



# St. Vincent de Paul (Osterley) Newsletter



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## 19<sup>th</sup> July 2020

16<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time Yr A Vol. 2 (Pg. 105)

**Wisdom 12:13,16-19. After sin you will grant repentance.** Even though God has the power to intervene directly in the world whenever he chooses, God usually acts gradually. He understands our weakness and allows us time to repent. God is more merciful and patient than we are.

**Romans 8:26-27. The Spirit expresses our plea in a way that could never be put into words.** Even when we are so downhearted that we cannot find the words for our prayer, the Spirit prays for us according to the mind of God.

**Matthew 13:24-43. Let them both grow till the harvest.**

Sometimes, despite our best efforts, weeds of sin and selfishness still seem to grow in abundance in our lives. Today's gospel offers us a reassuring message: do not worry. At the harvest time, God will sort out the wheat from the weeds.

PSALM 85: O Lord, you  
are good and forgiving.



**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.**

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*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.*

*19<sup>th</sup> July 2020*

Dear Parishioners,

A woman e-mailed me today, she said:

*“Dear Father Mark,*

*We happened to make Holy Mass bookings for many Sundays out of excitement, before reading the instructions in its entirety. Please can you therefore help by advising what may be done to these bookings?*

I dealt with the parishioners question but what struck me were the words “out of excitement”. It is so edifying to hear a parishioner use such a term about mass.

Cardinal Basil Hume used to say that he always had a sense of excitement before celebrating mass. Of course mass is not a show or an entertainment but it does bring us close to God and what could be more exciting than that!

This is the third week of the four weeks covered by our plan to resume masses in a way that observes the need for social distancing and allows every parishioner to attend Sunday mass.

During this period, parishioners have been entitled to book one Sunday mass and one weekday mass. The aim of this has been to ensure that parishioners do not feel the need to go on our booking website early or to be in competition for the reduced places at mass.

As we have become used to the new procedures we have been able to allow parishioners to also book any Sunday or Weekday mass the day before it takes place if there are seats available. Many parishioners are using this freedom to resume weekly attendance at mass.

We realize of course that many parishioners are still shielding and so should not come to mass. It is also the case that the obligation to attend mass is still suspended.

At the time of writing (Saturday afternoon) the following places are still available for any parishioner to book.

9.00 am 1 place

11.30 am 16 places

6.00 pm 46 places.

I would encourage parishioners to take up these places and resume weekly attendance at mass if your health and household situation allows.

At the end of our first four week reopening period (i.e. after the 26<sup>th</sup> July) we will look at the number of masses parishioners are allowed to book each month as their allowance (excluding masses booked the day before the service) so as to encourage parishioners to attend Sunday mass regularly.

### **Supporting the Parish**

Since resuming mass many parishioners have returned planned giving envelopes or made cash donations. There are collection baskets located at the front of the church at both Sunday and weekday masses for parishioners to make their weekly offerings. We are grateful for all those who

supported the parish by standing order or electronic donations during lockdown and to all those who have contributed as mentioned above.

The parish relies on your support, not least to pay for the sanitizing equipment we have bought and to pay the four young part time cleaners who are ensuring the church is safe for us all to use.



In these weeks our focus has been on reopening safely for mass. The parish will now look at how we can resume Confessions and bringing Holy Communion to the housebound. In due course we will also communicate about celebrating First Holy Communion and Confirmations which have been delayed. We will also look at whether we can resume devotions such as the Rosary and our prayer Group.

As usual for reflections on today's readings I recommend that you read the homily written by Fr Robin which is at the end of this newsletter.

**Update on the resumption of Sunday and Weekday mass ( as published in last weeks newsletter).**

I just want to emphasise the following:

1. The parish has employed four young part-time cleaners/stewards to clean the church after every service. Having tried it out myself, this work is quite strenuous and given the importance of this task and the training involved (which includes the use of PPE) this seems the most appropriate arrangement.
2. The parish is also thankful for everyone who has volunteered to Steward. Our volunteer stewards complement the work of our paid staff and enables us to open the church for mass and prayer more frequently.
3. Our regular volunteer cleaners will continue to give the church and other buildings their normal cleaning routine.
4. The parish is operating a 2.0 metre social distancing policy which means people are not obliged to wear masks (but may do so if they wish).
5. The parish has carefully calculated the capacity of the church when being filled in a socially distanced way by different sizes of groups. We are gradually increasing the tickets available on the website. For the first four weeks, parishioners can attend one Sunday mass and one weekday mass. In additional to this allowance, parishioners can also book any weekday mass and any Sunday mass if there are still tickets available the day before. This measure should allow many parishioners to attend Weekday mass and Sunday mass more than once a month.

6. After the first four weeks we anticipate being able to allow each parishioner to book a Sunday mass every three weeks or possibly every two weeks. This will depend on our experience of re-opening the church.
7. We may also investigate whether some provision could be made to broadcast the mass in the hall to accommodate more parishioners or possibly to facilitate parents with small children who need more space than is available in the church.
8. In any case we will only make available a number of tickets consistent with maintaining social distancing.

