



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

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DIOCESAN CO - ORDINATOR: – **Appointment Pending** – ☎: 0115 953 9850

TIMES OF MASSES AND OTHER SERVICES: 11TH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR: B

Eleventh Week of Ordinary Time: 13th – 19th June 2021 (Weekday Cycle Year I / Psalter Week III)

Saturday 12th June:	<i>The Immaculate Heart of Mary (memoria)</i>	<i>Your Prayers are requested for those who are sick:</i> Audrey Adamson, Isobel Alana Barnes, Marica Borsos, Margaret Brown, Fr John Cairns, Pat Constable, Francesca Lina Craparotta, Jim & Margaret Dougan, Fr Theodore Gomes, Ann Harrison, Fr Peter Harvey, Andrea Hoffman, Farzin Kazem, Breeda Keaney, Anne – Marie Reid, Simpson Family, Evelyn Venning, John Wilcox and Bob Wilson.
Mass;	Private Intention	
Sunday 13th June:	<i>Eleventh Sunday of the Year: B</i>	
10:00 am: Mass;	Stefania Estacchini RIP	
Monday 14th June:	<i>Weekday Feria</i>	
10:00 am: Mass;	John Frederick Dixon RIP (Teresa)	
Tuesday 15th June:	<i>Weekday Feria</i>	
10:00 am: Mass (St Francis);	Holy Souls	
Wednesday 16th June:	<i>Weekday Feria</i>	
10:00 am: Mass;	Intentions of the Grant Family (SVP)	
Thursday 17th June:	<i>Weekday Feria</i>	HOSPITALS 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;	Pro Populo; People of the Parish	
5:30 pm: Reception;	John Boland RIP	
Friday 18th June:	<i>Weekday Feria</i>	
11:30 am: Requiem Mass;	John Boland RIP	
Saturday 19th June:	<i>Weekday Feria</i>	
Mass;	Special Intention	
Sunday 20th June:	<i>Twelfth Sunday of the Year: B</i>	
10:00 am: Mass;	Paul Fitzgerald RIP	
UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED THE ABOVE MASSES WILL ALL BE SAID PRIVATELY!		
The Parish Hall of Our Lady of the Assumption and the Parish Hall at St Francis of Assisi 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 Intention, please see me after the one of the Scheduled Public Masses or contact me by telephone. Mass Stipends and Parish Collection Envelopes can be posted or given at a later date.		

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

REQUIESCAT IN PACE: Please remember in your prayers to pray for the repose of the soul of *John Boland* who died on *Wednesday 2nd June 2021*. John will be received into Church on *Thursday 17th June 2021 at 5:30 pm* and his Requiem Mass will take place on *Friday 18th June 2021 at 11:30 am* followed by Cremation at Bramcote Crematorium. We remember him, his wife Mona and his family at this sad time. May he rest in peace.

POOR CLARES: The Sisters send their grateful thanks for the gifts and donations from parishioners that I took them in my recent visit to the convent at Bulwell. They want you all to know how much the continued support from you all means to them and what a great help it is and that parishioners are remembered every day in their prayers. *My next visit will be 28th June 2021*. Many thanks – *Diane Wilson*

MISSION – RED BOX: The Summer issue of MISSION TODAY is available in the Narthex please feel free to take a copy – it is an interesting read. If you have a Red Box that needs to be emptied please could you give it to me or Father Christopher or contact me on the number on the label underneath the red box. Thanks for your continued support which is very important during the pandemic when fund raising has been so difficult: *Diane Wilson - Parish MISSION Secretary*

WEEKLY COLLECTION ENVELOPES: New envelopes are now available from the back of Church. If you haven't already done so, please collect your box of envelopes, which begin from the first weekend in June. If you don't have a set of envelopes and would like a set or, alternatively, you would like to set up a direct debit for your weekly offering, please either call (07850 978788) or e-mail: marie_calladine@hotmail.co.uk. If you are a UK tax payer we could also claim tax back on your donation after completion of a Gift Declaration Form. Thank you – *Marie Calladine*.

SACRAMENTAL CELEBRATIONS: Obviously due to the Coronavirus Pandemic we have been unable to Celebrate some of the important Sacraments in the life of the Church over the past year. Specifically, Baptisms, First Confessions and First Holy Communions and Marriage. I am hoping that Baptisms can begin again after all the restrictions are finally lifted by the Government on *21st June 2021*. Any families wishing to have their child(ren) Baptised are asked contact me as soon as possible to arrange a date for *after the 21st June*. Similarly, with First Confessions and First Holy Communions, it is hoped that we can complete the programme that was begun in 2020 and that the Celebration of the First Holy Communion Mass can be held some time at the beginning of the New School Year in either September or October 2021. Any children who would have ordinarily made their First Holy Communion in 2021 (School Year 3) will now begin preparations in 2022 and we will have two Schools Years' Celebrations at the same time. Any couples who intend to marry in 2021 are also asked to contact me as soon as possible to confirm dates and make arrangements for the Marriage Preparation Course. **PLEASE NOTE: I WOULD PREFER IT IF PEOPLE WOULD CONTACT ME BY TELEPHONE AND NOT BY E – MAIL.**

CAFOD: Thanks to your support, CAFOD has been helping communities around the world cope with the pandemic. In Zambia, over the past year, we've been able to reach over 1 million people with messages on COVID – 19, provide over 13k people with access to safe water, train 392 frontline health workers from Zambia's 11 Dioceses on how to prepare and respond to COVID – 19 in their local communities AND donate over 1000 handwashing hygiene stations in communities to support handwashing measures. Thank you for standing alongside people in Zambia and for supporting communities in more than 30 other countries worldwide. With many thanks and best wishes, *Maggie Mairura* – Community Participation Coordinator, CAFOD Nottingham.

