

NEWS

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

02 May 2021

EASING OF LOCKDOWN: As the rules slowly change it brings us new freedoms and new challenges. The most important thing is to keep our churches open and safe spaces for the faithful to gather to worship, and this means constant vigilance. In using our churches please keep in mind:

1) RESPECT FOR ONE ANOTHER: We need to preserve **PHYSICAL DISTANCING**. Please follow the directions of the stewards, and give each other space coming into and leaving church.

2) RESPECT FOR THE BLESSED SACRAMENT: If you are able to come to the grace of Holy Communion remember the guidelines: Holy Communion is received silently in the hands, which should be extended as far as possible in front of you, and you should be holding nothing else in your hands, including for example face coverings or a rosary. You are respectfully asked **not** to wear your face covering when coming to Holy Communion, so that you may worthily consume the Blessed Sacrament. This is why the priest wears his face covering at this point, to maximise mutual safety.

These guidelines are not invented by your parish clergy - they come to us from the bishops and we are all asked to respect them, clergy and faithful alike.

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS: As things "open up" there is all the more need to manage the buildings - so we need all the volunteers possible to help with this. It is a bit of an awkward task, but a vital one. If you are between ages 18-70 and can help your parish in this way, please email your name etc to the parish email address.

PARISH OFFICE: The office remains closed to visitors, because the building is not open to unscheduled visits. You can contact the office by the parish telephone number and Cynthia can make arrangements to collect or drop off documents etc on an individual basis. Please respect this and please don't ring the door bell on the way in to or out of Mass.

THANK YOU for your support of the particular collections recently: the Lenten Almsgiving; the Holy Places collection and the Priests Training Fund. These collections are still open and you can add something to them by marking an envelope for the appropriate collections and adding it to the bucket or through the letter box. God bless you all for your support of these causes. You can also make a donation via the card machine in St Gabriel's

PRAY THE ROSARY IN MAY: Pope Francis has called for all the faithful to pray the rosary during May especially to pray for the ending of the pandemic. You can join our May Devotion on 2 May - see the notice below. Also we suggest joining the daily rosary at Walsingham. See our [Marian Page](#) for more details.

MAY DEVOTIONS, SUNDAY 2 MAY: Unbelievably are now in May, the month of Mary! This is also the year of St Joseph, and his secondary feast day takes place on 1 May. So, we will offer a May devotion including a Rosary and the Litany of St Joseph following the 2pm Mass on Sunday 2 May, for about 30 minutes. To attend the May Devotions you will need to be in church for the 2pm Mass. ***If you intend to attend the 2pm Mass, please do not sign up for another Sunday Mass (this will enable someone else to attend Mass on Sunday).*** To comply with Covid precautions it is not possible to enter church after the Mass. The May Devotion will also be live-streamed.

DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE SURVIVORS OF ABUSE, TUESDAY 4 MAY: There are plenty of helpful prayer resources available on the Bishops' Conference Website [here](#)

DAY OF PRAYER FOR EASTERN CHRISTIANS 9 MAY: This year's day of prayer for Eastern Christians, promoted by Fellowship and Aid to the Christians of the East, will take place on 9th May, the Sixth Sunday of Easter. We will pray at Mass that day, and of course we are helping materially through our Lenten contributions to the Iraqi church. News of what we have raised for that will follow soon.

"THE DAY OF THE LORD": The bishops of England and Wales have written an important letter to the faithful about the meaning and importance of Sunday, Sunday Mass and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. You can find the full text [here](#). Copies are available at the exits of church today. We will post our own reflections on this document and how it helps in the process of starting again in parish life after Covid in the coming weeks. Please read this letter and use it to feed your prayers.

