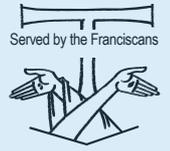




ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY
Woodford Green



*The*Word *The*Word *The*Word

Issue 6 - September 2018

Welcome to this new edition of *The Word*. In this issue we are focusing on our brothers and sisters who are sick and housebound. You will find articles by both the visited and the visitees expressing their personal feelings as well as some articles giving details of this wonderful ministry. We also have some thoughts for reflection from Fr Boniface.

If you would like to know more about the groups involved in this ministry then please contact the group leader, the Parish Office or email us at parishnews@stthomaswoodford.org

Mass for the sick and housebound

A Mass for the sick and the housebound, and those living in care homes will be celebrated at **3pm on Sunday 30th September at St Thomas'**, followed by light refreshments in the Becket Centre provided by the CWL and the SVP.

During the Mass the Sacrament of the sick will be available for those wishing to receive it. We are keen to invite as many as possible of our sick and housebound parishioners to this Mass, please invite any neighbours you know who might like to come along.

Ministers of Communion who take Holy Communion to the sick, please ensure you invite those you Minister to. Anyone requiring transport to / from the Mass please call the Parish Office on 020 8504 1686.

This annual event is a lovely occasion for those who cannot usually attend the regular services to come along for a special Mass and to meet up with their fellow parishioners afterwards for tea and a chat.

Jonathan McGuire

Visitation of the sick, housebound and elderly / infirm

This is a ministry which is carried out by many people in the parish today. It has been my experience that it is we, the ministers who are the privileged ones. Many would agree that this is the truth.

It is important usually to have a routine: that the visitee is aware of the visitor's time of coming. Also to not over-run the allotted time; elderly or sick people can easily tire, so there needs to be a flexibility and awareness of the person's circumstances. Visiting the nursing homes is a special event of the day for the recipient, and the "minister" or visitor has to follow the set routine of the nursing home.

Many people who live alone today complain of loneliness – it is endemic in our society. Some say they can pass the whole day without any conversation. It is important for all of us to remember those who may live nearby, and take the time and make the effort to visit them at least once in a while and / or phone them.

Sr Sandra

Eucharistic Ministry for the Sick and Housebound

At present our Eucharistic ministers take Holy Communion to 22 parishioners at home and 23 care home residents. A further nine parishioners have been visited over the past year on a temporary basis and a minister from our parish is involved in the chaplaincy team at Whipps Cross Hospital.

We aim not only to take the Eucharist, but to offer valuable links with the parish community and to facilitate friendship and a sense of belonging.

This has proved to be a beautiful gift both for the ministers and the parishioners and we would like to extend the facility to more sick and housebound either on a permanent basis or temporary recovery from illness.

If you know of anyone who cannot attend Mass and would value the Eucharist at home either temporarily or on a more permanent basis, please contact the Parish Office, myself or one of our friars.

Cathy Mair

As members of the CWL our commitment is to serve our parish community therefore some of our members have become Eucharistic Ministers.

This is a very spiritually rewarding ministry especially when we are asked to visit our sick or housebound parishioners and bring them Holy Communion on a regular basis. It is quite a humbling experience as our time together is extremely precious and equally rewarding.

We convey to them the latest parish news either verbally or via the newsletter; this generally leads to quite pleasant, light hearted conversation.

Those we visit really appreciate our time and efforts. We in turn feel blessed and privileged to be granted the opportunity to take the Body of Christ and to share the word of Our Lord in such a meaningful way.

CWL

Streaming Mass

A proposal at a meeting of the Liturgy Committee was to broadcast Mass to the sick and the housebound of St Thomas. This was discussed by the IT & Communications Committee and although we are lacking in experience of doing this felt that it was such an important issue that we had to do it. In fact this is already done by many churches throughout the land.

We realise that many people receive Holy Communion at home, in hospital or other nursing homes but hope that through the additional option of being able to watch Mass online they may further partake in the life of the church.

Carrying out this venture has not been easy. It is something new to us and we still need to make improvements in quality but we will continue to work on this. However, we sincerely hope that this online Mass will provide a genuine benefit to those who are physically unable to attend Mass in person and to have this additional opportunity to be part of the parish family.

24 Hour Adoration (Exposition) of the Blessed Sacrament 6pm Friday 28th to 6pm Saturday 29th September 2018

We aim to record the first hour of the adoration which will include Evening Prayer on Friday 28th September. This recording will be available online from around 7.30pm the same evening. We hope that this will enable our sick and housebound brothers and sisters to join together in adoration and prayer at a convenient time during the 24 hours.

Mike Eggleton & Paul Kinman

Personal Experiences

"Unfortunately, I was diagnosed with breast cancer in February this year. In May, I had major surgery and was unable to attend Mass for several weeks. As I rarely miss Mass, this bothered me a great deal. However, it was suggested that I contact the Parish Office to request communion to be brought to me for the time I couldn't attend. It was a very pleasant experience. I knew the Eucharistic Minister quite well. She would bring the host to me on an agreed weekday, we chatted for a while, she then lit a candle, recounted the theme of the Mass she'd attended and then administered communion to me. I am very grateful to the parish community for making this possible." *Catherine*

"Elizabeth (88 years old) said: "I am not now able to go to church. I listen on TV to the Hungarian Mass every Saturday but I miss Holy Communion. It is very nice for me when you come and I would greatly miss it if you didn't. I used to go to church every Saturday when I was healthy. I think God hears my prayers that I cannot go to church now. I pray to God and ask him for help. I feel in myself very happy that I can receive communion.

One of the ladies was so delighted that Our Lord was coming to her as she was no longer able to go to Mass to receive the Blessed Sacrament and it gave her great joy.

