

supply of Mauve envelopes then please carry on placing your donation inside and either drop through my letter box at 147 High Street, Stony Stratford or through the letter box at the Rectory. If you don't have your Mauve envelopes then you could use any envelope as long as your unique number is written on the outside. If you don't know your number then please call me as I can let you know.

If you normally donate by Yellow Envelope then again please consider paying by Standing Order. Please call me and I'll help you set it up.

If you really don't want to do that then again you can use any envelope and pop it through my letter box or through Fr. Ross'. If you do this and have given by yellow envelope at least once in the last two years then all I need is your name on the outside of the envelope as I have a Gift Aid declaration from you already.

On a separate note, if you were a Planned Giver through Gift Aid in the Tax Year 2019/20 and would like to receive a letter confirming your total donation then please let me know and I will do that for you.

All Saints: Since the last edition of the Newsletter was published there have been even more burials at All Saints. I remarked last time that a number of you had contacted me about whether you will be able to be buried at All Saints given the number of recent burials there. Don't worry there is still plenty of space.

Parochial Church Council News: for the first time ever the PCC held a meeting via Zoom on the 16th June. Given that we have not bought the Business Package, but relied on the free version of the App, we only had 40 minutes for our meeting - which rather concentrated the mind! The Rector reported that he had received numerous emailed instructions from various ecclesial sources relaying micro-management type instructions on how to interpret the regulations on COVID-19. The instructions from Her Majesty's Government being quite clear, he had decided to follow them, rather than additional instructions with little to no legal authority.

Fabric Matters: a) Faculty received for the South Aisle

works and Multi-media System at All Saints; b) the PCC agreed that the Rector should apply for a List B Faculty to replace the chancel radiators at SMSG; c) almost all the work on reviewing or writing PCC Policies was now complete and Terrier and Inventory/Log Books updates would be completed over the summer; d) the final year of works to the Yew Trees at SMSG would be completed this year, and the very concerning issue of the Wellingtonia would be raised with the Planning Authority and the Diocese over the summer; e) SMSG Sacristy Roof and Gutter works - COVID-19 restrictions have meant that Wilford & Dean have not been working. As the 'Lockdown' is eased our Architect will be leading on this.

Finance: as well as matters referred to earlier in this Newsletter the PCC agreed that, in order to raise further donations to the General Fund, the Rector and the Treasurer should explore options to have an automated donation machine situated in the Parish Church and a 'Donate Button' on the Parish website. The Treasurer is hoping that we can achieve a substantial payment of the total asked of us in terms of Parish Share this year.

Chairman's Matters: The Rector outlined some of the digital learning curve we had been on as a Parish and expressed his gratitude for the support he had been given in trying to maintain our spiritual life in the Parish at a most difficult time. He also asked that the PCC's gratitude be recorded for all the volunteers who had turned up to clean our churches, maintained our churchyards, assisted in opening the churches for private prayer, and assisted in any number of ways.

The Rector also discussed with the PCC the increased number of burials at All Saints, and the lack of burial spaces in Milton Keynes, apart from at Selbourne Avenue in Bletchley which is somewhat unsuitable as it suffers which water coming down from the Brickhills. We may see more requests for burials, but only those who die within the bounds of the Parish have a right to be buried in All Saints Churchyard, so he and the Churchwardens have a significant measure of control.

Fete: Jill Barby reported that she had received an enquiry about whether All Saints Church Fete would happen in September as usual. The only answer that could be given at this PCC Meeting was that we would have to decide nearer the time based on how far the Lockdown has been eased and what regulations are in place.

Seat Cushions at SMSG: unfortunately many of these are now quite filthy and would be difficult to clean. Whilst no decision has been taken as yet, as a Parish we will need to reflect upon what is the best and most hygienic thing to do given the concerns.



PARISH NEWSLETTER July AD 2020

From the Rector:

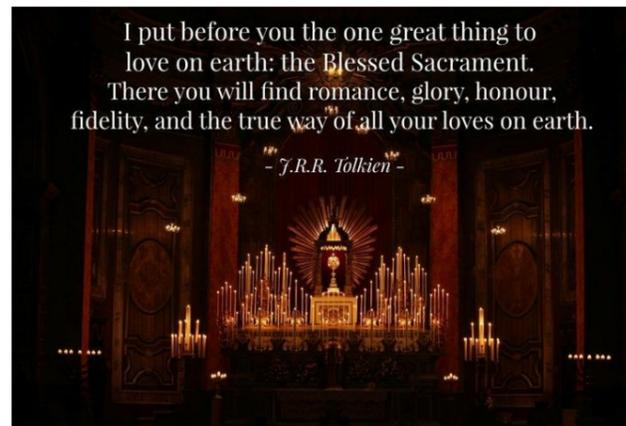
At the time of writing it is fourteen weeks since the 'Lockdown' commenced, and the last time we were permitted to gather for Mass was on Sunday 15th March, and of course there were restrictions in place the week before that.

