



Holy Innocents' Catholic Church Newsletter

Welcome to Holy Innocents', especially if you are a visitor or with us for the first time. Father Victor and our deacons are keen to meet you, so do please introduce yourselves to them.

Celebrating all of our mothers

This Sunday is Mothering Sunday, which the Church has been marking on the fourth Sunday in Lent for centuries. Rarely can it have fallen in such unusual circumstances as this. But equally, has there ever been a more fitting time for us to be celebrating motherhood?

Because when we celebrate “mothering” on this special day, our thoughts turn first to “Mother Church”. Traditionally, this was a day on which everyone paid a visit to their own mother church, and left an offering on the altar. This Sunday, probably for the first time since it opened, no Masses will be celebrated at Holy Innocents'; we will not be able to bring our offerings here. How much we will miss gathering together in our beloved mother church not just this Sunday, but in the weeks and months to come!

Also, mothers (and fathers) are never far from our minds when we're thinking about the COVID-19 epidemic. For those of us with older parents, how will they manage, particularly if we can't see them as often as usual or at all? We pray particularly for Father Victor's mother, who has sacrificed so much to allow him to be here, leading and shepherding all of us.

Then there are the young parents in our parish, bringing up children either on their own or with the support of their spouse or partner. How will they cope, now that the schools are closing? For those who are working – those in the caring professions, for example – will they be able to juggle work and child care? Will they have enough money if they lose their job? And what if one or all of them become ill?

For many parishioners, of course, Mothering Sunday is an occasion to remember and mourn the loss of a mother who has died. It's a comfort to think that our parents who now rest in heaven will be interceding constantly for us, our families, our Church and our world during these difficult times.

Finally, the motherhood of Mary, mother of God, mother of the Church and our mother, is very much on our minds this week. For this Wednesday is the Feast of the Annunciation, when we recall how she joyfully placed her life at God's disposal. Then next Sunday, as you can read on page 3, we are called to join with the entire Church in England and Wales in re-consecrating ourselves, and our land, as Mary's dowry.

Thanks be to God for all of our mothers!

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What is, and what is not, happening

Parish contacts

Parish Priest:

Father Victor Vella
(07802 721306
victorvella@
rcaos.org.uk)

Deacons:

Barry Chalkley
(07917 132472,
barrychalkley@
rcaos.org.uk)

Wayne du Preez
(07500 009281,
waynedupreez@
rcaos.org.uk)

Parish Secretary:

Sharon Delaney

Parish Office will be
open on Monday
and Friday
10:30am - 3:30pm.

Contact details at
foot of page.

Convent of Sisters of Mercy:

01689 832999

Safeguarding representative:

Andrew Leong
orpingtonsg3@
safeguardrcaos.
org.uk

Suspension of public worship

Until further notice, in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Bishops Conference of England and Wales, there will be no public celebration of Mass, and no other public acts of worship, here at Holy Innocents'. (You can read more about the guidelines on www.cbcew.org.uk.)

Father Victor will continue to celebrate privately in the church Mass each day. The continuing celebration of Mass by our priests allows us all to join in spiritual communion with them; you can read more about that on page 3.

From Monday 23 March, the church will be open for private prayer from 10.30am to 1.30pm each day.

Other sacraments, funerals and sacramental preparation

The suspension applies to the public celebration of the other sacraments, including Baptism and Matrimony. There may be special cases with regard to

Baptism or Matrimony; please speak to Father Victor if this may apply to you.

It also applies to funeral liturgies, which during the suspension must take place at the graveside or in the crematorium. Again, Father Victor will be happy to help.

Our First Holy Communion and Confirmation journeys have been put on hold with immediate effect; but let's all keep praying for the candidates and their families.

Sacrament of Healing

As Father Victor explained at our final pre-suspension Mass this morning, "we have to keep the channels of grace open". He will make himself available to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation with you, either in person (though at a safe distance) in the Presbytery or by a phone call or WhatsApp video call. (Father Victor has checked that this example of the 'creative responses' for which Pope Francis has praised Italian priests is a legitimate means of celebrating the sacrament.)

