



Our Lady of Grace & St Edward's Chiswick and St Dunstan's Gunnersbury with St Joseph's Grove Park

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For even more regular news on parish life and activities, check the Latest News page on the parish website www.ourladyofgracechiswick.org or follow the parish on Twitter @ourladychiswick or Facebook at Our Lady of Grace & St Edward, Chiswick, London W4

21ST JUNE 2020

12TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Fr Michael Dunne
Fr Mike Maguire
Sharon Bowden
Mike Guthrie

Parish Priest
Assistant Priest
Administrator
Seminarist

Fr Michael writes:

Earlier this month Cardinal Sean O'Malley OFM Cap, Archbishop of Boston, wrote a Pastoral Letter to the Catholics of his diocese on the evils of racism. His letter was addressing the specific context of the US and of his diocese, and the full text is easily available online but here's an extract:

For four hundred and one years this land, which would become the United States of America, has had to deal with the evil and moral cancer that is racism.

When the word racism is invoked it is often identified in personal terms: someone whose attitudes, convictions and actions target a group of other individuals because of color. This is a valid but only partial meaning of the term. From such people as Fredrick Douglass and Harriet Tubman, to contemporary leaders, thinkers and activists, African Americans have tried consistently to expand the general understanding of racism. In word and deed, they have pointed to the reality of systemic and structural racism.

Racism and slavery find a common nexus in this country, the denial of the humanity and dignity of other persons. As a nation we abolished slavery legally, but we have not dealt with its enduring legacy. If we reject slavery then we must reject and denounce the dehumanizing attitudes that foster discrimination, inequality and violence. Racism can be explicit, but it also can be unrecognized and unacknowledged. Yet, all of its manifestations are deadly and corrosive to civil society. Like COVID-19, racism can infect any person, without regard of region, religion, race or ethnicity. It is highly contagious, easily transmitted to others, and too often unseen and disguised in those seemingly healthy. Racism is a social and spiritual disease that kills people.

The antidote to the poison of racism is community and solidarity. The Catholic Church is a community of people of all colors, nationalities and ethnicities. Catholic moral teaching is based on the fact that all people – without regard to race, religion, ethnicity or nationality – are created in the image of God. This teaching rejects any form of racism, personal or systemic. Our faith calls us to leadership in breaking down barriers and standing against injustice. To violate human dignity is to dishonor the presence of Christ in each person.

The killing of George Floyd is painful evidence of what is and has been at stake for African Americans – the failure of society in too many ways to protect their lives and the lives of their children. As Catholics we are taught to nurture and protect life from its inception to its natural end and at every moment in-between. The demonstrations and protests of these days have been calls for justice and heart wrenching expressions of deep emotional pain from which we cannot turn away. They call us to affirm the inestimable value of every person's life. They call us to redouble our commitment to foster respect and justice for all people. They call us to uphold and defend the truth that Black Lives Matter.

12TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Sat 20/6	The Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary	•Dr. Ian Sparling •Fr. Christopher Gawecki	ANN RIP
Sun 21/6	12 th SUNDAY IN Ordinary Time	•Ann Johnson •People of the Parish living and deceased/ and Mary Ford	ANN INT
Mon 22/6	Ss JOHN FISHER & THOMAS MORE	•Michael & Tina Maher •Jimmy Liversage	INT RIP
Tues 23/6	Feria	•Batt Hickey •Peter Murphy	ANN RIP
Wed 24/6	THE NATIVITY OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST	•Rose Braniff •Noel Whelan	ANN ANN
Thurs 25/6	Feria	•Luke Chadwick •Frontline NHS & Care Home Workers; the sick & their families	RIP INT
Fri 26/6	Feria	•Tony Zaidan •Douglas Wilcox	RIP RIP
Sat 27/6	St. John Southworth	•Michael O'Donnell •Caroline Thomas	RIP RIP

LET US PRAY

For those who are sick: Sandra Bocca, Cecil Pocock, Romeo Monthoy, Fr. Noel O'Boylan, Celine Duignan, Andy Cronin, Eulalie Raymond, Jim O'Grady, Greta Gribben, Jim Ryan, Mike O'Farrel, Bridget Hayden, Alaina Embling, Hannah Thomas, Lauren, Anna and Joseph Mullan, Ewa Blonska, Phoebe Rodriguez, John Moylan, Wanda Jeziorska, together with all those suffering in the pandemic.

