



St John The Evangelist

Berry Lane, Rickmansworth, WD3 7HG
<http://parish.rcdow.org.uk/millend>



Our Lady Help of Christians

5 Park Road, Rickmansworth, WD3 1HU
<http://parish.rcdow.org.uk/rickmansworth>



St John Fisher

Hill Cottage, Shire Lane, Chorleywood, WD3 5NH
<http://parish.rcdow.org.uk/chorleywood>

ENCOUNTERING JESUS, SERVING OTHERS

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Parish Priest:

Fr Shaun Church
shaunchurch@rcdow.org.uk

Assistant Priest:

Fr Damian Ryan
damianryan@rcdow.org.uk

Parish Administrator:

Kerry Van Rensburg
rickmansworth@rcdow.org.uk

Rickmansworth

Paul Forrest
pga.forrest@btinternet.com

Chorleywood

Anne Lorrimer-Roberts
anne@themessagemachine.com

Mill End

Geraldine Page
geraldine.page21@gmail.com

Address for all correspondence:
5 Park Road, Rickmansworth
WD3 1HU
Telephone: 01923 773387

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (YEAR A) – 5th JULY 2020

A MESSAGE FROM FR SHAUN

It must have been shocking for people in the 1st century to hear Jesus refer to God as “Father”, as he does in today’s Gospel. The word he used is *abba*. In using this informal form of address, he was showing that God isn’t a faraway deity, disinterested and detached from creation. God is personal, loving, and involved in our lives.

God is our Father, and the “mere children” are his children who are humble enough to see that God has revealed himself in Christ. Perhaps the “learned and the clever” (the Pharisees) were too proud and stubborn to have an open mind about the new things God was doing in Jesus. Or maybe God calls the humble so that there will be no question that it is the work of God, not just the accomplishments of important people. Whatever the reason, true wisdom seems to come to those who are humble.

Jesus himself embodies both wisdom and humility, and for those who will follow his example, he promises rest. But this kind of rest doesn’t mean inactivity; it means refreshment, peace of mind, and renewed energy. The yoke was the harness that attached the cargo to a beast of burden. When Jesus says “Shoulder my yoke,” he means “let’s trade yokes – let me take your burden from you.” In the book of Sirach, the yoke represents the Law. In Matthew’s gospel it is associated with the scribes’ and Pharisees’ interpretation of the Law. Jesus takes away our failure to carry the burden of the Law and replaces it with grace; that is, the love and forgiveness of the Father that comes through Christ. So many people carry heavy burdens, especially with everything going on in our world right now. Jesus offers to share their burden, and

he needs us to help him. Are we willing to share the burden of Christ with those who are most in need?

This past week I met with the task force working with me to prepare for the re-opening of Our Lady’s for the celebration of Mass. There are many government and diocesan guidelines, which need to be carefully considered and implemented. We are planning for a **phased return** of Mass and it is our hope to begin with **one** Mass at 10.00am commencing on **Sunday 12th of July** (though this is not yet confirmed). We will be maintaining 2 metre social distancing and operating a one-way system throughout the church, so the numbers able to attend Mass will be very limited. There will be an online booking system on Our Lady’s website. We will also put a plan in place for those without internet access. Details of how to book will be published on the parish website and our other social media later in the week, once we are sure we have enough volunteers to open safely. Fr Damian will also send out the details of the booking system to everyone for whom we have email details.

As we grow the team of volunteer stewards and cleaners, whose role will be essential to the safe re-opening of the church for Mass, it is our hope over time to add two more Sunday Masses (a Saturday Vigil Mass at 6.00pm and a Sunday evening Mass at 6.00pm) and, provided we can recruit enough volunteer stewards and cleaners, to relay the Mass into the large hall. If we are to increase the number of public Masses that we can celebrate we will need a large team of volunteer stewards and cleaners. If you are under 70 and have no underlying health conditions, we encourage you to offer to serve by volunteering as either a steward or a cleaner. We would ask that you commit to serving once every three weeks. If you are willing to volunteer either as a steward or as a cleaner, please contact Fr Damian at damianryan@rcdow.org.uk. Please state the capacity in which you are willing and able to serve: a steward and/or a cleaner and the Mass times to which you would be able to commit to serve (note: even though you state you may be able to serve at all Masses, you will only be asked to commit to serve at **one** Mass every three weeks).

