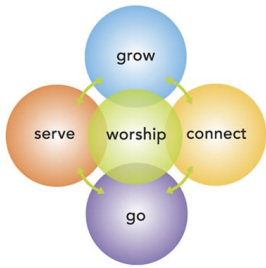


The Parish of
STONY STRATFORD
 with
CALVERTON



THE PARISH NEWSLETTER
THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
SUNDAY 14th August 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)

All the feast days of Mary mark the great mysteries of her life and her part in the work of redemption. The central mystery of her life and person is her divine motherhood, celebrated both at Christmas and a week later (Jan. 1) on the feast of the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. The Immaculate Conception (Dec. 8) marks the preparation for that motherhood, so that she had the fullness of grace from the first moment of her existence, completely untouched by sin. Her whole being throbbled with divine life from the very beginning, readying her for the exalted role of mother of the Saviour.

The Assumption completes God's work in her since it was not fitting that the flesh that had given life to God himself should ever undergo corruption. The Assumption is God's crowning of His work as Mary ends her earthly life and enters eternity. The feast turns our eyes in that direction, where we will follow when our earthly life is over.

The feast days of the Church are not just the commemoration of historical events; they do not look only to the past. They look to the present and to the future and give us an insight into our own relationship with God. The Assumption looks to eternity and gives us hope that we, too, will follow Our Lady when our life is ended.



THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH

TODAY: **THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**
PARISH MASS at St Mary & St Giles
FAMILY MASS at All Saints
 9:30am
 11:00am
 2:00pm
 Organ Recital at St Mary & St Giles
 Pray for: Our Parish

Monday: Feria
 9:30am 'Squeals on Wheels' in Parish Hall
 8:00pm Bell Ringing Practice
 Pray for: the Sick, Housebound and Disabled

Tuesday: St Stephen of Hungary
10:30am Mass at All Saints + 'Elevenses'
 6:30pm Meeting for all Pilgrims in SMSG
 Pray for: The Church in Hungary

Wednesday: Feria
 2:00pm The Fellowship - Afternoon Tea in the Parish Hall
 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: all those who are made homeless

Thursday: Feria
10:30am Mass at St Mary & St Giles
 12:00noon Lunchtime Concert in St Mary & St Giles Church
 Pray for: all those suffering with addictions

Friday: Feria
 Parish Pilgrimage to The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham
 Pray for: all Pilgrims

Saturday: St Bernard, Abbot & Doctor
 Parish Pilgrimage to The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham
 Pray for: Visitors to our Parish Churches

Next Sunday: 21st SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
 Parish Pilgrimage to The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham
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: Isaiah 66: 18-21
 Psalm: 117 (part)
 2nd Reading: Hebrews 12: 5-7, 11-13
 Gospel: Luke 13: 22-30

Sidesmen Team 2 Altar Servers Team 2
 Offertory Church Band
 Cleaning Team 2 Gardening Team 4

Worshipping Numbers last Sunday: 129
 Weekday Worshipping Numbers (w/e 6th Aug): 84

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.

Parish Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham: would all those joining us on next weekend's pilgrimage please come to a brief meeting at St Mary & St Giles Church on this Tuesday evening at 6:30pm in order that we can liaise over travel arrangements etc. Thank you. Fr Ross

'The Year of Mercy' - a Celebration in Oxford Cathedral: 17th September. It is planned to travel to Oxford in cars as the cost of the coach is clearly prohibitive. Please do still sign the list so that we know how many people wish to attend and then nearer the time we can meet to liaise over travel arrangements.

Calverton Fete: Is held this year on the 4th September from 2:00pm to 4:00pm. If you can help with setting up and clearing away, or with running stalls, or with donating home-made cakes and offers of books and/or bric-a-brac do please see Jane Hardy or Eric & Diane West. Many thanks.

Retirement: after considerable prayer and thought our Organist, John Neal, has decided that it is time for him to retire. John has kindly given the Rector an assurance that he will serve three months notice and so his final Sunday will be on the 30th October which gives us some time to see if we can appoint a new organist and/or choirmaster. Obviously, we will want to mark John's retirement nearer the time.

Please pray for the Parochial Church Council as it meets on Tuesday of next week to discuss plans to advertise for a successor to John, and for the Rector as he sees potential candidates with representatives of the PCC.

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.

FUTURE DIARY DATES

Wednesday 17th August

The Fellowship meets in the PARISH HALL 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.

Thursday 15th September

12:30pm Lunchtime Concert

Saturday 17th September

Year of Mercy Celebration at Oxford Cathedral.

Please book your place on the coach

Tuesday 20th September

7:30pm Join Governing Body at SMSG School

Friday 23rd September

9:30am School Harvest Thanksgiving Mass in St Mary & St Giles Church

Sunday 25th September

Harvest Thanksgiving 9:30am Parish Mass 6:00pm Evensong at All Saints followed by Bring & Share Harvest Supper



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 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 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.

