

St. Vincent de Paul (Osterley) Newsletter

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21 June 2020 Yr A Vol. 2 (Pg. 93)

Jeremiah 20:10-13. He has delivered the soul of the needy from the hands of evil men. The prophet describes terror all around him, but trusts that God will be with him and deliver him.

Romans 5:12-15. The gift considerably outweighed the fall. God's goodness to us always outweighs human wickedness and sin. God's grace manifested to us through Christ, has a superabundance far in excess of the damage of sinfulness.

Matthew 10:26-33. Do not be afraid of those who kill the body. The Lord knows us through and through, and we must bear witness to the Lord, and his law, and his love. If God's providential care extends even to sparrows, how much more does it extend to us.

Psalm 68: In your great love, answer me, O God.



**Fr. Robin Burgess has prepared a homily for today
You can read it on our website in the section entitled 'Homilies/Pastoral Letters' or scroll to the end of this page.**

The church building is open for individual private prayer (which includes household groups). Please check each week for opening hours as these change. Procedures are in place which comply with government advice to limit the spread of Covid 19.

21st June 2020

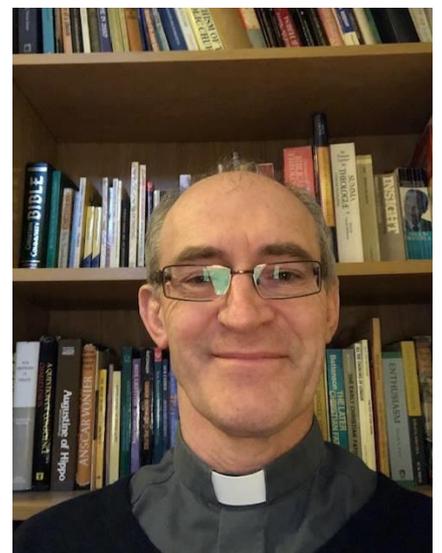
Dear Parishioners,

Today we celebrate the Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time. Fr Robin Burgess has written a homily for this Sunday which I recommend. You can find it in the homily section or at the end of this newsletter.

Last Friday we celebrated the solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and on Monday we celebrated the memorial of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Both of these feasts remind us of the love Jesus and Mary have for us.

In my parent's home in Dublin there is a picture of the Sacred Heart (as the photo of Jesus with his heart exposed is called). I am sure many homes have such a photograph. When my parents were decorating some years ago they discussed moving this picture but decided that it should stay where it is.

We live in a world saturated with images and yet the practice of having religious images and objects in our Catholic Homes has declined somewhat. It seems to me very important that we do have such images and objects displayed in our homes in order to



remind us of the presence and the love of God in our lives.

People will have different tastes in religious imagery and that is fine, but I am sure this practice is good for our faith and the faith of others who visit our homes.

The practice of the church of linking some memorials such as the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary often acknowledges the complementarity of the male and female contribution to life and to the church. Another example is the feast of the monk St Benedict which is followed by the feast of his sister the abbess St Scholastica. In St Luke's gospel he often follows a story about a man with a story about a woman, e.g. In chapter 15 verses 1-10 the parable of the man who loses a sheep is followed by the parable of the woman who loses a coin.

Speaking of the role of women last Friday a female parishioner rang and asked me to put a single rose by the statue of the Sacred heart which I of course obeyed!

Some parishioners have sent me photos of their cats to complement the photo of Rosie the Parish Cat Emeritus. Thank You.

Re-opening of Churches

Since last Monday we have been opening the church each day for individual prayer. It has been good to welcome people back. You can attend with other people who are considered to be part of your household.

The parish has put in place social distancing measures, hygiene precautions and a cleaning regime which complies with Government guidance to limit the spread of Coronavirus.

We have battery operated hand sanitizers on order but in the meantime we will provide pump action bottles of hand sanitizer. There will be a Steward on duty when the church is open to ensure social distancing is observed and cleaning will take place throughout the day. We have posted some new photographs of some of the measures we are taking.