Father Victor will also be available to celebrate the Sacrament of the Sick.

Anniversaries Stephen Dempsey, Gwendoline Poole, Mary Maddox, Albert Barnard, Michael Perry Reginald Bond, Hannah Turner, Thomas Gibbons, Agnes Kitchenham, Gertrude Goolding, Tom McCann, Gillian Holmes, Mary Sova, Mary Gilbert, George Bell, Maisie Maskell, Vicki Court, Eric Bass, Agnes MacPherson, Ellen Ahearn, Lionel Stewart, Margaret Evans, Harold Wagner and Jane Burkett. **May they rest in peace.**

Staying in touch

Streaming Masses

Father Victor is investigating whether it will be possible to have his Masses streamed on the internet. We will let you know what comes of those investigations.

Receiving communications

Our Communications Team will be trying hard to keep everyone up-to-date with what's happening. We will continue to produce a weekly newsletter, for example, and distribute it by email. (If you haven't already done so, subscribe to receive it: On the homepage of our website, find the box marked "Current newsletter", click "Subscribe" and follow the instructions.)

We are happy to post newsletters to people who are not on the internet or really need a hard copy. Let our Communications Team know on orpingtoncc@rcaos.org.uk if you know of anyone who would like to be on the list for this. (We'll need their permission.)

Picking up the phone

Text messages, emails and the like are all very well, but there's nothing quite like having a chat with someone. So we're all encouraged to keep in touch with each other by phone. If there's someone in the parish you're worried about, why not give them a call and see how they are?

Staying in communion

Spiritual communion

Although the public celebration of Mass and the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and holydays are suspended, we are still encouraged to share in the sacrifice of the Mass. In the words of our bishops in an open letter: “Knowing that the Mass is being celebrated; joining in spiritually in that celebration; watching the live-streaming of the Mass; following its prayers at home; making an act of spiritual communion: this is how we share in the Sacrifice of Christ in these days. These are the ways in which we will sanctify Sunday, and indeed every day.”

Live streaming of Masses

As mentioned on page 2, Father Victor is investigating the possibility of his Masses being live streamed. In the meantime, many Masses are live-streamed every day. There is a Mass at 12 noon each day from the National Catholic Shrine to Our Lady at Walsingham, for example, or you can find daily Masses on EWTN or on Bishop Barron’s “Word on Fire” website. There are some further suggestions on our parish website.

Praying together

We may not be able to meet together to pray, but we can keep praying in union with each other for the same intentions and sometimes at the same times. Here are three suggestions (we’ll make more over the coming weeks):

Prayer intentions

We remember in our prayers the sick, the housebound and their carers.

In particular, we pray for: Ann Van Ouckama, Ian Andrews, June Elsey, Vera Greene, Liz Weekly, Primrose Martin, Helena Johns, Miriam Cappelle, Alison Walker, Marie-Stella Polloni-Watson, Bill Allen, Jill Horton, Joanna Noss, Constantine and Veronica Pereira, Canon John McNamara, Les Forsyth, Rose O’Keeffe, Luisa Capp, Jo James, Brian and Judith Tiddeman, Godfrey Barber, Mary Hayes, Paddy Quinlan, Iris Whitehead, Paul Towers, Bernice Rayer and all those in hospital.

If you know a parishioner who is ill, injured or in hospital, or notice that someone has been absent for a while, please tell the Parish Office so that contact can be made and visits arranged if necessary.

To post personal prayer intentions on our website, contact ceciliaskudder@sky.com.

Pausing at 3

We’re encouraging anyone who is free at 3pm on any day to take a few minutes to pray for our parish, our town, our country and our world.

Light a candle of hope this Sunday

Also attached you will find a leaflet about a Churches Together in England initiative, asking us to light a candle and place it in a window of our homes this Mothering Sunday, 22 March, as a sign of hope.

A triduum of prayer for the Dowry consecration

Attached to this newsletter you will also find a leaflet making suggestions for how we can continue to build up to next Sunday’s re-consecration of our country as the Dowry of Mary. We are invited to join in a triduum of prayer from Thursday 26 to Saturday 28 March, by each day praying the Rosary and reciting the litany of saints and martyrs of England and Wales (set out in the leaflet).

