

CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. EDMUND OF CANTERBURY
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Monday to Friday 9 - 1pm



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1 September 2019
22nd Sunday

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Today there is an appeal by Fr Honest of the Spiritan Fathers

PROPHECY VERSUS FALSE OPTIMISM

IN 2015 the Holy Father, following the example of Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, designated today as a special Day of Prayer for Creation, in his encyclical *Laudato Si'*. One of the rather facile criticisms made of that letter at the time was that the pope was too pessimistic in his assessment of the damage we are doing to the planet, to God's created order. His urgency and the strength of his language many found unsettling. Given the current fires in the Amazon and Grand Canary, and policies being pursued by the leaders of the United States and Brazil, for example, the picture has in many ways got even gloomier in the last four years.

Those who attacked the pope for being pessimistic really don't understand the books of the prophets in the Old Testament - a good example would be Jeremiah, depicted here looking characteristically miserable in Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel in the Vatican. Prophets like him were not primarily concerned with predicting the future: rather they were concerned to denounce what the people and their rulers were doing at the present time. This is often a message of gloom and doom because they reject the solutions to problems which rulers are putting before the people - Jeremiah repeatedly tells the rulers of Judah they can't avoid the destruction coming on the state; military alliances with other peoples simply won't work. This makes the prophets deeply unpopular - Jeremiah was nearly killed and was thrown down a well at one point. In the New Testament Jesus endorses the ministry of the prophets of his people as a way of attacking the religious leaders in his own day. In our age, partly because we hear the message of the prophets read at Mass, we have recovered a sense of how this tradition is central to how we proclaim Jesus to the world. People often do have to be told how bad things really are.

Purveying false optimism is a sure sign that politicians are lying through their teeth. Many people, who really don't want to feel negative about the future, can be manipulated, particularly if the politicians preaching an optimistic message have boundless self-confidence, perhaps imbued by an expensive private education, protected by their personal wealth from future economic hardship. This is a widespread phenomenon - a few years ago in America a book was written by the cultural theorist Lauren Berlant entitled *Cruel Optimism*, which explores ways in which we sometimes desire things which we know will be harmful, a rather widespread phenomenon in our country at the moment.

Catholic Christians familiar with what the prophets say in the Old Testament will be suspicious of politicians who engage in the glib language of optimism - language attacking 'the doubters, the doomsters, the gloomsters' or invoking Britain's 'can-do spirit'; what you also get are a lot of arc references to Dunkirk

and even the *Titanic*. It's all an effort to patronise people, to distract them from hard facts about economic realities, or the worsening racism and hatred in the country. Using 1950s comic book language is part of the trick: our 'betters' simply want us to trust them, in spite of their mendacity and incompetence.



The rulers of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel condemned by Jeremiah, Amos and the other prophets in Sacred Scripture were surely like this, as rulers so often are. The contempt which people in power have for those whom they rule depends on lying to people about how things are: 'Trust us, everything will be all right.' The Bible is the revelation of God to us: the prophetic writings are in the Scriptures to teach us something. The God of the poor and the oppressed, speaking through his prophets, is unimpressed by the glib assurances of the powerful and the rich. In the Bible, prophets call people to repentance - both the rulers and the whole community. An essential part of being able to seek and receive forgiveness from God, as we realise when we go to Confession, is to know exactly how bad things are, in our own lives and in the life of the world.

That is why prophetic pessimism is definitely not the same as the grave sin of despair. We can only find hope by realising the need to be forgiven: glib optimism is a symptom of a society which has lost any sense of sin, presided over by people of low moral worth. This is why as Catholics we should also be wary of calls from some Christian leaders for reconciliation and a desire to 'move on'. If the damage in our society is the result of sinfulness and systematic lying, then reconciliation isn't really possible until those responsible, and people who've supported them, acknowledge this. So Jeremiah says 'Woe to those who cry "Peace, Peace!" when there is no peace (6:14). What we really need are prophets.

CHRISTMAS FAIR

Saturday 7 December

We are looking for parishioners to join the Organising Committee for this year's Christmas Fair. Additionally, if you have any ideas or suggestions on how we can improve the Fair, we would love to hear from you.

You can put in as little or as much time as suits you but if we all work together, we can make this year's event a huge success.

Contact Sue Owen on 07828 132921 or Email at

sueowenwolf@gmail.com

Thank you.

300 Club

Fr Semplicio kindly made the draw for the August prize winners. Congratulations to them all.

£100	Patricia Onuoha
£75	B V Edwards
£50	Alban Weeks
£25	Patrick Loftus

MISSIO BOXES



Please would you bring your red Missio Boxes to the church for emptying. Either give them to a priest after Mass or bring them to the Parish Office. When they are emptied they will be left in the porch for you to collect. Please do not leave them in the church.