Whilst we look forward to seeing parishioners visiting the church to pray, the obligation to attend weekly mass is still suspended (there is no mass in any case at the moment) and you are not obliged to attend the church for private prayer.

One of our flower arrangers made a beautiful display of flowers for the altar which I share below.

The times for individual prayer change each week (Please see below) so please check the website or newsletter. The Catholic Church in England and Wales is in active discussions with the government to establish when churches can also re-open for services. Permission has been given to have non- Eucharistic funerals in Church but these have many restrictions on the numbers who can attend. We, the church want to play our part in controlling Coronavirus so our leaders will ensure that we observe what social distancing measures are necessary.

If parishioners wish to donate to the parish when they visit the church, please do so using the new drop safe in the lobby. This can be used for planned giving envelopes.

We hope to send out new boxes of planned giving envelopes (which start from the 12th April 2020) by post in the next few weeks. The parish appreciates that the ability of parishioners to contribute to our collections may have been adversely affected by the current pandemic. Please just give what you can.



Prayer Resources Online.

It has been wonderful to see so many resources online for Catholics to use during these times. The link <https://rcdow.org.uk/> brings you to the diocesan website. This has many prayer resources and information on the practical steps being taken by the people of our diocese and by Caritas Westminster to help people in material need. Caritas Westminster was established by Cardinal Vincent using funds donated by parishioners during the “Growing in Faith” campaign which ran in the diocese some years ago.

Once again I send particular greeting to those who are sick or living alone. You are in my thoughts and prayers. We also pray for those who have died, may they rest in peace, and for those who mourn, may God console them.

Whilst we wait patiently to be re-united fully in body as a community, I ask God to bless you all in the following words. (Your response Amen!)

May almighty God bless you.
The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit
People: Amen

Times of Opening for Individual Prayer for week commencing the 22nd June 2020

Monday 7pm to 8pm

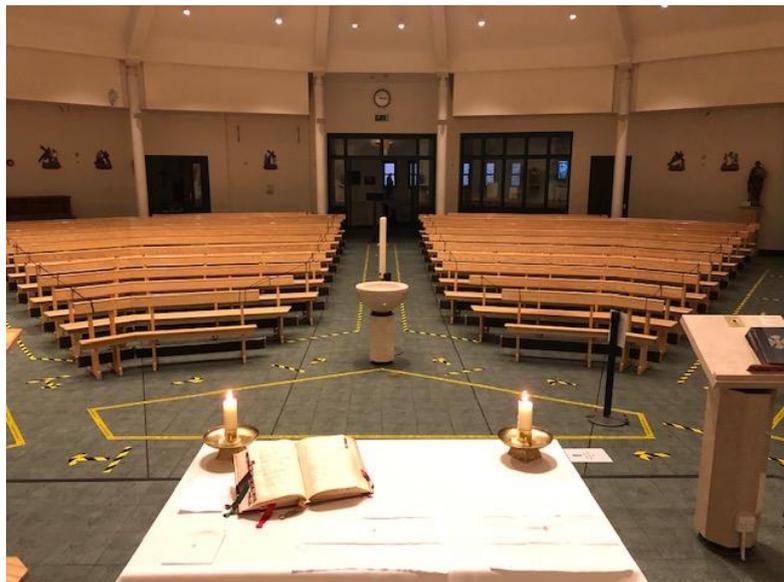
Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 11 am -12 noon and 7 pm to 8 pm

Wednesday Closed

Saturday 9 am – 11 am

Sunday 10 am to 12 noon and 5pm to 6pm





CAFOD, our Catholic Agency for Overseas Development

CAFOD, our Catholic Agency for Overseas Development, launched its coronavirus emergency appeal on 30 April. Coronavirus (Covid-19) has now spread worldwide, with confirmed cases in many countries where CAFOD works. The effects of coronavirus on developing countries are likely to be devastating.

Many countries have very weak healthcare systems and will not be able to cope. Families without enough to eat and without access to clean water, possibly living with other diseases, will be particularly vulnerable to coronavirus.

