

ST MICHAEL'S NEWSLETTER



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Hall wi-fi: [Netgear41](#) (password) [grandcomet148](#)
The office is CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE
Please ring Fr Tony on the number above in an emergency.

NB – there are four pages of newsletter this week, page 3 is Rosary relay on Sunday, page 4 is about church re-opening.

Seventh Sunday of Easter

NO MASS

The bishops of England and Wales have decided that Mass and other liturgies will not be celebrated in public until further notice.

**Priests will celebrate Mass in private only.
Churches will be closed until further notice.**

St Michael's Online Prayer and Worship during the pandemic.

Thursday at 7pm – 7.30pm

Thursday online prayer services are proving popular. We have another one this Thursday 4th June (with gathering from 6.55pm). This gives us a lovely opportunity to meet and see one another; and to share our worship and prayers during this difficult time. Do look out for the emailed link - and then it's easy - you just click on the link and wave to everyone before the meeting begins. *If you don't regularly receive these emails, do please let Bill know (at smichaelweb@gmail.com) and he'll add you to the Parish circulation list.*

Please pray for the souls of those whose anniversaries occur at about this time.

Joseph Rogers, Malcolm Legge. John Cox,
May Hirst, Sydney Alliston, Olive Greenway,
Kathleen Buxton, Michael Hall, Wyn Haynes,
Maria Palermo, Mario Schifano,
Trudi Walsh

May they Rest in Peace

PLEASE PRAY FOR

Myra Vanner, Sylvia Crampin, Paul Gruzalski, Clare Derry,
Peggy Brogan, Leonard Anderson, Vincent Smyth,
Emily Scarborough, George Stuart Baxter,
Bart Gruzalski, Sheila Hanks, Sarah Bishop,
Michael Roche, Pauline Hooper, Elizabeth Samson,
Fr Alan Sharpe, Bill Danson, Jean Rawlinson, Kay Fry,
Margaret Beeby, Anne Burman, Alfredo Sheffield,
Nina Grant, Barbara Long, Johanna Rainsbury,
Stephen Sullivan, Rachel Fulton and Michael Machese

and all who need our prayers.

PENTECOST

My Dear Friends,

I'm not sure that I've ever appreciated the Spring as much as I have this year. Perhaps with Lockdown I've had more time to notice it all.

I try, if I can, to go out for a walk each day. I don't always succeed, but apart from enjoying the beautiful colours of Spring, I have had a chance to meet people. - always of course at a proper distance!

Just walking in the village, I could meet quite a few people, and not just parishioners. The Roman collar seems to encourage conversation.

I notice people walking along, often preoccupied with their own thoughts, but a "Good Afternoon" from me usually brings a smile and a friendly greeting.

There are others who are totally absorbed in their earphones, and as the Catechism says in another context,

"They can neither see nor hear nor help us"

The smile is important. Priests who have forgotten how to smile should probably stay indoors.

Don't underestimate the value of a smile.

Many people live alone, and the only conversation they have is at the checkout in Marks and Spencer's. If you are working in a shop, don't underestimate what you do for lonely and isolated people by your kindness and your smile.

There are more key workers than you might think.

Usually my meetings in the street are just a brief greeting and a smile, but more often than you might think, it leads to a conversation about all manner of things. A surprising number are Catholics who are currently "resting" from church. I tell them that our doors are always open, or at least they WILL be as soon as the Government allows.

Please say a prayer for them. Maybe a smile and a few words from me could encourage them at least to think about it.

This weekend we celebrate the Feast of Pentecost and the gift of the Holy Spirit. It's going to feel a bit different this year, just like Easter.

But the Holy Spirit is not under lockdown. More than ever this year we need to ask the Holy Spirit to show us how to bring Christ to others even in these difficult times.

For all of us, and not just for me as a priest, the Lockdown opens up the possibility of making contact with other people. They may be "chance encounters", but they are also moments of grace.

The Holy Spirit has been given to each one of us for a purpose. People we meet aren't looking for sermons but a smile or a kind word can be a moment of grace.

Has it struck you that YOU might be a gift of the Holy Spirit for someone?

Scary isn't it?

With my love and prayers for each of you

Fr Tony

Meeting God in different ways

After every Mass Deacon David and I go down to the porch to greet you as you leave.

I learnt many years ago to greet each person individually. By shaking hands; it means that no one is left out. It doesn't work perfectly at St Michael's because you can always slip out of the other door. Or again, you can always leave early.

I normally stand just inside the door. The Deacon however, who is built to withstand all weathers, stands outside. I hear him greeting you as you leave, " have a good week, and don't overdo it". I've often wondered what exactly it is that he doesn't want you to overdo. Perhaps one day he'll tell us. Meanwhile, answers on a post card!

That church door greeting is often the only real contact I have with most parishioners during the week. I get to meet the First Communion children and their families on a Saturday, but inevitably in a parish like this where so many of you are commuters, and you have to work all the hours God sends to support your families, that's normal.