I can now announce that we are able once more to resume Public Worship and that therefore from Sunday 5th July Mass will be celebrated at the usual times of 09:30 in St Mary & St Giles and at 11:15 in All Saints - a schedule of Sunday and Weekday worship can be found at the end of this letter.

We can now look forward to being able to celebrate Mass together again. We have waited with patience and longing for this moment, and now we are full of anticipation that we will be able again to take part together in the Eucharist, which lies at the centre of our faith.

Of course, it is still very important that we continue to abide by the guidance, issued by the Government on Monday 29th June, regarding distancing and the other measures to avoid all unnecessary risk, thereby protecting each other from any remaining likelihood of infection.

This long period of being denied the Sacraments of the Church has made our hearts grow in longing for that moment when we can come together and receive again the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist. That moment is now very near and for that we must thank God.



I am acutely aware that for some of you it will not be possible for you to return to Mass just yet due to shielding requirements and other medical advice.



Please be assured that you will be in our prayers, and that we hope that the day you can rejoin us will come soon.

You may have read that only 30 people can attend anyone Act of Worship. I can reassure you that this ONLY applies to Services of Holy Matrimony, and the background to that is that the Government, very kindly, listened to pleas from the Rabbi's because at a Jewish Marriage Rite there is a requirement that at least twelve men be present. The Government's guidelines, as I was assured by Bishop Jonathan last week, is that in each Parish the Priest and Churchwardens will be permitted to use their judgement as to how many can safely gather in each Parish Church. In both of our churches we have closed off every other row of chairs or pew. To maintain safe distancing we would ask that in each of the available rows we have either one household or leave two seats or spaces between individuals. We will not be opening the galleries at St Mary & St Giles, until there is a further easing of the Lockdown, as movement in them would be difficult.

Unfortunately, there are certain restrictions that we will still have to observe for some time, although I am sure that you will understand that whilst these are requirements placed upon us, they have been done so for good reason.

- ◆ Only 3 or 4 Church Bells are permitted to be rung, because ringing chambers are not large enough for distancing requirements when a full team is present. The Tower Captain and Assistant must keep a record of who is present to ring on what dates and ensure that distancing is maintained on the staircase. Bell ringing practice is not permitted.
- ◆ Entry and exit to our Parish Churches must be via separate doors - entry via the West Door and exit via the Parish Hall at St Mary & St Giles - entry via the South Porch and exit via the West Door at All Saints
- ◆ There cannot be an social gathering in either of our Parish Churches before or after Mass - social intercourse may take place in the churchyards before or after Mass. Please allow the priest time to take off his vestments and move to the churchyard before leaving yourselves.
- ◆ Only one Priest will Celebrate Mass observing the necessary hygiene before, during and after Mass.

Rector: Fr Ross Northing SSC - Tel: 01908 562148 - Email: rector@parishstonystratfordcalverton.com - Mobile: 07484 643542

Associate Minister: Fr Tunji Adebisi - Tel: 01525 790954

Honorary Assistant Priest: Fr Joseph Loveday SSC - Tel: 01327 351511

Church Army Officer: Sister Dr Janet Northing CA - Tel: 01908 562148 - Email: jf.northing@btinternet.com

Arrangements for Banns, Holy Matrimony & Baptisms: May be made by contacting Fr Ross on 01908 562148

Confessions: May be made by appointment - observing spatial distancing.