It is not just a public health emergency. Many of the world's most vulnerable people will lose their jobs and be unable to support their families. The poorest and most marginalised communities, working hard to transform their lives, will be pushed further into poverty. CAFOD is adapting its programmes to help manage the risk of coronavirus in communities and working with local Church aid agencies on the frontline of this crisis. They are already working to get food to where it is needed most; to improve hygiene, handwashing and sanitation in communities and households; producing radio messages, posters and leaflets in local languages on risks and prevention; and training community volunteers to carry out awareness campaigns.

In order to continue protecting and improving the lives of those in poor communities, your prayers and gifts are needed now more than ever. While we are not able to hold collections in our church, you can donate at cafod.org.uk/coronavirus appeal.

PARISH CAT EMERITUS "ROSIE" AND FRIENDS



SUNDAY OFFERING AND SUPPORTING THE PARISH:

Dear Parishioners,

We are conscious that many parishioners may be struggling financially, if however, you are able to continue your weekly donations please see how to do this below:

- 1) On Sunday 5th April those who give by planned giving envelopes ran out of envelopes. It is not currently possible to distribute new boxes of envelopes.

If possible, please set up a Standing Order to replace your Planned Giving Envelopes. To see how to do this electronically please See “Donate to our parish” on our website. Should you wish, you can change this back to planned giving envelopes when they are distributed and movement restrictions lifted.

- 2) If you give cash, you can set up a standing order in favour of the parish electronically. For our bank details please see “Donate to our parish” on our website.
- 3) You can use the donation facility on our website to make your donation each week by credit or debit card. See “Donate to our parish” on our website.
- 4) If you do not already do so, you can Gift Aid all your donations. This increases your donation by 25% at no costs to you. You simply have to pay sufficient tax to cover 25% of your donations to the parish. If you do so the government will refund this money direct to the parish. Please follow the instructions on the parish website under “Donate to our parish”

We know that those who are able, will sustain the parish financially during this challenging time and enable us to minister to our parishioners and those in need.

If you have any queries you can contact the parish bookkeeper Steve McEvoy on osterleybk@rcdow.org.uk or 079 3278 3647. Thank you. *Fr Mark*

POPE FRANCIS: Pope Francis called for all Christians to respond to the coronavirus pandemic “with the universality of prayer, of compassion, of tenderness”, adding, “Let us remain united. Let us make our closeness felt toward those persons who are the loneliest”. Speaking after the traditional recitation of the Angelus, the Holy Father called on all Christians to join together in prayer. “In these trying days, while humanity trembles due to the threat of the pandemic, I would like to propose to all Christians that together we lift our voices towards Heaven

MASS INTENTIONS: *Mass intentions can still be requested via e-mail or by ringing the parish office. Please leave a message and phone number if there is no reply from the office. Offerings for such masses can be made using the online donation link on the website or submitting it to the parish only when movement restrictions are lifted. Masses offered prior to the reduction in Sunday masses will be allocated to the nearest free mass.*

SERVICE TIMES & INTENTIONS
21st June – 28th June 2020

SUNDAY 21st June Twelfth Ord Time Year A	Silvester Baptista and Anthony Carvalho RIP
Mon 22: Weekday	Peter O'Connor RIP
Tues 23: Weekday	Truda Weiler RIP
Wed 24: Nativity John the Baptist	In honour of Infant Jesus of Prague
Thu 25: Weekday	In honour of Sacred Heart of Jesus
Fri 26: Weekday	In honour of Immaculate Heart of Mary
Saturday 27: Weekday	People of the Parish
SUNDAY 28th June Ss. Peter and Paul	In honour of the Most Chaste Heart of St Joseph

PARISH OFFICE:

Please do not call to the parish office without an appointment. Enquiries can be made by telephone or you can e-mail the parish at osterley@rcdow.org.uk

- **PARISH ADMINISTRATOR:** Mrs. L. Faria
- **PLANNED GIVING CO-ORDINATOR:** Mr. Steve McEvoy
- **PARISH BOOKKEEPER:** Mr. Steve McEvoy
To contact Mr. McEvoy by email: osterleybk@rcdow.org.uk
- **300 CLUB:** Enquiries to Parish Office.

