

**SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER A** 17<sup>th</sup> May 2020

**CHURCHES ARE CLOSED**, but in Catholic tradition priests celebrate Mass daily.

Due to the danger of the Coronavirus spreading, we are not allowed at this time, to celebrate Mass with a congregation, but Mass is offered daily in our church.

**SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER Year A** 17<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> 6.00pm Private intention  
Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> 11.00am The People of our Parish  
Monday 18<sup>th</sup> 9.15am Holy Souls  
Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> 9.15am Holy Souls  
Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> 12 noon Private intention (Palmer)  
Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD - SOLEMNITY  
Ascension Day 10.00am The People of our Parish

8.00pm Matthias McGrath RIP (Anniv)

Novena (nine days) of Prayer begins for the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 9.15am Holy Souls

**SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER A World Communications Day 24<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

Saturday 23 May 6.00pm The People of our Parish

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> May 11.00am John Whitehouse RIP (Recently)

**SACRAMENT of PENANCE: on request and by arrangement at this time**

**SCRIPTURE READINGS at MASS - SIXTH SUNDAY of EASTER A 17 May 2020**

**READING: ACTS 8:5-17** The Gospel brings healing for ill of mind, body & spirit

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 65** Cry out with joy to God all the earth.

**READING: 1 Peter 3:15-18** Christ died for us sinners to lead us to God

**GOSPEL: John 14:15-21** Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit to be with us forever

**OFFERTORIES: Thank you for your generous Offerings of £800 in Standing Orders and some in envelopes by parishioners to the Priest's House letterbox. You can make donations online for our Parish or to specific parish funds or charities (e.g. Cafod) at:**

<https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/donations?parish=epping//>

**MASSES, SERVICES, RELIGIOUS BROADCASTING & ONLINE SERVICES**

**MASS AT WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL: [www.churchservices.tv/westminster](http://www.churchservices.tv/westminster)**

**EWTN DAILY MASS and more at: <https://www.youtube.com/user/EWTN>**

**DAILY MASS Leigh-on-Sea: Our Lady of Lourdes Church at <https://lourdesleigh.org/>**

**Bishops Stortford: St Joseph & English Martyrs: [www.churchservices.tv/bishopsstortford](http://www.churchservices.tv/bishopsstortford)**

**DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD WEBSITE: <https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/>**

**DAILY SERVICES WITH MASS: [www.churchservices.tv/timetable/](http://www.churchservices.tv/timetable/)**

**DAILY SERVICE on BBC RADIO 4 (198 meters) at 9.45am Sundays at 8.10am**

**BBC ESSEX at 95.3 and 103.5FM Sunday programme from 6.00am to 9.00am**

**DAILY PRAYER & MEDIATIONS at [www.sacredspace.ie](http://www.sacredspace.ie)**

**UNIVERSALIS: [www.universalis.com](http://www.universalis.com) Daily Mass readings, Lectio Divina, Prayer of the Church in The Divine Office and Spiritual Reading for each day of Easter.**

**MASS INTENTIONS:** If you or anyone you know wishes to have Mass offered for a particular intention for anyone living or dead, please contact Fr John at The Priest's House, by phone, letter or e-mail or stating the intention, and the Mass will be offered in our church as soon as possible. Mass cards are available from the Priest's House.

## Immaculate Conception Catholic Church



11 Church Hill, Epping, Essex, CM16 4RA  
Parish Priest: Father John McGrath Tel: 01992 572516  
Deacon: Rev Duncan Whitehouse Tel: 01992 577173  
Email: [epping@dioceseofbrentwood.org](mailto:epping@dioceseofbrentwood.org)  
Website: [www.eppingcatholicchurch.co.uk](http://www.eppingcatholicchurch.co.uk)  
Registered Charity Number: 234092

Our parish is twinned with Thistle Grove/Lebohang  
Parish in the Diocese of Dundee, South Africa

**SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER A** 17<sup>th</sup> May 2020

*Dear friends,*

Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations: baptise them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:16-20). At the Last Supper, as he was about to be arrested and taken from his disciples, Jesus commanded them to "love one another as I have loved you". Before leaving them, at his Ascension, he instructed them and us to continue his mission by baptising people and teaching them the way of truth. We do not see Christ with bodily eyes, but see him with the eyes of faith, for he assures us; "I am with you always" - he has not abandoned us but gone before us and is very close to us.

