

ST THOMAS MORE – PARISH NEWSLETTER

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SUNDAY 14TH APRIL 2024 Third Sunday of Easter (Year B)

Third Sunday of Easter

We continue to celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord for a total of fifty days all the way through to the feast of Pentecost. In this early part of Eastertide the Church encourages us to continue praying about the events on the first Easter Sunday. This year the Gospel reading on the third Sunday of Easter emphasises that Jesus really has risen from the dead. “Touch me and see for yourselves”, he said “a ghost has no flesh and bones as you can see I have.” He also removed doubts by eating some fish in front of them. Then he instructed them and gave them their mission to preach to all nations beginning from Jerusalem.

There is much for us to reflect on as we share the mission of the first disciples to witness in our time to the fact that Christ is risen and is with us.

Declaration on Human Dignity

A Vatican declaration on human dignity called *Dignitas infinita* was released by the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith on Monday 8th April 2024.

The Bishops of England and Wales issued a statement welcoming the document and assert that the promotion and defence of

human dignity lie at the heart of the mission of the Catholic Church in England and Wales. The statement can serve as an introduction and a summary of the Declaration.

“In our troubled times, it is important for Christians to proclaim the inherent and unconditional dignity of all human beings, without exception, as being the basis for authentic human rights. Although human rights have increasingly been codified in secular documents, such as in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, our dignity and rights originate in the Gospel preached by Christ. As Cardinal Fernandez states in presenting the document: 'we cannot separate faith from the defence of human dignity, evangelisation from the promotion of a dignified life, and spirituality from a commitment to the dignity of every human being.'

There are many areas where human dignity is misunderstood and human rights are under attack. These include questions about the dignity of human life from conception to natural death as well as the recognition of the unity of the person, body and soul, created as masculine and feminine. Although our faith and reason teach us that human

rights are inviolable and apply to the most vulnerable in society including the unborn, our abortion laws promote a false understanding of human dignity based on age, level of development, and mental capacity rather than on our shared humanity from conception until natural death. In addition, our laws and culture must allow us to recognise the difference between and complementarity of male and female whilst resisting the sometimes intolerant imposition of a gender theory that 'cancels differences in its claim to make everyone equal'. (*Dignitas inifinita*, 56).

In our own country, we also face the threat of the legalisation of assisted suicide. *Dignitas infinita* emphasises the links between the dignity of the sick and dying, our duty to care for them, and the need to resist the growing threat of assisted suicide and euthanasia. 'Helping the suicidal person to take his or her own life is an objective offence against the dignity of the person asking for it, even if one would be thereby fulfilling the person's wish' (*Dignitas infinita*, 52). Instead, we must respond to the suffering of the sick and dying with appropriate forms of personal and medical care. As the Declaration reminds us, to undermine the human dignity of the most vulnerable is to undermine the human dignity of us all.

The protection and promotion of human dignity is critical to addressing many other social justice challenges. As the document explains, by proclaiming that the Kingdom of God belongs to the poor, the humble, the despised, and those who suffer in body and spirit, Jesus recognised the dignity of every person, especially those who were considered 'unworthy'. (*Dignitas infinita*, 19) In our parish, civic and political life, we must, therefore, never forget the human dignity and human rights of the poor, prisoners, the sick, and those living with disabilities.

We also echo the Dicastery's call to bring an end to all war and end the scourge of violence within our local communities and in our homes. There is an urgent need for all of us to be peacemakers. This requires us to welcome migrants, work to tackle human trafficking and speak up for women who 'endure situations of exclusion, mistreatment, and violence' (*Dignitas infinita*, 44).

The Declaration concludes by reminding us: 'Each individual and also every human community is responsible for the concrete and actual realisation of human dignity.' (*Dignitas infinita*, 65). It is our hope that recognition of this shared responsibility will strengthen the social action of the Catholic Church in England and Wales and transform our civil and political life.

Gift Aid and Planned Giving

The boxes of envelopes for the tax year which started on 7th April are **ready to be collected**. If you have not done so already please ask our Finance Officer, Yolaine, or one of the priests for your box.

If there has been any change in your situation (new address, change in tax status, change of name), please kindly contact Yolaine at: swisscottagefin@rcdow.org.uk as soon as possible.