A JOURNEY IN FAITH

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults)

We are starting another course on Thursday 19 September for anyone who is interested in becoming a Catholic or who would like more information about the Catholic Faith. This includes adults (over 18) who were baptised as Catholics, but have little if any knowledge of Catholicism, and who are considering being confirmed.

The course will start with refreshments at 7.45pm at 11 Village Way, opposite the Church and next door to the Hall.

If you would like more information please contact Mary Deering on 0208 650 9650 or Cathy Denne on 07956914164 or mail us on beckenhamrcia@rcaos.org.uk. Or you are welcome to turn up on the night.

If you would like to attend a course but cannot do so on Thursday evenings please contact us for further advice.

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Bereavement Open Door is this Wednesday morning, 4 September, in no11 from 10.30 am until noon.

CWL meeting is this Tuesday afternoon in no11 Village Way at 2.30 pm.

Saturday Meditation is on Saturday 7 September in no11 from 10.30 am until noon.

Law Surgery is on Monday 9 September in no11 from 7.00 pm. Please come on time.

CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Some of you know that a year ago I became President of the Catholic Theological Association. This is a support group founded in the 80s for Catholics teaching theology and related disciplines in Higher Education institutes and formation programmes for clergy. In the early years some very distinguished academics were President (e.g. Eamon Duffy and Nicholas Lash) and it's a great honour to be chosen for the role (for two years). There are major concerns about the future of theology in universities, like other Arts and Humanities subjects, and some of you would have seen an article I wrote about this in *The Tablet* earlier this year. Anyway I am sharing this with you as our annual conference is in Twickenham this week and we would value your prayers. It's on religious language and it's entitled *Words and the Word: Words, Image and Ritual in Religion and Life*, with some very distinguished keynote speakers. I will report on it later after the event. Details of the CTA's work can be found on www.ctagb.org.uk

ONLINE GIVING AND STANDING ORDERS

A very big thank you to all who have signed up for on-line giving through ChurchSuite or who donate monthly by standing order. Not only do payments made this way help us have a better idea of regular income for the parish but it also assists our team of counters by reducing the volume of cash for counting. There are currently 100 people paying by standing order and 166 paying by on-line giving through ChurchSuite. If you have any queries about setting up a Standing order or signing up to on-line giving please contact the parish office and we can help you.



ST EDMUND'S FOLK CHOIR

The Folk Choir returns to 5.30 Mass Sunday 8 September after our summer break. In September 2020, we will be celebrating our fiftieth year of singing in St Edmunds. We are also continuing to learn some of the new songs we added to our books in the recent reprint, so now is a great time to join us. All we ask is that you commit to practising on Thursdays at 8.15 (in the church) and to 5.30 Mass on Sundays. Singing ability and experience are nice to have, but not essential!

Robin

BAPTISMS

Congratulations to the following who were baptised during August.

Rowe Marley Myra Frances Tucker
Lucy Melissa Grace Sheppard
Finley Daniel Bull
Niall Patrick Coyne
Tyler Joseph Salter
Adelle Carol Coker
Beatrice Iligan



ALPHA YOUTH

Holy Innocents in Orpington is running an Alpha Youth Series for young people in Y9 up to age 19. There is a poster in the porch with links to the organisers and to the website for full details



Holy Innocents is also running an adult Alpha Course starting on Friday 20 September. They will run a lunchtime and an evening session. Again full details are on a poster in the porch.

ST EDMUND'S BABIES & TODDLER GROUP

After their break for the summer the group starts again on Monday 9 September in the Hall from 10 until 11.30 am.

Come along to make friends and entertain your children.
All are welcome.



THE MAGIC OF ITALIAN OPERA Night Under the Stars

5 November, 7.30 pm at the
Royal Festival Hall

An evening of Italian opera classics.
Andrea Hixon is arranging a block booking to this event which is in aid of The Passage, the homeless charity in Westminster. Please see the flyer in the porch and if you are interested in coming leave your name and a telephone number with the Parish Office.

As our children return to school, move on to a new one or start school for the first time, here is a prayer for them and also one for the teachers to whom we entrust our children

Prayer for those at School

Lord our God,
in your wisdom and love
you surround us with the mysteries of the universe.
Send your spirit upon these students
and fill them with your wisdom and blessings.
Grant that they may devote themselves to their studies
and draw ever closer to you,
the source of all knowledge.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Prayer for Teachers

Lord God, your spirit of wisdom fills the earth
and teaches us in your ways.
Look upon these teachers.
Let them strive to share their knowledge with gentle
patience
and endeavour always to bring the truth to eager minds.
Grant that we may follow Jesus Christ, the way, the truth
and the life,
forever and ever.
Amen.