CELEBRATION OF MASS: *The public Celebration of Mass will continue as before for the time being.* Despite the country moving into Step 3 (17th May) of the Government Covid – 19 Response Roadmap published in February 2021, very little has changed with regard to Places of Worship. At the moment, the regulation on social distancing still requires that a reduced capacity exists in all churches. The Roadmap states that new sectors which will reopen on 17th May are “Some large events, including conferences, theatre and concert performances and sports events. Controlled indoor events of up to 1,000 people or 50% of a venue’s capacity.” This only applies to single one – off events, moderated by the Local Authority and not to regular worship in churches. We have been reminded of the need to follow the guidelines that we have in place and to remember to use the hand sanitisers, wear face coverings and maintain the 2 metre social distancing rule.

Holy Communion will continue to be under one kind and priests will continue to wear a face covering, although it is now permitted to announce “The Body of Christ” for each communicant. Communion is to be distributed in the hand.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation: The use of confessional boxes has been prohibited because of the risks of virus transmission. One of the most important aspects for the use of the confessional is the ventilation of the space between penitents. If anyone would like to go to Confession please speak to me and arrangements can be made.

Home Visits: Any Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion who wish to take Holy Communion to the Sick and Housebound are asked to speak to me regarding the guidelines and regulations for this.

Mass Booking: Please remember that you will still need to book to come to Masses using the Diocesan booking system. Details of how to book for Mass can be found on the Diocesan Website by following the link: <https://massbooking.uk/> where you will first need to Sign Up (if you haven’t already done so) in order to book for Mass. This is a pre – booking system and is the only way of regulating those who come to Church. ***PLEASE NOTE: that you can only book on the Mass Booking System up to 7 days ahead, so some of the Masses will not be visible yet.*** The latest time to book for a Mass will be **TWO HOURS** before. **PLEASE NOTE: If there are only two people coming from the same household please book TWO SEATS and not a whole pew as this will allow more people to attend Mass.** If you do not have access to or are unable to use a computer you may book for Mass, by telephone, by calling Marie Calladine for The Assumption (Tel: 07850 978788), or at Long Eaton by calling Christina Boott on 07875 625974; but I would ask that you only use this option if you are unable to book online. Mass will be available at The Assumption, Beeston on ***Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays*** and, at St Francis, Long Eaton on ***Tuesdays***, all at ***10:00 am***. The Sunday obligation continues to be suspended, so if you are unsure about coming along, do not feel under any obligation to do so; and if you or someone in your household, displays symptoms of Covid19, then please do stay at home.

Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time: B.

(*READINGS: Ezekiel 17²²⁻²⁴; Psalm 91^{2-3, 13-16}; 2 Corinthians 5⁶⁻¹⁰ and; Mark 4²⁶⁻³⁴*)

The Kingdom of God is such an important theme in the Gospels. It is at the core of Our Lord's message and the central theme of His preaching and teaching. Jesus is the eternal King and He came to earth in order to establish His Kingdom, the Church. And at the end of history, after the Last Judgment, those of us who have lived and died in friendship with the King by striving to obey the laws of His Kingdom will enjoy the everlasting peace and prosperity that comes from His rule. This Kingdom is such a high priority for Jesus that He put it right in the middle of the one prayer that He taught His disciples, the core prayer for every Christian, when He taught us to pray: "Thy Kingdom come!"

But since we are fallen human beings, it is easy for us to misunderstand what this Kingdom is really all about. That is why Jesus used so many parables – images and analogies to help our minds get in tune with His mind, so that we have the right expectations about what following this King really involves. Jesus grew up in the rich agricultural plains of Galilee, where wheat and fruit trees grew in abundance. So, it was natural for Him to use such imagery for the Kingship of God which He was proclaiming. The growing parables in today's Gospel passage reveal two essential characteristics about life in the Kingdom of God, two things that we need always to keep in mind so that we can live deeply our friendship with the King.

First, the very life of our relationship with God comes not from ourselves, but from God. Where does the power of growth in the seeds come from? Not from the farmer. It comes from the Creator. Likewise, if God were not constantly breathing His grace into our lives, no matter how hard we may try, we would never be able to grow in intimacy with Him – just as the farmer could never make a rock grow into an ear of corn. Our life of union with God depends primarily on God. We cannot achieve Christian success based solely on our own efforts. But the good news is that we don't have to, since God is always at work, even while we are asleep. As one of the Psalms says: "*In vain is your earlier rising, your going later to your rest, you who toil for the bread you eat, when He pours gifts on His beloved while they slumber.*" God is the source of our Christian lives and no matter how hard we may try to make our lives worthwhile, without His help, we can do nothing. Or, perhaps, Jesus meant that God's purposes are still accomplished in spite of our own feeble and fumbling efforts.

