



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

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TIMES OF MASSES AND OTHER SERVICES: 21ST SUNDAY OF THE YEAR: B

Twenty – First Week of Ordinary Time: 22nd – 28th August 2021 (Weekday Cycle Year I / Psalter Week I)

Saturday 21st August:	<i>St Pius X, Pope (memoria)</i>	<i>Your Prayers are requested for those who are sick:</i> Isobel Alana Barnes, Marica Borsos, Margaret Brown, Pat Constable, Francesca Lina Craparotta, Jim & Margaret Dougan, Fr Theodore Gomes, Ann Harrison, Fr Peter Harvey, Andrea Hoffman, Farzin Kazem, Breeda Keaney, Bob O' Donnell, Anne – Marie Reid, Simpson Family, Evelyn Venning, John Wilcox, Joan Williams and Bob Wilson.
Mass;	<i>Pro Populo; People of the Parish</i>	
Sunday 22nd August:	<i>Twenty – First Sunday of the Year</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.
10:00 am: Mass;	<i>Private Intention (G T - Ross)</i>	
Monday 23rd August:	<i>Weekday Feria</i>	
10:00 am: Mass;	<i>Welfare of Miss Dorothy Reus (Sinclair)</i>	
Tuesday 24th August:	<i>St Bartholomew, Apostle (Feast)</i>	
10:00 pm: Mass (St Francis);	<i>John Joseph O' Reilly RIP (Rose)</i>	
Wednesday 25th August:	<i>Weekday Feria</i>	
10:00 am: Mass;	<i>Deceased Clergy of the Parish (Foundation Mass)</i>	
Thursday 26th August:	<i>Blessed Dominic of the Mother of God, Priest (memoria)</i>	
Mass;	<i>Pro Populo; People of the Parish</i>	
Friday 27th August:	<i>St Monica, (memoria)</i>	
10:00 am: Mass;	<i>Robert & Kathleen Dixon (Wedding Anniversary)</i>	
Saturday 28th August:	<i>St Augustine, Bishop & Doctor (memoria)</i>	
Mass;	<i>Holy Souls</i>	
Sunday 29th August:	<i>Twenty – Second Sunday of the Year</i>	
10:00 am: Mass;	<i>David R Morgans RIP (23rd Anniversary) (Harvey)</i>	
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 *Fr John Cairns* who died on **Monday 16th August 2021**, at his family home in Derry. Fr John had battled with cancer for several years and his Requiem Mass took place in Derry on **Thursday 19th August 2021**. We remember him, his family and his former Parishioners at St Mary's, Marple Bridge, at this sad time. May he rest in peace.

POOR CLARES: The Sisters send their sincere thanks to parishioners for the gifts and donations they received from you when I visited on 26th July. They are continuing to work hard with their fund raising for the new building and one of the things they are doing is baking and on Monday I collected the first orders for our Parish. The following are cakes and other things that can be ordered from them: BEST CHOCOLATE FUDGE CAKE – CRUNCHY TOP LEMON CAKE – BANANA AND MIXED FRUIT CAKE – CARROT AND PINEAPPLE CAKE – FLAPJACK – RHUBARB CAKE – SAMOSA – APPLE PIE – FRIED RICE WITH EGG CURRY – PILAU RICE WITH EGG CURRY. These need to be ordered by **THIS Monday, 23rd August 2021** for collection on **Monday 30th August 2021**. There is no set price for the above but the Sisters request that you give a donation towards their fund raising. Please either phone your order to me on 07774 213712 or use the form on the notice board in the church. – *Diane Wilson*

UPDATE FROM THE SVP: During the Year 2020 / 2021 the SVP has continued to support the following Charities: – *Jericho Road* £ 99. 78 (Clothing); *Hope Foodbank* £ 314. 10 (Food donation and monetary); *Canaan Trust* £ 100. 00; *SVP Lebanon Appeal* £ 200. 00; *SVP India Corona Virus Appeal* £ 200. 00; *Local Women's Refuge* £ 143. 77 (Food). I wanted to Thank the Parish on behalf of the SVP for your continued generosity – *Marie Calladine - SVP President*.