This Sunday I will be discussing the more general issues around the re-opening of our churches for Mass with the Senior Leadership Team and members of the three Parish Core Groups and Finance, Operations and Premises Committees. It is our clear aspiration that St John Fisher, Chorleywood and St John the Evangelist, Mill End also reopen for Mass. Due to the amount of planning involved, and number of volunteers required, it has been agreed that the reopening St John Fisher, Chorleywood and St John the Evangelist, Mill End for public worship will happen at least two months after the re-opening of Our Lady's. However, the viability of opening these churches for Mass will largely depend upon us having a sufficient number of volunteers to ensure that we can open these churches safely in a consistent way. I have established task forces for both parishes, to take responsibility for the planning and organisation for a safe re-opening for the celebration of Mass.

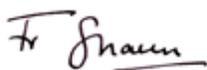
It may seem that we are moving very slowly but we believe that the best way to ensure your safety, and in making your voluntary commitments sustainable in the long-term, is by beginning with this phased return of Mass. **Our highest priority in all of this is the safety of our parishioners and of all those who enter our churches.**

It is clear that, for some considerable time to come, not everyone who might wish to will be able to attend Mass every Sunday. Bear in mind, the obligation to participate at Mass on a Sunday has been lifted at this time. Nevertheless, we still desire to participate in the celebration of Mass, so much patience and understanding is going to be asked of all us in the weeks and months ahead. Given this reality, we are seriously looking into the possibility of installing a professional live-streaming system at Our Lady's, with the costs being shared equitably between the three parishes. No decision has yet been made. There are both technical and financial considerations to be taken into account, but if these can be overcome then the ability to livestream Masses from Our Lady's should help us to maintain a sense of community whilst the numbers physically attending Mass is, of necessity, limited.

Our experience of Mass is going to be very different for the foreseeable future. You will need to make a booking in order to attend Mass, Masses will be shorter and there will be no congregational singing, the church will look slightly different, you will likely not be able to sit in your usual seat, the way we enter and leave the church will be strictly controlled, even the way we receive Holy Communion will be different. We have to accept these changes – they are there for everyone's safety.

Please pray for Fr Damian and me, and for those working with us to ensure the safe re-opening of our churches for public worship. Our progress may appear slow, but it is only because it is focussed on ensuring your safe participation in the Mass in the long run. Gradually we hope to increase our capacity for Masses so that more of you may return, with more regularity, to the communal worship of God and the receiving of the Holy Eucharist, for which so many of you long.

With every prayer and blessing



Fr Shaun
Parish Priest

MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK	
SATURDAY 4 TH JULY	For vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life
SUNDAY 5 TH JULY <i>14TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME</i>	For the People of the Parish Bob and Betty Livingston (Intentions)
MONDAY 6 TH JULY	Canon Christopher Tuckwell RIP
TUESDAY 7 TH JULY	For the sick and housebound of the parish
WEDNESDAY 8 TH JULY	Paul Turnbull RIP
THURSDAY 9 TH JULY	For those researching a Coronavirus virus vaccine
FRIDAY 10 TH JULY	For NHS and care workers
SATURDAY 11 TH JULY ST BENEDICT, ABBOT	For those living the Monastic way of life
SUNDAY 12 TH JULY <i>15TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME</i>	For the People of the Parish

CHURCH OPENING TIMES FOR INDIVIDUAL PRAYER

Saturday 4th July – 10am to 11am

Sunday 5th July – 3.00pm to 4.00pm

After 5th July the church opening for individual prayer will be suspended as we prepare for the recommencement of public worship.

CERTIFICATE OF CATHOLIC PRACTICE – ACADEMIC YEAR 2021/22 – UPDATED INFORMATION

With the exceptional circumstances in which we now find ourselves, I have decided that no further stickers will be given out for those applying for a place in a Catholic School for the academic year 2021/22. The assessment of whether a CCP can be issued will now be made in the following ways:

Secondary Transfer: Only the Sundays from the **beginning of October 2019 until and including Sunday 15th March 2020** will be assessed. Further, given the unprecedented nature of the situation, I will be reducing the requirement from 70% attendance to 65% attendance. This will mean that you will need **16** out of a possible **24** stickers in order for a CCP to be issued. In September 2020, I will set out the arrangements for the signing of CCPs in October 2020.

