

St Thomas More – Parish Newsletter

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Sunday 5th February 2023, Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)

From the Holy Father

Wednesday, 1st February 2023

The Gospel has just told us that the joy of the disciples on the evening of Easter was also great, and that this joy exploded “when they saw the Lord” (Jn 20:20). In this atmosphere of joy and wonder, the Risen Jesus speaks to them. What does he tell them? Above all, four simple words: “*Peace be with you!*” (v. 19). A greeting, but more than a greeting: it is a gift. Because the peace, the peace proclaimed by the angels on the night of his birth in Bethlehem (cf. Lk 2:14), the peace Jesus promised to leave his disciples (cf. Jn 14:27), is now, for the first time, solemnly given to them. The peace of Jesus, which is also given to us in every Mass, is an Easter peace: it comes from the resurrection, because the Lord first had to defeat our enemies, sin and death, and reconcile the world to the Father. He had to experience our solitude and abandonment, our hell, embracing and removing the distance that separates us from life and hope. Now, after removing the distance between heaven and earth, between God and man, Jesus gives his peace to his disciples.

Let us put ourselves in their place. That day they were completely mortified by the scandal of the cross, interiorly

wounded from having fled and abandoned Jesus, dismayed by the way his life had ended and fearful that their lives would end in the same way. They were feeling guilty, frustrated, sorrowful and afraid... However, Jesus comes and proclaims peace, even as his disciples’ hearts were downcast. He announces life, even as they felt surrounded by death. In other words, the peace of Jesus arrived at the very moment when, suddenly and to their surprise, everything seemed to be over for them, without even a glimmer of peace. That is what the Lord does: he surprises us; he takes us by the hand when we are falling; he lifts us up when we are hitting rock bottom. Brothers and sisters, with Jesus, evil never wins, evil never has the last word. “For he is our peace” (Eph 2:14), and his peace is always triumphant. Consequently, we who belong to Jesus must never yield to sorrow; we must not permit resignation and fatalism to take hold of us. Even though that atmosphere reigns all around us, it must not be so for us. In a world disheartened by violence and war, Christians must be like Jesus. As if to insist on the point, Jesus told the disciples once more: *Peace be with you!* (cf. Jn 20:19, 21). We are called to make our own the Lord’s unexpected and prophetic message of peace and proclaim it before the world.

*Homily of Pope Francis at “Ndoloo” Airport,
Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of the Congo,
1st February 2023*

Confirmation Classes

Fr Stefan will continue to help for a time. He has kindly agreed to offer Confirmation classes for all those who need to receive this Sacrament. These classes will take place on five consecutive Sundays from 3.30-4.30pm in the hall starting on Sunday 12th February. All those interested should email Fr Stefan on stefanhnylycia@rcdow.org.uk

Club Lodwar —January Draw

1st	£161.60	105	Vicky Czerniszewska
2nd	£121.20	69	Pauline Ainsworth
3rd	£ 40.40	81	Max Sharman
4th	£ 40.40	25	Gladys Ching
5th	£ 40.40	61	Kathleen Tarling

Magnificat — February and Lent

The February Magnificat (£5) and Lenten companion (£2) are available to buy. Please ask Maggie, or one of the priests for copies.

Valentine's Day Mass

Our traditional celebration of Christian Marriage, will be on **Friday 10th February 2023**. Mass at 6pm celebrated by Fr Stefan will be followed by a reception in the Hall. All married couples, especially the recently married, and those preparing for marriage are welcome to attend.

World Day of the Sick

On Saturday February 11th 2023, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, and the 31st World Day of the Sick, Cardinal Vincent will celebrate Mass in the Cathedral at 2.30pm. During this Mass anointing of the sick will be offered.

If you would like to attend this Mass then please let Fr Nicholas know. Best to send him an email or a note.

Annual Mass for Matrimony

“The annual Mass for Matrimony will be celebrated in the Cathedral by the Cardinal on Saturday 13th May at 2.30pm for couples celebrating significant wedding anniversaries.

Full information and invitation will be issued shortly by the Diocesan Co-ordinator

for Marriage and Family Life, Deacon Roger Carr-Jones, but in the meantime Parishes are invited to note the date and begin to advertise this very popular and important celebration.”

Bach's St John Passion

As part of its Lenten devotions, Westminster Cathedral Choir, directed by Simon Johnson, will perform Johann Sebastian Bach's the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St John on Thursday 16th March at 7.30pm.

Tickets (£45/35/25/15) for this seasonal performance in aid of Westminster Cathedral are available from Ticketmaster.

Concerns with current and proposed legislation on the issue of 'Buffer Zones' around abortion clinics

Bishop John Sherrington, Lead Bishop for Life Issues, speaking on behalf of the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales issued a statement expressing concern about an amendment to the Public Order Bill presently going through Parliament. The amendment introduces the 'offence of interference with access to or provision of abortion services'.