Jesus' directions to his followers have shaped the Church's mission and purpose down the ages. We fail in so many ways to live Christ's command to "love one another", but his teachings set the standard on how to conduct our relationships in the best way. Before being taken into heaven, Jesus commanded his followers to share and teach his love to all peoples and nations. Jesus tells us that "all authority in heaven and earth has been given to me", and St Paul tells us "Jesus is Lord of all". Those who accept his Word and grace show faith in him by choosing to have themselves and their children baptised. Baptism is acceptance of Christ, the word of God and a willingness to learn from "him who is gentle and humble of heart". Jesus tells us to teach his Word, the Gospel, and make disciples or believers of all so that they will find God's love, forgiveness and reconciliation with God and others through him. He tells us to bring all people to Baptism so that they will be saved and counted amongst God's chosen people.

The apostles spent nine days between Christ's Ascension and Pentecost Sunday with Mary, the Mother of Jesus, waiting and praying for the coming of the Holy Spirit. We too need to pray for a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit and his gifts to empower and sanctify our community and our individual life. Pray, asking the Holy Spirit to come and renew mankind with the power and love of God. We can use hymns to the Holy Spirit like: "Spirit of the living God", "Come Holy Ghost, creator come" or "Come down, O Love Divine", or "Love Divine all loves excelling" or the traditional prayer to the Holy Spirit given in this newsletter.

*May the Holy Spirit direct our thoughts, words and actions. Fr John*

**CHURCH CLOSURE:** It is 8 weeks since our churches closed on 20<sup>th</sup> March. This has been a wilderness experience for all of us unable to go into church to pray or go to Mass and receive Christ in Holy Communion. It has disrupted the normal growth of life and faith for many, but especially for the children and families who have been preparing for First Holy Communion, that we would have been celebrating at this time. But it need not be wasted if we turn to the Lord in our home or room and pray in our “secret place” (Matthew 6:6) and the Lord will be there for us. We can reflect on the image Jesus gave us of “the grain of seed in the ground” (John 12:24) lying there silent and unseen, but growing in that hidden place. So let us turn to the Lord in our home and family and relate to him as our dear friend, brother and Saviour who is always there for us and with us, giving us hope and confidence in new life as we go forward.

**PARISH FACEBOOK GROUP:** Our parish now has a Facebook Group on which we will post daily updates, and links to parishes and activities around our Diocese. James Ryan will manage it. If you would like to join, just click on the link below. All requests to join and all posts will go through James before they go into the group so that he can monitor it for security and relevance. We hope this will be a great way for our parishioners and people to connect with one another in our parish community:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/26415423943/?ref=share/>

**WE PRAY FOR ALL WHO HAVE DIED RECENTLY ESPECIALLY:**

**MRS ELVA ROBINSON RIP,** late of Frank Foster House, Theydon Bois, who died on Sunday, 26 April. Her Funeral will be celebrated at Parndon Wood Crematorium, on Tuesday, 19 May at 1.45pm. May she rest in peace.

**JOHN WHITEHOUSE RIP,** brother of Deacon Duncan, who died in Australia, recently and whose funeral has been celebrated there. May he rest in peace.

**CANON JOHN DUCKETT RIP,** who died on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May in a care home at Bishop’s Stortford. He was appointed an Honorary Canon of Brentwood Cathedral in 2017, in recognition of his outstanding priestly ministry in our diocese. He had served as a Consultor, a member of the Finance Board and Parish Priest of Debden and other parishes. He was recognised as a great pastoral visitor to his parishioners in all his parishes, and also an avid supporter of West Ham United. May he rest in peace.

**We pray for the repose of their souls and ask that the Lord send his, Holy Spirit, the Comforter, to console and strengthen their families and all who mourn.**

**WE PRAY FOR ALL WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES OCCUR:** Ronnie Barrett and Eric Sands & (16/5), Arthur Williams & Angela Riccoboni (17/5), Leslie Wilson, Ann Allshine, Bridie O’Loughlin (18/5), Robert Luker & John DeVos (20/5), Patricia Gandy (21/5), Beatrice Cox, & Keiran McClean (23/5) May their souls, and the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen

**PRAY FOR OUR SICK AT HOME & IN HOSPITAL:** Please contact a Priest or Hospital Chaplain if you, your relative, or a parishioner, is ill in hospital or at home so that they may receive appropriate ministry and/or the sacraments.

**YOUR GIFT AID & OFFERTORY ENVELOPES** for the financial year from 6 April can be collected from the porch at the side of the Priest’s House. Parishioners who do not have envelopes and would like to have them, please contact our Parish Office. We ask parishioners who have envelopes and do Gift Aid to **contact Michele Murphy, on 07973363577** if your circumstances or details have changed. We encourage all parishioners to use Offertory envelopes, and especially taxpayers to **Gift Aid** your donations to the church. This increases the value of your offerings to the church by 25% and at no cost to yourself. If you require a letter advising how much Gift Aid you contributed in 2019.20 please contact Michele.

