



ST MATTHEW'S CATHOLIC CHURCH, NORTHWOOD

SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF NORTHWOOD AND NORTHWOOD HILLS

'Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations...' [Matt 28:19]

SEVENTH WEEK OF EASTER (MAY 16TH - 23RD)

DEAR PARISHIONERS,

THE LORD IS RISEN!!! ... HE IS RISEN INDEED

This is an ancient and traditional greeting between Christians at this holy and joyful time of the year! He is risen indeed!

Preparing for Pentecost

Incredibly, it is now six full weeks since we celebrated Easter Sunday. Last Thursday we celebrated the Solemnity of The Ascension - the 40th day of the Easter Season. As Jesus left his disciples to return to his Father at the conclusion of his earthly ministry, He promised to send to his disciples the gift of his Holy Spirit. This great gift we recall next weekend when we celebrate the feast of Pentecost, and in doing so bring the season of Easter to its conclusion.

In this latter half of May, there is plenty going on in the parish. At the end of the week ahead, we will celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation with our teenagers, and our First Communion celebrations will follow the weekend after. These are joyful celebrations, and we give God thanks for our children, their families and those who have assisted them in their preparation during the difficult months that we have had. As a whole parish, we continue to pray for them and their continued journey with The Lord.

There are some necessary changes to the regular parish schedule as we celebrate these occasions together, although we have tried to keep disruption and alteration as minimal as possible. This week's changes affect the parish Masses on Thursday, Friday & Saturday as noted overleaf. There will be a booking system in place for those who are not candidates or their immediate families, however this does mean a reduced number of spaces available for general booking. Thank you in advance for your patience and goodwill over the next fortnight.

As our programs come to an end for 2021, we will shortly be turning our minds and attention towards next year's preparation. First Holy Communions are normally celebrated when our children are in school-year 3 or above and, in our diocese, Confirmation during school-year 9 or above. Registration forms will be available later in the summer, ready for commencement in late September or Early October. Precise details will be worked out in due course. Watch this space for exciting updates!

PRAYING FOR THE INTENTIONS OF THE HOLY FATHER POPE FRANCIS

There is a long tradition amongst Catholics of praying regularly for the intentions of the Pope. Perhaps you have never reflected on what that means? We pray for him personally, asking that the Lord give him continued wisdom, guidance, welfare and protection. In addition, however, each month the Pope asks us to keep specific intention(s) in our prayers. These monthly prayer intentions of the Holy Father can be found on the Vatican Website: www.vatican.va and in the future I will try and include them with the Mass Intentions sheet each month.

May God bless you all, and Our Lady & St Joseph intercede for you.

Fr Brian

CONTACT US

Parish Address:

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Ha6 1DW

www.stmatthewsnorthwood.org

Online booking for Mass:

<https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/northwood/events/>

Telephone Number:

01923 840 736

In an emergency:

07919 842 767

Email:

northwood@rcdow.org.uk

Fr Brian O'Mahony

Parish Priest:

Email:

brianomahony@rcdow.org.uk

Parish Office:

Contact Cheryl Myring or Siobhan Hogg

9:00 — 2:30pm Monday - Friday

Sunday School & Catechetics:

RE Co-ordinator: Eileen O'Sullivan

eileenosullivan@rcdow.org.uk

Hall Bookings: [currently n/a]

northwoodph@rcdow.org.uk

SAFEGUARDING

Colette Quirk

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northwoodsg2@safeguardrcdow.org.uk

Or safeguarding@rcdow.org.uk

GENERAL PARISH NOTICES

PARISH 200+ CLUB FUNDRAISING INITIATIVE - MAY DRAW

The Draw for May will take place after the 9am Mass this weekend. This club now has 58 members, and prize money is split according to the advertised formula in the terms and conditions available on our website. There is always an opportunity to join in next month's draw, and **membership is just £5.00 per month**, which can be paid as an annual contribution. Applications and subs must be received by the third Wednesday of the month, with the draw occurring on the 3rd Sunday. More information is available online or through the office. Please note that due to recent changes in the lottery regulations, we are unable to accept membership payments from anyone under 18 years of age.

