**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**

**THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER**

Prayers & Readings for this Sunday’s Mass can be found on p. 258 in the Parish Mass Book.

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

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**View from the Presbytery**

It was not reported much in the media here, but last Monday the Vatican issued a document called ‘*Dignitas infinita’* – basically a reflection on current church teaching about human dignity, which is its focus. It beautifully explains how the church understands human dignity in all its dimensions and its development from Genesis through to the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights. The Catholic Bishops of England and Wales have issued a statement about the document reminding us that ‘In our troubled times, it is important for Christians to proclaim the inherent and unconditional dignity of all human beings, without exception, as being the basis for authentic human rights. Our dignity and rights originate in the Gospel preached by Christ. As Cardinal Fernandez (*Prefect of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith*) states in presenting the document: “we cannot separate faith from the defence of human dignity, evangelisation from the promotion of a dignified life, and spirituality from a commitment to the dignity of every human being.” The promotion and defence of human dignity continues to be at the heart of the mission of the Catholic Church in England and Wales.’

There are many areas where human dignity is misunderstood and human rights are under attack. In our own country, we also face the threat of the legalisation of assisted suicide. ‘*Dignitas infinita’* emphasises the links between the dignity of the sick and dying, our duty to care for them, and need to resist the growing threat of assisted suicide and euthanasia. By proclaiming that the Kingdom of God belongs to the poor, the humble, the despised, and those who suffer in body and spirit, Jesus recognised the dignity of every person, especially those who were considered ‘unworthy’. In our parish, civic and political life, we must, therefore, never forget the human dignity and human rights of the poor, prisoners, the sick, and those living with disabilities. Our Bishops echo the document’s call to bring an end to all war and end the scourge of violence within our local communities and in our homes. There is an urgent need for all of us to be peacemakers. This is a daunting task – and we may feel powerless as we face it – but it is a shared responsibility. Our prayers are needed. In fact, our Bishops are on retreat together this week at Buckfast Abbey. We could begin by praying for them in the difficult task they have of leading the local Churches.

*Fr Séamus*

**GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY: Next Sunday, April 21st, is Good Shepherd Sunday, the day the Church throughout the world prays for vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Here in Westminster, the annual collection for the Priest Training Fund will take place. This fund pays for the formation of men for the priesthood in our Diocese, and also for the ongoing training of ordained priests. Donation envelopes are available at the back of the Church today. Please take one home and bring it back next weekend with your donation.**

**For those more savvy with such things, the QR code can be used to make an online donation, or you can also do so via:** [**www.rcdow.org.uk/donations**](http://www.rcdow.org.uk/donations)

**OFFERTORY ENVELOPES:** If you usually give your weekly offering to the Parish via the envelope scheme, new boxes of envelopes for the new Financial Year are now available for collection at the back of the Church. If you do not find a box with your name on it, and would like to make your offering in this way, please let me know via email hertford@rcdow.org.uk and I can sort out a box of envelopes for you.

Thank you. Fr Séamus

**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, Linda Abeysundera, Julia Rochford, Gerry Goss, James Monaghan, Jennifer Rademeyer, Teresa Morris, David Pearson.

 **FOR THOSE WHO HAVE DIED RECENTLY:** John Lamb, Eugene Martin (*his Funeral Mass will be at Saint Augustine’s R.C. Church, Hoddesdon on Friday 19th April at 2.30pm*) Mgr. George Hay, Maggie Maslinski, Maria Zielicka. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

**POPE FRANCIS’ PRAYER INTENTION FOR APRIL**

***For the role of women***

We pray that the dignity and immense value of women be recognized in every culture, and for the end of discrimination that they experience in different parts of the world.

**MASS INTENTIONS:**

**Saturday 13th April**

**6.00pm:** People of the Parish

**Sunday 14th April** *III of Easter*

**8.30am:** Private Intention

**10.30am:** Private Intention

**Monday 15th April**

**10.00am:** Private Intention

**Tuesday 16th April**

**12.15pm:** Private Intention

**Wednesday 17th April**

**10.00am:** Private Intention

**Thursday 18th April**

**CHURCH CLOSED**

**Friday 19th April**

**NO MASS**

**Saturday 20th April**

**6.00pm:** Matthew Coughlan RIP

**Sunday 21st April** *IV of Easter*

**8.30am:** People of the Parish

**10.30am:** Maggie Maslinski RIP

**Confessions: Saturday 5.15.- 5.45pm**