Nursery/Reception (*this does not include St John's school, Mill End, where a CCP is no longer a requirement*): Only the Sundays from the **beginning of December 2019 until and including Sunday 15th March 2020** will be assessed. Again, the requirement of 70% attendance will be reduced to 65% attendance. This will mean that you will need **10** out of a possible **15** stickers in order for a CCP to be issued. In November 2020, I will set out arrangements for the signing of CCPs in November 2020.

Fr Shaun

ONLINE BIBLE STUDY AND ONLINE BIBLE REFLECTION AND PRAYER

A new series of Online Bible Study and Bible Reflection and Prayer has now begun. We are studying, reflecting on and praying with the Book of Psalms. The series on the Psalms will last six weeks. Why not come and join us!

Online Bible Study programme – Monday evenings at 7.30pm (commencing Monday 29th June)

Each week we will study one of the Psalms and delve into its historical and biblical context, what it says about God, and what it has to say to us today about worship and life. No previous experience of bible study is necessary. Fr Shaun will lead this via 'Zoom', following up-to-date security measures. It will last about an hour. Please, contact Fr Shaun as soon as possible if you would like to attend (shaunchurch@rcdow.org.uk).

Online Bible Reflection and Prayer – Friday evenings at 7.30pm (commencing Friday 3rd July)

Each week on Fridays we will practice the beautiful and very ancient technique of praying with the scriptures known as *Lectio Divina*, using the same psalm already looked at in Session one. No previous experience of bible prayer is necessary. Fr Damian will lead this also via 'Zoom', following up-to-date security measures. Similarly, it will last between 45 minutes and an hour. If you are interested, please, contact Fr Damian

ALPHA - INVITATION TO PRAY

Alpha on line launched for our three Parishes on Tuesday 9th June and runs until 18th August. We are inviting all parishioners to join the Alpha Intercessory Prayer Team to either pray from home or to join the online Zoom platform over eleven Tuesdays from 8.00-9.15pm to pray for the guests and team attending Alpha. We also invite you to pray daily for our parish community and its ongoing formation. Maybe you could consider praying the following prayer:

Thank you loving Father for all those you have called to participate in Alpha; we ask your blessing upon all, both team and guests. Without you we can do nothing, you are the Way, the Truth and the Life. Pour out your Holy Spirit and abundant blessings and gifts during this Alpha. May Alpha ignite or re-ignite the flame of faith in all hearts so that we may experience the wonder, joy and hope that being in relationship with you brings. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be world without end. Amen

Thank you, the Alpha Service Team.

PRAISE AND WORSHIP GATHERING – SUNDAY, 5TH JULY AT 5PM VIA 'ZOOM'

You are warmly invited to join us on Sunday, 5th July, for a short Praise and Worship gathering at 5pm. We will be using Zoom to sing a few uplifting hymns, listen to a short prayer and a reading or reflection, as well as catch up with fellow Parishioners. Please do not worry if you have not used Zoom before, it is very simple to set up, and pick up and we will be happy to walk you through the process ahead of time and on the day. If you would like to attend, please email Katy Pione (cepione@hotmail.co.uk) before Saturday 4th July so she can send you a link with the meeting invitation on it, as well as the song words. Please feel free to invite anyone who might like to attend! Look forward to seeing you then.

SVP TWINNAGE ANNUAL CAMPAIGN – GIVE THE GIFT OF A CHILD'S EDUCATION

Chess Valley SVP wishes to promote the SVP's annual campaign for the **Vidya Jyothi Education Scheme**. Meaning "Knowledge and Light", the VJES enables children from poor families in India of all faiths and none to attend school and get an education to provide a vital pathway out of poverty for them and their families. By sponsoring a primary school student you will help to cover their school fees, uniforms, books, transport and food. Anyone can donate – SVP conferences and members, parishioners, friends, family etc. You can sponsor one student for one year with a **one-off payment of £15**. Further information about the scheme is on <https://www.svp.org.uk/student-sponsorship>. For queries contact info@svp.org.uk. The deadline for this year's campaign is **1st August**.