PARISH EVENING WALKING GROUP

The starting of our Parish Walking Group has been very well received, and the wet weather has not dampened enthusiasm. For anyone who is keen to join in, we meet on Wednesday evenings (unless otherwise notified). **This week's meeting point: bottom of Hills Lane, HA62QJ** - off Rickmansworth Road, and we will walk to Ruislip Lido. **Meeting is at 6:30pm**, and the duration of the walk is 1 Hour. No need to book, just turn up at 6.30pm and we will set off at 6.35. Any questions please call/text Deirdre Carroll on 07950 935408 or Anne Grant on: 07968 248898

WELCOMING NEW CATHOLICS

Easter is traditionally a time when we welcome new members into our community through the reception of the Sacraments. We have several adults who will soon be welcomed to the Sacraments. Please keep them in your prayers. For anyone interested in becoming a Catholic please contact Fr Brian in the first instance. We hope to have a structured course of Adult Formation in place in the parish by late summer. More information will be available later in the summer.

LIVESTREAMING OF PARISH MASSES

For much of the last year we have been doing our best (with occasional hiccups!) to livestream daily Masses and one Sunday Mass from St Matthew's. We are using a high-quality mobile camera and stream through our Facebook page which then links to our parish website..

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING LIVESTREAMING: SAFEGUARDING AND DATA PROTECTION

It is considered poor safeguarding practice to stream events with children participating, even with parental consent. For this reason, none of our upcoming parish celebrations of First Holy Communion and Confirmation will be broadcast. When we return to having Sunday School children participating in our Mass, these will not be streamed either. From this week, none of our Masses will remain on the parish Facebook Page longer than one week, and they will be set-up to prohibit sharing of the videos.

NEW ARRANGEMENTS FOR CELEBRATING THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION.

Confessions are available at the advertised times in the weekly newsletter or by appointment. for the foreseeable future, our confessional box will remain out of use, as it is not COVID-safe, and cannot be practically cleaned between penitents. After experimenting with a temporary confessional in the Sacristy, this arrangement has proved to be unsatisfactory. Confessions will now be heard in the parlour / meeting room near to the parish office. This space allows for privacy, social-distancing, and adequate ventilation. To access this room please come either to the Presbytery door, or through the sacristy during the advertised times, if it is opened. In order to comply with our safeguarding responsibilities, we ask that children do not come into the office area alone, but that they be accompanied by an adult to the office foyer, where there are chairs provided outside the confessional room. We ask adults to wait for their child and accompany them back to the church after Confessions.

PRIESTS' TRAINING FUND APPEAL - THANKS!

Huge Thanks to the whole parish for your enthusiastic support of the recent annual appeal for the Priest's Training Fund which supports the promotion of Vocations and the work of our seminary. We collected in **excess of £1,000.00**, which does not include any electronic donations that have been made. This is a wonderful effort in a difficult year. We hope to be able to welcome some of the students here to St Matthew's later in the year, and perhaps to arrange a parish visit to Allen Hall when the new Academic Year begins in September.

FURTHER EASING OF COVID RESTRICTIONS - MAY 17TH ONWARDS

As we are all aware, Monday marks another milestone on the road out of lockdown restrictions. As far as we can tell, for now this will have few practical considerations for way that we operate in St Matthew's. We will still be cautious in our approach and work to keep people safe in the ways that we have done up to now. Numbers will remain restricted and controlled through the booking system; our cleaning regime will remain in place and face-masks will continue to be required. Notable changes relate to those things outside of routine parish activities:

Baptisms & Weddings (and their receptions): Maximum of 30 people now permitted.

Funerals: Maximum attendance now lifted to the COVID-safe maximum of the Church

(In St Matthew's, this means 50-60 people, depending on household/bubble sizes)

Use of Parish Hall: Resumption of certain activities in the hall is now permitted, subject to varying restrictions depending on the nature and purpose of the event.

ENSURING WE REMAIN COVID- SAFE

We are blessed with an incredible team to help us to keep the church clean and safe for everyone who comes to join us. Thank you for your co-operation with their directions, especially concerning seating. As we are not yet completely out of 'lockdown', there are rules that still apply. Some people present in the church may still be uneasy in places where people gather. Please respect Social Distancing and the other guidance as much as possible.

THE YEAR OF ST JOSEPH - INSTALLING A NEW FEATURE IN OUR CHURCH.

It has been suggested that in honour of St Joseph, noting his employment as a carpenter, we commission some item made in timber for the church. I think this is a wonderful idea and two suggestions have been put forward for consideration. There is a parishioner exploring the possibility of a timber-framed glass case to house a worthy book of remembrance of the dead of our parish. We are also exploring the possibilities of renewing the ambo, from which the Word of God is proclaimed at Mass. Neither of these have been costed yet, nor firm plans drawn up. When we have decided what might be possible, we will raise funds for this project. Other ideas may also be considered. If you have a burning inspiration, please share it!

