

BULLETIN B 25 – 16TH MAY 2021
THE SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

My dear Brothers and Sisters,

As we celebrate the time after the Ascension, we prepare for the feast of Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit. May he who came on the first disciples come down upon us the disciples of the Lord today. May the Holy Spirit lead us and guide us in all truth, may his divine power fill us and inspire us to do God's will and to experience once more his love.

Deacon Michael in his Homily on Ascension Day reminded us the Our Lord in his life, death, resurrection and ascension had turned us from a mentality of "an eye for an eye", into "love your neighbour" and "turn the other cheek". May the message of Christ be heard again in the land of his birth, pray for the Peace of Jerusalem. May Arabs and Israelis recognise that they worship the same God, and that he is a God of love and peace.

God Bless you all,

Fr. John

TIMES OF MASS THIS WEEK

Sun	16	7 th of Easter	1000 Mass	People of the parish
			1800 Mass	Robert Day (RIP)
Tue	18	feria of Easter	1900 Mass	John Hogan (RIP)
Wed	19	feria of Easter	1000 Mass	Doris & Ken Pittuck (RIP)
			1030 Adoration & Rosary	
Thu	20	feria of Easter	1000 Mass	Fr. Michael Markey (RIP)
			1030 Adoration & Rosary	
Fri	21	feria of Easter	1000 Mass	Vocations
Sun	23	PENTECOST	1000 Mass	
			1800 Mass	

ROSARY AROUND THE WORLD SHRINE LIST AND DAILY PRAYER INTENTIONS

16 Saint Mary's Cathedral (Sydney) Australia	For all victims of violence and human trafficking
17 Immaculate Conception Washington, D.C. international organizations	For all world leaders and for all heads of
18 Our Lady of Lourdes France	For all doctors and nurses
19 Mother Mary's House Meryem Ana Evi Ephesus	For all people at war and for world peace
20 Nuestra Señora de la Caridad del Cobre Cuba America	For all pharmacists and health care personnel
21 Our Lady of Nagasaki Japan	For all social workers
22 Nuestra Señora de Montserrat Spain	For all volunteers

GOSPEL REFLECTION

One of the most famous advertising campaigns on British TV, running for many years from the 1960s, was the one for a certain brand of chocolates. In a series of different scenarios, the James Bond-like star skied across mountains, fought with crocodiles, scaled sheer cliffs, leapt over rooftops and into an open window carrying a box of chocolates for the woman he loved – "All because the lady loves Milk Tray." So memorable was it that in 2016 it returned to the screens and a fireman called Patrick McBride was chosen from over twenty thousand applicants for the starring role. He tackled the Mongolian Steppes to deliver the chocolates

We cannot overestimate the immense power of love. The power of love challenged the brutal might of the Roman Empire, built as it was on conquest and slavery. Pressure from Christians, motivated by love, contributed to the ending of contests to the death between gladiators in the Colosseum, and eventually the

cruelty of wild animal fights in the arena as well. Slavery persisted longer, so woven was it into the imperial economy; and tragically, throughout history since then, it has proved difficult to free the world of it.

In more recent years, love would eventually prove stronger than the fear through which the totalitarian dictators of the twentieth century held power. Neighbours reported neighbours; family members were encouraged to betray their parents or siblings for murmuring any criticism of the State, putting everyone in fear of each other and of the secret police. People disappeared never to be seen again. In Poland, a young priest and philosopher called Karol Wojtyla taught a whole generation of students about the value of human persons and the love which binds us together. When he was credited, as Pope St John Paul II, with the undermining of communism, he said the tree was rotten anyway and he just gave it a good kick.

Love is the heart and essence of Christianity. It is the glorious gift which God the creator gave to the human race. Love has its origin in God's love for us. Human love depends on God's love. That is one reason why, for example, after the Soviet authorities persecuted and closed churches over several decades, such terrible things happened to disabled people and to children in orphanages, that in the early 1990s President Gorbachev invited the Salvation Army and Mother Teresa's order, the Missionaries of Charity, to work in the country because it had forgotten how to take care of poor and needy people. Churches and monasteries were reopened when the State, as well as the people, realised how much they were needed.

God became human in order to bring God's love to us, thereby revealing how much God loves us. Very few would disagree with the famous words "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends." Religious people and those without faith can all recognise their truth. Many have forgotten that the one who first spoke them was Jesus, who in coming to live a human life, to guide and teach us, and to share our joys and sorrows, our happiness and agony, laid down his life on the cross, showing how much we are loved by God.

How tragic it is when people think they are of no value, no use or are unlovable – because it is not true. The one who gave his life for us created a loving community for us, the Church. Jesus calls out to everyone, especially those who are troubled and unloved, "Come to me." When we approach Jesus Christ, read his teachings in the Gospels, pray and talk to him as the real person he is, we understand what St John meant in today's second reading, "We ourselves have known and put our faith in God's love towards ourselves." As we sense this more, and meet others in our community who are full of love, perhaps in a small prayer group or friendship circle, it becomes a reality, not mere words, to hear St John say, "My dear people, since God has loved us so much, we too should love one another." A community which looks out for people, helps them, and in which people "walk the second mile", putting themselves out for others, truly does reflect the teachings of Jesus and manifest his presence among them.

Diocesan Virtual Pilgrimage to Walsingham – Saturday 29th May – Bishop Alan will lead a virtual pilgrimage from the Basilica of Our Lady of Walsingham, which we can join using the Shrine's live-streaming service via their website www.walsingham.org.uk or their YouTube channel 'Walsingham Catholic TV'.

Bishop Alan will be visiting us on Sunday 13th June – more details to follow.

On Friday 21st May, the Vigil of St Rita, please pray and fast for the end of abortion and euthanasia in this Country. On this month's Day of Prayer and Fasting for Life, we are especially asking you to fast and pray for the end of DIY abortions at home. Please join in and invite others to join as well. <https://www.facebook.com/events/886441852198421/>

NEW ST BON'S ALUMNI NETWORK - Open to all former students and staff of St Bonaventure's School in Forest Gate. Please join and spread the word - news, events and opportunities to give back: <https://www.stbons.org/alumni/>