

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

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BULLETIN C 45 – 2ND OCTOBER 2022 27TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

My dear brothers and sisters,

The plans for the next First Holy Communion are now available, would any families that have children for preparation to receive their First Holy Communion next year, see me in the Hall today and complete a application form.

Helen Osborn's Funeral Mass is this Friday at 10am here followed by a Cremation at Parndon Wood. I know that many of you will want to come and pray for Helen and give thanks to God for her life. Please continue to pray for Bob and all those who will miss her most.

God bless

Fr. John

VOCATIONS

The next "Enquirers' Evening" for those considering or interested in a vocation to the priesthood is on Tuesday 4 October at St Edmund of Canterbury Church in Loughton. The speaker will be Mgr Gordon Read.

For further information please contact Fr Mark Swires vocprom@dioceseofbrentwood.org

TIMES OF MASSES

Sun	2	27 th Ordinary Time	1000 Mass 1200 Mass 1800 Mass	Jack Roche (RIP) Alfred Tovee's Baptism People of the Parish
Tue	4	St. Francis of Assisi	1900 Mass	thanks giving for Creation
Wed	5	St. Faustina Kowsiska	1000 Mass 1020 Adoration	Helen Osborn
Thu	6	St. Bruno	1000 Mass 1130 Funeral	John Kelleher (RIP)
Fri	7	Our Lady of the Rosary	1000 Funeral Mass	Helen Osborn (RIP)
Sat	8	St. John Henry Newman	1000 Mass	the Ordinariate
Sun	9	28 th Ordinary Time	1000 Mass 1800 Mass	Harvest Thanksgiving People of the Parish

The *Season of Creation*, a time of sustained prayer and action concludes this Tuesday, St. Francis day. During this season we are encouraged to pray and engage in community events in order to deepen our relationship with our God, our neighbour and the earth we share, being ever more attentive to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.

This Friday is Family Fast Day when we are encouraged to practice solidarity with those who will go hungry today not through choice.

Next Sunday we will celebrate Harvest Thanksgiving Sunday, we can all bring something to show our gratitude to God for the plenty of goods he gives to us. The gifts will be later taken to our local Food Bank.

GOSPEL REFLECTION

A priest answered a late-night call to administer the “last rites” or sacrament of the sick. He was tired after being at the hospital for much of the day and had just fallen asleep when his pager had gone off. He struggled out of bed and up to the hospital, feeling as though he was on autopilot. He was called to the special care baby unit. But when he arrived, he did not find the family or even a patient.

The ward was all in darkness. A senior ward sister materialised in the gloom: “The baby died,” she said, rather gruffly. The family? Not coming in until the morning. “Goodness, why call me out?” the priest thought. “I’ll say a prayer,” he said. So the nurse led him to the corner where the little bundle lay and he began to pray. Suddenly he became aware that the woman at his side was heaving. He stopped and put his arms round her while she sobbed. “So, this was the person I had come for,” he thought, “this nurse who had lost a patient and still had tears to shed, bless her.” She couldn’t break down in front of a junior but she was broken-hearted at the unexpected death of the baby. It had got to her and she needed someone there. “So that’s what it was all about,” thought the priest, “this is why I am here.”

Today’s readings are all about faith, particularly the importance of being bold and never being ashamed of “witnessing to the Lord”. Faith is persistence in reaching out to Jesus and trusting in God’s power and authority. Faith is responding with love to forgiveness received, not letting fear get the upper hand, and being willing to take risks. Faith is giving praise to God, having confidence in God’s desire for justice and being willing to ask Jesus for what we need.

Throughout Luke’s Gospel, the closest followers of Jesus reveal their own mixed level of faith. They have left homes and jobs and families in order to follow Jesus. It has not been easy, as they have encountered hostility from many who oppose him. Still, they have stuck around, even for the final journey towards Jerusalem, even when they have received a warning of what is to come. In our own world’s days of turmoil and fear, we can empathise with the disciples when faith wavers. It is easy to lose sight of God’s Spirit at work in the world. Yet when we nurture faith we become aware of being part of something vast and intelligent and well intentioned that gives purpose to life, that leads us to seek beyond the horizons of our smallness to the hope that tomorrow, struggling and damaged as we may be today, we can all be better. Faith in God is the only ground we have for faith in ourselves, in humanity, in life. Then we may care enough about others, about the purpose of God for all human life.

Just as the priest chaplain visiting a hospital ministers to people in need – the patients, families and staff – so all are called upon to witness to Christ and to use our God-given gifts to serve others and bring healing. We are called to bear witness to Jesus right where we live – in our families, at work, everywhere – even just by giving kindness and the light of a smile. This light reflects the light of Jesus. Faith inspires some to reach out to refugees in our communities, to campaign for the protection of the local environment and to build peace. It inspires people of faith to build the kingdom of God and spread the Good News to humanity and all creation. We can demonstrate the beauty of the Gospel by the way we live. We can weave dialogue where society is experiencing tension and hostility. We can bring hospitality and solidarity where personal and collective selfishness too often prevails.

When religious faith becomes the bridge that leads to God, it stretches us to live to the limits of human possibility. It requires us to be everything God has created us to be: kind, generous, honest, loving, compassionate, just. It defines the standards of the human condition. It provides the basis for the ethics that guide our human relationships. It enables us to be fully human.

Cafod Envelopes – for Friday’s Fast Day available as you leave mass today

Catholic Post – our free newspaper is also available today

**The Bishops Conference has produced some Prayer Cards for
Queen Elizabeth II , RIP**