

PRAY FOR THE SICK

Lately dead: Bridget Sharkey

May she rest in peace

Anniversaries:

Garrett Godkin, Dominic Correia,
Michael Glynn, Patrick Lennon,
Frederick Simmons, Jessie Anderson,
Luciana Dodge, Anthony Fair, John
Green, Eileen Hands, Terence Lewis,
Maureen Morgan, Ann Starr.

Parish Bingo

A date for your diary Saturday **18 May 2024**. A Parish Social with Cash Bingo in the Beckett Centre.
Entrance £1.
Bingo Books £3 for 7 games.
Cash on the door. Please bring your own drinks and nibbles.
Door opens 7.30pm. Eyes down approximately 8pm.

Reflection

The Time of Reflection for the Ascension of Our Lord 3.30pm in Henrietta on the 4th of May 2024.

SUNDAY MASSES

1st Mass: 6pm Saturday;
8.30am; 10am & 11.30am Sunday
(The 11.30am Mass is recorded)



Join us for tea/coffee after
Sunday Mass in the Becket
Centre

10am Chigwell Convent

WEEKDAY MASSES

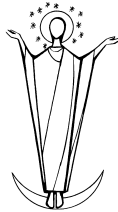
10am St Thomas'
9.30am Chigwell Convent except on
Saturday's when mass takes place at
10am

CONFESSIONS

Saturdays 10.30 to 11am
and
5.15 to 5.45 pm

BAPTISMS

1st and 3rd Sundays
of the month



St Thomas Bridge Club

Instruction for absolute beginners starts
next Thursday evening (**2nd May**).

If you are interested please email us at
bridgeclub@stthomaswoodford.org New
players are also welcome - we run a very
informal club, focused on enjoyment and
development.



ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY
Woodford Green



Served by the Franciscans

A FAIRTRADE PARISH

Parish Office: 020 8504 1686

Friary: 020 8504 1688

Email: parishoffice@stthomaswoodford.org



Website: www.stthomaswoodford.org

Facebook: @STOCWoodford

Twitter: @STOCWoodford

Fifth Sunday of Easter (B) 28th April 2024

Please note the nearest Fire Exit to you whilst you are in the Church

It is only through our union with Christ in the Eucharist that we are empowered to bear the fruits of his love in our lives. Jesus uses the image of the vine and its life stages to deepen our appreciation of this truth.

First reading

Acts 9:26-31

Saul preaches fearlessly in the name of the Lord on his return to Jerusalem.

Second reading

1 John 3:18-24

Whoever keeps Christ's commandments lives in God and God lives in them.

Gospel

John 15:1-8

Whoever remains in me, with me in him, bears fruit in plenty.

Responsorial Psalm

You, Lord, are my praise in the great assembly.



**Remain
in
my love**

Ronald Rolheiser on the Difficulty of Praying

Jan Walgrave once commented that our present culture constitutes a virtual conspiracy against the interior life. He wasn't suggesting that somewhere there is a deliberate force that is consciously scheming to keep us from interiority and prayer, but rather that an accidental flowing—together of forces and circumstances in history are making it difficult for us to live the examined life. What are these forces? They're simply the daily headaches and heartaches that afflict us.

Thomas Merton was once asked what he considered to be the major spiritual disease in the Western world. His answer: efficiency. The major spiritual disease in the Western world is efficiency because from the government offices down to the nursery we have to keep the plant running and, afterwards, we've no energy left for anything else. The first problem we have with prayer is that we're too-busy and too-preoccupied to make time for it. There's never, it seems, a good time for prayer. Prayer isn't easy because we don't understand it, don't know how to do it, and don't understand how the experience should feel. Always we're too-busy, too-stressed, too-tired, or too-preoccupied to sit or kneel down to pray. We rise early, groan as our alarm-clocks startle us from sleep, rush through breakfast, ready things for the day, fight crowds and traffic enroute to work, settle into a task that's demanding and draining, gulp-down a quick lunch, end the work-day tired, commute back home, ready another meal, tend to the needs of loved ones, share a meal with others who are just as tired and restless as we are, then, often enough, have still another meeting or event to attend in the evening. But we're not just too busy to pray, we're also too restless. It's hard to pray when we are restless and, mostly, we are.

Henri Nouwen puts this well: "I want to pray," he says, "but I also don't want to miss out on anything: television, movies, socializing with friends, drinking—in the world." Our deepest greed is not for money, but for experience. We don't want to miss out on life. Thus, to pray is truly a discipline because when we sit or kneel in prayer so many of our natural cravings feel starved and begin to protest. Restlessness is a great impediment to prayer.

Finally, beyond the headaches and restlessness, there is the ambiguity of prayer itself. Simply put, prayer isn't easy because we don't understand it, don't know how to do it, and don't understand how the experience should feel. Talking to God, hearing God's voice, and centering ourselves in God is not as easy as we sometimes make it out to be. God's reality, while massively real and the ground of the whole universe, is not physical and tangible like the things of this world. The world seems more real; family and friends can be hugged, touched and talked to, and physical sensation of all kinds doesn't leave us doubting its reality. But relating to God demands something else and it's easy to find ourselves bored, doubting, distracted, and anxious to get on to something else when we try to pray. Prayer isn't easy. By definition, prayer is a non-pragmatic, non-utilitarian activity. It's hard to sit still and (seemingly) do nothing when so many necessary tasks demand our attention and when so much inside us aches for activity and involvement. It's hard to pray when we suffer from the kind of headaches and heartaches that cannot be eased by taking an aspirin. Walgrave is right, there's a certain conspiracy against the interior life today. But prayer beckons us beyond, asking us to lift even this up to God.



Mass Intentions

Sunday 28th April

8.30 Massimo Boselli RIP
10 Muriel Meyler RIP
11.30 Diana & Mike Speller RIP

Monday 29th April

Fr Austin McCormack sick
Myles O'Malley anniversary

Tuesday 30th April

Theresa Piper RIP
Kathleen Blanchfield anniversary

Wednesday 1st May

Rosalia Bradbury sick
Francis Kadeyadeya & family

Thursday 2nd May

Brian & Maggie Mcdonagh & family
Trinity intentions

Friday 3rd May

C.W.L
Nicola McClean sick

Saturday 4th May

10 am Philip Doyle RIP
6 pm Angela Carneia RIP

Sunday 5th May

8.30 Ted Craft anniversary
10 Valeria Durkin RIP
11.30 Paddy & Phil Callanan RIP

Church Cleaning

Saturday 4th May at 10.30am

Rosie O'Connor & Charmaine Turrell

PARISH SUMMER FETE

Save the date for this year's summer fete on

Saturday 6th July 12-4pm

If you can help in any way, we'd love to hear from you. Could you donate a raffle prize?

Can you help out on the day? We need volunteers to help with setting up and running stalls on the day and clearing up.

If you are interested please email Dana: danaevesteve@hotmail.com

11:30 Mass Choir

We are so short of members that there is a risk the choir will cease to function soon.

That would be sad, as a choir can really enhance the liturgy and the experience of attending mass. So PLEASE consider joining us - we're not demanding!

Contact the parish office, and we'll organise a short intro for any potential members to help you make up your mind.

Trinity vacancy

Assistant Headteacher: Director of Religious Education and Religious Life of the School
Start date September 2024. Details of advert on schools website
<https://www.tchs.org.uk/about-us/employment/>