

St. Vincent de Paul (Osterley) Newsletter

Parish Priest: Fr. Mark Leenane, 2 Witham Road, Osterley, TW7 4AJ.

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This parish is part of the Westminster Roman Catholic Diocese Trustee Registered Charity No. 233699



5 July 2020

14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Zechariah 9:9-10. See now, your king comes humbly to you. The prophet Zechariah looks forward to the coming of the King of Peace. In the Gospels, this prophetic word is used to describe the Palm Sunday arrival in Jerusalem of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

Romans 8:9,11-13. If by the Spirit you put an end to the misdeeds of the body, you will live. Paul teaches the Christians of Rome that the Holy Spirit resides within each believer, and this makes all the difference.

Matthew 11:25-30. I am gentle and humble of heart. Jesus invites those who follow him to take up the yoke of the Gospel. It is not a heavy burden, but one that brings rest for the soul.

I will bless your name for - e - ver, O God my King.

PSALM 144: I will bless your name for ever, O God my King.



**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) and for mass. Please check the website each week for opening hours as these change. Procedures are in place which comply with government advice to limit the spread of Covid 19.

5th July 2020

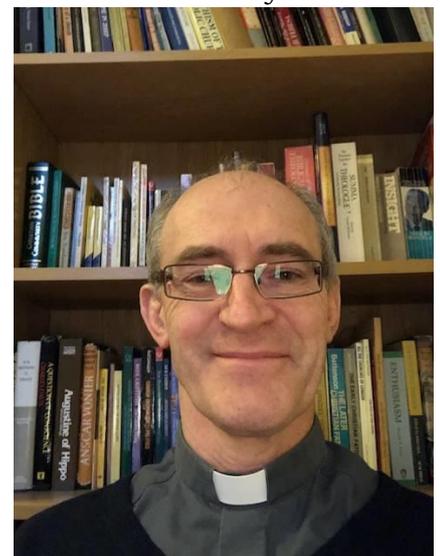
Dear Parishioners,

Today we celebrate the fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time. Our first reading is from Zechariah and although it is from the Old testament it brings to the mind of Christians the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem at the beginning of Holy Week. It is wonderful to read it today as we resume masses in a socially distanced way because of course we were unable to celebrate Palm Sunday this year in our church. Full details of the reopening of the church for mass and private prayer are on the website so please read them carefully as many arrangements including mass times have changed.

For the next four weeks when you come to mass I will light the paschal candle and in that way we will be reminded that even during lockdown the light of the risen Christ has dawned afresh on our world.

Also today as if in celebration the African Lily in our garden has bloomed in all its glory just in time to welcome parishioners back to church.

It has been interesting seeing parishioners coming for private prayer. It is as if they have been away on a long journey and it takes a few minutes to realize that this person is once again standing in front of you. Like old friends however both the priest and parishioner and I am sure fellow parishioners settle back into our old relationships and we know after a while that we are back home.



I have people telling me “Oh father I was in Knock or Chicago or Canada for mass during the lockdown” all virtual of course. This will still be necessary for those who want to attend an online mass as we slowly increase the numbers we can accommodate in the parish at Sunday and Weekday masses.

As I have been blessed to be in Osterley parish for 14 years I think it is good that so many parishioners will have experienced the ministry of a whole variety of different priests and lay ministers all over the world, albeit in many cases in a socially distanced way.

No doubt after your experiences you will be looking forward to being ministered to by your own esteemed Parish Priest.

Fr Robin has agreed to continue to write a homily for the website every week as parishioners cannot yet attend mass every week.

Reopening for Mass

You will know from the news that it is permitted to celebrate mass after Saturday the 4th July. Bishop Vincent has recorded a message, which you can watch on the diocesan website. You can click on this link to find it www.rcdow.org.uk

The bishops of England and Wales have also written an important letter about how we are to celebrate mass in these new circumstances. I encourage you to read this letter which can be found beside this newsletter in the Newsletter section of the website.

In the Cardinal’s video and the bishop’s letter they make it clear that in these extraordinary times the obligation to attend mass remains suspended so no one is obliged to come to mass.