Then we have the mustard seed. This could have been a reply to His discouraged disciples – or His critical opponents – that this motley little group of undistinguished peasants, fisherman and tax – collectors would grow into God's own mighty tree. This is the first hint that Our Lord's mission is to all nations and not just to Israel. All nations would nest and come to find a home in its branches, just as in today's First Reading they nest in the branches of the great cedar tree. Both images though, show that God is in charge and, that He has great plans that will be fulfilled despite our inadequacies.

Secondly, growth in holiness; life lived in communion with God, is a gradual process; it takes time. We Christians are not like some Hollywood heroes, who go from wimp to world champion in the course of a mere ninety minutes. Rather, Christians develop their incomparable wisdom, joy, courage and self – mastery through a patient and consistent effort to cooperate with God over the long haul. This is sometimes hard for us to accept, and it is even harder for us to understand, because our culture has developed such an immediate gratification and fast – results mentality. But developing a beautiful soul is not like making a cup of instant coffee. Instead, it is like building a beautiful cathedral.

The magnificent Gothic cathedrals that still decorate the European countryside and still leave even the most modern visitor speechless and awestruck, were not the work of a few days or even a few years. They took decades to construct, sometimes even more than a century. There are cases where three or even four generations of stone – masons worked on the same cathedral. Think about that for a moment. That means that your grandfather, your father, you and your son would have all worked on the same building, each one of you for your whole working – life. But only your son would have had the satisfaction of seeing the finished product. This is an almost perfect analogy for the growth of God’s Kingdom in our soul. It is not something we can work hard at, put in some extra hours at the weekend, pull a couple of all – nighters and then cross it off our to – do list. No, it is the adventure of a lifetime, it is our life – project, the only project, in fact, that really matters.

The growth of God’s Kingdom in our hearts and in the world depends primarily on God and secondarily on us and it is a gradual process that takes time. These are the pearls of wisdom that Christ wants to communicate to us through His parables. And if we reflect on them and pray over them, we will begin to discover their many consequences and implications. One of these is especially relevant in today’s stress – flooded culture: It is the real reason behind our frustration and discouragement. Frustration and discouragement can never come from God. God is not up in heaven tapping His watch and raising His eyebrows because we haven’t become perfect saints already. God designed human nature and so He understands that our growth in holiness takes time. He is the wise farmer that tends His crops patiently and carefully, knowing that the harvest will come, with time. So, if discouragement and frustration don’t come from God, where do they come from?

Often from our own unholy pride, our own spiritual immaturity, urged on by the devil. If our prayer life doesn’t produce spiritual fireworks right away, if our bad habits don’t go away with a snap of our fingers, if we don’t understand perfectly all of Catholic doctrine after a weekend conference, we tend to slacken off in our efforts or even give up entirely, like spoiled children. Humble children who trust their parents are much less likely to have anger management problems. Wise Christians who truly trust in God’s action and God’s pace are much less likely to give in to the temptations of discouragement and frustration. Imagine a farmer or gardener standing out in the field and yelling down at some recently planted seeds: “Grow faster, you fools! Faster!!” It is an absurd picture, but in the spiritual life it is a common one: every time we get frustrated at our slow progress or God’s apparently slow pace and response, we are uselessly screaming at the seeds to speed up their growth.

The image of growth, of plants and seeds, isn’t just a New Testament image. It is also how the Old Testament describes the righteous and wise believer in the Lord, the one who patiently follows God’s lead, trusting that true growth comes from God and advances at God’s pace. Here is how Jeremiah puts it, *“A blessing on the man who puts his trust in the Lord, with the Lord for his hope. He is like a tree by the waterside that thrusts its roots into the stream: when the heat comes it feels no alarm, its foliage stays green, it has no worries in a year of drought, and never ceases to bear fruit.”*

And today’s Psalm adds even another dimension to that image. If it is true that our spiritual growth, the growth of God’s Kingdom in the world and in our hearts, is truly a supernatural reality, then it doesn’t follow completely the natural rhythms of growth. In nature, life comes and goes; we grow and flourish, then we wither and die. But not in supernatural realm, not when God’s grace is the principle and source of our life. And so the Psalm tells us that the faithful followers of the Lord will, *“still bear fruit when they are old, still full of sap, still green.”* As we make our way into this new Liturgical Season of Ordinary Time after high season of Easter, let us see it as a Season full of opportunities for spiritual and moral growth, let us keep these images in mind. They will help us navigate through the dangerous temptations of discouragement and frustration. And they will help motivate us to stay close to God through prayer and the Sacraments, even when prayer and the Sacraments may seem to be dull or inconvenient. And in the end, staying as close as possible to God is what really matters.