"THY KINGDOM COME" ECUMENICAL NOVENA OF PRAYER BEFORE PENTECOST:

Once again, alongside other Catholic dioceses we are pleased to be participating in this timely ecumenical initiative to help us reflect more deeply on our journey with Christ and personal call to discipleship. A variety of rich Catholic resources are

available [here](#). In a year that has been beset by many personal challenges and worries, the following resources may provide a useful source of spiritual nourishment and reflection.

1) Pentecost Novena: A beautiful way to prepare ourselves for the joy of Pentecost, This resource is available as a download, booklet, or podcast [here](#):

2) Journey with Mary: This [special playlist](#) has been created for us to journey with Mary from the Ascension to Pentecost . What would we say, or share with Mary?

3) Praying for 5: During the novena which 5 friends, family, neighbours, who may be away from the Church, or have yet to discover the love offered them by Jesus would you pray for? Simply do so throughout the day and ask for the guidance of the Holy Spirit for them.

4) For Families: There are some delightful resources to help families, particularly those with young children praying Thy Kingdom Come. To explore what is on offer please [here](#).

SAFEGUARDING WITHIN THE CHURCH In October 2019 the Bishops commissioned an independent Review of Safeguarding Structures and Arrangements in England and Wales. Ian Elliot was the Chair of the Review. The final report and recommendations were published in November 2020 and are sometimes referred to as the 'Elliot Report'. The 'Catholic Safeguarding Project' has been established to deliver the recommendations of the Review. The Project Implementation Team has pledged to disseminate a newsletter every few weeks giving an overview of the work undertaken since the Implementation Plan was adopted. Newsletters can be found on the Bishops' Conference website: [here](#) and you can visit the Catholic Safeguarding project website [here](#).

OPPORTUNITIES ONLINE FOR STUDY AND FAITH DEVELOPMENT:

1) THE OLD TESTAMENT - A GUIDE FOR THE PERPLEXED: a series of five Tuesday-evening talks on Zoom, commencing 20th April, by Fr John Deehan. There's a poster in church. You can register for you ticket via the Eventbrite website [Here](#).

2) EASTERTIDE RESOURCES: The Year of the Word – The God Who Speaks – some rich resources focused on Easter Glory can be found at: godwhospeaks.uk/easter-glory

ANNUAL MASS OF THANKSGIVING FOR THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY MATRIMONY LIVE-STREAMED: via live-stream from Westminster Cathedral, on Saturday 15th May 2021 at 3.00pm.

The Cardinal will be celebrating a live-streamed Mass for all couples in the Diocese who are celebrating their 5th, 10th, 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th and 60th (and every year over 60) wedding anniversary of Catholic marriage in 2021. If you are celebrating an anniversary, please give your parish clergy/parish office the following details: husband and wife's names, wedding date, full postal address and email (or telephone number if no email), and these details will be sent to those organizing this celebration. An Order of Service can be downloaded from the Cathedral website before the event – www.westminstercathedral.org.uk.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION We were unable to put on extra time for the Sacrament of Reconciliation before Easter, so use the weeks of Easter too to come to the grace of new life in Reconciliation in order to come worthily to Holy Communion.

THANKS FROM MISSIO FOR "RED BOX" OFFERINGS: Mission write to us with thanks for contributions from the Red Boxes in 2020 which came to £1,149.56. As they say, the Red Box is a sign of our solidarity with our brothers and sisters around the world and these contributions go to the work of evangelization in many places. If you would like a **RED BOX**, or need to return one, please contact the Parish Office by telephone or wait to speak with the clergy outside church after Mass.

YEAR OF ST JOSEPH: Now that the Solemnity of St Joseph has been celebrated we will be offering more suggestions about how to enter into this year. Look at our Year Of Saint Joseph page [here](#) for more information.