It will be the case however that Catholics want to attend Mass and so it will be necessary to devise a way for people to do so in a way that accords strictly with the government guidelines on social distancing. The factors to consider are as follows:

Capacity of Osterley Church

The normal capacity of our church is 320 people. Over three masses on a Sunday we have 700 attendees. This works out at 233 people per mass. The parish will be maintaining 2.0 metres social distancing (as far as possible). This means that we can accommodate 63 parishioners per service.



It is the case that some parishioners will not be able to attend mass due to the need to self-isolate, nonetheless it is clear that we will have to limit the numbers coming to each mass so we can celebrate safely.

It will not be possible for everybody to attend every Sunday so we have published on this website the means by which we are going to ensure that each parishioner can attend Sunday mass once a month and weekday mass (which will have instrumental music and be like a Sunday mass) once a month.

If these arrangements work safely and well, then after the first month we will try to increase the opportunity to go to mass on a Sunday to more than once a month and on a weekday to more than once a month.

The Parish needs your help to reopen Stewards – one hour once a month

We need people to volunteer as stewards in the church. In order to be a steward you must:

1. Be deemed healthy and fit for work and should not be in the group classed as clinically vulnerable (over 70 years or specific pre-existing health conditions), self-isolating or shielding.

Full training will be given and personal protection equipment provided.

If you meet the above criteria and can commit one hour per month on a Sunday to being a steward please e-mail the parish at osterley@rcdow.org.uk **OR** ring or text 078 9989 5483 and leave your name and contact details clearly. **Please seriously consider volunteering so that the parish can open safely.**

The Parish needs your help to reopen Cleaners – one hour once a month

In addition to stewards we will also need people to volunteer to clean the benches after every mass.

In order to be a cleaner you must:

1. Be deemed healthy and fit for work and should not be in the group classed as clinically vulnerable (over 70 years or specific pre-existing health conditions), self-isolating or shielding.

Full training will be given and personal protection equipment provided.

If you meet the above criteria and can commit one hour per month on a Sunday to being a cleaner please e-mail the parish at osterley@rcdow.org.uk **OR** ring or text 078 9989 5483 and leave your name and contact details clearly. **Please seriously consider volunteering so that the parish can open safely.**

Private Prayer in Church

Since Monday 15th June 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 and pump action bottles of hand sanitizer. There is 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.

The times for individual prayer change each week (Please see below) so please check the website or newsletter. In addition to reopening for mass permission has been given to have funerals and weddings of no more than 30 people including ministers etc. We, the church wish to play our part in controlling Coronavirus so our leaders will ensure that we observe what social distancing measures are necessary.

Confession

Permission has also been given to advertise times of Confession in Church. Details of this will be published in next week's newsletter.

Planned Giving Boxes

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 have sent out new boxes of planned giving envelopes (which start from the 12th April 2020) by post.

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 29th June 2020

Tuesday, Thursday, 11 am -12 noon

Saturday 9 am – 11 am

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.

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

5th July 2020 – 12th July **New Mass Times**

SUNDAY 5th July 14 th Ordinary Time 9.00 am	Henrietta Henrika Marzecka R.D.
Sunday 11.30 am	Mass
Sunday 6.00 pm	Mass
Tues 7: 7.30 pm Weekday	Special Intention
Thu 9: 7.30 pm Weekday	Special Intention
Saturday 11: 10am Weekday	Mass
SUNDAY 12th July 14 th Ordinary Time 9.00	Laura Sullivan and Alice Hanrahan RIP
Sunday 11.30	Mass
Sunday 6.00	Georgette Isseyegh RIP

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 Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time 2020

Fr Robin Burgess writes

Dear Friends,

I was settling down to write something for this week, with only a vague idea of what I wanted to write about, when the electricity in our flat suddenly went off. The outage did not last long, but for a moment or two I began to wonder what it would be like if power supplies throughout the world did give out completely and we no longer had electricity or gas or anything to provide power to all the many machines we now use, including of course the computer I am using – a fearful prospect.

