

BLESSINGS

In sacred Scripture, **blessing** has a number of different, but complementary, meanings. It's used as a way of expressing praise: 'I will bless the Lord at all times' (Psalm 33:1); it's also used to express the desire that good fortune should be with a person or thing: 'By the labour of your hands you shall eat. You will be blessed and prosper' (Psalm 127:2). The most use obvious for our purposes is in the sanctification or dedication of a thing or person for a holy purpose: 'Christ took bread and blessed, and broke' (Matthew 26:26). In its liturgical sense, and in the sense in which we shall see our candles blessed this weekend, we mean that there is a **rite**, whether long or short, formal or informal, consisting of a **ceremony** (simple or complicated) and **prayers** (wordy or to the point) performed in the name and with the authority of the **Church** by a properly 'qualified' **minister**, by which people or things are **dedicated to the service of God**, or by which **God's favour is asked** to be with them.

Anything can be blessed. And, because the act of blessing is something given to the Church to do, or perform, the Church decides how these things may be done, and who can do them. Now, anyone may *ask God's blessing* on someone, something, or some situation, as we all do when we say grace before we eat. All of us can and should to that. But, as the *Catechism* nicely sums it up, 'the more a blessing concerns ecclesial and sacramental life, the more is its administration reserved to the ordained ministry (bishops, priests, or deacons)' (CCC 1669).

The things that have been blessed are often referred to as **Sacramentals**. Let's let the *Catechism* explain: 'Sacramentals are instituted for the sanctification of certain ministries of the Church, certain states of life, a great variety of circumstances in Christian life, and the use of many things helpful to man. In accordance with bishops' pastoral decisions, they can also respond to the needs, culture, and special history of the Christian people of a particular region or time' (CCC 1668).

As human beings, we need all the help we can get to pray, and to open ourselves to God's grace. We need places of prayer that help us focus on the mysteries there celebrated; sounds, sensations, gestures, that take us beyond ourselves and beyond our burdens and distractions. These for us are the equivalent of the singer's warm-up scales, or the athlete's stretches, so that we can, with God's help, be the best we can be. Sacramentals are part of God's generosity in helping us with all of this: in other words, 'what I do with this, I do to the glory of God'.

The *Roman Ritual* contains special blessings for the following, amongst other things: wine, seeds, eggs, herbs; cornerstones, schools, libraries, archives; printing-presses, hospitals, radio stations; the sea, fields, orchards, granaries, mills; blast-furnaces; cheese, lard; cars, railways (ordinary blessing), railways (solemn blessing), aeroplanes; fishing boats, climbing equipment, seismographs, electric dynamos, fire engines; mobile film units used for teaching road safety; anything that does not have its own proper blessing. I would be happy to bless any blast-furnaces you might have lying about the place.
Fr Daniel

Readings for the Sixth Sunday in Ordinary time (Year A)

Ecclesiasticus 15:16-20, Psalm 118, Corinthians 2:6-10, Matthew 5:17-37



St Edmund Campion Deanery, Old Berkshire
Thames Isis Pastoral Area

Hinksey Catholic Parish

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SUNDAY 5 February	SUNDAY 5 PER ANNUM YEAR A <i>Divine Office Week 1</i> Saturday Vigil Mass 5pm Holy Rood (<i>Divine Worship</i>) Confessions 6.10pm Our Lady of the Rosary Mass 6.30pm Our Lady of the Rosary Mass 7.30pm Holy Rood <i>Portuguese</i> Sunday Mass 9.15am Our Lady of the Rosary <i>Pro populo</i> Mass 11.15am Holy Rood <i>Pro populo</i> Youth Mass 4.15pm Our Lady of the Rosary
Monday 6 February	<i>Feria (Monday of Week 4 per annum)</i> First Holy Communion Class 3.45-4.45pm Rosary Room Mass 6.30pm Good Shepherd
Tuesday 7 February	<i>Feria (Wednesday of Week 5 per annum)</i> Mass 9.30am Our Lady of the Rosary Adoration 8.00pm Our Lady of the Rosary
Wednesday 8 February	<i>St Josephine Bakhita, Religious</i> Mass 9am Holy Rood Derek Worlock RIP (<i>Anniv</i>)
Thursday 9 February	<i>Feria (Thursday of Week 5 per annum)</i> Mass 6.30pm Holy Rood (<i>Divine Worship</i>) Adoration & Confessions 7-8pm
Friday 10 February	St Scholastica, Virgin Mass 8.30am St Thomas More FM Hester Johnson RIP Mass 12.30pm Holy Rood (Latin, 1962)
Saturday 11 February	<i>Our Lady of Lourdes</i> 9am Mass Holy Rood 9.30-10am Confessions
SUNDAY 12 February	SUNDAY 6 PER ANNUM YEAR A <i>Divine Office Week 2</i> Saturday Vigil Mass 5pm Holy Rood <i>Divine Worship SEPTUAGESIMA</i> Confessions 6.10pm Our Lady of the Rosary Mass 6.30pm Our Lady of the Rosary <i>Magdalen Kelly RIP (Anniv.</i> Mass 7.30pm Holy Rood <i>Portuguese</i> Sunday Mass 9.15am Our Lady of the Rosary <i>Pro populo</i> Mass 11.15am Holy Rood <i>Pro populo</i>

Our Lady of the Rosary, Yarnells Hill, Botley, OX2 9BD
Holy Rood, Abingdon Road, OX1 4LD
Good Shepherd, Bagley Wood Road, Kennington, OX1 5LY
St. Thomas More, Foxcombe Road, Boars Hill, OX1 5HD

TODAY All are invited to join the celebration, with a Mass of thanksgiving from 4:15-5pm at Our Lady of the Rosary, followed by refreshments in the Rosary Room. The session for 10-12 & 13-14 yr olds will be **BEFORE** the Mass, from 2:30-4pm. The session for 15-25 yr olds will be **AFTER** the Mass, from 5:30-6:30pm. There will be a wonderful presentation by Tom Felici on the relationship between Christianity and Science and its relevance for us today. We look forward to welcoming you!

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION | Is God calling you to: become a Catholic? To Marriage? To Ordination? To have your child baptised, or to take the plunge yourself? All those interested in preparation for the Sacraments of the Church are invited to take a moment quietly to consider and pray about this in advance of an informal series of meeting beginning next month.

PRAYERS FOR BAMENDA ✕ Please continue to pray for our Twin Diocese of Bamenda and for Archbishop Cornelius and the people of his diocese and throughout the English-speaking part of Cameroon.

ROTAS THIS WEEK
Counting Monday 6 January
Janet and Alan

PARISH COLLECTION TOTALS
Week ending 29 January 2017
Main collection plate: £489.47
Standing orders: £533.75
There will be a second collection next Sunday 12 February towards Catholic Education.

NEWSLETTER | Please send all notices for next week's Newsletter to the **Parish Office** by **Thursday 10 am** email hinksey@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

CHILDREN'S DIARY

Children's activities take place during the 9.15am Mass at Our Lady of the Rosary.
Please pray for FHC children who started their preparation.
Next Children's Mass: **19 March 2017**.
If your child would like to take part in Readings, Bidding prayers or music, please let Blanka know. Children's liturgy runs every Sunday unless stated otherwise.
Please contact Blanka at mccarthybb22@hotmail.com

SUMMER CAMP FOR BOYS | This year Fr Mark Hogan will again be leading a camp for boys of secondary school age at St. Cassian's, Kintbury, from **Sun 23rd to Sat 29th July**. There will be plenty of sport, outings, competitions and fun and games to ensure that boys will have a fantastic few days. This will continue to take place within the context of the celebration of the Catholic Faith, including daily Mass and morning prayer. The cost of the camp is £200 (though full and part bursaries may be available). To find out more or to reserve a place, please contact c/o Mr and Mrs Mulkerns, 23 Pardown, East Oakley, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG23 7DY or dbcamps@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

PRAYERS FOR VOCATIONS ✕ Fr John Chandler our Diocesan Vocations Promoter is currently commissioning a promotional video for our Diocese. Please pray for vocations to all states of life and ministry in the Church, but above all to the sacred priesthood, especially in our Diocese of Portsmouth. If you are wondering whether God is calling you to the priesthood and would like to talk about it, please email Fr John Chandler at jchandler@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk or contact Fr Gerard Flynn at gerardflynn@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

IN OUR PRAYERS

THE SICK AND THOSE IN NEED |
Andres Barranco, Anderson Barranco, Jim & Joan Chatting, Sean Hodgkins, Vanessa Clark, John Finch, Michelle Roche, Maurice McAvoy, Peggy Duhig, Harold Crapper, Anne Lansberry, Ted Renshaw, Catherine Harker, Norman Coles, Brian Hodgkins, Clifford Broome.

CONSECRATION OF ENGLISH MARTYRS CHURCH, SATURDAY 18 FEBRUARY AT 12 NOON ✕ The Consecration of the church is one of the most important events in its lifetime. Fifty years ago, Bishop Worlock came to English Martyrs in Didcot and blessed the church, but because it was not fully paid for, it could not be consecrated at the time. We are really pleased that Bishop Philip is going to visit Didcot on the anniversary of English Martyrs' blessing, to actually consecrate the church. This is going to be on Saturday 18th February at 12 noon. We hope that many people will be able to attend in order to make this a wonderful celebration.

WALKING THE CAMINO | From Reading, **13-20 September 2017**. Flight: Stanstead - Santiago. 30+ people: For new & former walkers, 20 - 25km per day. Thousands of people do this walk every year, the most famous pilgrimage after Jerusalem & Rome. Info evening on **Thursday 9 February** in St James RGI 3FD at 7.30pm.

WOMEN'S READING GROUP | A group of women from the Parish meets once a month on Monday evening, 8.30-9.30pm to read and discuss together **AMORIS LAETITIA**, that is, the Apostolic Exhortation **written by Pope Francis as a result of the synod on the family**. The main topic is family life - so it should be of interest to all! Please contact Maria Rosa Antognazza (maria.rosa.antognazza@kcl.ac.uk) if you wish to join or would like more information.

ORDINARIATE | Sung Mass, Saturdays at 5pm (for the Sunday obligation); Said Mass, 6.30pm on Thursdays, both at Holy Rood.
Masses using the Ordinariate Missal, which anyone is welcome to attend, are indicated by *Divine Worship* in the newsletter.
Next week's music: for Septuagesima, Byrd, *Mass for Three Voices*, Lassus, *Exaudi me Domine*.

HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER INTENTIONS | Each month the Holy Father asks us to pray for a particular intention. February's is: **Comfort for the Afflicted** That all those who are afflicted, especially the poor, refugees, and marginalized, may find welcome and comfort in our communities.

PILGRIMAGES | ✕ **KNOCK SHRINE IRELAND** ✕ Fully escorted Pilgrimage to Knock **13 March 2017** £599pp sharing, includes flights, 15kg checked-in bag, all taxes, luxury transfers, 5 nights in newly refurbished Knock House Hotel with full Irish Breakfast each morning and 4 Course Dinner each evening. All entertainment, excursions and guided tour included. Wheelchair accessible rooms in the hotel. Please contact Patricia anytime on 0 7 7 4 0 1 7 5 5 5 7 o r knockpilgrimages@gmail.com
✕ **LOURDES** ✕ Diocesan Pilgrimage with Bishop Philip **Friday 18-25 August 2017**. For more information, please email parkgate@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
✕ **IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF ST JOHN PAUL II** ✕ Poland from the **19-24 April**, led by Fr John Lee. The Pilgrimage takes place over Divine Mercy Sunday and we will visit the shrine celebrating the Divine Mercy of Jesus Christ, as revealed by Christ Himself to St Maria Faustina Kowalska. For information contact Pilgrimage People 0800 612 3423.