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## NEWSLETTER

**Sunday 24th January 2021**

**Third Sunday of Ordinary Time**

Members of the Parish Council and I have decided that I will stop holding Masses in St. Augustine's Hall for a period, whilst the Coronavirus is at such high levels in our area.

**We will continue to hold an online Mass every Sunday at 11am.** For details of how to join the Mass, please email [office@staugustines.org.uk](mailto:office@staugustines.org.uk)

**St. Augustine's Church** will be open for Private Prayer each day Monday to Friday from 12.00 noon to 12.30pm. It will **NOT** be open on Tuesdays and Thursdays in the evening.

I would like to remind those who do not already know that the obligation to attend Sunday Mass has been suspended during this pandemic. We are really lucky that, through the hard work of Anthony and Pamela, we will still continue with our online Mass and I would urge you to log in to it if you are able. It is a particularly good substitute at this time in helping us keep together as a Parish.

### MASS INTENTIONS

Sat 23 <sup>rd</sup> Jan	Private Intention	Wed 27 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Carolyn Ansell RIP
Sun 24 <sup>th</sup> Jan 11 am online	Walter Stanley RIP	Thurs 28 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Private Intention
Mon 25 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Fr. Anthony Donohue RIP	Fri 29 <sup>th</sup> Jan	People of the Parish
Tues 26 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Gerald Joyce RIP		

**OUR SYMPATHY:** As you probably know, Walter Stanley died peacefully at Eton House Care Home on Sat. 16<sup>th</sup>. January. We ask that God will grant him eternal rest. As we thank God for the good life Walter lived, we offer our very sincere sympathy to his wife, Christine, and to his sons and daughter and we pray that God will strengthen and comfort them at this difficult time. Funeral arrangements have not yet been finalised.

**SICK OF THE PARISH:** Please pray for the sick in the Parish, especially James Ansell, Dorrie Keating, David Mendes and Michael Torpey. Please pray also for those who are caring for them.

**CORONAVIRUS:** We remember those in our parish who may be suffering acutely from the effects of Covid. We think especially for those who are ill, those living alone - far from relatives, those whose jobs are at risk, those in Care Homes, those in difficult home environments. And let us not forget to thank God for the progress being made towards a vaccination programme for COVID. We pray for the scientists and the medical personnel who have worked so hard towards its discovery, and we pray that its distribution throughout the country will be speedy and efficient.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS:

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNION:** Four children from the Parish started their First Holy Communion preparations last Sunday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, with online classes. They will celebrate the Sacrament, along with the Sacrament of Reconciliation, later this year.

Would you please keep the children in your prayers as they progress through the Course, gaining a deeper knowledge and understanding of their Faith.

**FOODBANK:** We are very grateful for your generous contributions to the Foodbank and would ask you to continue with your contributions, as the need is still great.



### A Pastoral Message during the third lockdown

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Last week, we celebrated the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. 'Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptised in the Jordan by John.' This is an historical event. It is also a moment of mystical significance. Our Lord's true identity is revealed to us as He hears words which must sustain Him throughout His public ministry and during the paschal mystery. We too need to hear words which will encourage us in our lives today.

This Sunday, the Second of the Year, we hear that John the Baptist is a contemplative. The Baptist 'stared hard' at Jesus and said, 'Look, there is the lamb of God.' In the midst of challenging circumstances for God's people, the prophet is not blown around like wastepaper in our streets. He stands firm within Israel's relationship with God. The Baptist is someone who observes the drama of unfolding events and can see things from an important faith perspective. The beloved Son of the Father is amongst us. He has come to refocus our hearts and minds upon the forgiveness which God offers us through the ministry, the dying and rising of Jesus.

And now it is our moment in history. Our world today is experiencing the full effects of an unfolding pandemic. Most of us are challenged by this sustained and protracted onslaught on our lives and our ways of living. We are being encouraged, there is light at the end of the tunnel. Nevertheless, we are humbled before the statistics and see the effects of the pandemic all around us. A horrific number of people are losing their lives to this virus. A growing number of our fellow citizens are in hospital and really suffering because of their illness. Unemployment grows like another virus and our society is saturated with fear, anxiety and uncertainty.

How do we navigate our way through these bad news waters? We follow Jesus like the first two disciples in the Gospel. Jesus turns to each one of us and asks, 'what do you want?' We too may answer with a question, 'Teacher where do you live?' When we find ourselves in the eye of the storm, to find shelter with Jesus, truly present to us in the word of Sacred Scripture and the Blessed Sacrament is a place of true refuge. I am reminded of the words of a beautiful hymn to the Sacred Heart,

'O Sacred Heart, our home lies deep in thee...O Sacred Heart,  
our trust is all in thee, For though earth's night be dark and drear,  
thou breathest rest where thou art near, O Sacred Heart.'

+ David

Rt Revd Dr David J Oakley  
Bishop of Northampton

*Written by Bishop David on 17/01/2021*