CHURCH COLLECTIONS AND GIFT AID: Thank you to all those who continue to support the Parish financially, whether by cash, cheque or Standing Order. A special thank you to those of you who Gift Aid your offering; over the past tax year we have claimed back **£ 7013. 13** in tax from your offering. If you have any questions about Gift Aid, either about an existing Declaration or starting a new one please do not hesitate to contact me on (07850 978788) *Marie Calladine - Parish Gift Aid Co - Ordinator*.

TREETOPS HOSPICE: would like to invite you to a special event to remember loved ones – *Time To Remember* will take place on **Thursday 9th September 2021 at 6:30 pm** via Zoom, providing an opportunity to come together online for around 15 minutes. The event will be led by our Spiritual Support Team and is for anyone who has been bereaved either recently or some time ago. As part of the event there will be a slide show with the names of loved ones appearing, if you would like to have the name of someone special included, please email their first and last name to cc@treetopshospice.org.uk by **Monday 6th September 2021**. Zoom Meeting details: <https://treetopshospice-org-uk.zoom.us/j/95986697880?pwd=Y2ZJMFFQVDYrcncyVzcuUG9yL1dDZz09> Meeting ID: 959 8669 7880 and the Passcode: 315171

CAFOD RESPONDING TO MULTIPLE EMERGENCIES ACROSS THE WORLD: CAFOD is responding to significant crises across the world this week. We are working with local Church organisations in Haiti to deliver emergency aid to people affected by the catastrophic earthquake and tropical storm. In the tragic situation in Afghanistan, we are working to ensure the safety of our local partners and their communities. We are supporting local aid workers to deliver urgent food and water supplies to hundreds of thousands of people facing extreme hunger in Tigray in Ethiopia, South Sudan and north – east Nigeria. You can read more about how we can all express solidarity with our sisters and brothers affected by these emergencies on the CAFOD website: <https://cafod.org.uk/News/Emergencies-news>. Your compassion, generosity and prayers have helped us to stand together and enable us to continue to support communities in these difficult times. Thank you. – *Maggie Mairura Community Participation Coordinator - CAFOD Nottingham*.

GUIDANCE FROM THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF ENGLAND: Based on the guidance which has been given by the Catholic Bishops' Conference for England and Wales (CBCEW), the following points remain unchanged for the time being:

1. **Prevailing Local Conditions:** All places of worship are asked to consider the prevailing local conditions for the virus. Special consideration should be given to rates at which people are being vaccinated in the locality, the prevalence of new variants of the virus, the local rates of hospital admissions and any local public health advice. In most of our Diocesan geographical area cases are on the rise. And vaccination uptakes in some city areas are very low, especially those areas with a diverse ethnic mix. An overview of data (but often a week behind) can be seen here: <https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/details/cases?areaType=region&areaName=East%20Midlands> you can use the options on the side to swap between cases, healthcare, vaccination & deaths and use the filters at the top (Cases in ...) to swap to Regions or Local Authority areas.
2. **Mitigations:** It is important to mitigate against the risks of virus transmission. Although the vaccine rollout programme is very successful to date, over 85% of adults having had one dose and 64% two doses, the risk of transmission is still live and there are enough people not protected by vaccination to result in significant hospitalisations. However, HM Government has clearly stated that the progression from infection to hospitalisation and ultimately to deaths has been appreciably reduced through the vaccine programme. Most people admitted to hospital currently are only partially vaccinated or not vaccinated at all and communities should continue to encourage people to participate in the vaccination programme. Mask wearing will still help protect others as vaccination does not stop you passing it on, it just reduces the transmissions. Hands, Face, Space, Ventilate is still key. General cleaning, along with Covid cleaning, will continue and we will continue to provide hand sanitiser at entrances and exits and face coverings are still strongly recommended to be worn by those in Church.
3. **Social Distancing and Capacity:** While legal requirements ended on 19th July 2021, isolating from close contacts does not. If there is no distancing and a subsequent positive case then people could be advised to isolate. (Changes based on vaccinations do not come in until 16th August 2021). We have been advised to consider increasing capacity slowly so that people can adjust and consider the infection rate in our area in making a decision. The Mass Booking website will still be running over the summer and this this will be used for managing capacity.
4. **Celebration of Holy Mass:** The following is recommended for the celebration of Holy Mass from the 19th July 2021 within the churches and communities in England and Wales. At this time, it is not recommended that Holy Water stoups are refilled. Should people wish to receive Holy Water, it is recommended they speak to the Parish Priest. Ministers for the celebration of Holy Mass can be deployed such as servers and readers. It is recommended that the physical Sign of Peace remain suspended as it is not an integral part of the Mass and its omission will help to reduce physical contact between people during the celebration. Holy Communion will continue to be under one kind and the ministers will continue to sanitise their hands beforehand and wear a face covering whilst distributing. Holy Communion is recommended to be distributed in the hand.
5. **Other Sacraments: *Baptisms, Marriages and Funerals;*** There is no restriction on the number of people that can attend Baptisms, Marriages and Funerals in the Church. Marriages in the form of a Nuptial Mass should observe the recommendations for the Celebration of Holy Mass. Those within a Marriage Service outside of Mass should apply the usual norms. There is no restriction on the number of people that can attend Funerals in the Church. Funerals in the form of a Requiem Mass will also observe the recommendations for the Celebration of Holy Mass. For all Baptisms, Marriages and Funerals, however, the safe capacity of the Church, within the guidelines of safe distancing for those from different households will be observed.
Celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation; Please speak to me if you wish to go to Confession.