During the last two months it's been very different. I've been telephoning as many of you as I can. It's given me a chance to chat for much longer than we can at the church door. I hope it's helping to keep us together.

Each Thursday a number of us meet here on Zoom. It's great to see and hear you all - when it all works. It was lovely some ten days ago, to see the children when we had about 30 families together to honour Our Lady.

The children had made crowns, and painted pictures of Our Lady. Zoom made that possible. I believe these things are bringing us closer together.

I must tell you that zoom is not without its problems, last Sunday I watched a Mass being zoomed from a church in Devon. It was going quite well until the responsorial psalm being read by a lady in her kitchen. Suddenly her husband wandered into the kitchen to ask her a question about asparagus. He got no answer.

In different ways we are keeping in touch with each other. It doesn't really matter if the Zoom goes a bit wrong, or preparation for Sunday lunch interrupts the flow of the Mass. "The Word became flesh and dwelt amongst us". Jesus is at home with us and makes his home with us in the very ordinary things of everyday life, even the asparagus.

Sunday is Whit Sunday. The Holy Spirit given to us at Pentecost is here with us as we reach out to each other. In these strange days we can discover that the Spirit is at work in new ways among us, We need to be open to being surprised. Come Holy Spirit.

'Lunchbox' and 'The Meeting Room'

These two local organisations normally provide drop-in centres and mobile food banks for those in need. Because of the Coronavirus pandemic, each is currently unable to provide its normal drop-in centres but is continuing to function but in a different way. 'Lunchbox' is operating its mobile food bank. If you would like to donate money, non-perishable food or toiletries, 'Lunchbox' is open to receive donations every Wednesday from 10.30am to 12.30pm at the Methodist Church Hall, Church Road, Leatherhead, KT22 8AY. Last week two parishioners donated £200.

'The Meeting Room' is providing a similar service. On Mondays and Fridays. It is delivering hot meals and sandwiches plus other essentials to its clients. It has established arrangements with supermarkets for basic food donations but would welcome financial donations to enable it to purchase little treats, etc., for its clients. Cheques should be made payable to 'The Meeting Room' and dropped off to Phil Ward at 49 Ottways Lane, Ashtead.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

Curtis Thornton 12 on Sunday

Amelia Bell 10 on Monday

Mark Seprey-Hozo 8, Shaydon Wallace 3 on Tuesday

Jessica Amos 13, Matthew Langmead 11, Rowan Bailey 8,

Alexandra Yiannis 5 on Thursday

Sofia Richardson 10 on Friday

Nicholas Merlini 10 on Saturday

Parish Communications

Do keep an eye on the media while we're in lockdown!

Visit the **Parish website** <http://www.stmichaelashtead.org.uk/>

Our **Face Book Group** now has **200+** members. To join us, search for **St. Michael's Ashtead on Face Book**. We'll be expecting you!

Alison, Steve & Bill

This Week's Readings:

Acts 2: 1-11; Ps. 104;

Romans 8: 8-17; John 20: 19-23

You can see these readings at:

<https://www.universalis.com/20200531/mass.htm>

Fr Tony is saying Mass every day in private and is offering each Mass for the intention that was requested on that day. exception is on Sundays where the intention is for the People of the Parish

Online Giving - Coronavirus

With the closure of our Church, the Coronavirus is affecting us materially as well as spiritually.

Bills keep coming, but income is down. A good many parishioners give via standing order, cheques or weekly envelopes. If you can do this, it simplifies the admin and is great for self-distancing!

For more details email smichaelweb@gmail.com

About half the week's income usually arrives via the collection baskets so we are missing that. The Diocese has set up a web

page for online giving. The web link for this donation page is:

<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/parishoffertory>

The money will come in to the Diocese and then be sent to the parishes accordingly. **So don't forget to name the parish, area or priest when donating.**

For more info, contact Laura Maydew-Gale E:

communications@abdiocese.org.uk T: 07552 249 829

To access Mass online visit the following websites:

St Dunstan's, Woking <https://www.churchservices.tv/woking>

Sacred Heart, Hove <http://sacredheartrove.org.uk/videos.html>

Sacred Heart, Caterham-Mass (live and recorded), Adoration and

the Rosary. <https://www.churchservices.tv/caterham>

St Paul's, Haywards Heath will be streaming via Facebook.

The Shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham offers a 12 noon online

Pilgrim Mass each day

<https://www.churchservices.tv/churches/> provides live streaming

and recordings from churches around the country and Ireland.

Try Also: Vatican TV Live, Angelus news, EWTN

We are hoping to run a regular children's liturgy via Zoom

during lockdown and the pilot session will be this Sunday 31st May at 9.30. The link will be posted on the Facebook page or you can email emmalangbridge@btinternet.com if you would like it sent to you."