THANK YOU! TO THE STEWARDS AND CLEANERS – Because of the generosity of the 50 or so volunteers enabling the church to have been open two hours a day last week, about 500 people have come into the church for private prayer, all of them grateful, with a further few hundred perhaps over the weekend. *Thank you!*

STEWARDSHIP & CLEANING THE RE-OPENED CHURCH? –

The church is happily open because of the generosity of the volunteer Stewards and Cleaners who are there to ensure insofar as possible that the church is and will remain 'Covid-safe'. This is effected through social distancing measures and much sanitising and disinfecting. A condition of the re-opening is that we have volunteer stewards assisting, for instance, with access in terms of numbers, and with sanitising. Volunteer cleaners are needed for a full domestic cleaning of the church after closing each day. How long our church is open each day will be determined by how many volunteers we have to steward and clean as we cannot open without volunteers present. Volunteers must be in good health, under 70 years of age, and have no underlying health conditions. If you can offer an hour or two every few days or each week, please visit the parish website for information and a sign-up form www.ourladyofgracechiswick.org or contact the Parish Office.

LENT PROJECT TOTAL NEARLY £20,000! – In what is an amazing testimony of parishioners' generosity in the face of the lockdown and the virus, the Lent Project appeal, which annually runs from Lent to Pentecost, has now been closed and the totals sent away. We had three charities to benefit from Lenten alms: the Cardinal's Lenten Appeal supporting projects in the Westminster Diocese received £3,152.88; the Cardinal Hume Centre, supporting homeless youth in London, received £3,371.63; and our overseas' charity, Friends of the Holy Land, received £6,251.28, with a further £100 after we had closed the appeal and £70 Gift Aid. This would have been a fine total in the lockdown circumstances of £12,945.79 but for some other generosity. Some wealthy patrons of Friends of the Holy Land had agreed to double any donation to the charity up until Pentecost Sunday. We therefore ensured that our £6,251.28 was received in good time and the charity confirmed it qualified for being doubled by their own patrons to £12,502.56! Thus, the total received by the beneficiaries of the three charities is **£19,197.07**. As ever, a tremendous result doing great good.

FRIENDS OF THE HOLY LAND thank parishioners for their generous parish donations of £6251.28. "Your kindness will help Christians in the West Bank and Gaza know that they are not alone as well as giving them money for basic necessities. The current situation for Christians in the Holy Land is very challenging and our team on the ground are providing hope and financial assistance to those most in need. Please continue to remember the work of FHL and the needs of the Christians in the Holy Land in your prayers".

CAFOD – UNITE AGAINST CORONAVIRUS PETITION - As we cope with coronavirus in the UK, we think of those in developing countries who are facing this pandemic with fragile health systems, some of which have almost no intensive care beds or ventilators. Food prices have already risen with borders closing, the poorest are losing their jobs and income with wholesale shutdowns. Furthermore, inadequate healthcare, lack of access to washing facilities and limited ability to social distance will result in loss of life on an intolerable scale. The likely impact will be devastating. As we are one global family please consider signing the CAFOD petition to ask government to work to help the most vulnerable cope with this crisis. To sign please visit cafod.org.uk/coronaviruscampaign

BAPTISMS, FIRST HOLY COMMUNION & CONFIRMATION – Even if we may be able to start celebrating Mass again for very restricted numbers according to social distancing protocols from about 4th July, the return to large and festal occasions such as First Holy Communion or Confirmation Masses is more distant. Baptisms, too, are still some way off but the parish would contact those families who has booked a baptism during the lockdown period as soon as we have information allowing baptisms with social distancing to take place. Rescheduling the First Holy Communion and Confirmation Masses is going to have to wait for as near a return to normality as possible perhaps in the Autumn. The parish will swiftly contact parents and guardians of existing candidates for these sacraments as soon as authority is given.