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.

If you would like further clarification please speak to me.

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. **TO HELP THE STEWARDS PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU ARRIVE FOR MASS IN GOOD TIME BEFORE MASS BEGINS.**

CIRCUMSTANCES ALLOWING IT IS HOPED THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO INCREASE THE CAPACITY OF BOTH CHURCHES FROM THE BEGINNING OF SEPTEMBER 2021 AND ALSO HAVE A SECOND SUNDAY MASS AVAILABLE AT ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI, LONG EATON.

Twenty - First Sunday in Ordinary Time: B.

(READINGS: Joshua 24^{1-2, 15-18}; Psalm 33^{2-3, 16-17}; Ephesians 5²¹⁻³² and; John 6⁶⁰⁻⁶⁹)

Today we are presented with a profound and yet, disturbing mystery. St John tells us, in today's Gospel passage, that our Lord's teaching about the Eucharist, which we have been following over the past few Sundays, was so difficult and so shocking, that "many of His disciples" simply refused to accept it. As a result, they left Jesus, stopped going with Him and returned to their former lives.

Picture the scene. A large crowd of people surrounds Our Lord. Many of them witnessed the incredible miracle of the multiplication of the loaves just the day before. And yet, when He tells them about the Eucharist, about His plan to become truly present under the appearances of bread and wine, so that His divine life will become our nourishment, they turn their backs on Him. God's creatures turn their backs on their Creator! We can only imagine how painful that was for Our Lord. And so He looks at His closest disciples, the Twelve, the ones He has chosen to become the foundation stones of His Church. He doesn't offer some kind of watered down explanation of the Eucharist in order to convince them to stick around. He simply asks them: "What about you, do you want to go away too?"

It was a moment of crisis. The Twelve didn't understand, rationally speaking, the mysterious doctrine of the Eucharist any more completely than anyone else. So why did they continue to follow the Lord? Because they trusted in Him, in His Person. They put more faith in the Person of Jesus Christ, the Lord, than in their own limited ability to understand God. And that was a wise thing to do. By consciously exercising their faith in the midst of that crisis and not just depending on their own limited and imperfect understanding, they lifted their spiritual maturity to a whole new level.

Why do so "many disciples," as St John puts it, decide to stop following our Lord after His explanation of the Eucharist as the "living bread," while at the same time the Twelve stay with Him?

The question touches upon one of the great mysteries of our existence: human freedom. Somehow, in the depths of the human heart, God leaves us free to accept or reject the gift of faith. No one can manufacture faith in God, it is a gift that always begins with God and only comes from God: "no one can come to me unless it is granted him by my Father." But the choice to accept or reject that gift, to follow Jesus or turn our back on Him, remains with each individual: "What about you, do you want to go away too?"

Jesus Christ is the Lord of life and of history, but He refuses to force His rule on hearts that want to "stop going with Him" and return to their former way of life. God gives us the gift of life, but He leaves us free to administer it as we wish, either in communion with Him or not. Try to imagine how Jesus spoke the words, "What about you, do you want to go away too?" Try to picture His expression as He looked into the faces of His chosen Twelve. He cared deeply about them; He had handpicked them to be His closest companions.

