyes of the Church. The Church allows Catholics to marry non-Catholics in Church, even if the non-Catholic is not baptised. However, the non-Catholic must be supportive of the Catholic's commitment to the faith.

Consent to marriage can only be given freely. There is no marriage if one of the parties does not readily give their consent. For example someone might be married already, or a person might be forced to go through with a marriage out of fear or guilt. If it can be shown that there wasn't proper and mutual consent at the time of the marriage, the Church can declare that in fact the marriage was never valid. We call this an annulment. This is different from civil divorce, where the state dissolves a marriage that it recognised as valid up until that point. The Church does accept that sometimes the best thing is that a couple separate. Living in a bad marriage can be extremely damaging. In fact, it can become almost a countersign to Christ's love. Sadly, many marriages which have failed can still be valid in the eyes of the church. For such couples civil divorce may be the most prudent option, but because the bond they established between them is still there, neither party is free to marry someone else. Contrary to popular opinion, a divorced Catholic who has not remarried can receive communion.

The difficulty arises if that person wants to remarry. We began this article by saying that our fundamental calling is to love, but it is important to add that love is never easy, and in fact sometimes it goes wrong. Some people will read this and feel that the Church's standards are so high as to exclude them in their particular situation. Many Catholics have lived through the heart-break of a broken marriage or indeed the pain of a bad marriage.

I have had the privilege of listening to the stories of parishioners. In some cases, it has turned out that the situation wasn't as hopeless as they first thought. However, whether or not something could be done, I hope that we have been able to support each other in our God-given vocation to Christian love. If this article provokes some thoughts please do feel free to come and talk to me. Fr Denis

**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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto:Baldocksg2@safeguardrcdow.org.uk)  
[Baldocksg3@safeguardrcdow.org.uk](mailto:Baldocksg3@safeguardrcdow.org.uk)

**MASS FOR DECEASED RELATIVES,**

**All Souls Day 2nd November 7.30pm:**

November is the month of Holy Souls, when we pray for our deceased loved ones and we have our book of remembrance, in which we place the names of our family and friends who need our prayers. As we have our service of blessing the graves in August, I thought that it might be a nice idea to celebrate a special mass in November this year. Do come and join us and if you know of anyone who has lost a loved one and would like to join us please do invite them to the Mass.

**EXTRA-ORDINARY EUCHARISTIC**

**MINISTERS' DAY: Sat 4th November** will be held in the Church and after in the Parish rooms, at 10am to 12.30pm, followed by Lunch. Extra-ordinary Eucharist Ministers please do reply to Beverley if you are not able to attend. We need to know the numbers to prepare the lunch.

**OPEN MORNING - St John's Catholic Primary School**

We are holding an Open Morning on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> December between 10.00 am and 11.00 am for children who will be starting school in September 2024. For more information please visit [stjohns4.herts.sch.uk](http://stjohns4.herts.sch.uk) or call the school office on 01462 892478.

**CRAFT & CHAT** (formerly Knit & Natter) Our next meeting is on Friday 3rd

November, 9.30 to 11am in the Holy Family room. We welcome any adult crafters who enjoy knitting, hand sewing, embroidery etc. £2 per session which goes towards the church building fund. Any queries please phone Mary 07366 596671

**Contactless Payment Machine**

We have recently upgraded our Contactless Payment Machine situated at the back of the church. You can now make a donation (plus add Gift Aid), pay for your Repository items and also make a donation for a Mass Intention using the machine. For a Mass Intention, please continue to fill in one of the brown envelopes and add the named intention to the list on the Notice Board in the porch.

**YOUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR:**



We pray for the sick and housebound in the parish especially; Patrick Sarsfield and Celia Sheehan, and for those who care for and support them. We remember those who have died recently, especially Fr Dominic McKenna, John Southwell and Donal Hickey and those whose anniversary occurs at this time: Alfred Field; Ronald Bromage; Adelina Molloy; Michael Fitzgerald; Margaret Speck; Arthur Joseph Wilkinson; Michael Windebank; Christopher Windebank; Walter Picking; Maria Muria; Luigi Scarlino; Carolina Scarinzi; Irene Hunder; Antoni Bonja; Maura McMahon; William Thomas Crone; William Thomas Crone; Richard Hill.

Sat 28 <sup>th</sup>	6.30pm	Ss Simon&Jude, Apostles Private Intention
Sun 29 <sup>th</sup>	8.30am 10.30am	Della Newman RIP Donal Hickey RIP
Mon 30 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	
Tue 31 <sup>st</sup>	10.00am	
Wed 1 <sup>st</sup>	10.00am	All Saints Day
Thu 2 <sup>nd</sup>	10.00am 7.30 pm	All Souls Day
Fri 3 <sup>rd</sup>	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: 1<sup>st</sup> 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>