You can e-mail contributions to the Newsletter to

newsletter@stmichaelashtead.org.uk

to arrive by 9.30am on Friday morning

Pentecost Sunday

May 31st– National Rosary Rally 9am to 9pm

England, Wales, Scotland

Pope Francis is encouraging Catholics to pray the Rosary in their family homes during the month of May, especially when the Pandemic is making us aware of the value of our families and making it possible for us to pray together in lockdown at home.

He encourages simple Rosaries and joining online Rosary initiatives to pray to Our Lady for deliverance from Covid-19 and he has composed two prayers for this intention.

I invite you to join in an initiative that follows on the Pope's request, the **Pentecost Sunday National Rosary Rally**, from 9.00am to 9.00pm across Scotland England and Wales.

Our Diocese has been asked to pray a **Rosary Hour at 9am and I warmly invite you to take part.**

Proposed timetable for across the Dioceses

9.00am	Arundel & Brighton, Northampton and HM Forces
10.00am	Birmingham, Nottingham & Ukranian Eparchy
11.00am	Brentwood & Plymouth
12 Noon	Cardiff, Portsmouth & Dunkeld
1.00pm	Clifton, Salford & St. Andrews & Edinburgh
2.00pm	East Anglia, Shrewsbury, Aberdeen
3.00pm	Hallam, Southwark, Glasgow
4.00pm	Hexham & Newcastle, Wrexham, Ordinariate OLW
5.00pm	Lancaster, Westminster, Argyll & the Isles
6.00pm	Leeds, Polish Mission & Galloway
7.00pm	Liverpool, Middlesbrough & Motherwell
8.00pm	Menevia, Paisley & Syro Malabar Eparchy
9.00pm	Bishop John Keenan, as the May 2020 Rosary Mission Episcopal lead, will lead a final Rosary at 9pm to which all are invited.

This is to be led in the form of a **Rosary relay Rally** where the Dioceses designated in their **Rosary Hour** encourage the peoples across their Diocese to pray the Rosary either, individually, in families, as online prayer groups, parish groups, and where possible led online by their parish priests and Bishop.

It does not matter what time during the specified hour that the Rosary is prayed.

Then on the hour the next Dioceses take up the Rosary relay Rally and so on until 9pm.

At 9pm the Rosary Rally will end with a Rosary being led by Bishop John Keenan from St. Mirin's Cathedral in Paisley.

Come Holy Spirit & Renew the Face of the Earth
Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary, pray for us

Plans for re-opening of St Michael's

My Dear friends,

At the time of writing this the Government has not yet given a clear date for when churches can re-open. I think it likely that in the first place permission will be given for churches to be open for private prayer. That will certainly be very welcome. We will, of course, have to exercise due care to follow the rules of "social distancing".

The question of resuming the public celebration of the Mass will come next.

You will appreciate that this can only happen in a limited way at first.

The Bishops' Conference of England and Wales has been in consultation with the Government, and has submitted detailed plans about how best to achieve this. I anticipate that we will get clear general guidance, but obviously each parish will need to see how that guidance can be followed in practice within the restraints of our very different buildings.

We have now a small management team to look after the day to day administration of the parish, you might say that its task is to care for the nuts and bolts. We have been meeting recently to look at safe and manageable procedures for re-opening St. Michael's.

A review of seating to comply with social distancing indicates that we can accommodate between 70 to 80 people. This number depends upon the makeup of attendees. Family groups can be seated together which enables a higher number, but all are welcome although space initially might be at a premium.

Key to providing a safe and comfortable experience for parishioners is the number, training and reliability of Welcomers. Many of our current Welcomers are 'mature' or very young and some may, for good reasons, choose not to engage in the duties the team will now be required to undertake as we navigate this difficult period.

We need new Welcomer recruits. Please let Alison smichaeloffice@gmail.com know if you are able to offer assistance and at what Mass(es) you could help. We will be providing hi-vis vests and offering masks if requested. We would not expect those coming forward to remain as Welcomers after the current emergency (although you would be very welcome!)

All existing and new Welcomers will be contacted by email with guidance, well in advance of re-opening.

Plans for safe entry and exit of the church have already been drawn up and agreed by the management team.

Briefly, the plan will require at least 3 Welcomers per Mass (more if possible). One to be positioned outside the church (or in porch if wet). This person will manage a controlled flow onwards to 2 further Welcomers inside church, one for each side to guide to seating. All 3 Welcomers will be needed to guide exit arrangements after Mass. More detail will be provided once we have gained our army of Welcomers!

Welcomers will concentrate solely on these controls. To avoid infection transmission there will be no 'order of service' sheets, newsletters, hymn books, envelopes etc distributed. There will no basket collection during Mass. Collection baskets will be placed on tables as parishioners depart.

I know that we would all love to get back to our normal celebration of the Mass as soon as possible. None of these restrictions is especially welcome, but you will fully understand that, at least for a while, we must accept various limitations to what we do and how we do it.

Meanwhile I would ask you to offer your services as a Welcomers during this emergency period. It is absolutely essential that we have enough Welcomers to ensure safety and good order. I really hope that you will offer your services in this way.

With my love and prayers for each of you

Fr Tony