He had opened up His heart to them and now, as other followers said "no thanks," giving up on Him, He looked to the Twelve with a tinge of sadness, yes, but also perhaps with apprehension. Would they abandon Him too? How near God draws to us in Jesus Christ! He humbles Himself, makes Himself weak and vulnerable and almost powerless in the face of our freedom. He doesn't want mindless robots or heartless slaves; He wants friends, forever.

Throughout the ages, this basic and fundamental fact of Christianity has come across exceptionally well in art. In every period of Church history, Jesus is most frequently portrayed in one of two ways. First, as a little baby in the arms of His Mother, Mary. This isn't just an artistic symbol; this really is how God came into the world, as a helpless little baby. But what a strange way to depict the all - powerful Creator of the universe! And yet, from the perspective of our Christian faith, it makes perfect sense. God doesn't want to intimidate us into following Him. He wants to win over our friendship. So He doesn't arrive with fire and thunder; rather, He smiles at us with the irresistible charm of a child.

The second way that Christian artists have most often depicted Christ is on the Cross. There, as He suffers and dies, we see not the weakness of a frail divinity, but on the Cross we see the unconquerable mercy of the God, who wanted to prove beyond any doubt that His love for us truly is personal, determined and forgiving. This is a God who really cares about us and cares about how we respond to His invitations.

The situation in today's Gospel is not that much different to today. The "many disciples" who stopped following Jesus were not ready to commit and to trust. They were "keeping their options open." But if we reflect properly on the message of the Gospel, "keeping your options open" is not the path to happiness, wholeness or even holiness.

However, I think that, for the most part, we live in a generation that is not ready to commit. A generation that is short on trust. And that is not difficult to understand. We see the wreckage caused by the sexual revolution and its dissolution of the trust between men and women, both within marriage and outside of it. We have seen so many public officials betray their oath of office and Priests and Bishops betray the vows they swore to Christ and His Church at their Ordination. We have seen teachers betray the truth because of convenience or cowardice or an obsession to political correctness. And so, if we are a generation that finds it hard to trust and thus hard to commit, then that is very understandable. But that is not a persuasive argument; nor is it convincing one.

Perhaps this "trust deficit" is one of the reasons why so many people found Pope St John Paul II such a compelling figure. Here was a commitment embodied in an irresistible way – particularly towards the end of his life, as the Pope's physical difficulties became, through his commitment, an instrument of preaching the Gospel of life and of God's powerful and transforming love. Unlike popular culture, the Pope didn't pander to or indulge the individual – he challenged you: to never settle for less than the greatness of the soul; that God has made it possible for you to live, because of Jesus Christ. And at the same time he demonstrated, with his life, that he asked of you nothing that he hadn't asked of himself. He asked for no commitment that he had not made and no struggle that he had not struggled through.

Today we could all ask ourselves: How would I characterize my relationship with God? Or, how would an outside observer, someone watching me live my day-to-day existence, characterize that relationship? Is my relationship with God a real friendship, a living, ongoing, personal exchange? Or have I maybe fallen into a kind of mechanical relationship, a superficial and routine relationship? God will not reject us if we have fallen into routine – He doesn't pout and get sulky if we neglect Him: because His love is too generous for that. But He would much prefer our friendship. There are many things we can do to make our relationship with God into a true friendship. But maybe just think about two simple ones.

The first is constantly deepening our life of prayer, our own personal prayer. Prayer is more than just saying prayers; prayer is conversing with God, speaking with Him heart to heart. We listen to Him by reading and meditating on the Scriptures and, we respond by praising, thanking, adoring and petitioning him.

The second very practical way to move our relationship away from something mechanical or routine and closer to a real friendship is by learning from the experts: the saints. We have a tendency to think that saints were born saints. But that is not true: saints were born sinners, just like us. They lost their temper, gave in to temptation and faced agonizing challenges, exactly like we do. We can learn so much by reading about how they managed to develop a deep, life-and-world-transforming friendship with God from such humble and normal beginnings. And there is no shortage of available material.

Jesus renews His commitment to us in every celebration of the Eucharist. So, let us thank Him for loving us enough to desire our friendship and let us promise to let Him have that friendship with us – every single day.