**CHURCH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION & SAINT JOSEPH**

**23 ST JOHN’S STREET, HERTFORD SG14 1RX**

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**Parish Priest: Monsignor Séamus O’Boyle**

**SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – 10th /11th February 2024**

**Prayers & Readings for this Sunday’s Mass can be found on p. 137 in the Parish Mass Book.**

**Please note that there is a Loop system in the Church.**

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View from the Presbytery

First of all, thank you for your very generous response to the appeal from the Latin Patriarchate in Jerusalem for help with their outreach in Gaza and the West Bank. The collection taken up last weekend came to just about £1500 which is wonderful. That will be sent via our Diocese to the Patriarchate.

The Holy Season of Lent begins this coming week. On Ash Wednesday there will be Mass here with the distribution of ashes at 7.30am, 10.00am and 8.00pm. A reminder that Ash Wednesday is a day of Fasting and Abstinence – when we are encouraged to have just one main meal and to refrain from eating meat. During Lent we will be praying the Stations of the Cross each Saturday at 5.15pm as is customary.

The three bywords for Lent are Prayer, Fasting & Almsgiving – it is a time for us to try and do a bit of spiritual ‘Spring Cleaning’ – the very word Lent being derived from an Old English name for Spring. So, Lent should not be a gloomy time but one of new life – you will notice that there are already plenty of Spring flowers appearing in the courtyard garden.

Since the Autumn, our RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) group have been meeting. There are four in the group: Mariette, Darren, Caro and Louise. Mariette and Darren are becoming Catholics having been baptised in other Christian communities. Caro and Louise are baptised Catholics completing the Sacraments of Initiation. Please pray for them during Lent – it is a time of special focus for them as we approach Easter when they will be received and confirmed. Next Saturday afternoon they will be gathering with candidates from all over the Diocese in Westminster Cathedral for the ‘Rite of Election’ at which they will be presented to the Cardinal and his Assistant Bishops.

All the best for a happy and productive Lent!

*Fr Séamus*

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS:** each Saturday during Lent at 5.15pm.

**THANKSGIVING FOR MATRIMONY:** The Cardinal invites all couples who are celebrating 5th, 10th, 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th, 60th, and 60+ wedding anniversaries during this year to a special Mass of Thanksgiving on Saturday 25th May at 2.30pm in Westminster Cathedral. If you are a couple celebrating one of these milestones and you would like to attend the Mass, please let me know. *Fr Séamus*

**IF YOU GO IN TO HOSPITAL**: If someone is sick in hospital, please let us know here at the Presbytery, and/or ask the staff on the ward, so that your loved one can be visited whilst in hospital, and receive Holy Communion and any other Sacraments from the Chaplain.

At the Lister & QE2 hospitals, the Chaplain is: John O’Neill 01438 314333

**ROSARY GROUP:**  Come and join us in thechurch hall on **Tuesday evenings** at 7pm for recital of the Rosary and the Chaplet of Divine Mercy.

**PRAYERS ASKED PLEASE –**

**FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK:** Elizabeth Barnes, Ursula Partner, Jan Kracinski, Stephen Carey, Paul Cox, Malcolm Gilbert, Enzo Andrean, Miriam Matthews, Ruth Featherstone, Stephen Judd, Mary Ward, John Sweeney, Pam Gates, Juliet Davis, Phyllis Read, Jo Black, Robbie Robinson, Fr Terry, Angela White, Manuel Lopez, Lyn Carroll, Linda Abeysundera.

**FOR THOSE WHO HAVE DIED RECENTLY:** Norene Hristov - may she rest in peace and rise in glory.

**POPE FRANCIS’ PRAYER INTENTION FOR FEBRUARY**

***For the Terminally Ill***

*The Holy Father encourages prayers “so that terminally ill patients and their families always receive necessary medical and human care and support.”*

**MASS INTENTIONS:**

**Saturday 10th February**

**6.00pm:** Private Intention

**Sunday 11th February**

*VI Ordinary Time*

**8.30am:** People of the Parish

**10.30am:** Louis Guy Bouquet (Anniv)

**Monday 12th February**

**10.00am:** Joe Sullivan RIP

**Tuesday 13th February**

**10.00am:** Private Intention

**Wednesday 14th February**

*Ash Wednesday – Lent begins*

**7.30am:** People of the Parish

**10.00am:** Eileen Penrose RIP

**8.00pm:** Private Intention

**Thursday 15th February**

**CHURCH CLOSED**

**Friday 16th February**

**12.15pm:** Private Intention

**Saturday 17th February**

**6.00pm:** Peter Matthews (Anniv.)