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS:** Children in our parish would have been receiving First Holy Communion at this time. We regret that we are still unable to say when we will celebrate this joyful Sacrament for the children and their families. Our Catechists, who have been preparing the children for first Reconciliation and Holy Communion, have repeatedly said what a wonderful group they are and how well they have prepared. We look forward with faith, and hope it will be possible to have this joyful celebration soon. We will inform parents of the dates to complete the preparation and celebrate the first Holy Communion Masses as soon as possible.

**ACTS OF THE APOSTLES AT EASTER:** Lockdown can give us opportunities to dedicate time to read the Scriptures and celebrate our own Liturgy of the Word. During Easter, we read the Acts of the Apostles and see how the Easter Gospel of the resurrection of Jesus was preached in Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth. Fr Adrian Graffy has recorded talks on the opening eight chapters of Acts that are available on [www.whatgoodnews.org/faith-talks](http://www.whatgoodnews.org/faith-talks)

**DOMESTIC CHURCH PARENT RESOURCES:** The Diocesan news page has a link for articles useful to parents of school-aged children to enable them continue worship at home during Easter with their family while unable to gather for Mass.  
[www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/news/domestic-church-resources-parents-covid-19/](http://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/news/domestic-church-resources-parents-covid-19/)

**WE PRAY FOR for doctors, nurses, all working in hospitals, care homes, the NHS & Emergency Services:** For all who are ill at home or in hospital, for carers looking after those who are elderly or vulnerable in care homes or at home. For all who feel stressed on being isolated, alone or dependent on others. We can ask Jesus, the Light of the World to be a light and Saviour for God’s people in this time of need, and ask Mary the Mother of Jesus and Mother of the Church to pray for us

**PRAYER FOR THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AT PENTECOST**

*Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful,  
and enkindle in them the fire of your love.*

*Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created  
and you shall renew the face of the earth.*

*Let us pray. O God who has taught the hearts of the faithful  
by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant that by the gift of the same Spirit  
we may be always truly wise and ever rejoice in his consolation,  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen*

## **BISHOP ALAN'S MESSAGE: SUPPORT COUPLES THROUGH COVID-19**

### **My Dear Brothers and Sisters,**

“It is always a delight to meet couples celebrating many years of married life together at the annual Mass for Marriage and Family Life, as well as those at the beginning of this adventure. You won't be surprised to know that we've taken the decision not to hold a Mass this year in July as originally planned, and I hope those who would have come this year will be able to come next year instead,

I would like to take this opportunity to send my greetings to all married couples, especially all celebrating significant anniversaries this year, and all who are preparing for marriage. We recently celebrated the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, and the Church is greatly enriched by all those who live the vocation to marriage, helping their spouse and children on the path to heaven and revealing something of Christ's love for his church through their own commitment to each other. You are all in my prayers, but most especially those who are experiencing illness and bereavement. I am aware of the deep disappointment experienced by the many engaged couples who have had to postpone weddings or do not yet know how their weddings will be affected, and you too are in my prayers at this time of uncertainty.

Many families are under a great deal of pressure with all the additional stresses associated with the pandemic, and sadly some relationships will be pushed to breaking point: please do not be afraid to seek help or leave it too late to do so. Marriage Care is one of a number of organisations offering remote access to marriage counselling, and in our diocese the Brentwood Catholic Children's Society continues to provide vital support to children and families who are experiencing difficulties. As Pope Francis recently tweeted “The Family is the hope of the future. Let us pray especially for families facing serious difficulties: may Our Lord assist them.”

**Yours in Christ and Mary,**

**+Alan, sm Bishop of Brentwood**

**RELATIONSHIP DIFFICULTIES:** If you are experiencing difficulties in your marriage, whether due to the additional stresses caused by the Coronavirus crisis or other reasons help is available. Marriage Care offers remote counselling or you may find Smart Loving Breakthrough <https://smartloving.org/breakthrough/> helpful. Visit <https://www.marriagecare.org.uk/> Please don't leave it too late to contact us for help on **0800 389 3801** email [appointments@marriagecare.org.uk](mailto:appointments@marriagecare.org.uk)

**VIRTUAL DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO WALSINGHAM** – Our annual Diocesan Pilgrimage to Walsingham due to take place on **Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May** had to be cancelled due to the closure of places of worship. However, thanks to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham's 24 hour livestream service we can still have a virtual pilgrimage by joining the services being livestreamed via the Shrine's website [www.walsingham.org.uk](http://www.walsingham.org.uk) on **Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May from 11am.**



