



# St John Fisher Roman Catholic Church

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www.stjohnfisheronline.org.uk

Parish Priest: Fr. Shaun Middleton, 020 8429 5684, shaunmiddleton@rcdow.org.uk

Parish Catechist: Kay O'Connor, 020 8429 5682, kayoconnor@rcdow.org.uk

Parish Administrator: Claudia McHugh, 020 8429 5681, claudiamchugh@rcdow.org.uk (9.30am-1.30pm, Mon-Wed-Fri)

## 25<sup>th</sup> May 2014 ~ Sixth Sunday of Easter

### *We Welcome...*

- People of All Faiths and Cultures
- Divorced or Separated Persons
- Families with Children
- Those in Loving Relationships
- Those in Difficulty
- Married Couples
- Single Persons
- Those in Recovery
- Travellers from Far and Near
- Widows and Widowers
- Visitors

### *We Seek...*

- To live the Gospel of Jesus Christ
- To Gather the Community and Tell the Story
- To Sing and Make Music to the Lord
- To Break the Bread and Share the Cup

### *We Celebrate...*

- Diversity
- A spirit of hospitality
- The unity that God wills
- Enlightening those who seek God
- Forming small faith communities
- Reaching out to alienated Catholics
- Reverencing the dignity of each person
- Caring for the needs of the less fortunate
- Empowering Christians to realise their call
- Providing a spiritual Oasis
- Honouring an understanding among all faiths
- Nurturing our gifts and sharing them

In the second reading today St Peter says that we should always have an answer ready 'for people who ask you the reason for the hope that is in you'. He evidently thought that hope was a mark of Christian believers, and that this was noticed and remarked on by unbelievers, not least by those who slander and accuse them. That is why he says we should give our answer with courtesy and respect. That is more likely to be heard than an angry or dismissive response. What is this 'hope that is in us'? And how would it differ from the prevailing attitude of non-believers?



The first thing to say is that our hope is not based on any of the pleasant things that may happen to us. Instead it is based entirely on God, not on ourselves or on anything in the present world.

Hope features prominently in the New Testament. St Paul talks about 'faith, hope and love', and says that 'hope does not disappoint us because the love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which he has given us'. But the really remarkable thing is the place that hope has in the Old Testament. Even without a clear belief in an afterlife, the children of Israel trusted that God would fulfil his loving purposes for them, just because he was God, certainly not because they deserved it. 'O Israel, hope in the Lord; for with him is plenteous redemption'.

We call this hope a 'theological virtue', which is the technical term for a disposition in us which is given directly by God, not in any way produced by ourselves: virtues like justice or fortitude or prudence we can develop in ourselves by our choices and actions; you become a prudent person by behaving prudently. But there is no way we can set our hope in God unless God himself enables us to do so. Hope is God's gift to us, based on his loving purposes for our good, made clear to us in Christ. But we can of course open our hearts more and more to God so that the Spirit will make faith, hope and love grow in us.

From this, two conclusions follow. First, the virtue of hope has nothing to do with optimism. Optimism is a temperamental quality. Some people are naturally optimistic; others are like Thomas the Apostle, always expecting the worst. Christian hope is not temperamental; it has nothing to do with trusting to luck, or with a vague wishy-washy feeling that 'everything will turn out all right'. Hope depends on what we know about God by faith, and on our tenacity in holding on to this. Second, hope can persist along with almost unimaginable suffering, disappointment and disaster. You can see this in the fortitude of the martyrs; the extreme torture suffered by the Jesuit Robert Southwell in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, which he bore with astonishing faith and hope. But it is shown above all in Christ on the cross. Despite the agony and the sense of abandonment by God, he still cried out; 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit'.

Hope is not based on what is happening to you in the here-and-now, nor on what you might be able to do or receive in the future. It is based entirely on God, on our certainty that we are loved by God because he has said so, and also on the resurrection of Christ. If Christ is not risen then our faith and hope are in vain. Perhaps few of us are called to heroic levels of suffering. But sickness, disappointment, bereavement, and the gradual weakening that comes with old age can be quite testing enough. That is one point at which we all need the virtue of hope.

So, as Eastertide draws to its close, perhaps it is a good time to ask ourselves: Do I really have hope? Am I a person of hope? And we can remind ourselves that this hope does not depend on us, on our strength and determination, but wholly on God's love for us in Christ, shown in his Resurrection.

*Fr Shaun*

## Mass Times & Intentions

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> May (First Mass of Sunday)

18.00 Daniel Thiruchelvam (Special Int)

Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF EASTER

08.30 Queenie Lee (Anniv)

10.00 Mai Dineen (Anniv)

11.30 Regina Emmanuel (Anniv)

Monday 26<sup>th</sup> – Easter feria

09.30 Intention of Donor

Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> – Easter feria

09.30 Brendan Connolly (Anniv)

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> – Easter feria

19.00 Mark Kevin Sundararajan (Anniv)

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> – Easter feria

09.30 Eric Savundranayagam (Sick)

Friday 30<sup>th</sup> – Easter feria

09.30 Pete Carrol (Sick)

Sacrament of Reconciliation: Sat 17.15-17.45

**Please keep the sick in your prayers. A list of sick parishioners is displayed on the notice board at the back of the Church.**

**Pray Also For** Queenie Lee, Mai Dineen, Regina Emmanuel, Brendan Connolly, Mark Kevin Sundararajan, Cornelius Clancy, Mary O'Shea, Augustine Texeira, Sarah Madden, Ronald Martin, Julia Reilly, Jean McSweeney, Ciara Carvell, Patrick Morley, Vincent Breen, Bob Howard, Kathy Casey, Kay McGrath, Jack Keane, Walter Hickey and Mick McBreen whose anniversaries occur at this time.

