

FROM THE ARCHBISHOP: PLEASE ENSURE THAT THE DOORS OF ALL CHURCHES AND CHAPELS IN THE ARCHDIOCESE ARE CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC FROM 24 /3 / 2020

THANK YOU ALL

As we celebrate the Octave Day of Easter, I wish to thank the florists who decorated the outside of our churches as a community witness to our Lord for the Easter Solemnity. Thank you also to those who helped me to prepare in church for the private celebrations of the Sacred Triduum, and to those who carried out parish administration.

I would also wish to add a personal note of thanks for your generosity to Fr David and to me, in these most challenging of times, personally and financially, through the Easter offering received, and through your personal gifts and Easter cards. May God bless you all for your great kindness, **Father Kevin**.

Some of the children of the parish have sent me some beautifully decorated Easter cards. You have obviously been busy at home during home-schooling and Holy Week. I would like to thank you in a very special way for such kindness – God bless each of you.

As I said last week, as usual, there are small Easter eggs for all of our parish children. These will be safely stored, until we are all able to meet again for our Masses in happier times.

N.B. ST GEORGE'S DAY – PATRON OF ENGLAND THURSDAY 23 APRIL
THE OCTAVE DAY OF EASTER

The Gospel reading for this Sunday reminds us about the life of the earliest Christian community. They were behind closed doors; anxious after the Lord's death, and uncertain about the news of his resurrection. You might say, using that dreadful word which we have come to hear daily, that they were experiencing 'lockdown'.

Into that situation comes Our Lord, risen from the dead, speaking words of peace and imparting, through the act of breathing on the disciples, the gift of the Holy Spirit, so that they may be his agents of forgiveness and reconciliation in the world.

There was a problem, however. Thomas, one of the Lord's Apostles was not there; why, we do not know. Perhaps for him the fact of Jesus' death on the cross meant that the game was up. He could see no way forward and so had removed himself from the group of the disciples.

On the Octave Day of Easter, Jesus again comes to the disciples, into that locked room; and again imparts his peace. This time he reveals his divine mercy, and invites Thomas to 'doubt no longer but believe.' Thomas responds, 'My Lord and my God!'

At the time of one of Jesus' healing miracles in the gospels, we hear from the man asking Jesus for help, the words, 'Lord I have faith, help the little faith that I have' or in another translation, 'Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief'.

The difficult circumstances of our individual lives and also the challenges of this present time can disturb our own faith; may cause all sorts of questions to arise in our minds and hearts. There may be times when, like Thomas, we may wonder about what is happening. On those occasions may we hear the words of the risen Christ inviting us to discover that peace which is to be found in him, and to respond as Thomas, with Easter faith, 'My Lord and my God', happy to be those who 'have not seen, and yet believe.'

I hope that you and your family will have some blessed times together in spite of all the present difficulties.

FROM THE ARCHBISHOP: Dispensation from Easter Duties

Since it is not possible for the faithful to receive Holy Communion at this time, and into the future, the **Bishops of England and Wales have dispensed the Easter Duties for the year 2020.**

The Bishops have asked that all should make a Perfect Act of Contrition at this time.

An Act of Contrition – there are others that you may know.

O My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do what is good, I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.

Our Saviour Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy.

MISSIO APPEAL

Thank you to all who support the Red Box Missio Appeal. In 2019 our parish raised £1872.04 which was 19% up on the amount we raised in 2018. Our parish contributed to the £2,868,404 that was raised in 2019 to support missionary work across the world. Please continue to support the work of the Red Box. Should anyone wish to join the appeal and would like a Red Box please contact Jonathan Shipton on 07476405215.

MARY BOWIE RIP

We offer our love and sympathy to Mary's nine children and to all her family members, after her death on Thursday 2 April in Stratford- Upon- Avon Hospital.

Mary has been part of our parish, together with her late husband Peter for many years. More recently she was assisted to Mass by her children. May she rest in peace.

Service at Oakley Wood Crematorium 22 April 11.00am – Please pray for her
HAROLD ROGERS RIP

Harold and his wife moved back into the parish a few years ago, living at Tannery Court, after some years living in Spain. He had been a Catenian and came with a friend to the 11.15 am Mass at St Francis' Church. May he rest in peace.

Service at Oakley Wood Crematorium 30 April at 2.00pm – Please pray for him

GIFT AID SCHEME AND ENVELOPES

Over the period during which there are no public masses, please post your collection envelopes, through the inside letter box at the Priest's House, thank you. God bless you for this kind generosity.

MAY OUR LORD BLESS YOU ALL DURING THESE DIFFICLT AND CHALLENGING DAYS, FATHER KEVIN