CENTERING PRAYER – In the current lockdown the Centering Prayer group has found a new way to convene via the internet platform Zoom. The group will now be meeting fortnightly on Mondays at 7.30pm. The next meeting will be 29th June so if you would like to join please phone or email John O'Brien who will be happy to assist: 07747611616 or john@jobrien.co.uk

GUNNERSBURY NOTES

and

GROVE PARK NOTES

With the Government's allowing churches to re-open for private prayer, it might be thought all three of our parochial churches could re-open just as before the virus. This is not the case. Any re-opening of a church has to be accompanied by stringent terms and conditions pertaining to social distancing, sanitising and cleaning, subject to objective standards and external scrutiny, without which churches are not allowed to open. Meeting these terms and conditions relies entirely on many volunteers as can be seen in the arrangements for Our Lady of Grace and St Edward's Church being open from Monday for just two hours a day every day and four hours on Saturdays and Sundays. Stewards must ensure social distancing and sanitising; cleaners must give a full domestic clean of the church each day after it closes. This is very generous volunteering! It is likely that these terms and conditions will also apply when churches restart public liturgies such as Mass and Holy Hours. For the moment, therefore, St Dunstan's Gunnersbury and St Joseph's Grove Park will remain closed. Volunteers for stewarding and cleaning from these churches are very welcome to email and phone the Parish Office so that we can build up significant numbers of volunteers in the hope that we will be ready safely to restart liturgies in these churches when we are allowed to do so. Volunteers must be in good health, under 70 years of age, and have no underlying health conditions.

PARISH ASSOCIATION WITH THE CATHOLIC UNION – Our parish has become the first in the country to have a formal association with The Catholic Union www.catholicunion.org.uk and many more will follow where there is shared interest. Fr Michael much recommends going to the website to sign up for their news briefings directly emailed completely free of charge. The news from parliament is always interesting if often rather worrying with initiatives to challenge the common good.

FEELING VULNERABLE AND NEEDING HELP? – Some parishioners are offering to shop and deliver groceries etc for any others who may not feel strong enough to shop for themselves. If you would like this help, please phone the Parish Office and leave a message. You are not alone! Help is at hand! 020 8994 2877

CAN YOU OFFER HELP? – If you'd be happy to volunteer to assist particularly elderly, isolated or isolating parishioners with just one or two errands each week as you are about your own, please also email or phone the Parish Office. You must be known to the priests and other parishioners from attendance at Mass. We'd be aiming to match postcodes of volunteers and recipient.

COMBONI SISTERS' MOTHER GENERAL MAKES APPEAL – Sr Graça and Sr Natalia of the Comboni Centre on Chiswick Lane would like to draw parishioners' kind attention to their Mother General's "Emergency COVID-19 Appeal Caring for the Elderly Comboni Sisters", <https://www.combonisc.co.uk/community/> The Comboni Sisters Nursing Homes in the Veneto region of northern Italy where the Order originated, care for about 400 elderly and sick Missionary Sisters from all countries who have returned from giving their active lives in the service of others on the missions. Covid-19 has had a devastating effect in the area and aside from the tragic multiple premature deaths of retired Sisters, the enormous and exceptional expenses incurred in caring for the others through the pandemic has affected the Order's global budget for mission. Mother General Sr Luigina Coccia is appealing for prayer and for donations to help in this exceptional situation. Details on how to donate can be found by opening the above link where Sr Luigina's video appeal can be viewed. The Chiswick Comboni Sisters, who have been praying for parishioners throughout the pandemic, say "As missionaries, we greatly appreciate every gesture that makes us all feel part of the same family. Thank you and God bless you."

THURSDAY MASS for NHS & CARE HOME staff & the SICK – The next live-streamed Masses to be celebrated by a Bishop on behalf of the Bishops' Conference at 7.00pm each Thurs are:
25th June: Bishop Alan Hopes, Norwich Cathedral
2nd July: Archbishop John Wilson, Southwark Cathedral
9th July: Bishop Tom Williams, Liverpool Cathedral