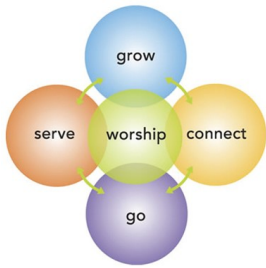


The Parish of
STONY STRATFORD
 with
CALVERTON



THE PARISH NEWSLETTER
THE 17th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
SUNDAY 24th July AD 2016



Welcome to the Parish Church where, after the example of the early church, we celebrate the Eucharist: the "apostles teaching and fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42)

The Our Father is certainly the most sublime formula possible and contains the whole essence of the most elevated mental prayer. However, Jesus gave it as a formula for vocal prayer: "When you pray, **say**. . ." (Matthew 11:2). This is enough to make us understand the value and importance of vocal prayer, which is within the reach of everyone even children, the uneducated, the sick, the weary.... But we must realise that vocal prayer does not consist only in the repetition of a certain formula. If this were true, we should have a recitation but not a prayer, for prayer always requires a movement, an elevation of the soul toward God. In this sense, Jesus instructed His disciples: "When thou shalt pray, enter into thy chamber, and having shut the door, pray to thy Father in secret.... And when you are praying, speak not much as the heathens" (Mt 6:6-7). It is interesting to note that in St. Matthew these prescriptions concerning the exterior and interior dispositions necessary for well-made prayer immediately precede the teaching of the Our Father.

Therefore, in order that our vocal prayer be real prayer, we must first recollect ourselves in the presence of God, approach Him, and make contact with Him. Only when we have such dispositions will the words we pronounce with our lips express our interior devotion and be able to sustain and nourish it. Unfortunately, inclined as we are to grasp the material part of things instead of the spiritual, it is only too easy in our vocal prayer to content ourselves with a mechanical recitation, without taking care to direct our heart to God; hence we should always be vigilant and alert. Vocal prayer made only by the lips dissipates and wears the soul instead of recollecting it in God; so let us recollect ourselves and thus unite ourselves more closely to Him.



THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH

- TODAY:**
 9:30am **17th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME PARISH MASS at St Mary & St Giles**
 11:00am **FAMILY MASS at All Saints**
 1:00pm Holy Baptism at St Mary & St Giles
 Pray for: *Our Parish*
- Monday:**
 12:30pm **St James, Apostle**
 School Merger Meeting
 8:00pm Bell Ringing Practice
 7:30pm **MASS OF CONFIRMATION**
 at St James the Great, Hanslope
 Pray for: *Those to be Confirmed*
- Tuesday:**
 10:30am **Ss Joachim & Anne, Parents of the BVM Mass at All Saints + 'Elevenses'**
 11:15am All Saints Fabric Committee Meeting
 Pray for: *All Grandparents*
- Wednesday: Feria**
 10:00am Almshouses Charity Meeting
 11:00am Apprenticing Charity Meeting
 2:00pm Rector meets with Officials re WEA
 6:30pm Handbell Ringing Practice at SMSG School
 7:15pm The Band - Practice at SMSG School
 7:30pm **Mass at St Mary & St Giles**
 Pray for: *Local Charities*
- Thursday: Feria**
 10:30am **Mass at St Mary & St Giles**
 Pray for: *A right use of Leisure*
- Friday: St Martha**
 12:15pm **Mass at St Mary & St Giles Church**
 7:30pm Parish Singers Rehearsal
 Pray for: *All who serve us in Public Office*
- Saturday: St Peter Chrysologus, Bishop & Doctor**
 2:00pm Marriage Rite at St Mary & St Giles
 4:00pm Confessions at St Mary & St Giles
 4:30pm Evening Prayer at St Mary & St Giles
 Pray for: *Visitors to our Parish Churches,*
- Next Sunday: 18th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**
 9:30am **PARISH MASS at St Mary & St Giles**
 11:00am **FAMILY MASS at All Saints**
 Pray for: *Our Parish*
- READINGS NEXT SUNDAY:**
 1st Reading: Ecclesiastes 1: 2; 2: 21-23
 Psalm: 90 (part)
 2nd Reading: Colossians 3: 1-5, 9-11
 Gospel: Luke 12: 13-21

