

Parish of the Assumption of Our Lady Old Harlow, Essex CM17 0HA

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BULLETIN C 16 – 13TH MARCH 2022 SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

My dear brothers and sisters,

It is lovely to see the church so full on Sunday mornings again, the presence of our First Communion children and their parents all at the same mass fills the church at the 10am mass.

The downside to this is that I know that some people are still wary of being in congested indoor areas, although all restrictions have now been lifted, we do need to consider those who may still be anxious. I have decided therefore that for a trial period we will have an additional mass at 12 noon. This will be a simple said mass with a shorter homily. This will also relieve congestion in the car park. We will begin on Sunday 20th and see how it goes.

I am often asked “where is Mrs so and so, haven’t seen her in church for a long time”. The problem for me is that although we updated our parish register of parishioners many of the long standing members are not on our list. The pandemic came just as I was still finding my feet in the parish, but every problem has an opportunity. If you see someone missing and know where they live why not visit them, if they need a follow up visit from me or Deacon Michael that can certainly be arranged. Do take a Parish Bulletin with you. Let’ them know we care and miss them.

God bless you all,

Fr. John

TIMES OF MASSES & SERVICES THIS WEEK

Sun	13	Second Sunday in Lent	1000 Mass 1800 Mass	People of the parish Eileen & Alex Welsh (RIP)
Tue	15	feria of lent	1900 Mass	Peace in Ukraine
Wed	16	feria of lent	1000 Mass 1030 Adoration	Mary Brien (INT)
Thu	17	St. Patrick	1000 Mass 1030 Lent Group	Ireland
Fri	18	feria of lent	1000 Mass 1030 Stations of the Cross	Tom Mears (RIP)
Sun	20	Third Sunday in Lent	1000 Mass 1200 Mass 1800 Mass	People of the parish Peace in Ukraine Barrie Reynolds (RIP)

TIMES FOR THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION THIS WEEK

Fr. John will hear confessions on Tuesday at 6.30pm, Wednesday at 10.30am or by appointment.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE – WEDNESDAY 16TH – 7.00PM IN THE HALL

Sadie Bell – sadly we announce the death of one of our oldest parishioners. Sadie Bell died Wednesday this week, having recently been anointed. She will be brought into church on Wednesday 23rd at 4.30pm, her Funeral Mass will be on Thursday at 1.15pm.

The Trustees of Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Multi Academy Trust wish to appoint for the following vacancy: KS 1 / 2 Teacher Closing date Thursday 24th March 2022 For further details please visit www.ourladyoffatimatrust.essex.sch.uk or alternatively call Mrs Irene Nelson, H.R. Manager on 01279 425383.

GOSPEL REFLECTION

“The human journey is a continuous act of transfiguration.” These words of the Irish poet John O’Donohue remind us that our journey through life is one of constant growth and change. This is true of both our internal and external worlds. Our readings today speak of change and of transfiguration, of the wonder of God’s presence – and then of what that presence might lead us to do and to be. However, before any transformation can take place, it would seem that it is necessary to spend time listening and being present to the Lord in silence and in stillness. Then, strengthened in faith, like the disciples, we will be able to embrace a new future, trusting in our God who calls us towards something new and beautiful: Christ’s transforming and transfiguring love.

In today’s Gospel, Jesus takes the disciples away from their ordinary lives to the mountain, a place of silence and prayer. And there, while Jesus prays, he is transfigured. Jesus’ whole appearance changes and he is seen in breath-taking glory. As Jesus is transfigured before them, the disciples are awestruck at the change in his appearance. It is too much for them to comprehend. While James and John remain silent, Peter is overcome by enthusiasm and the desire to do something momentous.

Jesus is silent, too, but the voice of the Father speaks from the clouds, telling the disciples that Jesus is God’s Son, the “Chosen One”, and urging them to “Listen to him.” They are being directed to look at and to listen to Jesus. Jesus is now the gateway to the future, the fullest expression of the Father’s love, and in the cloud covering the disciples with shadow, we are given a glimpse of the presence of the Holy Spirit. This profound experience of Jesus’ transfiguration renders the disciples silent. They have no words and the encounter is so precious that they hold it within their own hearts, treasuring what they have seen and heard.

Like the disciples, it might be good for us to spend time alone with Jesus and simply to allow ourselves to be transformed in the light of his unconditional love. In our busy and noisy world, this can be a challenge. So perhaps we need to go “up the mountain” every now and again to find the quiet that will allow us to meet Christ and to be changed inwardly by his immense love for us. Our moments of being present with Jesus can offer us an inner silence that brings us strength, and from which flows a tenderness for ourselves and for others.

Of course, you may say, Peter, James and John had to come down the mountain again. Indeed they had. However, lest we forget, they were still accompanied by Jesus on the way down the mountain and so are we in our own faith journey. Being chosen by Jesus to be present at this remarkable happening would have given the disciples courage and strength for the unknown future that Jesus in his mission and ministry is mapping out for his followers. Being with Jesus changed Peter, James and John, and it can transfigure our lives too.

Pope Francis, in one of his homilies on the transfiguration, said the “instructions for the disciples and for us are this: ‘Listen to him!’ Listen to Jesus. He is the saviour: follow him. To listen to Christ, in fact, entails taking up the logic of his Paschal Mystery, setting out on the journey with him to make of oneself a gift of love to others.” Pope Francis then suggested we look at the transfiguration in the following way: “with Peter, James and John we too climb the Mount of the Transfiguration today and stop in contemplation of the face of Jesus to retrieve the message and translate it into our lives; for we too can be transfigured by love”.

In the light of our call to follow Christ each day, we might ask ourselves: Where do I need to be changed, or what in my heart and life needs to be “transfigured” by love? And, not least, “How can I bring Christ’s transfiguring love to those around me?”

Fully escorted Pilgrimage to Knock Shrine, Ireland, 23rd May 2022. £699.00 per person sharing. Price includes flight with 10kg hand luggage, all transfers, 4 nights’ in Knock House Hotel with full board. All entertainment and excursions included. Lunches on days out. Wheelchair accessible rooms. Single room supplement £100. Contact Patricia on 01268 762 278 or 07740 175557 or email knockpilgrimages@gmail.com. Knock Pilgrimages is a member of the Travel Trust Association and is fully protected by ATOL T7613. Fr. John is leading this pilgrimage.

Pilgrimage to Lourdes: Bp Alan will lead the diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes from 24 – 29 July; a time to pray at the Grotto of Our Lady and enjoy the opportunities of this experience. You can book now on-line: www.tangney-tours.com/brentwood For further information, please phone Cathy O’Connor, the Administrative Director: 01206 735623