DAY OF RENEWAL

Aylesford Priory
Saturday 7 September
9.30 start ending with Mass at 4.00 pm
Healing & Empowering with prophetic gifting

Cor et Lumen Christi Community

LIVE STREAMING OF OUR SERVICES

If you have friends and family who are unable physically to get to a church please tell them about our broadcasts and show them how easy it is to view them on a computer or laptop.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION

Remember please that the priests need a clear six months to process all the paperwork that needs to be completed before you are able to marry in a Catholic church.
There are no short cuts.



Masses this week

Sunday 1 Sept **Twenty second Sunday**
World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation
8.00 am Church Finnegan family
9.30 am Church For the people
11.00 am Church Anthony Leonard RIP
5.30 pm Church Aileen Dunning RIP
7.00 pm Church Josephine Leamon & family

Monday 2 Sept **Feria**
8.15 am Church Maurice Tydings RIP
10.00 am Church Jeanne & Pierre Champetier & Nancy & Stephen Dennis RIP
7.30 pm 27 VW Adoration

Tuesday 3 Sept **St Gregory the Great**
8.15 am Claver Coral & Angel Umo - in thanksgiving
10.00 am Church Bruno Panetta RIP

Wednesday 4 Sept **Feria (St Cuthbert)**
8.15 am Church Sr Mercy's silver jubilee
10.00 am Church Nigel Kirk RIP
11.00 am Church Requiem of Andrew Jansen
7.30 pm Church Margaret Wymer RIP

Thursday 5 Sept **Feria**
8.15 am Church Promoters & benefactors of the Claver Sisters
10.00 am Church Veronica Shelley-Pearce RIP
8.00 pm Claver Adoration & Benediction

Friday 6 Sept **Feria**
8.15 am Church Norah Turner Nestor RIP
9.10 am St Mary's Derek Butler RIP
10.00 am Church Mrs Margaret Wymer RIP
Mass followed by Adoration & Benediction

Saturday 7 Sept **Feria (Our Lady)**
8.15 am Claver Claver Sisters - in thanksgiving
10.00 am Church In thanksgiving - Ania & Cornel's anniversary.
6.00 pm v Church Bessie Boudville RIP
Confessions from 10.30 - 11.00am and from 5.00pm - 5.55pm on Saturdays and at other times by request.
The Rosary is said Monday to Saturday from 9.40 am and there is Adoration for an hour after 10.00 am Mass.

DIARY DATES

Meditation every Monday in no11 from 5.30 - 6.15 pm - except on Bank Holidays
Open door for the bereaved on the first Wednesday of every month from 10.30 am to 12 noon.
Law Surgery every second Monday of the month in no11 at 7pm
Prayer Meeting last Friday of the month in no 11 at 7.30pm

SEPTEMBER

Tues 3 CWL in no11 - 2-5 pm
Wed 4 Bereavement Open Door in no11 - 10.30-noon.
Wed 4 Requiem for Andrew Jansen 11.00 am
Sat 7 Contemplative Saturday 11 am - noon in no11
Mon 9 Law Surgery in no11 from 7.00 pm
Thu 12 Requiem of Bernard Slonina 12.30 pm

COLLECTION

Our collection last weekend raised £1726.02, with a further £1386.28 from Standing Orders and through ChurchSuite

On Friday 16 August our church shop was broken into. A great deal of force was used to bend the grille and the delivery of all the items for Christmas and some of the stock on display were taken. All the entrances to the church are covered by CCTV and recordings made and the perpetrators are clearly visible on our CCTV recording. The police are following up on this. Fr Steve has decided to keep the shop closed for a short time.

We are sorry if this causes any inconvenience but we are sure you will continue to support the shop and the tireless band of helpers who staff it when it reopens.

No refreshments after the 11.00 am Mass this Sunday

Readings for 23rd Sunday of Ordinary Time
Cycle 1 Psalter Wk 2
Wisdom 9:13-18
Psalm 89
Paul to Philemon 9-10. 12-17
Luke 14:25-33

We pray for those who have died recently: Rita Taylor, Andrew Jansen, David Marshall, Peter Taylor, Fr Gerry O'Brien, and Bernard Slonina.

We pray for those whose anniversaries are this week: Victoria Hodgson, Sheila Petersen, Michael Cole, Christian Petersen, Derek Wiseman, Peter McMahon, James Hanley, Duke Ekong, Celia Rossi, Kathleen Lambert.

We pray for the sick: Aondongu Akuha, Angela, Bernice, Emma-Jane, Carmel Cardiff, Chant, Arthur Cromwell, Christine, John Crouch, Fr John Cunningham, Ilean Curry, Giacomo Dillon, Colin Dowling, Joshua Dunford, Nicholas Dunford, Cecil Dutton, David Edwards, Ann Elmer, Felicity, Chris Grant, Hans Halpin, Eileen Hayes, Maude Herring, Jerry Jacob, John, John Macnamara, Eddie Mitchell, Barbara Moyce, Orla O'Regan, John Quaife, Peter Sanders, Coleen Shroeder, Siobhan, Charlie Wynn and Patricia Weal.