Sidesmen	Team 4	Altar Servers	Team 3
Offertory		Bellringers	
Cleaning	Team 4	Gardening	Team 1
Worshipping Numbers last Sunday: 215			
Weekday Worshipping Numbers (w/e 16th July): 34			

INFORMATION

The Order of Mass is on the laminated card. The references to the Scripture Readings, which may be either listened to or followed in the Bibles provided, along with the Psalm and the Prayer of the Faithful are also included in this Sheet. Hymns are unannounced but are indicated on the boards towards the front of the Nave.

AA Large Print Orders of Service are available at St Mary & St Giles. Please ask a Sidesman or Sideswoman for a copy.



A Loop System is in operation at St Mary & St Giles - please set hearing aids to the "T" position.



Access for the Disabled at St Mary & St Giles is via the path on the north side of the church. **At All Saints** it is via the South Porch.



Gluten-Free Hosts: if you are on a Gluten-Free diet and would like a Gluten-Free Host when you receive Holy Communion please mention this before Mass to one of the Sides men or women who will arrange this for you. Please make yourself known to the Parish Priest so that he is aware of your need.



Collections: for the continuing mission of Christ are taken while the altar and gifts of bread and wine are being prepared. If you are a visitor and a taxpayer and would like to make a donation please use the Gift Aid envelopes provided at the end of each row - please fill in your details. This enables us to reclaim, from the Inland Revenue, 25p for each £1 donated.



We observe a period of quiet prayer and reflection before the celebration of Mass, between the end of the Organ Voluntary and the Sacristy Bell being rung, in order that we may be better prepared to worship almighty God.



Reception of Holy Communion: All Baptised and Confirmed Christians are encouraged to receive Holy Communion. If you are unwell or uncertain about receiving the Precious Blood please do still receive the Host. Our Chalice Assistants are not authorised to permit the intincting (dipping) of the Host.



Please join us at the back of church for tea or coffee after Mass. A priest will be near the main door shortly after the end of Mass should you need to talk with one.

Please take this Service Sheet home with you and use as part of your devotions during the week.

FUTURE DIARY DATES

Sunday 24th July

1:00pm Holy Baptism
at St Mary & St Giles

Monday 25th July

7:30pm Mass of Confirmation
at Hanslope, St James
Please pray for
Timothy Joseph Sharp
from our Parish
who is to receive
the Sacrament of Confirmation

Saturday 6th August

The Transfiguration of the Lord
8:00am Mass
at St Mary & St Giles

Sunday 7th August

2:00pm Organ Recital
at St Mary & St Giles

Sunday 14th August

**THE ASSUMPTION OF THE
BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

Wednesday 17th August

The Fellowship meets at the
Rectory for Afternoon Tea

Thursday 18th August

12:30pm Lunchtime Concert
at St Mary & St Giles

Friday 19th - Sunday 21st Aug

Parish Pilgrimage to OLOW

Friday 26th August

7:30pm 'Vivant' Concert
in St Mary & St Giles Church

Monday 29th August

2:00pm Cream Teas for a
Bank Holiday afternoon at St
Mary & St Giles Church

Wednesday 31st August

9:30am Children's Activity
Morning at SMSG

Saturday 3rd September

10:00am Coffee Morning
at St Mary & St Giles Church

Sunday 4th September

2:00pm All Saints Fete
& Open Day
Please see Jane Hardy, Diane
and Eric West if you can help
in any way.

9th - 11th September

Organ Festival Weekend
at St Mary & St Giles Church
Please see the leaflets in each
church for full details of a very
good series of recitals and
activities.