PARISH NEWS AND NOTICES



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.

Children's Activity Morning at St Mary & St Giles: All children are most welcome to join us at 9.30am on Wednesday, 31st August for a morning of fun activities, using The Lord's Prayer as our theme. Activities will include bread making, painting, music and lunch! Please let Lesley Salter, Jenny Rowson, Ray Rowson, Andrea Hearne or Richard Hearne know if you would like to come. There is no charge and all food and drinks will be provided - old clothes should be worn!

Sidesmen: The Churchwardens ask that all sidesmen check the rota on the notice board at the back of church to see when they are on duty.

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

6th Phrase: "And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us"

Every instance of trespass whether in relation to God or in relation to other people, involves some kind of injury to truth and to love and is thus opposed to God who is love and truth. Trespass leads to guilt and guilt calls forth retaliation. The result is a chain of trespass in which the evil of guilt grows ceaselessly and becomes more and more inescapable.

In this petition Jesus is telling us that guilt can be overcome not by retaliation, but by forgiveness. God is a god who forgives, because he loves us; but forgiveness can only penetrate and become effective in one who is himself forgiving. Forgiveness is a theme that pervades the Gospel. Christ reminds us that when we bring a gift to the altar and remember that our brother has something against us, then we must leave our gift before the altar: first go and be reconciled to our brother, and then come and offer our gift. This going out to meet our brother and making our gesture of reconciliation is the prerequisite of true worship of God. We should also remember that God himself stepped out of his divinity in order to come toward us to reconcile us. Christ also tells us of the story of the unforgiving servant, who having been forgiven a huge debt by his master, refused to cancel a trivial debt owing to himself. This leads to the conclusion that whatever we have to forgive one another is trivial in comparison to what God has forgiven us.

Guilt is an objective force that causes destruction and that needs repairing. Forgiveness is therefore, not just a matter of ignoring, of merely trying to forget. Forgiveness exacts a price firstly from the person who forgives. We must overcome the evil done to us; we must burn it interiorly, and in so doing renew ourselves.

The knowledge that God allowed the forgiveness of our sins to cost him the death of his own Son has come to seem quite alien to man today. That the Lord "has borne our diseases and taken upon himself sorrows seems no longer plausible to some. This is partly due to the trivialisation of evil, despite the fact that we treat the horrors of recent history as irrefutable pretext for denying the existence of God, and slandering his creation, the human race.

Cardinal Newman noted that while God created the whole world out of nothing, he could overcome our guilt only by bringing himself into play through his Son Jesus Christ. The petition for forgiveness is more than a moral exhortation. It is a reminder to us of the God who allowed forgiveness to cost him descent into human hardship and death on a Cross. It calls us to thankfulness for that intervention, and then, with him to

7th Phrase: "Lead us not into temptation"

God certainly does not lead us into temptation. We are helped to understand this by reflecting on the temptations of Jesus before he began his public ministry. He was "*led out into the wilderness by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil*" The Letter to the Hebrews emphasises how we understand the temptations of Jesus: For, "*because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are. Yet without sin*"

The Book of Job underlines the distinction between trial and temptation. It is customary for us to see Job as the great exemplar of patience and endurance in the face of great suffering. In fact the Book of Job is all about trust in God and his providence in every trial and disappointment that comes our way. It depicts Satan as challenging God to allow misfortune to overwhelm Job, because, as Satan says, his virtue is solely due to his prosperity, which God has heaped upon him. The reaction of Job however, is that God gave him many good things, and he has a right to take them away. Rather than being angry and turning against God, Job upholds God's right to bring misfortune on him. The Book of Job sees the trials of Job as a purifying experience leading to a profound oneness with God's will. Love always involves a process of purifications, renunciations, and painful transformations of ourselves.

What we are saying when we ask "lead us not into temptation" is that God will not overestimate our strength to resist temptation, that he will be close to us with his protecting hand when temptation becomes too much for us. Temptation also comes to keep us humble, to save us from forming too high an opinion of ourselves.

When we pray this petition, we must be ready to take upon ourselves the burden of trial that is meted out to us. On the other hand, the object of the petition is to ask God not to mete out more than we bear, not to let us slip from his hands. St Paul has assured us: "God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but with the temptation will also provide the means of escape, that you may be able to endure it"

8th Phrase: Father, 'deliver us Lord from every evil.....'

"Evil" and "the evil one" (Satan) are one and the same idea. In the era of the Roman emperor, Christians were faced with persecution unless they conformed to the demand for emperor worship. The evil from which they sought to be free was very real, very immediate and very threatening. Today, there are similar all embracing evils: e.g. the forces of market, traffic in weapons, drugs, and in human beings - forces that weigh upon the world and ensnare us all irresistibly. We also face the ideology of success, of wellbeing, that tells us: "*God is just a fiction, he only robs us of our time and of our enjoyment of life Don't bother with him! Just try to squeeze as much out of life as you can*". The Our Father in general, and this petition in particular is telling us that it is only when you have lost God that you have lost everything; then you are nothing but a random product of evolution. So long as the dragon cannot wrest God from you, your deepest being remains unharmed, even in the midst of all the troubles that threaten you. This is why we pray from the depths of our soul not to be robbed of our faith which enables us to see God and binds us to Christ.

