

St Thomas More – Parish Newsletter

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SUNDAY 14th MAY SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (Year A)

This coming Thursday:

**ASCENSION THURSDAY –
HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION**



Thursday this week, 18th May, is the Solemnity of the Ascension, a Holy Day of Obligation – a day on which, like all Sundays, the Church obliges Catholics (who are able) to attend the Sacrifice of the Mass. We should not see this as a *burden*, but rather as a reminder of what a great gift the

Mass is. Deliberately, without a solid reason, to ignore this sign of God's love for us, would suggest that we do not really believe that Jesus is our Saviour. We should treasure the Mass and be ready to give it top priority in our lives, knowing that any generosity on our part is always outdone by God's own generosity towards us. The Mass is always the making-present before us of the Sacrifice of Calvary, and is of unlimited value – even if, for whatever reason, we are not able to receive Holy Communion.

On the feast of the Ascension we recall our faith in Jesus, forty days after his Resurrection, ascending body and soul into Heaven. From there, together with the Father, He sends us the Holy Spirit, to strengthen us and enable us to become *other Christs*: thus able to look forward to being welcomed ourselves into unending heavenly joy after our life in this world.

If we reflect on the significance of the Ascension, we should be overwhelmed by God's unmeasured goodness towards us! Let's, therefore, do all we can to arrange things so that we are able to mark the occasion by attending the Holy Mass as the Church wants us to do.

To facilitate keeping Thursday's Holy Day of Obligation, there will be an **extra evening Mass at 7pm**, in addition to the normal weekday **7am and 10am** Masses.

FORTHCOMING PARISH ACTIVITIES

Family Event

A group of parents with young families have organised a Family Day in the parish ground floor hall and garden next **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 if you intend to attend, mentioning how many adults and children will be joining.

Laudato Si Film

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.

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.

Young Adults Group

No activity of the Young Adults Group in the Parish this week, but keep updated on future events by contacting:
young.adults.group.stm@gmail.com or Fr Alvaro (alvaro.tintore@netherhall.org.uk)

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.

Collections for 9th April to 30th April

Sunday offertory collection and contactless card machine (7 April to 4 May): **£2,937.89**

Special Collections

Priest Training Fund: £437.19

Holy Places: £426.02

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

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.**

From the Holy Father:

This Sunday's Gospel passage (cf. *Jn* 14:15-21) presents two messages: observance of the commandments and the promise of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus links love for him to observance of the commandments, and he insists on this in his farewell discourse: "If you love me, then you will keep my commandments" (v. 15); "He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me" (v. 21). Jesus asks us to love him, but explains: this love does not end in a desire for him, or in a feeling, no; it demands the willingness to follow his way, that is, the will of the Father. And this is summarised in the commandment of mutual love – the first love [in its fulfilment] – given by Jesus himself: "even as I have loved you, that you also love one another" (*Jn* 13:34). He did not say, 'Love me as I have loved you', but 'love one another as I have loved you'. He loves us without asking us to do the same in return. Jesus' love is a gratuitous love; he never asks for the same in return. And he wants this gratuitous love of his to become the concrete form of life among us: this is his will.

To help the disciples walk this path, Jesus promises to pray for the Father to send "another Counsellor" (v. 16), that is, a Consoler, a Defender, who will take his place and give them the intelligence to listen and the courage to observe his words. This is the Holy Spirit, who is the Gift of God's love that descends into the heart of the Christian. After Jesus has died and risen, his love is given to those who believe in him and are baptised in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit himself guides them, enlightens them, strengthens them, so that everyone may walk in life, even through adversity and difficulty, in joys and sorrows, remaining on Jesus' path. This is possible precisely by remaining docile to

the Holy Spirit, so that, through his presence at work in us, he may not only console but transform hearts, opening them up to truth and love.

Faced with the experience of error and sin – which we all do – the Holy Spirit helps us not to succumb and enables us to grasp and fully live the meaning of Jesus' words: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments" (v. 15). The commandments are not given to us as a kind of mirror in which to see the reflection of our miseries, our inconsistencies. No, they are not like that. The Word of God is given to us as the Word of life, which transforms the heart, life; which renews, which does not judge in order to condemn, but heals and has forgiveness as its aim. God's mercy is thus. A Word that is light for our steps. All this is the work of the Holy Spirit! He is the Gift of God; he is God himself, who helps us to be free people, people who want and know how to love, people who understand that life is a mission to proclaim the wonders that the Lord accomplishes in those who trust in him.

May the Virgin Mary, model of the Church, who knows how to listen to the Word of God and to welcome the gift of the Holy Spirit, help us to live the Gospel with joy, knowing that we are sustained by the Spirit, the divine fire that warms our hearts and illuminates our steps.

Pope Francis, Regina Caeli, Library of the Apostolic Palace, Sunday 17th May 2020

Fr Nicholas returns tomorrow, Monday, from his in-service formation course. Meanwhile, Fr Bernard and Fr Alvaro wish you a fruitful preparation for Thursday's great feast of the Ascension of Jesus into Heaven!

ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Sixth Sunday of Easter

14th May – 20th May 2023

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

	MASS	OTHER ACTIVITIES
SUN 14th May SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (Readings. Year A)	9.30am People of the Parish 11am Mass Jim and Hildegard Charles (intentions) 6pm Mass For young people in the Parish	The Church opens at 9.15am 10.30am Confessions 5.30pm Confessions
MON 15th May Easter feria	7am Mass For Peace in Ukraine 10am Mass For vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life	The Church opens at 6.50am Monday to Friday for 7am Mass (entry via Church car park). Main doors open at 9.30am
TUE 16th May Easter feria	7am Mass For Peace in Sudan 10am Mass Duarte Costa Pereira (RIP)	
WED 17th May Easter feria	7am Mass Carmine Albano (intentions) 10am Mass For all who are sick in the Parish	
THU 18th May THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD Holy Day of Obligation	7am Mass Holy Father's intentions 10am Mass Eduardo Arboleda (recently deceased) 7pm Mass People of the Parish	
FRI 19th May Easter feria Friday abstinence	7am Mass Helen Birch (RIP) 10am Mass Hugo Jativa (intentions)	10am to Noon Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
SAT 20th May St Bernadine of Siena, Priest	10am Mass For the spread of the Gospel	The Church opens at 9.30am

Prayer Intentions:

Recently deceased: Joseph Power; Ghislaine Williams; Helen Birch; Alice Hancock; Rita McNally; Mick Morrisette Tabet; Edouardo Arboleda; Duarte Costa Pereira

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:

28th May: PENTECOST SUNDAY

4th June: THE MOST HOLY TRINITY