Confirmation Masses: Bishop Jonathan will be in St James the Great, Hanslope tomorrow evening at 7:30pm (Monday 25th July, on which occasion he will Confirm Tim Sharp. We are very much welcome to support Tim and the candidates from Halsope and Castlethorpe. Please pray for all those about to be Confirmed and especially for Tim as he takes this huge step in his pilgrimage with Christ.

'The Year of Mercy' - a Celebration in Oxford Cathedral: As you will no doubt know, the wider church is celebrating a Year of Mercy. Bishop Jonathan has been talking with the Dean and Chapter of Christ Church Cathedral and they have welcomed the possibility of a celebration to mark the Holy Year on Saturday 17 September. The basic idea will be an opportunity to celebrate the Mass at Christ Church at 11 am followed by a picnic lunch and an early afternoon session of teaching and fellowship. Jane Hardy has kindly volunteered to organise a coach. Lists are available in each church for us to sign up to book a seat.

Proposed School Merger: As you are already aware, there is a proposal from Milton Keynes Council that St. Mary & St. Giles Junior School and Queen Eleanor Primary School should merge and become one school from 1st January 2017. This proposal has the support of both Governing Bodies, so the Council conducted an informal consultation with key stakeholders. That consultation resulted in the majority of respondents agreeing with the proposal which was then put as a formal recommendation to the Lead Member for schools, Councillor Zoe Nolan. (The papers for that meeting are available on the Council Website).

On Tuesday 28th June Councillor Nolan received that recommendation from the council officers and accepted it. Her decision means that the Council will now go to formal consultation in September for a four-week period - leading towards a final delegated decision by the lead member in November. During the formal consultation views and opinions will be sought from the public at large and we would welcome your contribution to that consideration.

It is our hope that the formal consultation will result in positive feedback from the public and a delegated decision to approve the merger so that our schools can merge on 1st January 2017. Signed,

Paul Critchley - Chairman of Governors, Queen Eleanor Primary School; Liz Lockhart - Headteacher of Queen Eleanor Primary School; Fr Ross Northing - Chairman of Governors, St. Mary and St. Giles Junior School; Kieran Salter - Headteacher of St. Mary & St. Giles Junior School



The Annual Buckinghamshire Ride & Stride takes place on Saturday 10th September this year. With the weather warming up and the sun finally making an appearance, it isn't so hard to believe that a walk or cycle in the Buckinghamshire countryside in September might be a pleasant experience. We are looking forward to this year's event and already have plans in the pipeline to make 2016 a special year. Last year the sun shone and walkers and cyclists raised over £30,000 which will be used to help maintain the fabric of Buckinghamshire's historic churches. This year there are lots of different ways of taking part in the event, which has been running (or walking or riding) since its birth in Suffolk in 1982. We are hoping record numbers of people across Buckinghamshire will take part to make 2016 our most successful year ever.

Preparations for Ride & Stride 2016 are well under way. Since its inception it has been, and still remains, the principal fundraiser for the Bucks Historic Churches Trust. Over recent years there has been a gradual decline in participation and in

PARISH NEWS AND NOTICES



funds raised. Although the sums are still impressive, we hope that in coming years we will be able to improve upon them. The number of churches in Buckinghamshire is truly awe inspiring, as are some of the efforts that have been made over the years to raise funds. We want to build on those successes, so this year – as well as continuing with the tried and tested formula – we will be testing a number of different ideas, and we are already working towards some more radical ideas in time for the 2017 event.

We are aware that other churches across Buckinghamshire take part in the Heritage Open Days scheme. HOD even has an icon in its literature to show that participating churches are also supporting Ride & Stride. So with a little planning it is very possible for both events to run happily alongside one another.

Mavis Wright has very kindly agreed to be our Parish Organiser this year. If you are willing to participate as a walker or cyclist please do have a word with her. Further details will be posted as they become available.

Reflection on the Lord's Prayer as recorded in St Matthew's Gospel (6: 9-13)

Central to the prayer of our Lord Jesus Christ was the 'Our Father', and it is on this universal prayer that we will focus in the coming weeks in a series of articles.