OFFERTORY ENVELOPES FOR THE NEW TAX YEAR

The boxes of weekly envelopes for Sundays in the tax year 2021- 2022 have now arrived for those who use them. They can be collected from the stewards at the back of the church when you come to Sunday Mass, or from the office. This year, the box numbers are not pre-allocated. Please take the next available box and enter your name next to the number on the list. Please let us know if you would like to move away from this mode of giving and begin a Standing-Order arrangement instead. We will be happy to send you a form by mail or by email to facilitate this.

CONTACTLESS GIVING OFFERTORY

The trial of contactless giving by card or by smartphone that we are participating in has proved to be very popular. The new machine is in the church porch, and is very user-friendly. We hope it will help people in planning their contribution to the parish. If you wish to gift-aid your donation, this option is offered also. We can now use this mode of payment for other things such as hall-hire or repository purchases.

THINKING TOWARDS PARISH-LIFE AFTER COVID

Now is the time for us to be thinking about the future of our parish; what we will do (and perhaps do differently) later in the year when something like normality begins to return from the summer onwards.

PARISH HALL HIRE:

Our great goal is to make the most out of this wonderful facility, which has been sitting largely unused for more than twelve months due to restrictions that have been in place. As these ease, we will shortly be able to open the hall again for hiring. Parish activities will resume there also, in due course. We are currently re-structuring our hiring fees and will be offering preferential rates to parishioners; we will publish the new schedule of fees as soon as we can. We are also looking at creative ways to use this facility that will maximize both the enjoyment of it by our community and the income that it can generate for the parish. There remains a residual debt from the refurbishment completed a few years ago, and the parish Finance Committee is actively pursuing strategies to ensure we can meet our obligations in this regard.

PLEASE JOIN US IN PRAYING FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK AND THOSE WHO HAVE DIED

FOR THOSE WHO ARE UNWELL:

Anna Kelly, Peter McDonald, Veronica Keilty, , Ron Picardo, Ada Barker, A parish family member, Victor & Gilda Kumarathanan, Barry Jervis, Audrey Potts, as well as others for whom we have been praying together recently. We will happily add any requests for prayer to our sick-list, which will be updated weekly. Please contact us with any additional names and accept our apologies for anyone we have missed off it.

FOR THOSE WHO HAVE DIED RECENTLY:

Theresa Bingham-Daly, Peter McHale, Philippa O'Connor, Fr Leo Silke SMA, Maureen Marshman, Rosalinda de Cruz, David Jones, as well as others for whom we have recently been praying together. Please contact us with any additional names you may wish to be added to this list which will be updated weekly, and accept our apologies for anyone we have missed off it.

AND THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARY OCCURS AROUND THIS TIME:

Father Alistair Smith-Steinmetz, Gerry Harsant, Calogero Manfredi. Please contact us with any additional names you may wish to be added to this list which will be updated weekly, and accept our apologies for anyone we have missed off it.

MASSES AND SERVICES THIS WEEK (MAY 16TH-23RD)

SUNDAY 16th MAY	SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (YR B) 9:00 DAMIEN STAYNE (THANKSGIVING) 11.15 ARLINDO PACHECO 18.00 PEOPLE OF THE PARISH
MONDAY 17th	10:30 COLEEN (SP. INTNS) <i>13:00 - 16:00 Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament</i>
TUESDAY 18th	10:30 MICHAEL NUTT RIP <i>13:00 - 16:00 Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament</i>
WEDNESDAY 19th	VINOWARD JEYARJAN RIP [MASS IN PRIVATE - CHURCH CLOSED]
THURSDAY 20th	19:00 PHILOMENA CHOW (THANKSGIVING) PARISH CONFIRMATIONS CELEBRATED AT THIS MASS
FRIDAY 21st	19:00 EMMA LOOMES RIP PARISH CONFIRMATIONS CELEBRATED AT THIS MASS
SATURDAY 22nd	11.00 BETTY INCE RIP PARISH CONFIRMATIONS CELEBRATED AT THIS MASS 18.00 VINCENTE JAMES WILSON (SP INTN) PARISH CONFIRMATIONS CELEBRATED AT THIS MASS
SUNDAY 23rd MAY	PENTECOST SUNDAY (YR B) 9:00 NATASHA LEE (THANKSGIVING) 11.15 MANUEL FERREIRA RIP 18.00 PEOPLE OF THE PARISH

Holy Father's Prayer intention for MAY: During the month of May this year Pope Francis has asked us all to pray: *'for the world of finance: So that the poor do not suffer painful consequences from this system... that finance be a form of service, and an instrument to serve the people, and to care for our common home...[and] that those in charge of finance will work with governments to regulate financial markets and protect citizens from its dangers.'*