



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: 23RD SUNDAY OF THE YEAR: B

Twenty – Third Week of Ordinary Time: 5th – 11th September 2021 (Weekday Cycle Year I / Psalter Week III)

Sunday 5th September:	<i>Twenty – Third Sunday of the Year</i>	Your Prayers are requested for those who are sick: 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.
9:00 am: Mass;	Laura Benson RIP (1 st Anniversary)	
11:00 am: Mass (St Francis);	Pro Populo; People of the Parish	
Monday 6th September:	<i>Weekday Feria</i>	
10:00 am: Mass;	Liz & Robert Powell (Jane)	
Tuesday 7th September:	<i>Weekday Feria</i>	
10:00 am: Mass (St Francis);	Christian Friends in Ethiopia; Members of the EECMY (Spittle)	
Wednesday 8th September:	<i>The Birthday of The BVM</i>	
10:00 am: Mass;	Burn Family (King)	
Thursday 9th September:	<i>Weekday Feria</i>	
Mass;	Pro Populo; People of the Parish	
Friday 10th September:	<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.
10:00 am: Mass;	Trevor Jones RIP	
Saturday 11th September:	<i>Weekday Feria</i>	
Mass;	Private Intention	
Sunday 12th September:	<i>Twenty – Fourth Sunday of the Year</i>	
9:00 am: Mass;	Samuel James Dowling RIP	
11:00 am: Mass (St Francis);	Andrea & Alain (Wedding Intentions)	
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.

POOR CLARES: Many thanks to everyone who sent food and donations to the Sisters, they are so appreciative and grateful for what you all do and they want you to know that you are in their prayers

daily. The Sisters are busy fund raising because they have to rebuild the Monastery at Bulwell and one of the things they are doing is baking. The following are available to order: **Best Chocolate Fudge Cake; Banana and Mixed Fruit Cake; Crunchy Top Lemon Cake; Carrot and Pineapple Cake; Flapjack; Rhubarb Cake; Samosa; Apple Pie; Fried Rice with Egg Curry and; Pilau Rice with Egg Curry.** These need to be ordered by **Monday 20th September 2021** for delivery the following Monday. The items are not priced but the Sisters ask that a donation is made for them. There is an order form in the Narthex or I can be contacted on 07774 213712 – thank you again for your continued support – *Diane Wilson*

MISSIO/RED BOXES: The Autumn edition of MISSION TODAY is available to collect from the Narthex please help yourself to a copy – it’s an interesting read. If you have a Mill Hill Red Box could you bring it in to be emptied please. Many thanks – *Diane Wilson Parish MISSIO Secretary.*

MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING: We are having a Macmillan Coffee Morning on **Saturday 25th September 2021.** It will be held in the Hall from **10:00 am – 12 noon.** Last year we were unable to hold the Coffee Morning due to Covid and so we are hoping to have a bumper event this year. Please make a note of the date and time and come along and support this very worthwhile cause. Cakes, helpers and any donations would be greatly appreciated.

CAFOD RESPONDING TO AFGHAN REFUGEES: CAFOD are keen to respond to the Afghan refugees and invite Parishioners to respond. We have been in touch with both Nottingham and Derby refugee groups and we have a list of items that are required: **Camping Items:** Tents (2 – 8 person); Sleeping bags (for adults and children); Thick blankets and; Torches. **Cooking Equipment:** large pots and pans and Kettles (non – electric to be used over a fire). **Women’s Clothes:** Warm jackets S, M and L (especially black and long); Warm leggings and joggers S, M and L; Waterproof jackets; Socks (new or used as long as in good condition) and; New underwear. **Children’s Clothes:** Children’s warm leggings / joggers ages 5 – 16 years; Children’s waterproof coats; New underwear; New socks; Children’s long sleeved tops and jumpers ages 5 – 10 years. **Shoes:** Trainers (women and children). **Miscellaneous Items:** Smartphones, phone chargers and power banks. **Hygiene items:** Face cream and moisturiser and Body Lotion. Any of the above items should be brought to Church before the 12th September 2021. – *Maggie Mairura Community Participation Coordinator – CAFOD Nottingham.*

TALK ON ASSISTED SUICIDE BY BARONESS GREY – THOMPSON: On **Thursday 9th September 2021** at **7:30pm**, Baroness Grey – Thompson will deliver a talk entitled, ‘*Assisted Dying: A Win for Autonomy or a Loss for Civil Society?*’ Baroness Grey – Thompson, is a former Paralympian, disability rights campaigner, Member of the House of Lords and opponent of legalised physician assisted – suicide who will address the Diocese on this vital moral issue, via Zoom. If you would like to attend this exclusive talk, please visit: www.dioceseofnottingham.uk in order to register.

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 DO NOT JUST TURN UP FOR MASS AND EXPECT TO BE ALLOWED INTO CHURCH, AS HAPPENED LAST SUNDAY. IT IS NOT FAIR TO THE STEWARDS, NOR THE OTHER PEOPLE WHO HAVE TAKEN THE TIME TO BOOK.**

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.

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 at 9:00 am, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays all at 10:00 am*** and, at St Francis, Long Eaton on ***Sunday at 11:00 am and Tuesdays 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 AT LEAST 5 MINUTES BEFORE MASS BEGINS WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL.

From ***THIS Sunday, 5th September 2021***, onwards, there will be an increased capacity for both the Assumption, Beeston and St Francis of Assisi, Long Eaton. This means that it should be easier to book a seat for Mass.

Masses on Sunday, from that date, will be ***9:00 am at Beeston and 11:00 am at Long Eaton***. This is not to say that conditions have returned to a pre – Covid situation and the above instructions still apply regarding booking for Mass. We are still being ***very cautious*** about how we continue to use our Churches and the fact that Covid has not simply gone away!

The idea at the moment is that we continue to move forward carefully and slowly to see how things develop. With this in mind we will continue to have stewards, a one – way system and hand – sanitisers at both the entrance and exits to the Church; which you are encouraged to use.

For the safety of yourselves and your fellow Parishioners I would also request and encourage you to wear a face mask when you are in Church (*exceptions apply to those with medical conditions*).

Although the need to socially distance is no longer 2 metres, I would ask that you keep a sensible space from anyone who is not in your household/bubble while you are in Church.

Twenty – Third Sunday in Ordinary Time: B.

(READINGS: Isaiah 35⁴⁻⁷; Psalm 145⁷⁻¹⁰; James 2¹⁻⁵ and; Mark 7³¹⁻³⁷)

Our Gospel for this Sunday is that wonderful story of Jesus healing the deaf mute. The story is best known for Jesus use of that term "*Ephphatha*" meaning, "Be opened." It is a story which reflects a major aspect of the life of Jesus, who was well – known to be a wonder – worker. That fact is testified to in all four Gospels, where Jesus is consistently concerned with healing the sick.

We might ask though, "Why didn't Jesus just snap His fingers and cure that man's deafness?" That is all He really needed to have done, isn't it? After all He is the Divine Physician. He is the greatest miracle worker ever. All He would have to have done was to snap His fingers and then, that man's ears would have been opened, that man's tongue would have been loosened. But instead think of all the fuss and bother that He goes through. The people come and ask him to lay hands upon the man. Then Jesus takes him aside. And then He puts His fingers in the deaf man's ears. Then He spits and He rubs it on the man's tongue. Then He looks up to heaven and He sighs. Then He yells out, "*Ephphatha* – Be opened." Why? Why all these moves? Why all these gestures? Why all these signs? Why all these actions, why all this complication?

But then I think that Jesus wanted not only to heal the deaf man, but also, as usual, to teach us a lesson. It is perhaps included in the Gospel because it has such symbolic overtones as well. And this is often the case. Our Lord prefers to work through signs, through intermediaries, through words and gestures and touch and actions. That is the way He prefers to help us and to heal us. Of all the things Our Lord did, certain ones are remembered and certain ones are included in the Gospels. The ones that are included have a wider symbolic overtone or application and I think that is especially true here. I wonder if Jesus is not, in fact, giving us a Catechism lesson on the Sacraments. The Seven Sacraments of the Church.

In our belief as Catholics, you see, Jesus still, right now heals us and helps us just like He did with that deaf man. Through words and through touch and through water and through bread and wine and oil, in the Seven Sacraments of the Church. He still repeats the episode of today's Gospel. And He takes us aside and He touches our ears and our mouth; He touches our head and He sighs and He speaks in the Seven Sacraments of the Church.

In the waters of Baptism. In the expression of sorrow in the words of Absolution and Penance. In bread and wine at the Eucharist. In the Oil of Chrism at Confirmation. The Oil of the Sick in the anointing of the infirm. In the exchange of words in Matrimony and the laying on of hands at Ordination. Jesus still helps and heals. He still opens our ears and loosens our tongue in the Seven Sacraments of the Church. Pope St Leo the Great wrote, "All the visible realities of our Redeemer have passed over to the Sacraments."

Those of us who have the high honour and the call and the duty to administer the Sacraments often solemnly recall that we do not do them. Jesus, Jesus acts through us. However unworthy and, you can be sure that we are. After all, if He can use spittle to open the ears of the man in today's Gospel, He can use me to act in His Person; to change bread and wine into His Body and Blood, to forgive sins, to wash a soul clean in the cleansing waters of Baptism and to Anoint the sick.

Those Seven Sacraments of the Church are the miracle of Christ now. Through them Jesus still expels demons and multiplies bread for the hungry. He still raises a dead soul to life and strengthens weak legs so that they may be confirmed in the power of the faith. He still opens eyes and ears. He still soothes the sick. And He still says, "Do this in memory of me." That is on the level of the spiritual; that is how the grace of God is available to us right now.

The deaf mute is symbolic of someone who is inattentive to the things of the spirit. He is unable to hear the Word of God, so I think he is a figure who has great relevance for us today. There is an increasing level of hostility today to the Church, to the Word of God and the things of the Spirit. Our increasingly secularised society refuses to hear or listen to the Word of God. The success of

science means that we are able to master nature in a way that no generation before us has been able to do. This can lead to a distortion that reality is, or can only be, measured by what science and technology can do. Religion then becomes relegated to the realms of superstition, placed on the same level as fairies, Martians and Father Christmas. There is no attempt to even engage in dialogue; instead we are subjected to sympathetic mockery.

We are all well aware that science and engineering have given us so much. You have touch screen technology and, in some cases, now you only have to use your voice – you speak and issue a command and something happens. But guess what, God has been doing that since He created the world. Just read the first chapter of the Book of Genesis and see how the Omnipotent God is able to speak and create. But there is also so much more to God that no matter how hard we try, mankind can never match Him. God as the Bible speaks of Him is not an item in the world. He is not one being among many. Not one of the things that our minds can control or our eyes can see. The Bible speaks of, “The Lord the God of Israel is a hidden God,” or, “No one can see God and live.” When Moses asked for God’s name the Lord replies, “I am who I am.” Moses tried to categorise God; to grasp Him, to understand Him, to get a name by which he could control Him. God must be one of them. But the answer that God gives, “I am who I am,” undermines this idea and way of thinking.

All this is true because God is the Creator of the world and hence prior to and greater than any worldly reality. God is not a conditioned being, but rather, as St Thomas Aquinas said, “The sheer act of being itself.” God is the unconditioned reality that precedes, transcends and permeates all conditioned things.

The great scientists and philosophers tell us that the mind seeks the truth. But God isn’t one of the true things that the mind might find. God is the truth itself which has already seized the mind whenever it searches for true things. Think of that deep passion for the truth that has gripped the mind of any great philosopher or scientist. That passion for unconditional truth: “I will seek the truth no matter what. I will seek the truth no matter where the journey leads me.” God is not so much one of the things you might find; He is the condition required for the possibility of knowing anything at all. To be religious is to be sensitive to this illusive but compelling dimension of reality. This is why we sometimes speak of God as being seen more out of the corner of your eye. St Augustine said, “If you understand, then that isn’t God.” If your mind can grasp it, that is something in the world. It is why we talk about grace and free gift. God is never taken hold of, rather He takes hold of us. Our Lord says in John’s Gospel, “It is not you who chose me; rather it is I who chose you.” There is that principle of the primacy of supernatural grace.

So, to return to our Gospel, notice again how the deaf and dumb man is cured. Jesus takes him off away from the crowd. One reason that we can’t hear the things of the Spirit is that perhaps we are spending far too much time in the city; in the place of common or worldly opinion. Just think of the people in the midst of our very secularised society. When all they are focused on are the things that their minds and their senses can control. Will they understand God – No. Will they be sensitive to the things of the Spirit – No; they can’t. And so, Jesus leads this man into a new space; it’s the space of the Church. And almost literally He hooks him up to Himself. Jesus puts His fingers in the man’s ears and then spitting touches his tongue. It is almost as if He is plugging Himself into this man. He is establishing a conduit, a link, between this man and the Spirit of God. He is allowing the grace of God to break through this man’s deafness. So how do we hear the things of the Spirit in our over – secularised world; when we have often grown so deaf to it? We need to enter into that new space; the space of the Church. And we need to be plugged into Jesus Christ, who becomes the conduit to us of the grace of God. “*Ephphatha*; Be opened,” says the Lord, to the deaf mute and to each one of us.