



# A WARM WELCOME TO THE PARISH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Beeches Green • STROUD • GL5 4AA • (01453) 762442

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## Seventh Week of Easter

**Sunday Cycle Year B, Weekday Cycle Year 1, Psalter Week 3**

Date	Mass Times	Celebrations	Intentions
<b>Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> May</b>	6:30pm ( <i>Saturday</i> ) 8:30am ( <i>Painswick</i> ) 10:00am	<b>Seventh Sunday of Easter</b>	Billy Boyd R.I.P. People of the Parish Florentino Pagazaurtundua
<b>Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May</b>	10:00am	Easter Weekday	Pat Stephens
<b>Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> May</b>	6:00pm	Easter Weekday	John Scobell R.I.P.
<b>Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> May</b>	10:00am	Saint Dunstan	Mervyn R.I.P & Maggie Ind and Family & Friends
<b>Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> May</b>	10:00am	Easter Weekday	Maureen Owen
<b>Friday 21<sup>st</sup> May</b>	10:00am	Easter Weekday	Holy Souls
<b>Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> May</b>	No morning Mass	Easter Weekday	
<b>Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> May</b>	6:30pm ( <i>Saturday</i> ) 8:30am ( <i>Painswick</i> ) 10:00am	<b>Solemnity of Pentecost</b>	Paddy Brosnan R.I.P. People of the Parish Mandy Tinker

**Diocesan Prayer Link:** We pray for the Cheltenham parishes of **Saint Thomas More** and **Saint Gregory the Great**.

**The public celebration of Mass continues this week.**

**The Sunday Obligation has not been reintroduced.**

**Social-distancing measures apply, including reduced capacity.**

(Sheets with details of these are available from our churches or with this newsletter online)

We pray for all those within our parish and their intentions including: the communities at the Monastery of Our Lady and Saint Bernard, Brownshill and More Hall, Randwick; and all those connected with our schools.

### Seventh Sunday of Easter

'Holy Father, keep those you have given me true to your name, so that they may be one like us.' These are the opening words from today's Gospel which is part of the prayer, often known as the Priestly Prayer, which, according to Saint John's Gospel, Jesus offered at the conclusion of the Last Supper. While the Gospels often speak of Jesus spending time in prayer, the content of that prayer is only rarely made explicit, and nowhere else at such length as in this Gospel chapter. This prayer can help understand the heart of Jesus better, his love for us, and what he wants for us. It can also help our hearts to be more attuned to his. Our second reading can also help with this, as Saint John's letter continues to explore true love.

While we are conscious that these days between the Ascension and Pentecost are an opportunity for prayer for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit, they are also days for action. The selection of Saint Matthias (whose feast day was last Friday) to complete the number of twelve apostles following the death of Judas, took place during these days according to the account we find in today's first reading from the Acts of the Apostles. As we consider this event it is good to remember that the prayer for the feast of day Matthias reminds us that we should be rejoicing at how the Father's love has been allotted to us.

### **YOUR PRAYERS** are asked for those who are housebound, in nursing homes, in hospital or sick including:

Maggie Kieron, Tony Allsopp, Mary Paul, Virginia Couchman, Edward Johnson, Janet Strong, Maria Capicotto, Peter Bouzyk, Antonietta Lazdans, Vivienne Tarn, Sarah Williams, Jean Barber Gisele Smart, Helen Hursthouse, Christopher Browne, Gerardo Capaldo, Michael Flint, Clare McDermott, Pat King, Margot Williams, June & John Privett, Olivia Bouzyk, Raphael Moore, Brian O'Donoghue, Mary Grant, Finley, Ursula Kyne, Imelda Kucharzyszyn, Kitty McCoy, Lisa Knight, Francis Kerrigan, Monika Smit, Pilar, Rebecca Frazier, Lucia Mirkovic, Joan O'Donoghue, Sister Quentin, Peter Ollis, Peter McCombie, Anne Allen, Sister Catherine, Bevan, Daryl Jackson, Lola Long, Grace Harper, Jamie Watt, Maggie, Woody, Thea Gregson, Peter Tay, Ann Enright, Jill Chapman, Janie Wilmot, Kevin Sivell, Theresa Finneran, Niall Walker, Murray Dolan, Cecilia Redgrave, Christopher & Clifford Browne, Victor Vincent, Stephen Carden, John Stephens, Phyllis Bruton, Marilyn Anderson, Chris Strong, Kate Thorley, Amanda Mullins, Paul O'Keith, Simon Terry, John Cibulskas, Anna Dowdeswell, Stephen & Paul Coupe, Anthea Van Venroy, Maisie McGinley and all their carers.

**Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for May concerns the world of finance.** Let us pray that those in charge of finance will work with governments to regulate the financial sphere and protect citizens from its dangers.

**World Communications Day** is this Sunday and is a day of prayer for right use of the media. There will be a **second collection** to support this work. The message from Pope Francis for this day, with the theme of "Come and See" (Jn 1:46). Communicating by Encountering People Where and as They Are' is available via the internet: [https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/communications/documents/papa-francesco\\_20210123\\_messaggio-comunicazioni-sociali.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/communications/documents/papa-francesco_20210123_messaggio-comunicazioni-sociali.html).

**Solemnity of Pentecost** is next weekend. This feast of the descent of the Holy Spirit can be seen as the birthday of the Church. It also marks the end of the Easter Season. The days between the solemnities of the Ascension and Pentecost are seen as a particular time to ask for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit as we remember the Blessed Virgin Mary gathered with other disciples of Jesus between these two events in the Upper Room. This is often seen as being the first Novena. Prayers and reflections for these days can be found at <https://cliftondiocese.com/novena/>.

*Come Holy Spirit,  
fill the hearts of your faithful  
and kindle in them the fire of your love.  
Send forth your Spirit  
and they shall be created.  
And you shall renew the face of the earth.  
O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit,  
did instruct the hearts of the faithful,  
grant that by the same Holy Spirit  
we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations,  
Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.*

**Rosary Marathon:** In response to the Holy Father's heartfelt wish, the month of May is being dedicated to a 'marathon' of prayer, to ask for the end of the pandemic, which has afflicted the world for more than a year now, and to ask for the resumption of social and work activities. Pope Francis wishes to involve all the Shrines around the world in this initiative, so that they may become vehicles of the prayer of the entire Church. The public rosary is due to be celebrated most days at 5:00pm English time (6:00pm Rome time). For more information, including a download with the daily locations and intentions, please visit <http://www.pcpne.va/content/pcpne/en/news/2021-04-23.html>. The Vatican Media YouTube Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dCDr9ft0Ym4>) is showing the daily celebrations.

**Dare to Dream:** Our diocesan programme continues during Eastertide. For more information and resources please visit <https://cliftondiocese.com/dare-to-dream/>.

**Holy Land:** Bishop Declan, who is the Lead Bishop for International Affairs for England and Wales, issued the following statement regarding the situation in the Holy Land:

*As people of peace, we pray for an end to the airstrikes, shooting, missile attacks, and communal violence engulfing the Holy Land.*

*Pope Francis reminds us that: "Every act of violence committed against a human being is a wound in humanity's flesh; every violent death diminishes us as people."*

*The local churches have clearly stated that peace requires justice. We echo their calls for an end to the occupation, discrimination and human rights violations that propagate violent attacks on civilians, standing in the way of a stable and peaceful future for Palestinians and Israelis.*

*We reaffirm our commitment to the internationally recognised status of Jerusalem, the Status Quo of its holy sites, and the equal rights of Jews, Christians and Muslims in the city.*

*At this critical time let us also offer our support to those humanitarian organisations working tirelessly to save lives and alleviate suffering.*

An interview with a parish priest in Gaza can be found at <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/gaza-priest-we-are-preparing-the-parish-in-case-people-need-to-take-refuge/>.

**Parish Information during Covid-19:** There is a separate sheet available with information regarding the celebration of Mass and other aspects of parish and sacramental life during this time (it is included as pages three and four of the version of the newsletter available from our website).

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## SITUATION REGARDING SUNDAY AND WEEKDAY MASSES

In common with the other bishops of England and Wales, Bishop Declan has issued a decree in light of the current Covid-19 situation. Within this decree it is clear that:

- The obligation of the faithful to attend Mass on a Sunday or Holy Day of Obligation is removed until further notice.
- The faithful may choose one of the following alternatives to attending Sunday Mass:
  - Taking part may include watching a Sunday Mass online, or on television, and so receive Holy Communion spiritually; OR
  - Reflecting on the Sunday Liturgical text, reading the Bible or saying the Rosary

Public Mass has resumed in our churches. If seeking to attend Mass please be aware that the following instructions apply (all measures are intended to enable people to confidently and safely participate in the celebration of Mass):

- The obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation is **not** being reintroduced at this time. Those who prefer not to come to the church for Mass at this time are not obliged to do so.
- Numbers are restricted so that the two-metre (or one metre plus) rule can be observed. There are **33 places** in Stroud. Some of these can be for more than one person if they are from the same household. The capacity at Painswick is **22 individuals**.
- Once the designated church capacity is reached further people may not be admitted.
- Social distancing must be maintained and face coverings/masks are to be worn (unless exempt). The mixing of households/support bubbles both inside and outside of the church must be in accord with current government and diocesan guidelines.
- Hand sanitiser will be available and must be used upon entering and leaving the church.
- Those attending Mass will have to use the pews/chairs as indicated by the stewards.
- The Mass will be adapted in various ways including the omission of: the prayers of the faithful; procession of the gifts; and the sign of peace. The collection will be taken at the end of Mass, although people are encouraged to use standing orders or online methods.
- Altar servers and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are not exercising their ministry during Mass at this time, and access to the sacristy before and after Mass will be limited to the priest, deacon and stewards. The sacred vessels will be prepared by the priest.
- There will be one reader for the first reading, psalm and second reading who will be provided with single-use gloves. The reader may remove their face covering/mask while actually reading.
- There will be no singing.
- Before the distribution of Holy Communion the priest will raise the Sacred Host and say: 'The Body of Christ', and then everyone may respond 'Amen'. He will then raise the chalice and say: 'The Blood of Christ', and then everyone may respond 'Amen'. This will remove the need for any dialogue when each communicant comes forward.
- **Holy Communion must be given silently in the hand only, with the communicant standing, and avoiding any physical contact. People should wait in their pews until instructed to move forward for Holy Communion by the stewards, always aware of the regulations on social distancing. When they approach the priest or deacon (or extraordinary minister of Holy Communion) they should do so with arms at 'full stretch' so that there is a good distance between the priest and the communicant. Their hands, palms upwards, one on top of the other, should be extended as flatly as possible. The communicant should unloop their face covering and consume the Sacred Host and then replace the face covering before moving back to their pew or chair in an orderly manner.**
- At Stroud there will be a designated route for entering and leaving the church, while
- At Painswick please observe social-distancing when entering or leaving.
- After Mass the church will be closed for cleaning.
- There are no toilet facilities available at this time.
- Directions from the priest, deacon and stewards must be followed.

A possible form of prayer for use when Mass cannot be publicly celebrated can be found at <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2020/03/No-Mass-A4.pdf>.

Sunday and daily Mass readings can be found at <https://www.universalis.com/mass.htm>. Sunday Mass and weekday Mass from Clifton Cathedral is available every day at 9:30am on our diocesan website [www.cliftondiocese.com](http://www.cliftondiocese.com). Celebrations from Rome can also be found on 'Vatican Media Live' on YouTube. Our Bishops' Conference website [www.cbcew.org.uk](http://www.cbcew.org.uk) is also a source for details of celebrations in our country and beyond.

### **Spiritual Communion: Prayer of Saint Alphonsus**

*My Jesus, I believe that you are present in this Holy Sacrament of the altar.  
I love you above all things and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul.  
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my soul  
so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and forever. Amen.*

### **OTHER INFORMATION**

While the parish administration continues, access to the parish office is restricted to appointment only. For those matters normally dealt with by the parish office please use the parish email or telephone 0784 249 5988 (Tuesday to Friday 10:00am – 3:00pm). The normal parish telephone number should be used to contact Father Gary.

**All parish groups and programmes are suspended until further notice.**

**There will continue to be a weekly newsletter available on the parish website.** Please make the details of the newsletter known to those who may not access the website.

**Prayer is always important.** Even when we cannot be physically close, prayer unites us. As well as traditional prayers known to us there are also resources online: [www.prayasyougo.org](http://www.prayasyougo.org) offers daily meditative prayer which some may find useful.

**First Holy Communion and Confirmation:** There is still no definite indication when it will be possible to prepare children for First Holy Communion or begin the programme for Confirmation in the normal way. If any parent or young person is particularly concerned about receiving these sacraments, they are welcome to discuss the situation with Father Gary.

**Baptisms and Marriages** cannot take place in the usual way at this time. For more information contact Father Gary or Deacon Steve.

**Funerals** may be celebrated within strict regulations. Arrangements may be made for a Mass *in memoriam* when congregations are allowed to gather safely.

**Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession)** is available in the church by appointment. It may not be possible to celebrate the sacrament before or after Mass as Father Gary has extra responsibilities in preparing for Mass which he cannot delegate at this time.

**Pastoral Visits** by clergy or lay people cannot take place in the normal way at present. Father Gary is happy to speak with people by telephone. Please contact Father Gary to request the Sacrament of the Sick.

**Parish Finances:** Although public Masses have resumed, and there is a collection at the end of the weekend Masses, we are encouraged to use methods which avoid physical cash if possible. Those who currently do not contribute via standing order may like to consider the following:

- Set up a standing order via online banking. Please contact the parish for the necessary details.
- Donate via the 'Paypal' button on the parish website. Donations can be gift-aided if applicable. You do not need your own paypal account to use this service. We believe that the cost to the parish for donating in this way is 1.4% and 20p per donation.

Some second collections are being taken at the end of Mass.

**Please speak with Father Gary regarding these or other aspects of parish life or sacramental celebration.**