**Please keep checking the website to learn when these changes will come into place.**

As mentioned elsewhere the church is following all government and diocesan procedures to be as safe as possible. Sometimes pictures say this better than words so I have posted pictures in this newsletter of the following:

1. Battery operated (more to come) and pump action hand sanitizers.
2. One-way system in the church.
3. Touch bins replaced with pedal bins.
4. Seats roped off to maintain 2.0 m distance.
5. No kneeling allowed to maintain social distancing.
6. Hand towels instead of driers.

This is not a complete list but it gives an idea of the practical steps we are taking. The priest will explain any changes to mass as it is celebrated in these early days.

You will also be glad to see that I have posted some more photos of flowers from the parish garden and the church throughout this Newsletter.

**Readers, Altar Servers, Ministers of the Eucharist.**

We thank these ministers for all they do. Currently we are contacting ministers on an ad hoc basis. Over the next few weeks we will be in touch to put rotas in place for these ministers to resume their roles in the liturgy should they be willing to do so. Thank you for your patience.

### **Reopening for Mass**

You will know from the news that it is permitted to celebrate mass after Saturday the 4<sup>th</sup> 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](http://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 much less people in each mass.

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.

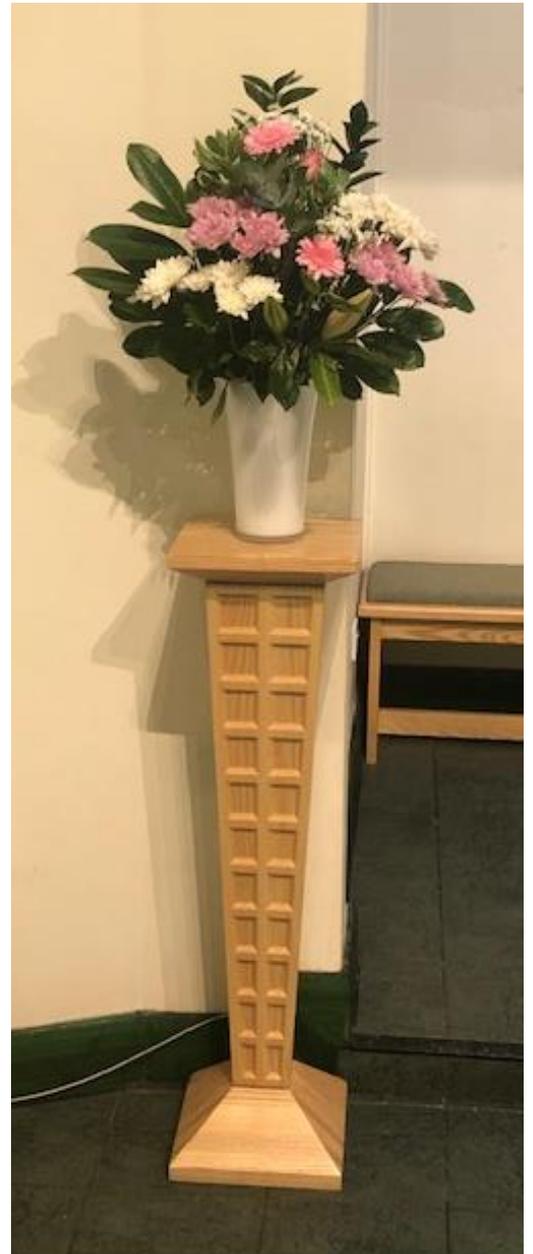
Full training will be given and personal protection equipment provided. If you meet the above criteria and can commit one hour per month on a Sunday to being a steward please e-mail the parish at [osterley@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:osterley@rcdow.org.uk) **OR** ring or text 078 9989 5483 and leave your name and contact details clearly. **Please seriously consider volunteering so that the parish can open safely.**

### **Private Prayer in Church**

Since Monday 15<sup>th</sup> 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 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 due course. If you require confession in the meantime please

### **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 12<sup>th</sup> 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.

I ask God to bless all those who are still at home in the following words. (Your response is 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 19<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

Tuesday, Thursday, 11 am -12 noon

Saturday 9 am – 10 am



## **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 5<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:osterleybk@rcdow.org.uk) or 079 3278 3647. Thank you. *Fr Mark*



**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

19<sup>th</sup> July 2020 – 26<sup>th</sup> July **New Mass Times**

<b>SUNDAY 19<sup>th</sup> July</b> 16 <sup>th</sup> Ordinary Time <b>9.00 am</b>	People of the Parish
Sunday 11.30 am	Mr and Mrs S. Joseph RIP anniv
Sunday 6.00 pm	Mr Niall McGarry RIP
Tues 21: 7.00 pm Weekday	Mrs Ana Rosa Fernandes
Thu 23: 7.00 pm Weekday	Louise Carvalho-De Souza RIP anniv
<b>SUNDAY 26<sup>th</sup> July</b> 17 <sup>th</sup> Ordinary Time <b>9.00</b>	People of the Parish
Sunday 11.30	Mass
Sunday 6.00	Mass