Parish Website: www.parishstonystratfordcalverton.com

To Hire the Parish Hall (when legislation permits): phone Lesley Salter on 01908 567404



- ◆ There will be no 'shared' Mass cards. Instead each week new Orders of Mass will be printed with the full text of the Mass printed upon them. Please do not take a copy for someone else – either retain it for your devotions at home, or place it in the bin provided at the exit points in both churches.
- ◆ The First and Second Readings may be read by Sister Janet from the Legilium which will be placed inside the Sanctuary at St Mary & St Giles. The Nave Lectern and the Pulpit will not be in use as we would have to sanitise it after each person has used it. When Fr Tunji is celebrating if the Rector is away, then he will read the First & Second Readings.
- ◆ Until further notice all singing, singing rehearsals and concerts are banned in all places of worship. Within a week or two the Rector & our Director of Music will have planned 'Organ Masses' - these are where incidental music is played on the organ at certain parts of the Mass. But such incidental music will not be accompanied by singing.
- ◆ Collections: Cash donations and envelopes must be placed either in the large plinth donations box at St Mary & St Giles, or in the bowl by the south porch door at All Saints. We are not allowed to pass a collection plate/bag to one another.
- ◆ 'The Peace' may not be shared physically. We may however join our hands and bow to each other at The Peace.
- ◆ When going forward to receive Holy Communion - at St Mary & St Giles please approach centre of the altar rail in single file via the main aisle, observing a two metre distance, and return to your place via the side aisle. At All Saints: again single file two metres apart but keeping to the south porch side of the main aisle on approaching the altar rail and returning to your place on the vestry side. N.B. in both churches Holy Communion must be received

whilst standing and please extend your arms as far as you are able. Textile kneelers and cushions have had to be removed.

- ◆ 'Holy Communion' may only be received in one Kind, i.e. The Host. This must be received in the palms of our hands and not on the tongue.
- ◆ Please maintain a two metre distance on leaving our churches after Mass.
- ◆ Lavatory Facilities. A surprise guideline from the Government does allow for lavatories to be used - which may come as a relief ! However, this guideline comes with very strict hygiene regulations. Only the larger of the two lavatories only will be open at SMSG (at All Saints there is only one). Strict hand-hygiene must be observed and hand-dryers only used. In the lavatory at each church there will be a spray sanitiser and single use sanitising wipes for each user to wipe the seat, flush-handle, water taps, sink and door handle. Used wipes should be placed in the waste baskets provided.

All of these restrictions, whilst not what we would wish for, do not detract from the fact that once more we shall be able to receive the Lord in his Blessed Sacrament.

The Mass Schedule for Sundays will resume with our customary times of

09:30 at St Mary & St Giles

11:15am at All Saints

Until the 'Lockdown' is fully lifted, the temporary weekday Mass schedule will be:

Wednesday 18:00 at St Mary & St Giles

Thursday 10:30 at All Saints

Friday 12:00 at St Mary & St Giles

Other Liturgies will be advertised weekly. Confessions may be made by appointment with the Priests. Bookings for Banns, Holy Matrimony and Baptisms will, for the time being, have to be arranged by 'phone.

PARISH NEWS:

The Rector's Silver Jubilee of his being Ordained Priest: as you know I was to have celebrated a Sung Mass to mark this important anniversary with a number of invited guests and the Bishop was going to preach. However, the 'Lockdown' has put paid to many people's birthdays, anniversaries, weddings and baptisms along with the really sad and painful situation of not being able to attend the funeral of a loved one. So I am not unduly saddened that it cannot happen in the rather splendid way we do things in the Parish.

However, I shall be celebrating a said Mass at 10:00am on the 2nd July (the day itself) in St Mary & St Giles at 10:00am, and hope to Livestream this - mobile signal permitting !

Jonathan, our Director of Music, methinks not wanting to miss out on the chance for a splendid occasion, has made an alternative suggestion, which is rather good. That is that if I wait until 2022 I can mark 10,000 days as a Priest. Bishop Jonathan was very

taken with the idea and so on the 17th November 2022, if I am spared, we shall celebrate this as a Parish Family with a 'grand do.'

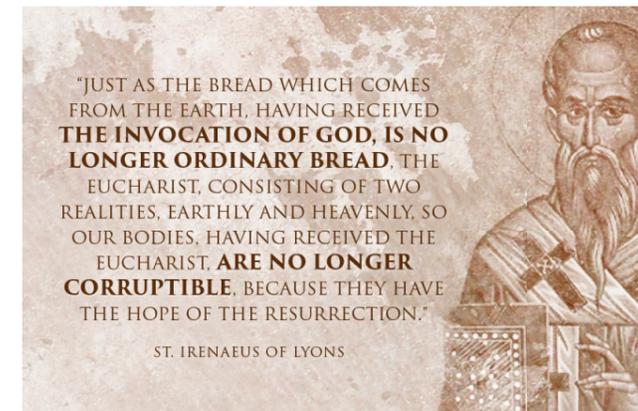
In the meantime, please pray for me as I reflect on 25 years sharing in the Ministerial Priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and as I continue to serve him. I well recall the late Fr Martin Wray who I served with in the latter part of my curacy telling me that a Rabbi had once asked him how long he had been a priest. As it happened Fr Martin had just celebrated his Silver Jubilee as a Priest, and on hearing that the Rabbi remarked, "That's a long friendship" - something perhaps, as Priest and People, we should all reflect upon as we continue our pilgrimage with the Lord.