Another person said it gives her great strength to continue the week and to build up her faith when she is unable to cope and it is a great joy to have someone from the church to visit her each week. She looks forward so much to receiving the Blessed Sacrament." *Sr Patricia*

How to watch Mass Online

If you want to watch Mass online you will need to access our parish website via a computer, tablet or smartphone. The web address is:
<https://www.stthomaswoodford.org/>

Once the website opens up you will see an icon on the home (front) page which says, quite simply, **Mass Online**. If you click on this you will then see another icon which says **Watch Mass Online**. Click on this to be taken to the page where you can view the mass. (NB – please note this is the only way to view mass online. You cannot directly search for it or find it on You Tube or anywhere else on the internet).

We publish the online mass times on our website and in the newsletter. We had aimed to stream the mass live but have experienced some technical issues. As a result, for the foreseeable future, this may not be possible. However, we will upload the mass as soon as possible afterwards. This would normally be within two hours of the mass start time (e.g. for 6pm it should be online at 8pm etc). The mass will be kept online to view for at least a week.

A WORD IN YOUR EAR

We are all familiar since the days of our childhood with the hymn *Hail Queen of Heaven*. The other day I happened to reflect on the words of the hymn. These were written by John Lingard, someone largely forgotten now, though in the Victorian era in which he lived he was a respected historian and author. This was his only hymn. He was born in 1771 of a recusant family in Winchester and became a student at the English College in Douai, in fact the last candidate for the priesthood to emerge from the College when it was closed at the time of the French Revolution. He returned to England in 1793 where he was eventually ordained a priest. His main work was a History of England initially published in 1819 in eight volumes, but by the time he died in 1851 it had grown to 13 volumes. He was a true Victorian, and it will not surprise us to find his hymn text somewhat florid and colourful.

The words which caught my attention were these in the second verse addressed to Our Lady: “*remind thy son that he has paid / the price of our iniquity*”. I allowed the words to form a picture in my mind of Mary like any mother admonishing her Son, “and don’t forget that you died on the cross for all these people”, Jesus answering, “*Thanks mum, I almost forgot*”.

At that point I was shocked at what would have been not only a quite impossible conversation, but the very idea of it would be blasphemous: Jesus cannot “almost forget” his death on the cross. And yet English-speaking Catholics have been singing this for 150 years and I do not know of any protest. I went on to reflect on how careful we must be when we try to find the right words to talk about God. God is the “wholly Other”: we cannot really talk about what He is, only about what he is not. When we say that he is infinite, we are really saying that he is not finite or limited in any way.

St. Paul told the Corinthians, “*the depths of a man can only be known by his own spirit, not by any other man, and in the same way the depths of God can only be known by the Spirit of God.*”

Fr Boniface OFM



Join us in the Becket Centre **after all Masses on Sunday, 23rd September** and at Chigwell Convent on **Sunday 30th September** in support of *The World's Biggest Coffee Morning*, Macmillan Cancer Support's biggest fundraising event for people facing cancer. Last year alone over £27 million was raised and we can help make this another successful year.

“The first ever Coffee Morning happened way back in 1990. It was a rather small affair with a simple idea: guests would gather over coffee and donate the cost of their cuppa to Macmillan in the process. Since then, Coffee Morning has raised over £200 million for Macmillan.

One in two of us will face cancer, and the money raised at the Coffee Morning will help us make sure no one has to face it alone.” *Macmillan*

Please bring your cake(s) along EARLY on Sunday 23rd, to help us make a difference!

HAPPY BAKING 🥰 Check out recipes here>>> <https://coffee.macmillan.org.uk/baking-recipes/>



Lilian is a remarkable woman. A widowed mother to two young children, living in Zambia, Lilian works hard to provide for her children.

When our partner, the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, first met Lilian she was very sick. The Sisters provided Lilian with medicine and when she was diagnosed HIV positive, and the Sisters also provided counselling to help her come to terms with her illness.

After receiving counselling and support, Lilian decided to become a caregiver and trained with the Sisters so that she too could help support others.

Speaking of this, Lilian shared:

"I have learned so much thanks to the Sisters. They are here for me. Without them, I would be dead."

This Family Fast Day (Friday, 5th October) your gift could help more people like Lilian receive the support they need.

<https://cafod.org.uk/Give/Donate-to-CAFOD/Harvest-Appeal>

LILIAN'S PRAYER

Thank you Lord my God for being with us.

I thank you Lord and I pray that you protect us.

I pray you will protect me in the future.

I thank you for everything you have done for me.

Amen

Parish Sponsored Walk 2018 for bccs

A very big thank you to everyone that took part or sponsored the parish walk on 23rd June.

With nearly all returns now received it is estimated the record number of 45 people who took part will have raised just over £3.7k for Brentwood Catholic Children's Society - rising to £4.3k if all the Gift Aid can be collected.

This is the best result in the nine years we have been doing the walk. And provides a very good omen for our 10th anniversary walk in June next year.

David Underwood



Parish weekly newsletter by email

If you would like us to send you the parish newsletter via email you can sign up on the parish website. The address is <https://www.stthomaswoodford.org/> or you can send a mail to parishnews@astthomaswoodford.org

Internet resources

St. Thomas Parish Website: <http://www.stthomaswoodford.org>

Parish Facebook: [@STOCWoodford](https://www.facebook.com/STOCWoodford)

Parish Twitter: [@STOCWoodford](https://twitter.com/STOCWoodford)

Pope Francis at the Vatican: <http://w2.vatican.va/content/vatican/en.html>

Follow Pope Francis on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/Pontifex>

The Art of Dying Well - what does the church say about death? <http://www.artofdyingwell.org/>

Steward of the Gospel: What is all about? [Steward of the Gospel Questions](#)

Order of Friars Minor in Great Britain: <http://www.friar.org/home>