"Beware of practicing your piety before men in order to be seen by them; for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. Thus, when you give alms, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. And in praying do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. Pray then like this:

***Our Father who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.***

***Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;***

And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us ;

***And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.***

As we can see St. Matthew records the Lord introducing the Lord's Prayer with a few warnings against false forms of prayer. Firstly it must not be an occasion for showing off before others. Rather prayer must have a discretion that is essential to the nature of love. We must be aware of God's personal love for each of us, but also realise that there is a community aspect to prayer. This is the very reason why the Lord's Prayer uses the plural "we" or "us" throughout. The second false form of prayer is the verbosity that can so easily smother the spirit.

Our relationship with God should not be momentary asking or thanksgiving, but should be present as the bedrock of our souls. Prayer really is being in silent inward communion with God. In a very real sense everything that happens in our lives should be related to the permanent presence of God with us.

The Our Father is always a prayer of Jesus, and communion with him is what opens up this prayer for us.. We pray to our Father in heaven whom we know through his Son. And that means that Jesus is always in the background during the peti-

tions, as we will see more clearly as we go through the petitions in the weeks ahead.

1st phrase: "Our Father who art in heaven"

The Our Father begins with a great consolation: we are allowed to say "Father" This one word contains the whole history of redemption. We are allowed to say "Father" because the Son was our brother and has revealed the Father to us; because, thanks to what Christ has done, we have become once more the children of God.

The problem for very many people today is that their experience of fatherhood is in many cases either completely absent or obscured by inadequate examples of fatherhood. We must therefore allow Jesus to teach us what 'father' really means. For Jesus, the Father is the source of all good, the measure of perfection of all people. *"But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good"* The love that the Father has for us endures to the end. Christ fulfilled that love on the Cross by praying for his enemies. We call God "Father" because he is the source of all love, and in the Lord's Prayer Jesus invites us to become children of this all-loving Father.

We should reflect on the parts of the New Testament where Jesus elaborates on the Father's love and generosity. *"If you, then, who are evil, know how to give your children what is good, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!" "If you then, who are evil, know how to give your children what is good, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"* The gift that God gives us is the gift of himself, and this means that prayer is really a recognition of this truth. God's gift of himself to us is the "one thing necessary" Prayer is a way of gradually purifying and correcting our wishes and of slowly coming to realise what we really need: God and his Spirit.

How do we recognise the Father, whose love and presence with us is the "one thing necessary"? The answer is in the person of Jesus Christ who is the mirror and the perfect image of the Father, for Jesus tells Philip *"to have seen me is to see the Father."* When we call God our Father we recognise that he is our Creator, but also in the person of Jesus our Redeemer too. This is because Jesus is the image of God, of one substance with the Father, the "new Adam".

To be able to call God our Father is a summons to us: to live as a child of God, as a son or daughter. The word *Father* is an invitation to live in awareness that we are children of God. It also frees us from the delusion of false emancipation from all guidance in the living of our lives. Adam believed that in eating the forbidden fruit he and Eve would become "as gods", and hence be able to live their lives free from the need for God. Through calling God our father we see not a dependency on God, but rather a relationship of love that sustains our existence and gives it meaning and grandeur. How salutary this is in an age that seems to want to tell that we can live without God – it shows that this temptation is nothing new...that it has existed since the beginning of time, but the answer is as true then as it is true now: when we seek to cast God out we find that in reality we cast ourselves out.

To be continued next week...

Looking ahead to the autumn: Confirmation Preparation: the Rector is planning to commence Confirmation Preparation sessions in late September for adults and children. The sessions for those aged 18 and above will be held on Wednesday's in the Parish Hall adjoining St Mary & St Giles following the evening Mass. Please see Fr Ross about these sessions.

With regard to the preparation of young people aged between 10 and 17 the date and time of the sessions will be agreed with a meeting of the parents of all young people. These sessions will be held at the Rectory and parents are asked to liaise with Sister Janet.