Chancel Radiators: for some while now we have been noting at PCC Meetings the condition of the radiators in the Chancel at St Mary & St Giles. Emergency repairs to the boiler were undertaken before the 'Lockdown,' as we had no heat. That repair revealed a further fault with a 'quarter return valve' in the boiler room, which should not have been installed on a new system such as ours. The result was that it had been leaking, and this was probably why the boiler had eventually ceased to work. That second repair was completed about two months ago.

However, the replacement of the valve required the complete draining of the heating system and then refilling and testing, and this led to the engineers having a lengthy discussion with me about the state of the two radiators in the chancel. However, it turns out that the valves between the radiators and the radiators need replacing urgently, and the radiators themselves are so rusted in places that they will need replacing at some point. There is a further complication in that the valves are so rusted that it may not be possible to remove them without damaging the radiators, and, as reported previously, the PCC has taken the decision to replace the radiators in any case. Since then I have been contacted by a local businessman who wished to donate £5000 (+Gift Aid) to St Mary & St Giles for specific projects to do with the fabric and contents - he has kindly agreed that his donation should pay for the replacement radiators and that the balance should be placed within the Restoration Fund for general repairs to the Church Building. I have therefore applied for the Faculty to have this work completed before the onset of the winter months and the need for the heating to be used once more.

Finance: First of all we continue to be hugely grateful to everyone who has continued to give to the Parish Funds to support the mission of the Parish. Without this financial offering our ministry and mission would be seriously weakened. *Thank you.*

Bob, our Treasurer and I catch up on finance frequently by 'phone and we are pleased to report that all the standing orders are being honoured and that about 11 people have transferred from the envelope scheme to standing orders. Some of those who give by envelope have been contacting Bob wanting to know how they can continue to ensure that their envelopes reach us. Bob and I have agreed that envelopes can be placed through either his letterbox or the Rectory's. We have also agreed that if anyone



wishes to make a donation and are a tax-payer then they can place the donation in any envelope with their name and address on the front along with a declaration that they want the enclosed donation to be 'Gift Aided' to the Parish of Stony Stratford with Calverton. Of course, with the return to Mass being celebrated in church collections will be received there too.

Bills have been fewer given the restrictions and the fact that the Heating Systems in both churches are switched off. However, we are receiving a number of emails (as are all parishes) from the Diocese about the continuing need to pay the Parish Share. As you know we have never refused to pay it, we want to, but are unable to do so in full.

Since last writing to you about this I have endured a two hour grilling, via Zoom, from two Lay Officers of the Deanery Synod as to why we have not paid our Parish Share in full, and a demand to know why the PCC has not used funds designated for other purposes to do so. As I understand it we have restricted and designated funds that have either been given or raised for specific purposes/intentions. Restricted Funds may only be used for the purposes intended. But it seems to me that to use designated funds for other purposes than what they were raised or given for would be to dishonour the intention of the donor or supporters. I shall need to report to the PCC more fully on this later in July, and I intend to give you a more fulsome account of that encounter as well as the PCC's response subsequent to that meeting.

Bob has asked me to reprint his message from the last edition of this extended Newsletter:

'In 2019 the Parish received £11,000 through the two Envelope Schemes and a further £7,000 in loose cash. This £18,000 represented just over one third of all the Planned Giving that the Parish received. The other two thirds was received by Standing Order.'

In 2020 the General Expenditure (excluding Parish Share and expenditure from Restricted Funds) of the Parish will be over £40,000. So at this time when Public Worship is impossible we need to find ways in which this £18,000 can still be received.'

If you normally give by coloured (Green in 2019, Mauve in 2020) envelope please consider paying by Standing Order. Please call me on 07834902737 and I'll help you set that up. I'm pleased to say that a number of people have done this already. Remember that it's just easy to stop as it is to start.

If you really don't want to do that and you have your

