



OUR LADY OF LOURDES CATHOLIC CHURCH

A LIVESIMPLY and FAIRTRADE PARISH

Parish Priest: Fr Rob Esdaile

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SUNDAY, 15 MAY 2022 — FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Psalter Week 1, Lectionary Cycle C

LIVING OUR CALLING

There's something poignant about the Sunday Gospel readings in the second half of Eastertide. Jesus speaks of his departure ("I shall not be with you much longer ..." in this Sunday's Gospel, for instance – Jn 13.31-35). They might have something useful to say to our community as I prepare to leave at the end of this month and we become one parish, together with the community at Holy Name, Esher. Firstly, note that the early Church (and John's Gospel in particular) doesn't regard Jesus' 'withdrawal' (portrayed most graphically by the Ascension scene in Luke and in the Acts of the Apostles) as problematic. Rather, the opposite: his physical absence awakens the promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit, a sharing in the risen life of Jesus and the commission to share the Gospel – a mission that transformed the ancient Mediterranean world and could again transform our tired and aging society.

Secondly, we need to learn from the early Church's experience. The apostles didn't try to 'run the Church'. Rather, they nurtured the communities they founded ("putting fresh heart into the disciples, encouraging them to persevere in the faith") and then moved on. In particular, they identified 'elders' ('presbyters' is a literal rendering of the Greek – cf Ac 14.21-27), whom they prepared for their new role in the community "with prayer and fasting". We have got so used to the idea that 'Father runs the parish' and the notion that 'the Bishop will send a priest' that we have undercut the truth that it is you, the parishioners, who are responsible for the life of the community (because you are that life!).

The parish priest is here to coordinate your worship, formation and witness and to stand as a guarantee that you are in communion with the Bishop (and with the Universal Church) when you gather in prayer. I try, in my faltering way, to live out Jesus' teaching about leadership ("Anyone who wants to be great among you must be your servant, and anyone who wants to be first among you must be slave to all" – Mk 10.44) as an example of how we should all live. A parish priest seeks to animate (literally 'to put soul into') the community – or rather, to draw soul out of it, because the Spirit is already at work among you. Yes, I was 'ordained to the priesthood' but you also share in Christ's priesthood (the only priesthood there is) through your baptism. It is baptism which makes you members of his Holy People (the real meaning of the word 'laity'). Ordination is more of a subtraction than an addition, dedicating me to service. It doesn't make me 'more of a priest' than the rest of you but gives me a particular task within the Body of Christ. I am to undergird your spiritual life and your witness as a community – not replace it. That is why I can move on without loss to the community (assuming I have done my job). When I go, the Spirit remains and so does your calling: love one another.

- **Fr. Rob**

MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS

Streamed Masses can be viewed at:

<https://bit.ly/2Lu1sN4>

Sat	6pm	People of the Parish
Sun	9am	Private Intention
	10.45am	Special Intention
Mon	9.30am	Mass at Church of the Holy Name
Tue	9.15am	Private Intention
Wed	9.30-10am	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament & Rosary
Thu	9.30am	Mass at Church of the Holy Name
Fri	9.30am	Special Intention
Sat	6pm	People of the Parish
Sun	9am	William Wells RIP
	10.45am	Special Intention

We commend to the Lord Mary Elliott and Maureen Curran, whose anniversaries of death fall this week.

Parish Prayer Intentions For May: That we may live as Easter People in this Holy Season; for the coming of the Spirit with power this Pentecost; that the Spirit may work powerfully in all those being confirmed this month; that our First Communion may be the gateway to a lifetime of friendship with Jesus; for God's blessing on the new ways being opened up for our community as Fr. Rob prepares to leave us; for peace in Ukraine and around the world; for Pope Francis' prayer intention for May: "*for all young people, called to live life to the fullest; may they see in Mary's life the way to listen, the depth of discernment, the courage that faith generates, and the dedication to service.*"

May is traditionally kept as 'Mary's Month' – inviting us to think about Mary's example as the First Disciple of her Son, who welcomed the Word of God not only into her heart but into her womb, and to pray to her. Our own dedication to Our Lady of Lourdes invites us also to acknowledge God's special love for those on the margins of life (such as St. Bernadette and the millions of pilgrims who travel to Lourdes every year in search of peace, healing and new hope). This is a great time to take up the Rosary as a way of meditating on the Gospel. Ask her intercession especially for our parish as we transition to new arrangements.

First Communion children have their rehearsals this Saturday morning (10am & 11.30am – according to your group) and will receive Holy Communion for the first time next Saturday, May 21. Please pray for them in these final days of preparation – and let their hunger to receive Jesus renew and deepen your own faith in the wonder of his Real Presence in the Sacrament. He let himself be broken for us. He places himself in our hands. He nourishes us with himself in the form of bread and wine.

Becoming An Altar Server: We shall be inviting the children making their first communion to become altar servers once they have made their first communion. Any other children or young people who would like to join our serving team are also welcome. Have that conversation with your child to see whether they would like to do this. Our servers add a great deal to our worship and it's a great way of learning more about their faith. Contact servers@olchurch.org.uk to find out more.

Congratulations to our young people confirmed last Saturday at St. George's College by Bishop Richard. We shall welcome them back as a community at 6pm mass this Saturday (May 14). Continue to pray for them, to welcome them and to support them.

Alpha: There were lots of lively discussions on the theme of *Who is Jesus?* on our Alpha course this week. Please continue to pray that Alpha will be a time of blessing for everyone who is taking part. Thank you so much to Chris Mapleton for cooking us a delicious meal to start the evening. We do still need a few more cooks over the next few weeks. If you are able cook a meal for either 6 or 12 please email alpha@olchurch.org.uk.

Parish Soups are back - this Wednesday at 12.30. Delicious selection of homemade soups served with bread and cheese - a great community event. Please come along and bring a friend.

TakeTime meditations are a calm, compassionate space to meet God. Our TakeTime group also offers the opportunity to explore your faith with others. 8-8.45pm **every Wednesday** via zoom. Please email meditations@olchurch.org.uk for the zoom link. Go to <https://taketime.org.uk/> to try the meditations at home.

Music and Play and drop-in café for all ages, with **fresh coffee and cake!** Fridays 10-11am during term time.

Gift Aid Statements: Gift Aid letters have been sent out, however please note that they cover donations by standing order, cash and cheque. Any donations made via our CollecTin devices are not included. If you need an updated total, please email accounts@olchurch.org.uk to request this. The CollecTin devices should now ask if you would like a receipt when making a donation, allowing you to enter an email address.

Open Air Mass on 29 May at 10.30am. As this will be Fr. Rob's last mass at OLOL, we will celebrate with a picnic after mass. Bring your own picnic and blanket/chair - coffee and tea will be available.

Help Needed for Open Air Mass: If you are able to help set up at 9am and/or tidy up after, please let the office know.

Becoming One Parish: We continue to work with our friends at Holy Name church, Esher to build our new identity as a single parish with two churches. Our office staff are already working together and the new joint 'Vision Team' has been set up, with the leadership of individual activities still coordinated by those responsible in the two churches. Our shared Alpha group is now up and running (based at Holy Name), while Baptism Preparation will also be shared from now on. This week we move to the new weekday schedule (with mass at Holy Name on Monday and Thursday; mass at OLOL on Tuesday and Friday), while the Sunday mass schedule will not change until after Fr. Rob's departure at the end of May, when Fr. David will become responsible for the two churches until his own departure and the arrival of our new parish priest. Let us move forward together, rooting the changes underway in prayer and asking the Holy Spirit to guide us.

A Word In Edgeways: Fr. Rob's little volume of poems to raise funds for the Cafod/DEC Ukrainian Refugee Appeal is on sale for a donation of £5 or more.

The Diocese would like to find out what our Catholic community is doing to support refugees here and abroad. The following short questionnaire will enable Bishop Richard and our Central Office teams to build a picture of the wonderful work being undertaken across our community, as well as highlighting possible areas of need: <https://forms.office.com/r/mEwnrp9bgw>

The paradox of abundance: Over 800 million people go hungry each day. Yet the world produces over 4 billion tonnes of food, and we only need 3.7 billion tonnes to feed everyone. From all this food produced, a third is wasted. St John Paul II called this 'the paradox of abundance.' Clearly the current global food system is not working. But as Pope Francis said, "Each of us has a role to play in transforming food systems for the benefit of people and the planet." Let's respond to his call! CAFOD's new campaign is called Fix the Food System. See www.cafod.org.uk/food for more information, including an invitation for parish groups to learn about the impact of our food with our Fix the Food System: a 7-station journey resource.

Host Families Needed (with child aged 5 or over) for Spanish students visiting to improve their English. Paid over £500. 26 June to 18 July. Transport collects and returns the students to English School 8.30 to 4.30. Contact Felicity.leicester@gmail.com / 07900 312634.

Annual Pilgrimage of Reparation and Consecration at the Church of Our Lady of Consolation & St Francis, West Grinstead RH13 8LT on Saturday **16 July**, 12.15–4.15pm. The day includes Mass, a personal consecration to Our Lady, the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Holy Rosary, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Chaplet of Divine Mercy - Adoration and Silent Prayer and Benediction. There is no need to book, to find out more contact Linda C-Dominguez T: 01273 463463 or Jayne Lock M: 07816 422851 or E: jayne.lock1@gmail.com.