MASS TEXTS PROPER TO TODAY'S OBSERVANCE

Reflection prior to Mass

Through baptism we are united to Christ, our brother. Our sins have been forgiven and we are made children of God. God wants us to be aware of the dignity of our calling and to hold converse with him. As we are gathered together in this holy sacrifice of the Mass let us listen what God has to say to us and let us pray to him with confidence.

The Collect

Almighty God, who sent your Holy Spirit to be the life and light of your Church: open our hearts to the riches of your grace, that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in love and joy and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD (SIT)

The First Reading

SMSG Reader: Tony Oakley
All Saints Reader: Eilish Friedman

Genesis 18:20-32
Old Testament Page 12

The Responsorial Psalm

(from Psalm 138)

R/. On the day I called, you answered me, O Lord.

I thank you, Lord, with all my heart,
you have heard the words of my mouth.
Before the angels I will bless you.
I will adore before your holy temple. ®

I thank you for your faithfulness and love
which excel all we ever knew of you.
On the day I called, you answered;
you increased the strength of my soul. ®

The Lord is high yet he looks on the lowly
and the haughty he knows from afar.
Though I walk in the midst of affliction
you give me life and frustrate my foes. ®

You stretch out your hand and save me,
your hand will do all things for me.
Your love, O Lord, is eternal,
discard not the work of your hands. ®

Second Reading

Reader: Isa Thomas

Colossians 2:12-14
New Testament Page 169

Gospel Acclamation

(STAND)

Alleluia, alleluia!

You have received the spirit of sonship;
in him we cry, "Abba, Father!"

Alleluia!

The Gospel

Luke 11:1-13
New Testament Pages 61

The Prayer of the Faithful

(Biddings: Fr Joseph)

Priest: Gathered together in Christ as brothers and sisters, let us call to mind God's many blessings and ask him to hear the prayers which he himself inspires us to ask.

Intercessor: For our Bishop N, all the Church's ministers

and the people they have been called to lead and serve..... Let us pray to the Lord:

V/. Lord, hear us.

R/. Lord, graciously hear us.

For those who serve us in public office and for all those entrusted with the common good..... Let us pray to the Lord:

For all travellers, by land, air, or sea; for prisoners; and for those unjustly deprived of freedom..... Let us pray to the Lord:

For all sick and suffering people, both those in hospital and those ill at home, and for those who care for them... Fiddy Abraham, Anna Archer, Jill Barby, Eileen Cox, Margaret Hooton, Rebecca, Terry Mason, Pete, Shirley Scrutton, Marian Wright... Let us pray to the Lord:

For those who have died, those who have shared with us in the faith of Christ and those whose faith is known to God alone... Ian Brooks (*priest*), Steve Gardner.... and for those whose anniversaries of death occur during this week... **24th** Sister Cecilia; **25th** Mary Bodley, Zillah Full, Iris Mathers; **26th** Fanny Downing, Charles Perceval (*priest*), Clara Read, Michael Viard; **27th** Karen Dare; **28th** Edward Worley, Alan Rose; **30th** Iris Morgan... Let us pray to the Lord:

✠ Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord.

And let light perpetual shine upon them.

For all of us gathered in this holy place in faith, reverence, and love of God..... Let us pray to the Lord:

Priest: Father, hear the prayers of your Church and, in your love, make up for what is lacking in our faith. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Communion Reflection:

Before receiving Holy Communion, we are called upon to show, by the sign of Christ's peace, that we love one another. This was enjoined by Jesus when he said: *if you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.* (Matt 5:23-24). Unless we really live as brothers and sisters, we cannot say *Our Father*.... Give us *Our daily bread*.... Forgive us *Our trespasses*. We cannot be sons and daughters, unless we are also brothers and sisters. The reverse is also true, as is being discovered where community concern disappears following the rejection of the Father, or the more recent trend of subtly denying the Second Person of the Holy Trinity.

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