COVID-19 VACCINE CONFIDENCE: A webinar has been organized for the of Dioceses of Brentwood, Southwark and Westminster, with the cooperation of Hertfordshire County Council and Hammersmith & Fulham Council, and other local authorities. It will take place on Saturday 15th May 2021 from 10am to 11.30am and will feature a panel of eminent medical experts led by Prof Kevin Fenton, Regional Director of Public Health London. The panel will share the latest information on COVID-19 vaccination. There will be an opportunity for participants to ask questions anonymously. To join the webinar: <https://zoom.us/j/99627319556> Passcode: 546617

LIFE-CHANGING OPPORTUNITIES FOR BOYS NOW IN YEAR 3 AT WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL CHOIR SCHOOL: The Head Master writes: "Becoming a chorister at Westminster Cathedral is a wonderful opportunity... There are no financial barriers: all boys receive scholarships up to 100% of fees. The universal element is a love of singing!" See poster in church and ask Fr James or Fr Tom if any family is interested.

JOB VACANCY AT ST GREGORY'S CATHOLIC SCIENCE COLLEGE: Vacancy for a LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANT across Key Stage 3 and 4 from September 2021. Experience as a Learning Support Assistant is desirable but the school is interested in hearing from individuals looking for a career change or for recent graduates. Hours: 8.30 - 4.30 Monday - Thurs and 8.30 - 3.30 Friday. Contact Miss Togher on 8907 8828 Ext 242. Applications close 14 May 2021.

INFO ON THE EU CITIZENS SETTLEMENT SCHEME: Settlement Scheme for European citizens EU, EEA and Swiss citizens who were living in the UK by 31st December 2020 have until 30th June 2021 to apply for the Settlement Scheme. Those who do not apply are at risk of losing their rights to live and work here or access important services such as healthcare. There is a need to continue drawing this to people's attention as we approach the deadline. Older and vulnerable people may require assistance with the online application or not even know that their status is at risk. In many cases their main point of contact with society will be through the Church. Relevant information can be found on the official government website (www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families), from the European Commission (www.eurights.uk/what-you-need-to-know) or from the charity Settled (www.settled.org.uk). *Please note, Irish citizens do not need to apply.*

RIGHT TO LIFE UK ASK FOR YOUR SUPPORT: Act now and ask your MP to oppose introducing assisted suicide. The assisted suicide lobby have launched a large campaign to put pressure on the Government to reconsider the legalisation of assisted suicide.

It is vital that it is clear to the Government that the public want them to continue to hold strong against this pressure from assisted suicide campaigners. Right To Life UK have set up an easy to use tool which will enable you to email your MP asking them to make it clear to the Government that it should not give into demands from the assisted suicide lobby to reconsider the legalisation of assisted suicide. It only takes 30 seconds to email your MP by visiting the link: <https://righttolife.org.uk/StopAssistedSuicide>

MESSAGE FROM RETROUVAILLE MARRIAGE SUPPORT: Stress in Your Marriage? – This has been a very difficult year for many couples. Retrouvaille is a programme for married couples that feel bored, disillusioned, frustrated, or angry in their marriage. Some experience coldness. Others experience conflict. Most don't know how to change the situation or even communicate with their spouse about it.

This programme has helped 6,000 couples who were experiencing difficulties in their marriage in the past year alone. There is no group therapy or group work

For confidential information about 'Retrouvaille' or to register for the next programme commencing with a Virtual weekend on 1st - 4th July 2021, call or text 0788 7296983 or 0797 3380443 - or email retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com or visit www.retrouvaille.org.uk

"JESUS, I ADORE YOU": is a new book of prayers before the Blessed Sacrament for younger children. Available from St Gabriel's office or stewards priced £5.95. A really good teaching resource for parents, especially in this time without public celebration of Mass.

HAND MADE ICON FOR SALE: Cristinel Paslaru, who made the icons of the Baptism of Christ in St Gabriel's and of the Holy Trinity in St Bernard's is a professional Icon Writer from Iasi in Romania.

He has made a new icon of St Christopher (25cms x 12cms) which is looking for a home. His price is £150. Cristi's work is beautiful and of the highest quality. All questions or enquiries to Fr James.