**PRINCESS ALEXANDRA HOSPITAL:** Message to a Loved One in hospital. Family members & friends of PAH inpatients can send personal messages or collate messages to [paht.messagestoalovedone@nhs.net](mailto:paht.messagestoalovedone@nhs.net). There is a dedicated phone line 01279 868128, available between 10am and 12noon each weekday when a member of staff or volunteer will write down a message and get it to the patient. Video calls are available for patients on Kingsmoor Ward, John Snow Ward, Lister Ward, Locke Ward and Harold Ward between 2-4pm, seven days a week. Family & friends of inpatients can email [paht.virtualvisiting@nhs.net](mailto:paht.virtualvisiting@nhs.net) to arrange a 10 minute video call and find out how to join their call that to be hosted on secure video line

**IN NEED OF URGENT HELP:** If you or someone you know urgently needs help in this time, please contact the Priest's House. We will endeavour to assist through parishioners who have volunteered to help, the church, Foodbank or local agencies. Simple things like a phone call or e-mail can be a real comfort to many at this time.

**CORONAVIRUS VOLUNTEERS:** Everything Epping Forest manages a contacts database of people willing to act as "community volunteers" who could assist with deliveries etc to "self- isolating" people in the district at this time. If you would like to be added to the database, and are happy to have your contact details passed on to anyone requesting them, email [everythingeppingforest@gmail.com](mailto:everythingeppingforest@gmail.com) with: your name, contact number, Area (town, village, streets) where you are willing to help.

**CHURCH UPDATES Re CORONAVIRUS:** For the latest updates please visit: [www.cbcew.org.uk/](http://www.cbcew.org.uk/) and also go to [www.vaticannews.va/en/church.html](http://www.vaticannews.va/en/church.html)

**IF YOU NEED HELP** or assistance and would like to contact a volunteer in your area, please email [everythingeppingforest@gmail.com](mailto:everythingeppingforest@gmail.com) with "REQUEST" in the subject line or text 07710 447868 and state where you live. Everything Epping Forest will not be responsible for arrangements between parties. Anyone using this initiative does so on the understanding that arrangements between volunteers and anyone in need are the responsibility of those individuals. Everything Epping Forest will only pass on contact details to anyone requesting them as part of the initiative.

**CAFOD CORONAVIRUS EMERGENCY APPEAL** was launched on 30 April. The effects of coronavirus on developing countries where CAFOD works will be devastating. Families without enough to eat, without access to clean water or healthcare are particularly vulnerable to coronavirus. The poorest and most marginalised communities will be pushed further into poverty. Your prayers and gifts are needed more than ever to help protect the lives of those in poor communities. We cannot able hold physical collections in our churches, but you can donate as individuals at [cafod.org.uk/coronavirusappeal](http://cafod.org.uk/coronavirusappeal), or as a parish community via your parish at <https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/donations?parish=epping/>

**CATHOLIC PAPERS, MAGAZINES, MAGNIFICAT & CHILDREN'S Easter Booklets** are on a table by the side door of the Priest's House & Church Sacristy. It is open all day every day you can pick up a Magnificat, Newsletter, magazine or paper. The Catholic Herald is now being published only once a month.

## **INVITATION FROM THE NATIONAL JUSTICE AND PEACE NETWORK**

- *Are you concerned about injustice in our world?*
- *Do you feel the need to take action and make your voice heard?*
- *Would you like support and encouragement?*

If the answer is yes, then please look at what the National Justice and Peace Network (NJPN) has to offer. The National Justice and Peace Network is a grassroots body with Catholic roots, working with groups and individuals of all faiths and none, who share its aims and values. It is based in England and Wales.

- Opportunities for action,
- access to related agencies,
- Information sharing,
- Friendship, solidarity and mutual support.

More details available from:

<https://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/>

You can sign up to the regular e-bulletin and check out their latest newsletter.

## **CRIME & ESSEX COURIER FRAUD ON THE INCREASE**

If you or someone you know is vulnerable and has been a victim of fraud, call Essex Police on 101. Report fraud or attempted fraud by contacting Action Fraud at [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or call 0300 123 2040. Please see attached details of the current courier fraud. Following on from last month's alert around courier fraud, I draw your attention to a large number of these offences occurring across Essex, from Epping to Tendring to Leigh on Sea, and spreading into bordering counties.

Criminals are contacting elderly victims claiming to be from the bank, then within a very short time frame they attend the victims home purporting to be a courier to collect the victims bank card and to replace with a new card. They leave the victim with an envelope containing what feels like a bank card but transpires to be a gift card. The offenders then leave to withdraw victims' money. We have had a number of reports of men acting as the courier, often wearing a high visibility jacket – although this may not always be the case.

We ask all residents to be aware and ensure that this message is passed on to friends and family members, or those in self-isolation. If we can follow the idea of 'Tell2' – if you tell two people, who then tell two people etc, we can reach enormous numbers of people. An unbroken chain of 26 'Tell2' would reach 67 million people! Please spread this message to protect our elderly and vulnerable people. It starts with you!