

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

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BULLETIN C 38 – 14TH AUGUST 2022 THE ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY

My dear brothers and sisters,

Today we celebrate the great solemnity of The Assumption of Our Lady. A solemnity the whole Church celebrates, but for us it has an even greater splendour for it is OUR FEAST. Mass today at the usual times of 10am and 6pm. At 3.30pm we will continue our fellowship with our Strawberry Tea, word to the wise don't have a a big lunch. I hope today that each and every one of us will experience the peace and the joy of God's love for us and may our souls to sing "Magnificat"

God bless you all,
Fr. John

FUTURE EVENTS

The Ordinariate **Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham** is on Saturday 27th August, some of our Ordinariate members will be going, this is open to everyone and details are in the porch.

The Sonare Choir will be giving another concert on Saturday 24th September at 2.30pm, book the date in your diary now.

Coffee Morning in aid of MacMillan Cancer Care on Friday 30th September.

TIMES OF MASSES THIS WEEK

Sun	14	Assumption of Our Lady	1000 Mass 1800 Mass	People of the Parish
Tue	16	St. Stephen of Hungary	1900 Mass	Helen Woods (RIP)
Wed	17	feria	1000 Mass 1020 Adoration	
Thu	18	feria	1000 Mass	Alfred Corbyn (RIP)
Sun	21	21 st Ordinary Time	1000 Mass 1800 Mass	Terry Handorff (Birthday INT) People of the Parish

TIMES OF RECONCILIATION THIS WEEK

Fr John will be available this week to hear confession on Tuesday at 6.30pm and Wednesday at 10.45am, or by appointment.

MASS INTENTIONS

We have many spaces for mass intentions, if you would like mass offered for someone, living or dead, or for a particular intention please use the envelopes provided.

GOSPEL REFLECTION



In her book *The Reed of God*, the Catholic writer and artist Caryll Houselander speaks poetically of Mary, the mother of Jesus, as “a reed, / straight and simple / growing by a lake / in Nazareth”. Mary, like a reed, is open to the Spirit of the Lord dwelling in her heart and soul, “a reed that is empty / until the breath of God / fills it with infinite music”. She is a reed that bends to carry the music of love and the Son of God in her very body: “The word of God / is infinite music / in a little reed”. Our readings today are poetic and beyond the everyday language used by most of us.

However, the use of such poetic language can speak to us of a world beyond – beyond our understanding and beyond our dreams. All three readings today offer a vivid picture of a creative and innovative future. This is a future dreamed of, and hoped for, when God’s kingdom in all its beauty will be fully revealed. In this new future, good prevails over evil. In this new future, Christ himself, the new Adam, brings the promise of eternal life, and Mary, in openness to bearing Christ, God’s Word, enables the Spirit of love to sing a new song for our world.

The word of God to us in all our readings today speaks of new life, of birth and of fruitfulness. In our first reading, the book of Revelation tells us of God’s sanctuary in heaven opening and a great sign appearing in the sky. This sign is of a woman giving birth: a sign of new life and of future prosperity. As with every birth, there is an element of risk and we see the evil one (depicted as a dragon in John’s vision here) seeking to destroy the child. After a titanic struggle, God and goodness prevail. The woman gives birth to a male child, a sign of God’s favour and one who is destined to rule the nations. In today’s second reading, Christ, who has been raised from the dead, is seen as the second Adam, anointed of the Father; and the Father offers new life to those who belong to Christ.

In today’s Gospel, Mary journeys to visit her cousin Elizabeth. Mary must have wondered, as she carried this new life within her, what the future held for herself and her child. Travelling in haste through the hill country, Mary is anxious to share her news with someone who understands how she feels, someone who is experiencing the same joy and possibly the same uncertainty as she is. Elizabeth’s greeting confirms for Mary that she is carrying the Lord, the anointed one – the Messiah for whom the people of Israel have been waiting. Elizabeth is overwhelmed by the coming of the mother of the Lord to visit her, so much so that the child in her womb leaps for joy. Elizabeth goes on to say of Mary, “blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled”. In these words, Elizabeth both affirms Mary in her carrying of the anointed one and offers a model of faith and discipleship for all who might desire to bear Christ in their hearts and lives. Mary’s response is to proclaim the greatness of God, in the song we know as the Magnificat.

The openness of Mary to God’s word allows the immensity of God’s love to fill her physically, spiritually and totally. God’s fullness and goodness in the lives of Elizabeth and Mary find expression in words of thanksgiving and joy. Openness and hospitality of heart are gifts we can cultivate in our own lives and offer to others.

Mary and Elizabeth reached beyond their own needs and concerns, and thus they provided a safe and comforting environment for one another. Might God be asking us, like Mary and Elizabeth, to reach out beyond our own needs and to encourage and support someone close to us? When we are able to reach out in such a way, we become, in the poetic words of Caryll Houselander, “a cradle for God”, a “light in a dark house” and “warmth to the world”. Then we will truly be “the breath of the spirit of love” for all whom we encounter.