#### 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](mailto: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](mailto: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 6<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto: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 Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time 2020

Fr Robin Burgess writes

Dear Friends,

A few days ago I was able to visit Kew Gardens and sat by the lake enjoying a picnic, looking at the water, the trees and the wildfowl. At one point a large flotilla of Canada geese, about a dozen or fifteen of them, came floating by, closely packed and seemingly very purposeful in what they were doing. A little later they returned, swimming in the opposite direction, still appearing to have some definite purpose in mind, but what it was I have no idea. Maybe they were just enjoying the sensation of the water, their smooth movement through it and their being together. Several other people who were around clearly took great pleasure in looking at the wildlife, and indeed I think human beings in general do find the natural world a source of endless fascination. Think of all the many television programmes about the wonders and marvels of creation.

The natural world has this quality for us because it is, simply, given. We did not create it, it is just there and goes on its way with no regard for human beings, except for the ducks wanting some of my picnic! As religious people we believe it is the creation of God, the author of all life, of everything that is. Some people speak of the Two Books of God. One is the written record of Scripture, which we have had for about 3,000 years, but the other is the book of creation that has lasted for much longer, the world around us, which is a sign of God's creative love. It carries no message other than that it is, but because of that can be a means for us of pleasure and comfort. Jesus even says that if you are weighed down by the burdens of life and perhaps feeling adrift from God, go to the natural world: look at the flowers of the field and the birds of the air. They give delight merely by existing. As the book of Wisdom says, **'there is no god other than you, who cares for everything,'** and if God cares for the animals and the world of nature, will he not much more care for us?

We saw last week that in teaching about the kingdom of God Jesus tends to follow oblique methods of telling stories and suggesting comparisons. The stories that we call parables often use illustrations drawn from the natural world, but sometimes with a twist. In the Gospel reading for this Sunday Jesus says the kingdom of God is like a man sowing wheat in his field, in which, when he is asleep, an enemy comes and sows weeds. If you try to pull out the weeds, you might pull out the good seed as well, so you must wait until both have ripened together, then you can safely remove the weeds. Again this time Jesus gives an explanation of the parable, referring it to the end-time when there will be a sorting out of good and bad. But maybe we can also see it as showing that sometimes we just need to let things take their own course. We cannot always direct events in our world (how well we know that at the present time), but must wait to see how they work out. The decisive moment is not yet.

In the Sunday Gospel Jesus uses another image of the kingdom of God as a mustard seed, the tiniest of seeds which can grow into a great shrub. I once brought back from the Holy Land a box of mustard seeds and left some of them out in the church for people to take. The little pods contain lots of tiny seeds, each one of which can grow into a full plant. I never found out how people fared with them, but maybe in due course there were mustard plants all over Ealing. Once you plant the seed the kingdom will grow as it will and we may never know what becomes of our sowing – we can only leave that to God.

It is an article of faith that God is at work in our world, bringing all things to good, but a lot of the time we will not know how this is happening, we can only trust that it is. If we do believe that we and everything else is created in love by God (creation is an act of love), we will know that in the end we can only hand everything over to him and allow him to act as he, and not we, desire.

Our task is to allow God to be God in us and for us, and this is why the message of St. Paul in the second reading of this Sunday's Mass is so important. In the key chapter 8 of his letter to the Romans Paul says that sometimes we do not know what to pray for, but:-

*The Spirit comes to help us in our weakness.*

*For when we cannot choose words in order to pray properly,*

*the Spirit himself expresses our plea in a way that could never be put into words,*

*and God who knows everything in our hearts knows perfectly well what he means,*

*and that the pleas of the saints expressed by the Spirit*

*are according to the mind of God.*

A lot of prayer and worship consists of our words directed to God, asking him for what we need or desire: to heal the sick, bring peace to the world, bless our relations and friends, and so on. Jesus does indeed say we should ask God for what we want, but he also says that when you pray you do not need a lot of words, but can be very simple, resting in the presence of God whose Spirit dwells within us. The great teachers of prayer in fact say that prayer is not so much what we do or say, but the Spirit of God, of Jesus praying within us. What we do is allow that prayer to happen in us and seek to be in touch, in harmony with it.

More and more, I believe, we need to move from prayer as overmuch talking to or at God to more of the listening, resting in his presence, handing everything over to him in faith and trust. To take time to be still and quiet, not saying anything in particular, but being there, letting go of our own thoughts and concerns, will always be a good thing to do. It will help us to develop a sense of attentiveness to God present in all things, which can then grow and inform everything we do, everything we are. This is our vocation as God's people: to be people who know God in themselves and knowing him are able to live from the deep centre which is the Spirit of God poured into our hearts.

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](mailto:robinburgess@rcdow.org.uk)