It reminded me of a strange book I read not long ago, *The Second Sleep*, by Robert Harris. As the story begins you imagine from the descriptions that it is set in the Middle Ages, long before our modern technology, but it turns out to be about 800 years in the future when the world has experienced a great disaster, ‘a systemic collapse of technical civilization’ the reasons for which are not explained, and life has reverted to what it was centuries ago. We are getting a taste of this kind of situation with the Coronavirus pandemic. So much of what we take for granted in our lives has been on hold and maybe that will make us think again about what really is important.

[This Sunday's](#) Gospel reading includes a favourite text of mine and probably of many other people, words of Jesus which can be a source of great comfort:

‘Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened,

and I will give you rest.

Shoulder my yoke and learn from me,

for I am gentle and humble in heart,

and you will find rest for your souls.

Yes, my yoke is easy and my burden light.’

Faith can be a means to comfort in difficult times, but faith, if it is real, is not easy or easily bought. Following the ways of God will mean sharing our burdens with him, and knowing he is with us in everything we endure as well as enjoy, but also experiencing the burdens for ourselves.

Having faith will not in itself solve the problems we face in our lives – illness, bereavement, unemployment, whatever they may be, nor will it solve the problems of the world in general. What it can do, however, is give us a different and more hopeful orientation towards our lives and the world in which we live, and enable us to live them out of the deep centre of our human make-up which is the Spirit of God within us. The second reading on this Sunday from St. Paul says that ‘the Spirit of God has made his home in you,’ so that we are able to lead spiritual lives and not unspiritual ones.

What this means is, I think, much the same as something that was later taught by St. Ignatius of Loyola, one of our most reliable guides to the spiritual life, who speaks of consolation and desolation. He does, however, have his own particular take on these terms. If we are in a state of consolation, or comfort, we know that we are in touch with God. Everything else in our lives may be in turmoil, but at the heart of us we know that we are in God and God is in us. To be in desolation, conversely, means to be cut off from God even if our lives are going well and we are contented.

This accords very much with the teaching of Jesus on prayer in the Sermon on the Mount. You remember he says that when you pray you should go into your inner room, shut the door and be with your Father in that inner space, for he does not look so much at the surface of things but at what is going on in secret. There is a little joke here, for not many people in the time of Our Lord would have had private rooms in their house to which they could retreat to be on their own. It is therefore believed that he does not mean a physical place, but the heart, the centre of the human person. To be with God means going to that centre and closing out everything else, so that we can just be with God.

How do we do this? One simple way is to be quiet and still, let go of our thoughts, ideas and feelings, and gently repeat a single word or prayer-phrase, such as the Jesus Prayer: *Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me*. Give the words your attention, but do not think about their meaning or indeed about anything.

To pray in this way is what is called *contemplation*, a word which means ‘being in the temple with God,’ the temple of the Holy Spirit which is our human self. We do a lot of talking to God and thinking about God in our prayer and worship, we tell him how wonderful he is and what we want him to do for us, but this is always *our* words, *our* thinking. More and more I believe that if we are really to grow in knowledge of God we need to go beyond our words and thinking and move more towards the contemplative mode and contemplative ways of prayer. This is not necessarily easy and can even be daunting, as we may fear a loss of control if we let go of our thoughts, but if we realise that is in order to free ourselves and hand everything over to God there is never any need of fear, for God can only ever want what is best for us in every possible way, here and hereafter. He could not otherwise be what we believe him to be, a God of universal love and compassion.

We are all looking forward to being able to be together with others again, in pubs and restaurants, at school and at work and of course in church. I do hope, however, that we will have learned from this time of crisis the vital importance for faith of the contemplative way, the path of interiority, because this really is the way of Christ. He went to Jerusalem to take part in the festivals and rituals of his religion, but if he wanted to be with God he went off to be on his own, leaving behind or letting go of everything that ordinarily filled his life. In this way he is the model of what we can be and what we need to do if we are truly to be the people of God.

Wishing you very blessing, Fr. Robin (robinburgess@rcdow.org.uk)

P.S. We can do with some light relief from time to time, so I can recommend an earlier book of that writer Robert Harris, a novel called *Conclave*, in which he imagines a gathering of cardinals in Rome to elect a new Pope. He must have done a lot of research as the details read very convincingly, though I find some of the story-line fairly unbelievable. An entertaining read if you do not take it too seriously!

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