





Dear friends, My sincere thanks to everyone who both contributed to and helped at last Sunday's social after the 10am Mass. It was a great occasion. We have another opportunity for a social gathering after Mass on Sunday 10 July.

Last Sunday, the Catholic Church in England and Wales re-established the obligation to be at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days following the lockdowns caused by the pandemic. The Church wants us to be at Mass so that we can benefit from the spiritual blessings which are available and to be a support and encouragement to each other.

In the Code of Canon Law, the Church describes Holydays as: "Sunday, on which by apostolic tradition the paschal mystery is celebrated, must be observed in the universal Church as the primordial holy day of obligation. The following days must also be observed: the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Epiphany, the Ascension, the Body and Blood of Christ, Holy Mary the Mother of God, her Immaculate Conception, her Assumption, Saint Joseph, Saint Peter and Saint Paul the Apostles, and All Saints." (Canon 1246.1)

So, for us in England and Wales, every Sunday is a Holy Day of Obligation. And, the following: Christmas Day (25 Dec); the Epiphany of the Lord (6 Jan); the Ascension of the Lord (forty days after Easter); Ss Peter and Paul (29 June); the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (15 Aug); and, All Saints (1 Nov).

In addition, since 1984, the Bishops of England and Wales decreed that when the Epiphany; Ss Peter and Paul; the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin; and, All Saints, fall on either Saturday or Monday, the celebration is transferred to the Sunday.

On Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation, it is the vision of the Church that all her members are obliged to participate in Mass. This participation means being present in church with our brothers and sisters in Christ for Mass.

I am aware that some people are reticent about being in church. During the week, I was present at an occasion and asked why I was still wearing a face covering! I would also like to reassure those who for reasons of health, do not feel safe enough to return to Mass. It has always been the understanding of the Church that when the freedom of any Catholic to attend Mass in person is impeded for a serious reason, because of situations such as ill health, care for the sick or legitimate fear, this is not a breach of the Sunday Obligation.

As we return to Sunday Mass, as the young people of our parish receive the Sacraments, let's pray and work together for a renewal of faith in our parish, homes, and families. Let's work towards a transformation which makes us bold Catholics. Being at Mass, going to Confession, daily prayer and sending our children to a Catholic School shows that we want God to be part of our lives. This is great! So, let's...

- Return to Mass - Sunday Mass at St Mary's: Saturdays at 230pm and Sunday at 10am.
- Go to Confession – Saturdays 10am – 1030am or by appointment
- Pray for 5 minutes every day. This week, you might like to use the Psalm from Sunday's Mass, Psalm 8. It is an uplifting Psalm, praising God for creation.

O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens.

Out of the mouth of babies and infants, you have established strength because of your foes, to still the enemy and the avenger.

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,

what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?

Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly being and crowned him with glory and honour.

You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet,

all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas. O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

- Share our time, talent and treasure

#### Young people of our Parish

During the week, some of the children at St Mary's went to Confession for the first time as part of their preparation for First Holy Communion and this weekend some young people from St Mary's Academy will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Please pray for the children who are receiving these sacraments at this time.

Being safe in church While there are no legal restrictions in place, we want to ensure that everyone is as safe as possible. So we ask that:

- Use the hand sanitizer as you arrive at and leave the church.
- Please consider wearing a face covering while in church, as an act of charity to those who remain vulnerable or return home to vulnerable relatives.
- A number of benches still have cordons for those who wish to keep a physical distance and the church will be ventilated.

#### A Synodal Parish in a Synodal Church

The Parish SVP Group had its first face to face meeting in the Narthex for over two years. It was great to see them and hear about how they want to continue to reach out to the isolated members of our parish by providing meals on wheels, befriending and other support. Almost all of the Parish Groups have had their first face to face meeting.

I met with some of the Eucharistic Ministers who will resume taking Holy Communion to the sick and housebound. These visits will resume once all the Eucharistic Ministers with this role have their DBS updated. The Eucharistic Ministers will also resume Eucharistic Services in church in the coming weeks.

Can you help?? **Cleaning the church on Sundays after Mass** – if you can help with cleaning the church after Mass on Sunday, I will be most grateful for your help.

**Altar Serving** – the ministry of altar server is very important for young people and help the spiritual development of young people and their families. If you want to start altar serving, working as a member of team, having an important role in our parish, being a leader of the people, please see Fr Martin.

#### St Mary's Parish Piety Stall has reopened!

There are new stocks of First Communion and Confirmation cards; rosaries, crucifixes and Mass Cards.

#### Annual Novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

The annual novena at Maryvale House, Birmingham, will take place daily from Thursday 16 June with Mass at 7pm.

#### Parish Pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes at Hednesford, Sunday 3 July

The annual pilgrimage Mass to the shrine of Our Lady will take place this year. If you would like to go, the coach will leave St Mary's at 12noon on Sunday 3 July. Please take your own packed lunch. The price is £16 per person. To confirm your seat, please sign the list at the back of the church and pay a deposit of £7 per person. Please place all monies in an envelope marked Hednesford and hand it to Fr Martin.

#### Dates for your diary

Saturday 18 June	230pm Mass and First Holy Communion
Monday 20 June	630pm Bible Book Club on Zoom
Thursday 23 June	5pm Parish Council in the Narthex
20 – 24 June	Vocations' Week at St Mary's Academy
Wednesday 29	Ss Peter and Paul, Holy Day of Obligation. Parish Mass at 6pm.
Saturday 2 July	230pm Family Mass
Saturday 9 July	Club Day: No 230pm Mass on this day.
Sunday 10 July	Social gathering after Mass

Collection	Gift Aid £309.00	Non Gift Aid £66.90	Total	£375.90	Standing Orders for May £1211.509
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Thank you for your generous support of our parish.

**With prayers and best wishes for you and your family. Fr Martin**