ADMIN

- **PARISH WEBSITE ADDRESS FOR ONLINE NEWSLETTER:**
<https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/osterley/>

• **PARISH REGISTRATION:** Please take a Welcome Pack from the lobby when the church re-opens in due course. Completed Registration and Planned Giving forms should be posted through the door of the Parish house. Thank you.

• **BAPTISM:** Contact Fr. Mark to arrange a baptism date and attend a course. Please complete a form (available in the lobby or online) and submit to the Parish Office. Next course: TBA.
NB Unfortunately courses are now cancelled until further notice.

CERTIFICATE OF CATHOLIC PRACTICE: This parish operates a system of Mass Attendance Cards. This is only applicable for parents who wish to send their children to a Catholic primary or secondary school. Attendance at 75% of masses at which stickers are given out will be deemed to comply with the conditions for receiving a Certificate of Catholic practice. Parents can apply to Catholic schools without a Certificate of Catholic practice but will usually be considered after those who possess one. The Certificate of Catholic Practice should be downloaded from our website. (Do not use the form provided by the school). Please print one for every school to which you are applying.

Parents/Guardians should begin collating forms two years before the closing date for their child's application to Nursery, Reception, Secondary and 6th Form.

IMPORTANT UPDATE: Mass attendance stickers were not distributed on Sun. 15/3/2020.

They will not be distributed in the near future until further notice. These weeks will be omitted in our calculation of the 75% attendance for school admission

• **MARRIAGES:** 6 months' notice required. Please ring the office for initial discussion with Fr. Mark.

CONTACTS

- **SAFEGUARDING REP:** Mrs. A. Trigger. Tel. 07764482186
Email: osterleysg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk
- **WEST MIDDX HOSPITAL RC CHAPLAIN:** Tel. 020 8321 5447.



REDEMPTORIST PUBLICATIONS bring the Sunday Holy Mass, celebrated by Fr. Denis McBride into your home every Sunday. Each Sunday service will be accessed at: <https://www.rpbooks.co.uk/holy-mass-online> Visit their BLOG section for a variety of reflections.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Homily for the Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time 21st June 2020

Fr Robin Burgess writes

Dear Friends,

After Eastertide, Trinity Sunday and Corpus Christi we resume this week what is called “Ordinary” Time. The use of that word makes it sound dull and workaday, but one idea is that it really means “ordered,” time which has a pattern, a sequence to it, time which does not just go on and on but is moving towards a definite end – our union with God in his kingdom. In that sense no time is ever ordinary, but truly *extraordinary*, as it is always informed by the presence and working of God drawing us closer to himself.

During this season we resume week by week reading of the Gospel of St. Matthew. In this Sunday’s passage we hear Jesus twice say to us, ‘Do not be afraid.’ I think it was in a book of Pope John Paul that I once read that these are the most frequently repeated words in Scripture. Over and over, through prophets, through angels, through his Son, God says to his people, ‘Do not be afraid.’ This is something quite new in the history of religion. Before modern technology enabled us to dominate and transform the world around us it was natural for primitive mankind to think of the world as a hostile and dangerous place, full of unseen traps and lurking perils, and God or the gods as powerful beings who control the world and were not particularly concerned for or interested in the human race – except to keep us in our place of subservience and homage to them. Coronavirus may have at least the virtue of reminding us that although we think we can be in control of nature, we never are and nature will often show us how much more powerful it is. As a Roman poet put it, *You may drive nature out with a pitchfork, but it will always coming running back again!*

Judaism and Christianity introduced for the first time the belief that God is the creator of all that is, and that he is a God of love – for love is necessarily creative and creativity is an act of love. He is a God who loves all he creates and therefore desires that the people he creates should love him – since love always calls for a loving response. Not only does he desire this, but in Jesus he makes it possible for us to respond to him in this way, for Jesus is the incarnation of self-giving, all-encompassing divine love.

