



# OUR LADY OF LOURDES CATHOLIC CHURCH

A LIVESIMPLY and FAIRTRADE PARISH

**Parish Priest: Fr Rob Esdaile**

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**SUNDAY, 02 MAY 2021**

**FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (Psalter Week 1, Cycle B)**

## FROM JUST WORDS TO JUST ACTION

This Sunday's second reading (1 Jn 3.18-24) really repays reflection. The writer reminds his congregation that "our love is not to be just words or mere talk but something real and active," because that is the path to peace of heart and a deep, trusting relationship with God. Moreover, the action needs to go beyond rule-following and conformity, because of the very nature of the commandments we follow. We are called to "love one another as he taught us." The conclusion drawn is an extraordinary assurance: "Whoever keeps his commandments lives in God and God lives in them," as is demonstrated by their experience of the Holy Spirit.

There's great wisdom in this. However, perhaps it sounds too good to be true. And in one regard it is. In John's Gospel and Epistles you will search in vain for Jesus' most demanding instruction: "Love your enemies and pray for those who hate you." (Mt 5.44) Let's say that the Church that produced the Fourth Gospel was good at group hugs. (It probably had to be because of the opposition it was experiencing from former friends, as relations with the local synagogue nose-dived towards the end of the first century.) But as it hunkered down to survive, it rarely looked over its own high walls. 'The World' was hostile territory – the realm of darkness.

The Church has always been tempted to buy into that view. For 450 years after the Reformation, we Catholics in these islands were particularly inclined to withdraw from engagement with 'The World' and to look after our own in a similarly sectarian way. But that response, understandable though it was in a community under siege, is certainly not adequate today. Our love has to be something real and active, not only in the home and in our friendship groups (important though these be) but also out in the world of politics, economics, social cohesion and sheer human kindness. Like the Word of God himself, our love has to 'take flesh', and to do so by our daily choices and commitments.

Love of enemies is not some soft-headed sentimentality. It is the hard work of refusing to give up on each other or to narrow our focus to 'what is good for me and my own'. It is the refusal to accept division, prejudice, injustice and want as the natural way of things. It is a commitment to the Common Good lived out day by day, beginning where we live. By the way, it's Election Day on Thursday.

- Fr. Rob

### MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS

**Streamed Masses can be viewed at:** <https://bit.ly/2Lu1sN4>

Sat	6pm	People of the Parish
Sun	9am	Special Intention
	10.45am	Private Intention

**Mon**      **Bank Holiday - Church Closed**

Tue	9.30am	Day of Prayer for Survivors of Abuse
Wed	9.30	Special Intention
Thu	9.30am	Tony Scott & Colleagues Int.
Fri	9.30am	Holy Souls

Sat	6pm	People of the Parish
Sun	9am	Private Intention
	10.45am	Special Intention

**We commend to the Lord** all who have died; especially Arthur Worley, Maura Smith, Judith Prescott and Vera Richards, whose anniversaries of death fall this week.

**Parish Prayer Intentions For May:** That each of us may have a renewed attentiveness to the Holy Spirit in our lives and prepare in prayer for Pentecost; for the families preparing their children for first sacraments (baptism, first reconciliation, first communion); for our young people preparing for Confirmation; for Pope Francis' own prayer-intention for the month: *"that those in charge of finance will work with governments to regulate the financial sphere and protect citizens from its dangers."*

**Prayers needed?** A book of prayer intentions is placed on the altar at all masses. If you'd like a name or intention added to the book, phone/e-mail Fr. Rob.

**This Sunday** is the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

**Wedding News 1: Congratulations to Ed and Andrea**, married this Saturday (May 1) at OLOL (at the 3<sup>rd</sup> attempt – due to Covid-19 regulations squeezing out previous arrangements elsewhere!). May God bless them greatly as they live out the promises they have made to each other. Please pray also for **Chris and Agnieszka**, who will be married in Poland in July, and **Antonio and Stefania**, who will be married in Calabria in August.

**Wedding News 2:** Looking ahead, it's **National Marriage Week** from **May 10-16**. Let's use that as an opportunity to give thanks for married love, to ask God's blessing on our relationships, to pray for the healing of hurts, to renew the promises and the trust that are at the heart of our family life.

**Celebrating Reconciliation:** If you wish to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation call Fr. Rob to arrange a time.

**Baptism Preparation:** From May 17 it should be possible to celebrate baptisms again (in small-scale celebrations). So if you have a child awaiting baptism please contact Fr. Rob or the parish office.

**First Communion:** Thanks to parents for your understanding of our need to re-schedule our programme so that children celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation before the summer holidays but celebrate First Communion in the autumn. The alternative, of a class every Saturday afternoon until mid-July did not seem viable. Your first **Parents' meeting** is this **Tuesday at 8pm**. The children then gather **next Saturday at 4.50pm** and are invited to stay with their families for 6pm mass afterwards. This may stretch the Covid-secure capacity of the church – so **we invite other parishioners to avoid the 6pm mass** if possible next Saturday.

**Confirmation:** Covid-19 has prevented us from meeting until now, so thanks to everyone for your patience while we established what we could do and when. We invite the young people in Year 10 or above who have registered their interest, together with their parents, to attend **an introductory meeting in church at 6pm on Pentecost Sunday, May 23**, at which we'll explain the programme, the commitment involved and the ways we'll explore our Catholic faith together, using videos, speakers, discussion and prayer. Given the belated start (Bishop Richard has fixed our deanery date for celebrating the sacrament as September 17-18—straight after the summer break!) we're very dependent on everyone committing to the journey and supporting each other on the path. We are equally dependent on the prayers and encouragement of the whole parish for our fine young people, their families and their catechists, Charlotte, Georgie, Jo and Paul. May the Holy Spirit fire them up and inspire them all.

**An Invitation To Read:** As we return to having 3 'Sunday Eucharists' each weekend it is an opportunity to reflect on the importance of the 'Ministry of the Word' in our worship. Do you love words? Do you love the Word of God? Could you proclaim it convincingly to our Eucharistic assembly? If you would like to join our **readers' rota** (especially at the **10.45am** mass), please contact the parish office. If you are already a reader, you are invited (with would-be readers, too) to **a one-off training session** at Christ the Prince of Peace Church, Portmore Way, Weybridge KT13 8JD **on Tuesday, June 1 at 7.30pm**. The evening will be led by Nicholas Lee, an English teacher by profession, with long experience as a reader in church. Please contact our parish office if you would like to attend.

**Take Time Meditation** – find stillness and peace amidst the hassles of life. Every Monday at 8pm via zoom. Please email [meditations@olchurch.org.uk](mailto:meditations@olchurch.org.uk) for the link.

**Catholic Newspapers:** a gentle reminder that **The Tablet** and **The Universe** are available in the Narthex. If you haven't got cash with you and the CollecTin machine isn't available take a copy and pay us later! (No browsing please to avoid contamination risks.)

**Pax Christi** – the International Catholic Peace Movement holds its AGM online again this year, on **Saturday, May 22** (from 10.15am for 10.30am start). Book a place using this link: <https://bit.ly/wQb6n7x>

**'2021: Moment of Truth':** Assuming Covid-19 restrictions are relaxed in time, the *National Justice & Peace Network's* annual conference will be held at The Hayes Conference centre, Swanwick (Derbyshire) from **July 23-25, 2021**. A call to *Action For Life On Earth*, it will be chaired by Christine Allen (Director of *Cafod*). For details see <https://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/conference/>

**Embracing the Shadow: A Journey to Love** – An online retreat at the House of Prayer, Saturday, 15th May 2021 (10am – 4pm). Led by Julie Leger Dunstan via Zoom, Cost: £30. Blending psychology, theology, poetry, reflection and prayer, this will be a day to explore the journey inwards to a greater experience of love, via those things which we find most difficult to embrace. For more information or to book, E: [admin@christian-retreat.org](mailto:admin@christian-retreat.org) or T: 020 8941 2313

**We continue to support the East Elmbridge Foodbank** and donations can be left in the church when it is open or at the presbytery. Lists of most-wanted items and details of how to make cash-donations are to be found at <https://eastelmbridge.foodbank.org.uk/>

**You Can Help Your Marriage:** Do you feel alone? Are you frustrated or angry with each other? Do you argue ... or have you just stopped talking to each other? Does talking about it only make it worse? *Retrouvaille* (pronounced retro-vi with a long i) helps couples through difficult times in their marriages. There is no group therapy or group work. This programme has helped 10s of 1000s of couples experiencing difficulties in their marriage. For confidential information about *Retrouvaille*, or to register for the next programme commencing with a 'Virtual' weekend on 1-4 July. Call or text 0788 7296983 or 0797 3380443; Email [retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com](mailto:retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com) – or visit [www.retrouvaille.org.uk](http://www.retrouvaille.org.uk)

**Are you struggling with bereavement or loss?** Would it help to have someone to talk to? Our Deanery has a team of trained Catholic Bereavement Supporters available to listen and support people experiencing bereavement and loss. Please contact Fr. Rob if you would like to speak to one of our team. To find out more about Bereavement Support please contact our Marriage and Family Life Project Officer: E: [simon.south@abdiocese.org.uk](mailto:simon.south@abdiocese.org.uk) / T: 01293 651155