

# St Thomas More – Parish Newsletter

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## SUNDAY 7TH MAY FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (Year A)

*Last week we celebrated the feast of the English Martyrs. We quite often celebrate Mass in honour of martyrs, there are many in the liturgical calendar. Therefore you may find these considerations made by Pope Francis at one of his Wednesday audiences relevant.*

After talking about evangelisation and talking about apostolic zeal, after considering the witness of Saint Paul, the true “champion” of apostolic zeal, today we will turn our attention not to a single figure, but to the host of martyrs, men and women of every age, tongue and nation who gave their life for Christ, who shed their blood to confess Christ. After the generation of the Apostles, they were the quintessential “witnesses” of the Gospel.

Martyrs: the first was the deacon Saint Stephen, who was stoned to death outside the walls of Jerusalem. The word “martyr” derives from the Greek *martyria*, which means precisely, witness. A martyr is a witness, one who bears witness to the point of shedding their blood. However, very soon in the Church the word martyr began to be used to indicate those who bore witness to the point of shedding their blood. [1] That is, at first the word “martyr” meant giving daily witness. However, it was later used to indicate those who give their life by shedding [their blood]. Saint

Augustine often underlines this dynamic of gratitude and the gratuitous reciprocation of giving. Here, for example, is what he preached on the feast of Saint Lawrence: “He performed the office of deacon; it was there that he administered the sacred chalice of Christ’s blood; there that he shed his own blood for the name of Christ. The blessed apostle John clearly explained the mystery of the Lord’s supper when he said, ‘Just as Christ laid down his life for us, so we too ought to lay down our lives for the brethren’ ( 1 Jn 3:16). Saint Lawrence understood this, my brethren, and he did it; and he undoubtedly prepared things similar to what he received at that table. He loved Christ in his life, he imitated him in his death” (Sermons 304, 14; pl 38, 1395-1397). In this way, Saint Augustine explained the spiritual dynamism that inspired the martyrs, with these words: martyrs love Christ in his life and imitate him in his death.

Today, dear brothers and sisters, let us remember all the martyrs who have accompanied the life of the Church. As I have already said many times before, they are more numerous in our time than in the first centuries. There are many martyrs in the Church today, many, because for confessing the Christian faith, they are banished from society or end up in prison... there are many. Vatican Council II reminds us that “martyrdom makes the disciple like his master, who willingly accepted death for the salvation of the world and through it he is conformed to him by the shedding

of blood. Therefore the Church considers martyrdom the highest gift and supreme proof of love" (cf. Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, 42). Imitating Christ and with his grace, martyrs turn the violence of those who reject the proclamation into the supreme proof of love, which goes as far as the forgiveness of their own persecutors. This is interesting: martyrs always forgive their persecutors. Stephen, the first martyr, died as he prayed, "Lord, forgive them, for they know not what they do". Martyrs pray for their persecutors.

Although martyrdom is asked of only a few, "nevertheless all must be prepared to confess Christ before men. They must be prepared to make this profession of faith even in the midst of persecutions, which will never be lacking to the Church, in following the way of the cross" (ibid., 42). But, were these persecutions something of those times? No, no: today. Today there are persecutions of Christians throughout the world, many, many. There are more martyrs today than in the early times. Martyrs show us that every Christian is called to the witness of life, even when this does not go as far as the shedding of blood, making a gift of themselves to God and to their brethren, in imitation of Jesus. (...)

Let us pray, then, that we may never tire of bearing witness to the Gospel, even in times of tribulation. May all the holy martyrs be seeds of peace and reconciliation among peoples, for a more humane and fraternal world, as we await the full manifestation of the Kingdom of Heaven, when God will be all in all (cf. 1 Cor 15:28).

*Pope Francis Wednesday audience 19th April 2023 in St Peter's Square*

### **Collections for 9th April to 30th April**

Sunday offertory collection: £1,796.43  
(Envelopes: £ 495.45; Loose: £1,300.98)

Contactless card machine 7th April to 4th May: £1,141.46

**Grand total: £2,937.89**

### **Special Collections**

Priest Training Fund: £437.19

Holy Places: £426.02

Many thanks

### **Club Lodwar April 2023 Prize Winners**

1st	£163.20	89	Rita Rogan
2nd	£122.40	37	Nick Aldridge
3rd	£ 40.80	10	Christian Baker
4th	£ 40.80	107	Francis Ayers
5th	£ 40.80	20	Michael Drudy

### **Family Event**

A group of parents with young families have organised a Family Day in the parish ground floor hall and garden on Sunday 21st May starting at 12.30pm, after the 11am Mass. Everyone is welcome, including children of all ages. Tea/coffee and drinks for children will be provided, but please bring your own lunch/snacks. We hope this will be a great way for families of the parish to meet and get to know and support each other. It can also be a good introduction to the church for those who do not at present attend Mass.

Kindly RSVP to [dominik@nagly.eu](mailto:dominik@nagly.eu) if you intend to attend, mentioning how many adults and children will be joining.