Because this belief runs counter to our normal ways of thinking we are always in danger of slipping back into older, more primitive attitudes – seeing God as a hostile, judging, punishing God whom we have constantly to appease by offering him sacrifices and prayers. It hardly needs saying that this attitude is still alive and strong in varieties of Christianity today. This, I think, is why God has to keep telling us not to be afraid, but turn to him willingly and give ourselves to trust in his love and care. Doing so will not immediately solve all our own problems or the problems of the world – life will go on much as it usually does - but it will give us a

different, more hopeful orientation which will enable us to live our lives in a more loving, less fearful way, believing that God is indeed present in all things and bringing all things to their completion in him.



The Scriptures, the Word of God, can be helpful here in building up our faith. There are, for instance, the psalms that are sung daily at the office of Compline, or Night Prayer, the last prayer of the day in monasteries such as Ealing Abbey, near where I live, psalms chosen to give the assurance of God's protection as we enter the hours of darkness that presage the darkness of death itself. Here are verses from one of them, Psalm 91: *you will not fear the terror of the night nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the plague that prowls in the darkness nor the scourge that lays waste at noon. Upon you no evil shall fall, no plague approach where you dwell. For you has he commanded his angels to keep you in all your ways.* Especially now I am sure many of us will want to echo those words in fervent prayer.

After Compline the monks are expected to retire for the night and go into *The Great Silence* which will not be broken until breakfast the following morning. A few years ago a remarkable film with that title proved an unexpected success. It was made at the father-house of the Carthusian order in the French Alps near Grenoble. Carthusians are perhaps the most austere of the religious orders, spending much of the day in silence and solitude in their own cell (a suite of rooms with a small garden) and coming together only for the prayers they say in church. The film-maker had to agree that he would only show the monks in their daily life with no commentary or interviews or background music. Verses of Scripture appeared at intervals on the screen and the camera would regularly hold the face of a monk for half a minute or so, almost as if one were looking into his soul – and what was patently visible was his calmness and sense of being quite untroubled and at ease with himself. We could all do with some of that! As I watched the film I was wondering whether religious life really does need to be as austere as this, but I ended thinking, 'I'm glad they are there. I'm glad I'm not there with them! But I am glad they are there doing what they do, praying for us and giving an example of what everyone can be.'

Religious life, after all, is only one specialised form of what we are all called to be, people who know God in a real personal way and live our lives, everything we do, out of that knowledge. And the way to that knowledge is to pray as the monks do, letting go of ourselves, our concerns and preoccupations and simply resting in God's presence with us and in us. This is what it means to be *contemplative*, not *thinking* about anything, not even thinking about God, but *being* in God, and the contemplative way is the way for all Christian people since it is the way of Christ himself. Being a Christian is not so much a matter of believing things or doing things, but above all of being, being *in* Christ, as St. Paul puts, sharing the divine-human life that is in him. Belief and action follow from that.

Spending time letting go of ourselves and being with God will always be time well spent and indeed is essential if we are to grow in faith, but we need something to help us to do this. A simple way, well tried and practised, is to pray a single short form of words over and over for the time you have, giving it your attention and using it as a focus or anchor to keep your own thoughts at bay. You could, for example, use the Jesus Prayer of the Russian Orthodox tradition: *Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me*. Sit, be still and quiet and inside yourself repeat these words. But there are many other ways. Anything you can do which will help you to still your beating mind and just be there with God can be followed.

Our churches are now open again for what is being called *private* prayer, but strictly speaking this is a misnomer. Christian prayer is never private in the sense that it is my prayer alone, it is always taking part in the prayer of Christ through the Spirit dwelling within us. It is not what we do, or I do, but Christ praying in me. Insofar as I am doing anything it is simply being in touch with the prayer of Christ going on at the centre of the human person. The more we can do this the better prepared we will be for resuming our participation in the celebration of Mass when that becomes possible. Meantime happy contemplation!

Wishing you every blessing, Fr. Robin

Fr Robin is happy to receive any comments or questions you may have. He can be contacted at robinburgess@rcdow.org.uk