

Dear All

Apologies For The Short Notice!

On Tuesday evening 16th May, members of our Parish Finance Committee and I met with Matt Bloomer of the Closer To Christ campaign to discuss aspects of it and to see how we might engage towards the late Summer. I had requested the meeting because we all had concerns about yet another campaign to raise money, especially during the Cost of Living crisis impacting on so many and Mass attendance only slowly returning to pre-pandemic levels following a sharp decline across the Diocese before the virus arrived.

We had expected it to be a general discussion enabling us to outline to you the aims of the campaign over the next couple of months, as at a recent meeting of our Pastoral Area clergy it was my belief that we decided to look to later in the year to engage because of the various pressures affecting us all as clergy. I was taken aback when Matt said that he had come to the meeting believing the involvement to begin immediately! To put it mildly, I was more than irritated, explaining that I am having two weeks of a break in June and with Dan Wisniewski beginning induction as our new part-time Administrator early next week, I have more than enough to do before the end of June. So, we shall definitely not be starting in earnest until the beginning of July, especially as I have to be heavily engaged in the matter.

However, we agreed that it is only right that we should let parishioners know as soon as possible of this campaign. Although we had not received it, I agreed to read a general letter from the Bishop to parishes engaging in the campaign, which will happen this weekend. Following on from this there will be a census taken over the weekend Masses of 27th/28th May (Pentecost) and 3rd/4th June (The Holy Trinity). This will mean that the Sunday morning Masses at Tadley will start without music those weekends and the Psalm will be said as I shall be under considerable pressure to get over to Burghfield Common for 11:00am Mass and the census there.

I take this opportunity to thank those parishioners who have spoken to me recently, sympathising over the recent deaths of long-standing parishioners, of the pressures of trying to cover things without a new part-time Administrator and asking me to take care of myself and get away more regularly. Thank you! And my thanks to Kathryn Garden for all her help and support over the last few months, without which I could not have coped, as she leaves us by the end of next week to concentrate on her role as full-time Administrator at Douai Abbey. I know she will be missed by many of you.

Welcome To Dan Wisniewski

All being well, Dan will be starting as our new part-time Parish Administrator on Tuesday 23rd May. This will involve some considerable time of induction in respect of both diocesan and parish matters, so for the next couple of weeks he will be fully engaged and may be unable to deal with other issues. It would be advisable, if possible, to contact the office with telephone messages if there are issues to be dealt with within a short time span. I shall also be dealing with areas of the induction and the development of the Closer to Christ campaign as parish priest. It may be that there are considerable delays before I get back to people during this time. Apologies for any inconvenience and please keep Dan in your prayers as he engages in this important role. Please remember that the parish office's hours have been reduced to 15 hours to facilitate a pay rise for this role, subject to review with the diocese after six months.

Welcome In Baptism

We welcome in Baptism Alessandro Christopher Coelho this Saturday at St Michael's Church.

Eileen Kelly, RIP

We keep Eileen in our prayers this weekend as her family is holding a Memorial Service for her in Mortimer on Sunday 21st May. My thanks to her daughter, Sheila, for inviting me to join them and members of the Burghfield Common community, but I am unable to do so. I spoke with Sheila on the telephone a few days ago, thanking her for a lovely card of thanks for celebrating the 11:00am Mass at St Oswald's Church this Sunday for the repose of Eileen's soul, with a donation enclosed. Eileen was a lovely lady who died on 24th January, in her early nineties. The family had her Funeral Mass at St Michael's Church, Glinsk, County Galway, to be buried with her husband Michael. So, St Oswald and St Michael pray for her. My thanks to Mary Gush for her help in this remembrance celebration.

Welcome to The Reverend Peter Williams

It is good news to hear that the Kingsclere and Ashford Hill with Headley community will have the Licensing of the Reverend Peter Williams at St Paul's Church, Ashford Hill Road, Headley RG19 8AZ, by the Bishop of Basingstoke on 24th May, at 7:30pm. I have received a personal invitation but have had to send my apologies, although I will be meeting with Revd Peter in the not too distant future. It would be good to re-establish ecumenical relations with him and Revd Rachel, the Methodist Minister, following the pandemic and the departure some time ago of Revd Ben for a new appointment. There is a general invitation to all Catholics in the area to attend if they would like to do so. A poster is on the noticeboard in St Michael's Church for those interested.

Don't Forget The Organ Recital!

As noted in the Parish News some time ago, and highlighted by posters in both our churches, Francis Brookes will be giving an Organ Recital in St Michael's Church at 7:00pm on Friday 2nd June. This should be a fine evening of organ music and the event is free, with donations accepted for St Michael's Hospice. Francis is the son of Carole's late husband Francis, who died recently. Our thanks to Carole for doing the altar linen for both churches, which I deeply appreciate as her health is not good at times. Looking forward to seeing many of you that evening.

First Communion Day

This is on Sunday June 11th (Corpus Christi). There will be only one Sunday Mass that morning to facilitate a non-rushed celebration for our four youngsters and their families, at 10:00am in St Michael's Church. The Saturday evening Vigil Mass will be held as normal at 6:00pm on 10th June. I look forward to seeing a good gathering that Sunday from both communities as our youngsters come from both. There will be a First Communion Reception in the Parish Room after the Mass.

Having A Break At Last!

From Sunday afternoon 11th June until Sunday 24th June I am not available, having had to change my Easter plans because of the recent funerals and the need for the interviews for the appointment of a new part-time Administrator. More details of arrangements later. All being well I shall be taking time out in August and a week's Retreat in late September.

No Return Of The Chalice At Present

I have decided that the chalice will not be given at Mass at the present time, noting that several parishioners have been very unwell with covid over the last few weeks and that there has not been adequate time to begin the training of new lay ministers for both Masses and the distribution of the Eucharist to parishioners unable to attend church. It would be helpful to know of any members from both our communities who would be prepared to be formed for licensing in this ministry as required by the Diocese, as the present licences have expired. Also, a person from each community to be responsible for heading this ministry with me.

Second Collection - World Communications Day

Sunday, 21st May is World Communications Day. There is a Second Collection taken at the end of all Masses this weekend to support the work of Communications in the Catholic Church in England and Wales. The Pope said in his World Communications Day message, "It is the heart that spurred us to go, to see and to listen, and it is the heart that moves us towards an open and welcoming way of communicating." Vital to this is good communication - through our websites, publications and social media channels. If you wish to donate online via our Diocesan collection, you can do so here<<https://portsmouthdiocese.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=04bcc8430c87c5529461e65e6&id=80f7d8e0ef&e=d7cbe96b23>>.

No Gardening Club - there will be no Gardening at St Michael's on Saturday 27th May because of two baptisms taking place that morning.

Treacle Fair, Tadley

Dina Wood is coordinating the CTAT area at the Treacle Fair on Sunday 4th June and has asked for volunteers to help with setting up, clearing down and during the day: help setting up from 8.30am to 9.30am (including bringing tables in); help to man the stalls for children's activities (simple games or putting together some windmills); balloon modelling; chatting to people and closing down from 5pm. Any time, from a couple of hours to all day would be appreciated. Dina can be contacted on dinahaywood@btinternet.com<<mailto:dinahaywood@btinternet.com>>.

Planning for 24 Hour Prayer - Burghfield Common

Following the invitation to join in a meeting for planning the 24 hour period of prayer on 9th-10th June, the best date seemed to be for next Wednesday 24th May at 7.30pm at Revd Glynn Lautenbach's house. Thanks to those who opted into the planning meeting and everyone is very welcome to join them. The meeting will take place at Revd Glynn's home, The Rectory, Hollybush Lane, Burghfield Common, RG7 3JL. It's opposite Garland Close and there is room on the drive for several cars. She will be in touch once the planning is completed and there is a clearer outline of how the 24hrs will flow.

Thanks To Our Catenians

On Monday 15th May I was invited to attend the Catenian Ladies' Night Dinner outside Basingstoke, which was most enjoyable. Since the pandemic, I had not attended any Catenian Dinner, so it was good to meet up once again with Catholics from the local Circle who do praiseworthy charity work. My thanks to Geoff Warner, the late Helen Warner's brother, who drove me to and from the event, enabling me to enjoy some pleasing Chilean white wine before and during my fish course. It was good to meet with him and his wife again.

Kevin Rafferty of the Circle, who is engaged with our Tadley Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB) and whom I meet at Tadley Community meetings, had raised £850 for CAB and £850 for the Basingstoke Foodbank, which links with our Tadley Foodbank. The £850 for CAB was doubled by the Greenham Common Trust, which supports certain charities within its guidelines. A Trust representative spoke recently at a Tadley Forum on its work. It was good to speak with Kevin again and to enjoy time speaking with his wife, and to meet Paula Vallance of the Basingstoke Foodbank, who is in contact with the Parish Office at times. A good evening!

Various Diocesan Vacancies

There are several roles available with the Diocese, including IT Manager, Estates Manager and Choral Director. For more information please go to:

<https://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/about-us/other/jobs/>

Wishing you all a happy weekend and hoping you will enjoy this double-issue of Parish News.

Fr Patrick