### **Seminar: Understanding yourself in today's world**

In June we shall be hosting a seminar over two days with this title. It is billed as "A Reflection on Faith, Science and the Human Person", led by Dr James Navarro, a Philosophy Lecturer with plenty of experience of explaining philosophical ideas to the general public. It will take place from 3pm to 5.45pm on 17 and 18 June. For more information please pick up a flyer from the back of the church. This may provide the opportunity to invite neighbours and friends to the church.

### **Magnificat — May**

The May *Magnificat* (£5) is available to buy.

Please ask Maggie, or one of the priests for copies. It is possible to pay using the card reader at the entrance or placing cash in the newspaper and leaflet collection slot.

### **Monday 8th May**

Please note that as this is a bank holiday and as result there will be no 7am Mass and the church will close after the 10am Mass.

### **Young Adults Group**

Last week the young adults' group listened to a talk by Brendan Thompson CEO of Catholic Voices on the topic "Transmitting and to follow. Anyone interested in the group should please contact Diego Cobian on [young.adults.group.stm@gmail.com](mailto:young.adults.group.stm@gmail.com) or Fr Alvaro ([alvaro.tintore@netherhall.org.uk](mailto:alvaro.tintore@netherhall.org.uk))

### **The Priest Training Fund**

Thank you to all those who contributed to the Priest Training Fund last Sunday. These donations support the training of future priests in this diocese as also the on-going formation of priests. If you still wish to make a donation envelopes are still available at the back of the Church. Please also continue to pray for the seminarians of the Diocese.

### **Laudato Si Film**

#### **Early Warning – Save the date!**

On Thursday 25th May at 7pm in the Parish Hall, join us to watch **The Letter**, a documentary about how spiritual values unite us in the face of the planetary emergency.

The film builds on the encyclical, *Laudato Si*, and shares the real stories of people from around the world who come together, at the invitation of Pope Francis, on a transformative journey to Rome and beyond.

After the film, we'll discuss what we can do to join the movement of people who are building a better future.

If you are interested in attending, please put your name on the list in the Narthex so we

can prepare for appropriate numbers. Refreshments will be provided.

*The film is suitable for teenagers, but perhaps too serious for younger children.*

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*I will be away from the parish this coming week from Monday 8th until Sunday 15th May attending an in-service formation course. It will hopefully provide an opportunity to revise some theology and reflect on the future direction of the parish. Fr Bernard and Fr Alvaro will celebrate the Masses during that time.*

*Mgr Nicholas*

### **REGINA CAELI**

V. Queen of heaven, rejoice, alleluia;

R. For he whom you did merit to bear, alleluia.

V. Has risen as he said, alleluia;

R. Pray for us to God, alleluia.

V. Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia;

R. For the Lord is truly risen, alleluia.

Let us pray.

O God, who by the Resurrection of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, granted joy to the whole world: grant, we beseech you, that through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, his Mother, we may lay hold of the joys of eternal life. Through the same Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

# ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC CHURCH

## Fifth Sunday of Easter

7<sup>th</sup> May – 13<sup>th</sup> May 2023

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	MASS	OTHER ACTIVITIES
<b>SUN 7<sup>th</sup> May</b> FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (Readings. Year A)	<b>9.30am</b> People of the Parish <b>11am Mass</b> Club Lodwar/People of Lodwar <b>6pm Mass</b> For young people in the Parish	The Church opens at 9.15am <b>10.30am</b> Confessions <b>5.30pm</b> Confessions
<b>MON 8<sup>th</sup> May</b> Easter feria	<b><u>Bank Holiday No 7am Mass</u></b> <b>10am Mass</b> Jack Nally (RIP)	The Church will open at 9.30am and close after the 10am Mass.
<b>TUE 9<sup>th</sup> May</b> Easter feria	<b>7am Mass</b> For Peace in Sudan <b>10am Mass</b> Mary Bilton (intentions)	The Church opens at 6.50am Tuesday to Friday for 7am Mass (entry via Church car park). Main doors open at 9.30am <b>10.45am</b> Womens' Mini Retreat
<b>WED 10<sup>th</sup> May</b> St John of Avila, Priest & Doctor	<b>7am Mass</b> Carmine Albano (intentions) <b>10am Mass</b> For all who are sick in the Parish	
<b>THU 11<sup>th</sup> May</b> Easter feria	<b>7am Mass</b> For peace in Ukraine <b>10am Mass</b> For children preparing for Holy Communion	
<b>FRI 12<sup>th</sup> May</b> St Pancras, Martyr  <b>Friday abstinence</b>	<b>7am Mass</b> Priest's intention <b>10am Mass</b> Persecuted Christians	<b>10am to Noon</b> Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
<b>SAT 13<sup>th</sup> May</b> Our Lady of Fatima	<b>10am Mass</b> For vocations to the Priesthood	The Church opens at 9.30am

### Prayer Intentions:

**Recently deceased:** Joseph Power; Ghislaine Williams; Helen Birch; Alice Hancock; Rita McNally; Mick Morrisette Tabet

**Anniversary:** Maroun Ramia; Iris Nally; Veronica O'Farrell; Peggy Attlee; Camillo de Castiglioni; Peter Monaghan

### 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:

**18<sup>th</sup> May: THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD – Holy Day of Obligation**

**28<sup>th</sup> May: PENTECOST SUNDAY**