St. Cyprian says: "When we say 'deliver us from evil,' then there is nothing further left for us to ask. Once we have asked for and obtained protection against evil, we are safely sheltered against everything the world and Satan can contrive. What could the world make you fear if you are protected in the world by God himself?"

STOP PRESS: NEW CHURCH DIARIES NOW AVAILABLE

MASS TEXTS PROPER TO TODAY'S OBSERVANCE

Reflection prior to Mass

This feast of Mary is called by two names. In the great Churches of the East, it is the 'Falling Asleep of the Mother of God' in death. We know it better as the Assumption, the taking up of Mary into the glory of the resurrection. In celebrating Mary's share in the fullness of God's life and love, we remember that the same promise is made to all believers, as we turn to the Lord for grace and mercy.

The Collect

Almighty ever-living God, who assumed the Immaculate Virgin Mary, the Mother of your Son, body and soul into heavenly glory, grant, we pray, that, always attentive to the things that are above, we may merit to be sharers of her glory. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD (SIT)

The First Reading

Revelation 11: 19; 12:1-6,10

SMSG Reader: Anna Page

New Testament Page 213

All Saints Reader: Rita Wiseman

The Responsorial Psalm

(from Psalm 45)

**R/. On your right stands the queen,
in garments of gold.**

The daughters of kings are among your loved ones.
On your right stands the queen in gold of Ophir.
Listen, O daughter, give ear to my words:
forget your own people and your father's house. ®

So will the king desire your beauty:
he is your lord, pay homage to him.
They are escorted amid gladness and joy;
they pass within the palace of the king. ®

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 15: 20-26

Reader: Oliver Williams

New Testament Page 147

Gospel Acclamation

(STAND)

Alleluia, alleluia!

Mary has been taken up into heaven;
the host of angels rejoices.

Alleluia!

The Gospel

Luke 1: 39-56

New Testament Pages 49

The Prayer of the Faithful

(Biddings: Fr Ross)

Priest: My brothers and sisters, Mary, raised body and soul to glory, shines forth as "a great sign" of our eternal future as the Church. As a pilgrim people let us bring our prayers, with her, to God our Father.

Intercessor: For the Church..... that we will look forward to the resurrection promised us by Christ, let us pray to the Lord:

V/. Lord, hear us.

R/. Lord, graciously hear us.

For world leaders..... that they will keep the peace and avert wars, let us pray to the Lord:

For the Society of Mary & the Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary, that the devotion to Mary they foster may lead all Christians to that unity of will and purpose that is God's will, let us pray to the Lord:

For our families and homes..... That they may reflect the life of the home of Mary at Nazareth, let us pray to the Lord:

For the sick and afflicted... Fiddy Abraham, Anna Archer, Jill Barby, Henry Blake, Eileen Cox, Margaret Hooton, Terry Mason, Pete, Shirley Scrutton, Dee Stobie, Wendy, Marian Wright... That they may be assisted by those around them and aided by the prayers of Mary and of all the saints, let us pray to the Lord:

For those who have died... and for those whose anniversaries of death occur during this week... Rebecca Flatley, Steve Gardner, Paul Hudson, Anita Stallard....and for those whose anniversaries of death occur during this week...**14th** Ethel Foolkes; **15th** Nessie Bainbridge, John West; **16th** Frank Pell; **18th** Alfred Russell; **19th** Pam Rees, Ruby Eglesfield, Joan Dando; **20th** Ernest Barrett... That they will rise with Christ to rejoice forever with Our Lady and all the saints, let us pray to the Lord:

✠ Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord.

And let light perpetual shine upon them.

Let us commend ourselves and all for whom we have prayed to the intercession of Our Lady as we greet her and say: Hail Mary,.....

Priest: Lord of heaven and earth, our prayers come before you with the help of the glorious ever-virgin Mary, the first believer called to share in the glory of your triumphant Son, who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Communion Reflection:

We celebrate you as a living temple, Mother of God, for the Lord who holds all things in his hands dwelt in your womb and made you holy, made you glorious and taught us to cry out to you:

Hail, abode of God the Word,
Hail, holy one, greater than the saints.
Hail, golden ark of the Spirit,
Hail, unfailing fountain of life.
Hail, key to the kingdom of Christ,
Hail, hope of eternal happiness.
Hail, virgin mother and unwedded bride.

(From the Akathist hymn, sixth century)

Christ's is the seed, Christ's the harvest, gathering us into God's great barn. Christ's the sea, Christ's the fish, his the unbroken net of love. From green youth to grey age, as the years pass on to death, hold us firm, Mary's Son, in your two strong hands. At the end may we rest with Mary in the paradise of God.

(Adapted from the Irish)

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