If you are a UK Income or Capital Gains Taxpayer, please sign a Gift Aid Declaration and support our parish in this free, easy way (donating either via online transfers to the parish bank account, standing order, weekly envelopes or using the Contactless devices). Gift Aid means our parish can claim an extra 25p for every £1 you donate, at no extra cost to you. Thank you!

First Holy Communion Classes

The First Holy Communion classes will resume on Saturday 20th April.

Please note First Holy Communion will be celebrated on **Sunday 16th June** at the 11am

Mass. Please put this date in your diary, and come if you are able so that the children and their families feel supported by the whole parish.

Mass Intentions

Please use the brown Mass Offering envelopes in the Narthex to request a Mass and provide the information requested. Please write the date you would like the Mass celebrated, but this needs to be confirmed by the parish secretary. The completed envelope can be handed to a priest or put through the letterbox of the presbytery. Please speak to Maggie Ainsworth in the Parish Office (Tuesday or Friday mornings) or email her at swisscottage@rcdow.org.uk about any Masses you wish to be offered on a specific day.

If your Mass intention is for someone who has recently died or is seriously ill, we shall try to allocate a Mass as soon as possible. However, bear in mind that it is not unusual for Masses to be offered several weeks after they have been requested.

Priest Training Fund

Next Sunday 21st April is Good Shepherd Sunday, the day we pray for priests and for vocations to the priesthood. There will be a retiring collection for the Priest Training Fund. This fund pays for the priestly formation of men for the Catholic priesthood. There are currently 49 men studying at Allen Hall seminary, 13 of whom are from our own Diocese. We also have one seminarian in Valladolid and one at the Beda, presently on pastoral placement in Ruislip. There are also two on a propaedeutic year at Redemptoris Mater. Last year 3 deacons were ordained for Westminster Diocese. The Priest Training Fund also supports the ongoing enrichment and formation of our ordained priests. Your generous donation helps ensure we can

support these men who are called to be like Christ the Good Shepherd.

Annual Mass of Thanksgiving for the Sacrament of Matrimony

This Mass will take place in Westminster Cathedral at 2:30pm, Saturday 25th May 2024. The deadline for details to be sent is Monday 15th April, therefore if any further couples are celebrating significant anniversaries please contact Fr Nicholas this weekend.

Regina Caeli

V. O 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

Third Sunday of Easter

14th April - 20th April 2024

Tel: 020 7435 1388

<https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/swisscottage/>

	MASS	OTHER ACTIVITIES
SUN 14th April THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER (Readings. Year B)	9.30am People of the Parish 11am Mass Peggy Attlee (RIP anniversary) 6pm Mass Wirner and Paula Maria Villacís (intentions)	The Church opens at 9.15am 10.30am Confessions 5.30pm Confessions
MON 15th April Easter feria	10am Mass Sue Sharman (recently deceased)	Church <u>opens</u> at 9.30am Monday to Saturday Monday: Church closes at 1pm
TUE 16th April Easter Feria	10am Mass Margaret McEvoy (intentions)	 Church closes about 6pm Tuesday – Friday
WED 17th April Easter Feria	10am Mass Joan Roscoe (RIP)	
THU 18th April Easter Feria	10am Mass Pat Gibson (intentions)	
FRI 19th April St Alphage, Bishop and Martyr Friday abstinence	10am Mass Funeral Mass of Mrs Susan Sharman	No Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
SAT 20th April Easter Feria	10am Mass Nicholas Birch (intentions)	11am -12pm First Holy Communion Class (20)

Prayer Intentions:

Recently deceased: Joan Ross; Maria Maguire; Mervyn Agnew; Fr Terry Murray OMI; Brian Ainsworth; Vasil Chornay; Evenamede Afiavi, Sue Sharman
Anniversary: Letizia Goodfellow; Patrick O'Donnell; Helen Birch; Frances Brown; Mick Morrisette; Antonio Valdez; Peggy Attlee

Confessions:

Weekdays: before and after 10am Mass
Saturday: before and after 10am Mass
Sunday: 9.30am; 10.30am and 5.30pm (before Mass)

Forthcoming liturgical celebrations:

23rd April: **SAINT GEORGE, Martyr, Patron of England**
9th May: **THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD**