



THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF
OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION,
FOSTER AVENUE, BEESTON,
NOTTINGHAM, NG9 1AE
and
ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI CHURCH,
TAMWORTH ROAD,
LONG EATON, NG10 1DH



Nottingham Roman Catholic Diocese Trustees Company No. 7151646 Charity No. 1134449

PARISH PRIEST: Fr. Christopher A Thomas, Presbytery, 25 Foster Avenue, Beeston, NG9 1AE

E – mail: frcathomas@live.com ☎: 0115 922 8145 Website: www.theassumption.co.uk

PARISH DEACON: Rev. Chris Stevens (deacon@lecatholic.org.uk) ☎: 0115 808 5428)

SAFEGUARDING REPS: – (Assumption) ☎: 0115 922 8145

Carol Morris & Jane Watts (St Francis) – ☎: 08445 880933

DIOCESAN CO - ORDINATOR: – **Clare McKenzie** – ☎: 0115 953 9850

TIMES OF MASSES AND OTHER SERVICES: SIXTEENTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME: A

Sixteenth Week of Ordinary Time: 19th – 25th July 2020 (Weekday Cycle Year II / Psalter Week IV)

<u>Saturday 18th July:</u> <i>Weekday Feria</i>	<i>Your Prayers are requested for those who are sick:</i> Isobel Alana Barnes, Marica Borsos, Jessie Breame, Margaret Brown, Fr John Cairns, Pat Constable, Francesca Lina Craparotta, Jim & Margaret Dougan, Fr Theodore Gomes, Ann Harrison, Fr Peter Harvey, Andrea Hoffman, Breeda Keane, Elizabeth Reilly, Alan Roberts, Maria Sawicki, Simpson Family and Evelyn Venning.
Mass; Edna Cooke RIP	
<u>Sunday 19th July:</u> <i>Sixteenth Sunday of the Year</i>	<u>HOSPITALS</u> A number of priests are still trying to maintain an 'on – call' rota for City and QMC. This is strictly calls for Anointing of the Sick when someone is nearing the end of their life. The hospital will not call us out for a request for prayers or when someone has already died – these will be dealt with by a member of the Chaplaincy Team who may or may not be a Catholic minister. Holy Communion is not being taken into hospital by Eucharistic Ministers. Families should not contact a priest directly to visit their loved one in hospital – all requests need to go through the Ward and Chaplaincy Department. QMC 0115 924 9924 ext. 63799 or City 0115 969 1169.
Mass; Eileen Curtis RIP (Cooke)	
<u>Monday 20th July:</u> <i>Weekday Feria</i>	
Mass; Norma Brennan RIP (Stephens)	
<u>Tuesday 21st July:</u> <i>Weekday Feria</i>	
Mass; Sarah & Michael Munnely RIP (Willis)	
<u>Wednesday 22nd July:</u> <i>St Mary Magdalene (Feast)</i>	
Mass; Andrew Saville's Intentions	
<u>Thursday 23rd July:</u> <i>St Bridget of Sweden, Religious, Patron of Europe (Feast)</i>	
Mass; Derek Naylor RIP (1 st Anniversary)	
<u>Friday 24th July:</u> <i>Weekday Feria</i>	
Mass; Pro Populo; People of the Parish	
<u>Saturday 25th July:</u> <i>St James, Apostle (Feast)</i>	
Mass; Iain Findlay RIP	
<u>Sunday 26th July:</u> <i>Seventeenth Sunday of the Year</i>	
Mass; Hugh Curtis RIP (Cooke)	
THE ABOVE MASSES WILL ALL BE SAID PRIVATELY AS ALL PUBLIC ACTS OF WORSHIP REMAIN SUSPENDED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE!	
The Church of Our Lady of the Assumption and the Parish Hall and the Church of St Francis of Assisi and the Parish Hall are closed to members of the public, until further notice. If you urgently wish to contact Fr Christopher please telephone 0115 922 8145 (at any reasonable time).	
For enquiries or to book a Mass, please also do this via the telephone. Stipends can be posted or given at a later date, but for the foreseeable future if you book, or have already booked a Mass Intention, then this Mass will be Celebrated in private.	

Items for the newsletter can be given to Fr Christopher or e – mailed to frcathomas@live.com by Thursday of each week for inclusion in the next issue.

LIVE STREAMING AND YOUTUBE VIDEOS WITH LINKS TO ACCESS LITURGIES BEING OFFERED DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC CAN BE FOUND ON PREVIOUS NEWSLETTERS (AVAILABLE ON THE PARISH WEBSITE).

POOR CLARES: The Sisters send their grateful thanks to everyone for the generous donations they received from Parishioners. They are all safe and well and have managed to avoid the Covid – 19 Virus so far. They are praying for the safety of everyone during this difficult time. Our donations are always so important to them but especially now during the pandemic. My next visit is planned for *Monday 27th July 2020* and donations can either be given to Father Christopher or myself. Thank you so much for your continued support – *Diane Wilson*.

RE – OPENING OF CHURCHES: Thank You to all who have kindly volunteered to help with the stewarding and cleaning when, please God, we can begin to open the Church for Public Mass once again. Special Thanks to Paul Curtis, Wilf Rainford, David & Christina Boott and Marie Calladine for coming along on Thursday morning to mark out the Church with all the necessary signage and tape. We now hope to be able to complete the Risk Assessment, which will need to be approved at Diocesan level before we can set a date to re – open.

We now have about 24 volunteers who have contacted me in various ways and, there is still room for others if they would like to contact me by telephone or e – mail. As is the way of the world these days we have a fair amount of paperwork to get right. To that end I will be sending out, by e – mail this weekend, the volunteer forms that each volunteer will need to complete, so that we comply with the Diocesan regulations. If you complete and return them to me as soon as possible we can then draw up a rota.

Due to the need for Social distancing (which means 2 metres in the Diocese of Nottingham) we have a much reduced and limited capacity for public Mass. At the moment it looks likely that if all the people attending Church comes as individuals that capacity will be set at 24 ONLY. If a group of people living in the same house or ‘bubble’ wish to attend together, then the capacity may be increased to 36.

Other noticeable changes will be a ‘One – Way’ System, whereby the Entrance will be via the main double doors from the car park and the Exit will be via the Fire Exit doors onto Foster Avenue. This will maintain the requirements of social distancing and potential pinch points.

The distribution of Holy Communion will take place at the end of Mass and not at the usual time. Once you have received Holy Communion you will be expected to leave the Church immediately via the Exit door. The Guidance is explicit that Communion is to be given hand to hand only and that social distancing is to be maintained with people moving within the space. I would emphasise at the point of Holy Communion that this is only a necessary *temporary* emergency measure and that, as soon as is possible, we will revert to our usual canonical practice of offering people the choice of receiving Holy Communion either on the hand or on the tongue at the usual time during Mass.

The Guidance is also clear in its use of phrases such as ‘the shortest possible time’ and ‘minimising time spent in contact’ as important factors in reducing risk. The also Guidance seeks cooperation in the ‘Test and Trace’ system by our keeping a record of those attending Church at any one time. With that in mind and, given that there will be a limited number of places available when we do begin the celebration of Mass again, a Diocesan booking system is now live for Parishes where Mass is available (details will follow of how to book for Mass once we are up and running). This therefore be a pre – booking system is the only way of regulating those who come to Church.

***PLEASE BE AWARE THAT YOU WILL NOT JUST
BE ABLE TO TURN UP AND ATTEND MASS.***

***For the time being and until further notice
SUNDAY OBLIGATION REMAINS SUSPENDED.***

Supplies of PPE have been ordered and will hopefully arrive this week (including, aprons, disposable gloves, disposable masks, surface cleaners and wipes). We have installed automatic fixed Hand – Sanitisers either side of the Entrance and Exit doors and these will remain in place for the foreseeable future.

I will let you know the date / times of Mass as soon as we have been given the go ahead by the Diocese.

Sixteenth Sunday of the Year: A

All religions are not the same. Common sense says that this is obvious. But common sense is not always so common. In many places, it is popular to teach the contrary truth: that all religions, underneath their apparent differences, are indeed just the same. And that is dangerous, because, like all false doctrines, this one has destructive consequences. Today's First Reading tells us: "There is no God, other than you, who cares for everything." There is only one God, the God of Jesus Christ. As St Peter said on Pentecost: "for of all the names in the world given to men, this (Jesus Christ) is the only one by which we can be saved." He didn't say, "Of all the names in the world given to men, it really doesn't matter which one you choose to worship and pray to, because they are basically all the same." Jesus Himself said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one can come to the Father except through me." He didn't say, "By the way, I am just one of history's really great philosophers, so you can either follow Me or another one, if you like, since we all basically teach the same thing." St Paul also made this abundantly clear, when he explained that God raised Jesus from the dead to show that He truly is the only Lord, "so that all beings in the heaven and on earth and in the underworld, should bend the knee at the name of Jesus and that every tongue should acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." He didn't say, "In the end, some people will worship Jesus, but others will not, because Jesus is only one of God's many faces."

All religions are not the same. This is a truth of common sense and a doctrine of the Catholic Church. So why do we find so many people saying that they are the same, even some Catholics. The first parable we read in today's Gospel gives us the answer. In the parable, Jesus assures us that there is a real difference between the weeds and the wheat. The weeds (darnel), Jesus explains, stands for unrepentant sinners, people whose first priority is themselves, who use others for their own advancement or pleasure, instead of serving them. Jesus clearly states that these unrepentant sinners will end up in hell, "the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth." The wheat stands for the righteous, those who resisted the seductions of evil, repented for their sins and battled against selfishness in order to follow Jesus Christ. Jesus says that these will enter into the joy of eternal life, shining, "like the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

All of this makes us very uncomfortable. But we do live in a fallen world and it is hard for us to resist the pull of selfishness and sin. We prefer to give in to them, at least a little bit – it's easier! Now, if all religions are the same, then I am free to pick and choose what I like from any one of them, putting together my own personal religion according to my own personal tastes; like a collage of photographs. That way, I can include compassion, but not include hell, sin, repentance and judgment. In other words, believing that all religions are the same gives me the perfect excuse for doing whatever I please in life; it turns me into my own god. And that is the devil's oldest trick – just ask Adam and Eve. Let us take one example to make this clear:

Most of us have heard about the doctrine of reincarnation, a common belief among Hindu and Buddhist religions that originated in the east. Reincarnation teaches that at death, unenlightened human souls transmigrate from our body into another body, either of an animal, vegetable or mineral. That process of transmigration is repeated over and over, until the soul is completely enlightened. No good and evil here, no heaven and hell – just an enforced recycling process ending when the enlightened individual self finally dissolves into nirvana. Some people who say that all religions are the same, claim that reincarnation is just an eastern version of what Christians call Resurrection. Really? In the Letter to the Hebrews we read, "Just as man is destined to die once and after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people." *Once*; Christ died once and rose again once. We will all die once and will be judged and then spend eternity either with God or without God. Jesus said the same thing in today's Gospel. At the end of time there will be the harvest and the weeds. Unrepentant sinners will not be planted again to see if they come up as wheat, but will be "thrown into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth." But the wheat, the righteous, who spent their brief earthly lives resisting the seductions of evil, repenting of their sins and battling against selfishness in order to follow Jesus Christ, will enter into the joy of eternal life, shining "like the sun in the kingdom of their Father." That doesn't sound like reincarnation at all. To claim that they are the same empties both doctrines of their real meaning. That is why this approach is so tempting. If doctrines don't really mean anything, we have a good excuse to just go around doing whatever we feel like, instead of trying to follow a clear moral code. It is easy to say all religions are the same; it is hard to follow Jesus Christ.

St John wrote: "God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not be lost, but may have eternal life." (John 3¹⁶) Believing in Jesus, our faith, is our connection to salvation. But it is possible for that connection to become weak. When our faith weakens, we become more vulnerable to temptations of laziness, selfishness, lust, greed and all the other sins which damage or destroy our friendship with Christ.

How can we keep the faith connection strong? By doing two things. First, we can exercise our faith. The more we use it, the stronger it gets. The less we use it, the weaker it gets. If you know a foreign language but never use it, it gets rusty and then when you really need it, you suffer. We can use our faith every day simply by taking time to pray, to read articles or books that give the Catholic perspective on current events and by informing and obeying our conscience – the voice of God guiding our behaviour. Second, we can keep our faith strong by sharing it with others. Many people don't really know Jesus Christ or have forgotten about Him or have the wrong idea about Him. And so they are looking for happiness in all the wrong places. It is up to us to reach out to them, by our words and actions, bearing witness to the truth and the goodness of Christianity. Let us live this with a deep sense of gratitude for the gift of faith which connects us to the One, True God and let us promise Our Lord that we will do our part to keep that faith strong and to share it with others