

CONFIRMATION CONGRATULATIONS!

We congratulate the young people from year six at St. Augustine's School and from the small Parish Group, who received the Sacrament of Confirmation recently.

In total twenty of our young people were confirmed and many other school members supported them from their class and in the choir. I am grateful to Bishop William Kenney for his visit to the Parish, and to the new Head teacher Mrs Ritchie, Miss Burden, Mrs Barnes, Mrs Cutler and Mrs Mottram and all others who were involved in the preparation. Thanks to **all the school staff** and to the school choir and our loyal altar servers for their kind and willing support. Thanks also to parents and sponsors. Every blessing and good wish to our young people, as gifted in the Spirit, they continue their journey of faith.

NEXT SUNDAY

Brothers and Sisters from our Society of St. Vincent de Paul will be speaking at each mass and there will be a **second collection for the work of the Society in our parish**. As we prepare for the Lenten themes of prayer, fasting and concern for others, I would ask for your generous response.

NOREEN DAVIES RIP

Noreen and Mike have been part of the life of our parish for over thirty years at both St Austin's and St Francis' Churches. After a period of deteriorating health of about a year, and supported by Mike, by family and friends, Noreen died last Saturday morning. **Her body will be received into St Austin's Church on Thursday, 2 March at 5.30 pm and the next day, her Requiem Mass will be at 1 pm.** The family is small and so all parishioners would be welcome. We offer our love and sympathy to Mike and Noreen's sisters, Bernadette and Marie and their families. May she rest in peace.

TOM CLARK RIP

Tom, husband of the late Helen Clark, and for many years involved in the life of our parish, has died recently. **His Funeral Service will be at Oakley Wood Crematorium on 6 March at 2.15 pm.** We offer our sympathy to his sons and their families. RIP.

APF BOXES

Please bring your APF Red Boxes to the Sacristy at St Francis for emptying.

Your box must carry your name and address – there should be a label underneath. If not please place a slip with your details inside the box so it can be returned to you after emptying. If you are not able to bring your box to St Francis, please call Jonathan Shipton on 01926 714825 to arrange collection. Many thanks for your donations.

FRIENDS OF THE HOLY LAND

The Lenten Lunch will be held in the parish centre on **Sunday 5 March at 12.45 pm**. Tickets will be on sale after each weekend Mass, price £5. All proceeds will go directly to the Christians who are most in need in the Holy Land. Contact Pam Highton 859532.

PIETY STALL/REPOSITORY

Val and Caroline wish to inform parishioners that the Repository now has items relating to Reconciliation, St. Patrick's Day and Mothering Sunday as well as all the usual stock items and cards. Olive wood goods from the Holy Land are available. Please look and buy!

THE BIG PICTURE

If you would like to explore the riches and the treasures of the Holy Scriptures, a series of weekly sessions over twelve weeks, will begin on **Wednesday 22 February from 7.30 pm to 9.00 pm and on Thursday 23 February from 1.30 pm – 3.00pm**. DVD will be used and a booklet provided. Please contact Pat Southall **859494**.

'ST AUSTIN'S 175' CELEBRATION

I am delighted to be able to tell you that a group of people, invited by the Parish Pastoral Council, is in the process of putting together a Celebration in the Parish for the 175th Anniversary of the celebration of mass for the first time at St Austin's Church.

It will be on Saturday 3 June at 12 noon, and there will be a Mass celebrated by the Archbishop and concelebrating priests. This will be followed by a buffet lunch.

Further details will be available soon but at the moment, **please book the date** and keep it free to share in such a wonderful parish event!

JUST A REMINDER: LENT 2017

Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, this year will be on Wednesday, 1 March with Mass and Imposition of ashes at 9.30am and 7.30pm at St Francis' Church.

Mass will be celebrated for Crackley Hall School at St Francis' Church at 11.00 am and at St Augustine's School at 2.00pm.

N.B. Ash Wednesday is a day of fasting and abstinence from meat.

Lent gives us the opportunity not only to think of self-denial but also of renewing and refreshing our spiritual lives by doing something new or taking up again something from which we may have lapsed. Let us pray for the grace to keep a good Lent.

Prayer, fasting and concern for others are spiritual keynotes in Lent.

- What about coming to **an extra Mass in the week? Celebrating Reconciliation?**
- Stations of the Cross Friday **7pm** at St Francis' and Sunday **4.30pm** at St Austin's.
- **Family Fast Day for CAFOD 10 March**- envelopes will be available.

FATIMA PILGRIMAGE 2017

I am in the process of putting together a pilgrimage to Fatima in celebration of the centenary of the apparitions this year. It will be from **Monday 25 until Friday 29 September 2017** flying from Manchester and it will have the basic cost of £599. Single rooms, travel to the airport and insurance will be extra to this price.

If you are interested in receiving further information, **please let me know by 12 March** when booking forms and an itinerary will be available.

HOLYWELL PILGRIMAGE

Nearer to home, it is hoped to arrange a two night stay at Holywell from **2 -4 May**, staying at the Bridgettine Guest House there and having devotions at St Winifred's well. **Please let Father David or me know** if you are interested in joining this pilgrimage to one of the great mediaeval holy sites of Britain. Cost is to be arranged.

PASTIMES

Meetings are on Mondays 2 – 4pm in the Parish Centre, with Craft Corner (knitting, needlework etc), Bridge, Whist, Scrabble etc. and refreshments. Subscription is 40p.

ST FRANCIS' PARENTS' AND TODDLERS' GROUPS

The **Monday** group meets at the Parish Centre from 10 – 11.15am.

There is also a **Wednesday** group at Crackley Hall from 10 – 11.30am.

ST AUGUSTINE'S PARENTS' AND TODDLERS' GROUP

This meets on **Tuesdays** at the Kids Club adjacent to the school from 10 - 11.30 am.

OFFERTORY COUNTERS

This Sun: T Walmesley, P and K Alexander

Next Sun: P and T Whiting, M Harrington

CHURCH CLEANING

St Francis': P Hadfield, R Richardson, T Wilding St Augustine's: S Haley, M Palmi
EVERY BLESSING AND GOOD WISHES TO YOU ALL, Father Kevin.