PARISH CLERGY – DAYS OFF

For the foreseeable future Fr Shaun's day off will be **Friday** rather than Thursday. Fr Damian's day off will continue to be a Wednesday.

COFFEE MORNING - 9.45 -10.45 ON WEDNESDAYS DURING LOCK DOWN

You are warmly invited to Zoom and join us for a friendly get together over coffee/ tea. As you probably know on Zoom only one person at a time can speak. I therefore thought it an idea to have a loose structure to the hour. Please bring something to share maybe a funny/ sad story, a poem, review of a film / book etc. that has touched you or simply a bit about how you are coping with the lock down. There is no obligation to share so please do not hold you back from zooming along.

Please contact Anne Jaxa-Chamiec on 07810805900 or at anne.jaxachamiec@btinternet.com for a 'Zoom' invite. Thank you, Anne.

FACEBOOK PAGE

There is a new Facebook page for the three parishes. The name is 'Chess Valley Parishes' – we couldn't fit the full three names into the title! We hope to post weekly videos of scripture readings and reflections, and other things you may find useful. The link is: <https://www.facebook.com/Chess-Valley-Parishes-102042071465161/>

Please, follow us to keep connected, and share with friends.

WE HAVE JOINED INSTAGRAM!

Come follow the parish on our new Instagram page where we want to engage with you as parishioners, as well as those outside our parish! On a weekly basis you will see us posting the weekly readings, video reflections, a Fun Friday mini quiz (because let's face it, we all love a bit of bible trivia!) and posting plenty of other content which we would love to share with you. Our Instagram handle is @chessvalleyparishes so come and follow us (and invite your family and friends to as well) - we look forward to seeing you there, chatting with you in the comments and bringing our community together during this challenging time!

INVITATION TO PRAY

You are warmly invited to join us every Thursday evening to pray together and have a time of fellowship. Whether you are part of the Parish Community or not we would love you to come along to our online prayer group. The evening will consist of a time for singing, reading and quiet reflection, sharing and intercessory prayer. You are welcome to join in as you feel you would like. Prayer meetings will start at 8.00pm every Thursday and finish at 9.30pm. If you would like to join us simply email the following address and we will add you to the invitation: anne.jaxachamiec@btinternet.com. We are using a platform called 'Zoom' which is very 'user friendly' and we can support you with this if necessary. We look forward to hearing from you.

CAFOD – UNITE AGAINST CORONAVIRUS

As we cope with coronavirus in the UK, we think of our sisters and brothers in developing countries who are facing this pandemic with fragile health systems, some of which have almost no intensive care beds or ventilators. Food prices have already risen with borders closing the poorest are losing their jobs and income with wholesale shutdowns. Furthermore, inadequate healthcare, lack of access to washing facilities and limited ability to social distance will result in loss of life on an intolerable scale. The likely impact will be devastating. We are one global family. In order to continue protecting and improving the lives of those in poor communities, your prayers, gifts and voices are needed now

This Sunday's Readings

Zechariah 9:9-10, Romans 8:9. 11.13; Matthew 11: 25-30 (Gospel)

Next Sunday's Readings (15th Sunday in Ordinary Time)

Isaiah 55:10-11; Romans 8: 18-23; Matthew 13: 1-23 (Gospel)

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK OF OUR PARISHES

Our Lady Help of Christians: David Cook, Kathleen Collins, Brenda Reynolds, Neville Mathews, Agnes Harper, Eileen Durkan, Ginny Goodgol, Maria Wallis, Heather Kean, John Caneparo, Henry Cutting, Nalene Nixon, Pam Bell, Joan Townend and Maureen Douglas

St John the Evangelist: Rita Murray, Michael Dixon, Alfredo Rock and Joan Hart

St John Fisher: Nora O'Toole, Francis De Souza, Georgina Kelham, Pete Murray, Steve Kibbey, Matthew Leone, Jean-Pierre Roche, Angela Hoy, Pat Finucane, Colin Dowling, Kitty Finucane, Anne Trenchard, Vicky Williams, Paul Kennett and Ann Penn