There can hardly be a better time to seek the intercession of those great figures in the faith history of our country.

Accompanying Father Victor

Father Victor will each day be following a set pattern of Adoration, Rosary and Mass. He may be accompanied by one person, who must be under 70 and have no underlying health issues. If you might like to do this one day, contact orpingtoncc@rcaos.org.uk.

Prayer

Coordinator for Prayer and Formation:

Anne Scripture
(07801 445966,
orpingtonpaf@rcaos.org.uk)

Pope’s March prayer intention:



Catholics in China

We pray that the Church in China may persevere in its faithfulness to the Gospel and grow in unity.

Holy Innocents’ Catholic Primary School

Ryan Langford
(Head Teacher) or
Ian Wilson (Chair
of Governors) via
the School Office
on 01689 813040

www.holyinnocents.bromley.sch.uk

Saturday 21 Mar	Hosea 6: 1-6; Ps 51: 3-4, 18-19, 20-21; Luke 18: 9-14	
Sunday 22 Mar Mothering Sunday	First Samuel 16: 1, 6-7, 10-13; Ps 23: 1-6; Ephesians 5: 8-14; John 9: 1-41	4th Sunday of Lent
Monday 23 Mar	Isaiah 65: 17-21; Ps 30: 2-6, 11-13; John 4: 43-54	Feria
Tuesday 24 Mar	Ezekiel 47: 1-9, 12; Ps 46: 2-3, 5-6, 8-9; John 5: 1-16	Feria
Wednesday 25 Mar	Isaiah 7: 10-14; 8: 10; Ps 40: 7-11; Hebrews 10: 4-10; Luke 1: 26-38	Annunciation
Thursday 26 Mar	Exodus 32: 7-14; Ps 106: 19-23; John 5: 31-47	Feria
Friday 27 Mar	Wisdom 2: 1a, 12-22; Ps 34: 17-21, 23; John 7: 1-2, 10, 25-30	Feria
Saturday 28 Mar	Jeremiah 11: 18-20; Psalms 7: 2-3, 9-12; John 7: 40-53	Feria
Sunday 29 Mar	Ezekiel 37: 12-14; Ps 130: 1-8; Romans 8: 8-11; John 11: 1-45	5th Sunday of Lent

Looking after each other

If you need information or help

You won't be surprised to hear that many people are getting in touch with the parish during the current situation, seeking information or asking for help for themselves or others.

In order to look after Father Victor and our Parish Secretaries, who will otherwise drown under the weight of messages and emails, we have decided to route all messages (except for urgent or sensitive pastoral matters) via the parish Communications Team.

So if you need information or help, then unless it is an urgent or sensitive pastoral matter (in which case please contact Father Victor as normal), please send your request to the Communications Team at orpingtoncc@rcaos.org.uk. They will respond or pass your message on to the relevant person.

If you would like to offer help

The same applies if you are able to offer help in any way to other members of our parish community if needed. We are drawing up a list of those who have offered to help and Jackie Low will be coordinating that effort. But in the first instance please provide your details to orpingtoncc@rcaos.org.uk, saying how you might be able to help if needed and giving your contact details and permission for them to be kept on a list.

Helping the parish

We know that for many parishioners, the current crisis might cause financial difficulties. But if that doesn't apply to you and you normally make your weekly offering to the parish by putting money or a Gift Aid envelope in the collection plate, could you please switch for the time being to making payments to the parish directly by Standing Order? If you would like to do this and have not separately received a message with our bank account details, please contact orpingtoncc@rcaos.org.uk.

Helping the Bromley Foodbank

Our Foodbank trunk will continue to be available, in the porch, for donations while the church is open. The Bromley Foodbank is in immediate need of volunteers (who are not subject to health or age restrictions on their ability to do so) to help at their centres and to assist in other ways. Contact pm@bromleyborough.foodbank.org.uk if you might be able to help.