In his statement, Bishop Sherrington wrote that all harassment and intimidation of women is to be condemned. Moreover, as accepted in a 2018 Home Office Review, there are already laws and mechanisms in place to protect women from such unacceptable behaviour and so render this new offence unnecessary and excessive.

The Catholic bishops, and many others, hold religious liberty to be essential for the flourishing and the realisation of the dignity of every human person and recognise it as a foundational freedom of any free and democratic society.

Further information about this legislation is available on the websites of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, the Westminster Diocese and SPUC.

On Spiritual Discernment

As you will have noticed the Crib was dismantled on 2nd February, the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord. From now on our thoughts will be directed towards Jesus' work of salvation accomplished by his passion, death and resurrection.

I took over as Parish Priest from Fr Stefan on 1st February. I want to thank everyone for their warm welcome and support these past months while I have been working with Fr Stefan and learning from him the work involved as Parish Priest. There is a great spirit of community and cooperation in this parish. I look forward to getting to know everyone.

I took a look at the job description given in the Code of Canon Law, it is so long that it would fill this entire newsletter! It is clear that we can only have a vibrant evangelising parish with the prayers and help of you all.
Mgr Nicholas

From Fr Stefan

I would like to thank you all for the many cards and messages. May the Lord bless your kindness and generosity.

The light that true knowledge gives out is the ability to distinguish unerringly what is right from what is wrong. This being so, the path of uprightness – which leads the mind towards God, the radiant sun of righteousness – takes that same mind into an unbounded light of knowledge and then leads it on to seek trustingly for love.

Those who are struggling in battle ought always to keep their souls free of the tumultuous waves of distraction. If they do this, the mind will be able to distinguish among the thoughts that come to it. The good thoughts, sent by God, they can store in the treasure-house of their memory. The evil thoughts, sent by the devil, they can throw out. In just the same way, when the sea is calm, the fisherman can see to the bottom of it and practically no fish can escape his gaze; but if it is stirred up by wind and storm, it becomes opaque when in calm times it was transparent – and when that happens, even the wiliest fisherman is wasting his time.

Clearing and purifying the mind is the task of the Holy Spirit alone – just as when a house is being burgled, the spoils can only be recovered if a strong man bursts in and despoils the burglar.

Therefore we ought to keep our souls at peace so that the Holy Spirit is welcome there, so that the lamp of knowledge will always be lit – for when it is, the dark and bitter impulses of the devil will be easy to see and they will be reduced to creeping helplessness as they are caught in that holy and glorious light. (St Diadichus of Photiké)

St Diadichus of Photiké was a fifth century ascetic. Born around 400, he died sometime between 474 and 486. Photiké was a small town in the North West of Greece. We know he was bishop there in 451.

ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC CHURCH 5th Sunday of Ordinary Time

5th February – 11th February 2023

Tel: 020 7435 1388; <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/swisscottage/>

	MASS	OTHER ACTIVITIES
SUN 5th February Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Readings. Year A)	9.30am Club Lodwar/People of Lodwar 11am Mass Deceased members of Zito and Vetrano families (RIP) 6pm Mass Karina Tabet (intentions)	The Church opens at 9.15am 10.30am Confessions 5.30pm Confessions
MON 6th February St Paul Miki and Companions, Martyrs	7am Mass People of the Parish 10am Mass For the Church in Japan	The Church opens at 6.50am (Monday to Friday)
TUE 7th February feria	7am Mass Toni Daaboul (intentions) 10am Mass Carmine Albano (intentions)	
WED 8th February St Josephine Bakhita	7am Mass For Christians in Sudan 10am Mass For victims of trafficking	
THU 9th February feria	7am Mass Maroun Ramia (RIP anniversary) 10am Mass For vocations to the priesthood	
FRI 10th February St Scholastica, Virgin Friday abstinence	7am Mass For the February intentions of the Holy Father 10am Mass Irene Cole (RIP anniversary) 6pm Mass For married and engaged couples in the Parish	10am – 12pm Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
SAT 11th February Our Lady of Lourdes	10am Mass Peggy Benz (intentions)	The Church opens at 9.30am

Prayer Intentions:

Recently deceased: Mike Cipolla; Michael Crook; Pope Benedict XVI; Angela Carpos; John Stopplecamp; Wendy Bellas; Irene O'Sullivan; Peter Glenn

Anniversary: Brigid Monaghan; Josephine Abdala-Tabet; Christine Banks; Mark Sharman; Elizabeth Covenden; Maria Fernanda; Simon Ulcickas; Nick Aldridge; Mabel Bull; Sofia Vukusic; Maroun Ramia; Irene Cole

Confessions:

Monday to Friday (before and after 10am Mass)

Saturday: before and after 10am Mass

Sunday: 10.30am and 5.30pm (before Mass)

Forthcoming Events:

22nd February: ASH WEDNESDAY, the beginning of Lent

20th March: ST JOSEPH, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary

25th March: THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD