

FASTING & HOLY COMMUNION

We are soon to enter the season of Lent, when fasting, prayer, and almsgiving are of course much on our minds, but I thought I'd write something on an area we don't often hear much about, namely the Eucharistic Fast; that is, our abstaining from food and drink before receiving Holy Communion. Our Church's *Code of Canon Law* tells us this:

Whoever is to receive the blessed Eucharist is to abstain for at least one hour before holy communion from all food and drink, with the sole exception of water and medicine (Canon 919.1)

Where does this come from? We know about St John the Baptist, with his preparation of the way of the Lord by means of his own fasting and prayer, as well as that to which he called his followers. Our Lord also fasted forty days in the wilderness in preparation for his mission of teaching, preaching, and healing. At Antioch (where followers of Jesus were first called 'Christians'), they engaged in 'worshipping the Lord and fasting' (Acts 13:2). Christians in Rome would gather to celebrate Sundays and major feasts the day before, spending the Saturday as a Vigil of fasting and prayer: the Mass would be celebrated early on Sunday; the fast would be broken by Holy Communion itself, and a communal meal was eaten thereafter.

We fast because we are creatures of soul and body. We need to prepare ourselves, soul and body, to receive Our Lord. If we have sins to confess, we need to do that first, before Communion. Similarly, the Eucharistic fast gives us greater respect for the Sacrament, which is no ordinary food, but the Bread of Angels. We owe this to Jesus Christ. We know we'll never be perfect, but there are things we certainly *can* do, like confession, and an hour's fast, which at least show willing on our part.

Fasting before receiving the Eucharist, then, isn't something from misty antiquity: the *Code of Canon Law*, which tells us what we should do in this matter, only dates from 1983. Traditionally, the fast began at midnight, which is manageable if Mass is first thing in the morning, followed by breakfast and work or school; but with the advent of evening Masses in the mid-20th century, it becomes much more demanding. With this sort of thing in mind, therefore, Bl Pope Paul VI decreased the length of the fast to one hour before receiving the Eucharist (his predecessor, Pius XII, had already brought it down to three hours). This means that you shouldn't eat or drink anything except water and medicine for one hour before communion: an hour before Mass is due to begin is an easy way to remember, but sometimes things are more complicated than that. This discipline does not apply to the sick and elderly, of course: the Church doesn't ask us to keep anything which we physically can't do. As the *Code* says:

The elderly and those who are suffering from illness, as well as those who care for them, may receive the blessed Eucharist even if within the preceding hour they have consumed something (Canon 919.2)

You can always ask advice if you're unsure. So is it a sin not to fast *if we can*? Well, our instructions in this matter are pretty clear... But ask the question another way: is it *good* to fast awhile in preparation for Holy Communion? Absolutely, yes it is. Moreover, it's important that we should never be indifferent to the holy Eucharist, or take it for granted: so can we, in our fasting, watch with him for one hour? *Fr Daniel*

Readings for the Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

Leviticus 19:1-2, 17-18, Psalm 102, 1 Corinthians 3:16-23, Matthew 5:38-48



St Edmund Campion Deanery, Old Berkshire
Thames Isis Pastoral Area

Hinksey Catholic Parish

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SUNDAY 12 February	SUNDAY 6 PER ANNUM YEAR A <i>Divine Office Week 2</i> Saturday Vigil Mass 5pm Holy Rood <i>Divine Worship</i> SEPTUAGESIMA 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>
Monday 13 February	<i>Feria (Monday of Week 6 per annum)</i> <i>No First Communion Class (Half Term)</i> Mass 6.30pm Good Shepherd
Tuesday 14 February	Ss Cyril, Monk, & Methodius, Bishop, Patrons of Europe Mass 9.30am Our Lady of the Rosary <i>Catherine Harker's Ints.</i> Adoration 8.00pm Our Lady of the Rosary
Wednesday 15 February	<i>Feria (Wednesday of Week 6 per annum)</i> Mass 9am Holy Rood <i>Private Intention</i>
Thursday 16 February	<i>Feria (Thursday of Week 6 per annum)</i> Mass 6.30pm Holy Rood (<i>Divine Worship</i>) Adoration & Confessions 7-8pm
Friday 17 February	<i>Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Orders</i> Mass 8.30am St Thomas More FM <i>Madge Williams RIP</i> Mass 12.30pm Holy Rood (Latin, 1962)
Saturday 18 February	<i>Our Lady on Saturday</i> 9am Mass Holy Rood 9.30-10am Confessions
SUNDAY 19 February	SUNDAY 7 PER ANNUM YEAR A <i>Divine Office Week 3</i> Saturday Vigil Mass 5pm Holy Rood <i>Divine Worship</i> SEXAGESIMA Confessions 6.10pm Our Lady of the Rosary Mass 6.30pm Our Lady of the Rosary <i>Thomas Kelly, RIP</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	

CATHOLIC EDUCATION SERVICE

This weekend we have a second obligatory collection for the Catholic Education Service (CES) which acts on behalf of the Catholic Bishops' Conference to support Catholic education. Catholic schools make up 10% of the national total of maintained schools, with over 2000 Catholic schools, academies and colleges in England educating over 800,000 pupils.

CONSECRATION OF ENGLISH MARTYRS CHURCH ✕

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 18 February** at 12 noon. We hope that many people will be able to attend in order to make this a wonderful celebration.

CTS BOOK: THE MEANING OF LENT

Lent is more than forty days of repentance. Lent is a journey full of meanings and graces, projecting us to the joy of Pentecost, passing through the waters of Baptism at Easter. By reflecting on our baptism, the dialogue of faith and the Gospel 'scrutinies', our Lenten journey takes on a new dimension, and so does our prayer, fasting and almsgiving, as we experience the joy of passing from death to life, from slavery to freedom in Christ Jesus.

ROTAS THIS WEEK

Counting Tuesday 14 February
Jo and Gerald

PARISH COLLECTION TOTALS

Week ending 5 February 2017

Main collection plate: £ 472.73
Standing orders: £533.75

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.

19 March - Children's Mass. No children liturgy.

26 March - Mothering Sunday Brunch after Mass.

2 April - Teaching Mass for FHC children. 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

HINKSEY YOUTH GROUP MEETS ON SUNDAY 5 MARCH

11-14 yr olds - 2:30pm - 4pm at the Rosary Room followed by **Mass at 4:15pm** at Our Lady of the Rosary, Yarnells Hill, Oxford, OX2 9BD. For more information please contact Melanie at tipayouth@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

SUMMER CAMP FOR BOYS I 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 dbcamps@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

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.

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, Anne Lansberry, Ted Renshaw, Catherine Harker, Norman Coles, Brian Hodgkins, Clifford Broome, Moira Fryer

ADORE (Alton Day Of REnewal) – Saturday 25th February 2017 11.00-4.00 ✕

You are warmly welcome to a mini-retreat day (or morning/afternoon) of spiritual refreshment and renewal, focussing on the Charisms or gifts of the Holy Spirit. Please note new venue: at Alton Convent, Anstey Lane, Alton GU34 2NG. Talk "The Gift of Wisdom" by Peter Hobbs. There is no need to register in advance, and no charge (though a collection will be taken to cover costs). Please see poster at the back of the church.

WOMEN'S READING GROUP I

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.

VACANCY FOR CHAPLAIN AT HUNTERCOMBE PRISON I

Part-time 18.5hrs per week, £25,520+ pro-rata. To offer pastoral care & religious formation to the prisons and staff of the Catholic tradition. For job description & application form from Rev. Ian Thacker email: ian.thacker@hmpps.gsi.gov.uk or 01491 643212. Apply ASAP.

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 Sexagesima, Sheppard, *Western Wind Mass*; Lassus *Perfice gressus meos*

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.

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? The award-winning *Why?* Course begins this Lent, with a morning session on Saturdays and an afternoon session on Sundays. All are welcome for an engaging DVD presentation followed by discussion and a chance to get to know one another.

PILGRIMAGES | ✕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.