**Hilda Rogers RIP** Her funeral will take place on Thursday, 29<sup>th</sup> May 2014 at 10am at St Matthew's, Northwood followed by burial at 11.30am at Pinner New Cemetery. Hilda was a long standing member of our Parish.

**Harrow Deanery Day** Please collect a booking form from your pigeon hole in the porch and return it to Kay.

**Parish Quiz** The Social Club are holding a Summer Quiz on Saturday, 7<sup>th</sup> June at 8pm in the Parish Hall. Entrance is £3 per person. Do come along and support us, we'd love to be able to repeat the success of our last one. All proceeds to parish funds. For further info/tickets please email [durcanjohn@aol.com](mailto:durcanjohn@aol.com).

**International Day** Once again our parish will take responsibility of a number of stalls at the International Day, which will be held at St John Fisher school in Melrose Road on Saturday, June 21<sup>st</sup> at 11am–3pm. Last year we used our share of the proceeds to buy our new organ and I hope you have had a chance to enjoy the music. This year we would like to use whatever money we make to install a new lighting system. So we would ask everyone to attend the International Day, to buy raffle tickets and to contribute to the International Kitchen, you will find sign-up sheets for this in the porch. Please do get involved - this is our main fundraiser in the year and it brings together old friends and new.

Could you also please help with the following donations: brick-a-brac, teddies, toys (in good condition), books, posh bags, bottles (unopened) for the tombola and Jolly Jars – these are jars (any type, jam, sauce, etc) filled with all sorts of treats that you think children would like, i.e. sweets/chocolates (wrapped or in packets), balloons, bouncy balls, hair clips, stickers, crayons, lollies and anything fun. You can drop all the above items off in the Church porch at the weekend or the sacristy during the week. Do you work in a company that operates a £4£ giving scheme? If you do and your company would like to support the school and

parish, which are both registered charities, then please contact Fr Shaun at [shaunmiddleton@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:shaunmiddleton@rcdow.org.uk) / 020 8429 5684.

**St. John Fisher Church Theatre Group** I have recently attended the AGM of the Church Theatre Group and would like to remind you of the ongoing events which are on offer for us. The outings are outlined on the noticeboard in the porch. If you have difficulty with booking or forwarding your booking, you may call me on 020 3620 8396. Please note also that we are due to pay our Annual Fee of £5 which can be placed in an envelope and put it in my pigeon hole for me to hand it on to the committee. The Theatre Group is a wonderful way to see our favourite plays or musicals and eliminates the worry of travelling to London in the evenings. In order that this facility continues, we need to support it. *Ena Bocarro*

**Knights of St Columba – Sponsored Walk** There will be a collection this weekend for the sponsored walk on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2014 in aid of Royal Brompton & Harefield Hospitals Charities. Thank you for your support.

**St. John Fisher Preschool** Are allocating places for their Sept 2014 intake. If you would like to apply for a place please call in between 10am-12pm or email for an application form 07586 345706/[sjf.preschool@gmail.com](mailto:sjf.preschool@gmail.com). Our sessions are Mon, Tues & Weds 9.15am–3.45pm, Thurs & Fri 9.15am-12.45pm. Your child may also attend from 12.45pm-3.45pm Mon, Tues & Weds or 9.15am–12.45pm. Term time only. Did you know the criterion for funded two year olds is extending and will enable more children to qualify in Sept 2014? We are registered to take funded 2 year olds but are only able to take a limited amount.

**Summer Accommodation in London** Allen Hall Seminary in Chelsea offer comfortable rooms in central London in July and August. Beautiful gardens and chapel. Rooms from £50 per night (including breakfast). Visit [www.allenhall.org.uk](http://www.allenhall.org.uk); email [allenhall@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:allenhall@rcdow.org.uk) or call 020 7349 5600 (option 0).

**St Luke's Hospice Summer Proms** At Harrow School in June and July. Please see poster and booking forms in porch or visit [www.stlukes-hospice.org/summerproms](http://www.stlukes-hospice.org/summerproms).

**Pilgrims Progress** The June edition, including details of the CTinNH AGM to be held on 1<sup>st</sup> July, is available in the porch.

**Buy a Brick - Certificate of Thanks** Please collect your certificate from the pigeonhole in the porch. Thank you for your support.



*Would you please consider buying a brick or two in order to support re-furbishing the Sanctuary? Bricks cost £10 each and we will issue a Certificate of Thanks for every brick that you buy. Please fill out the form below and return it to Fr*

*Shaun at the presbytery. Cheques should be made payable to St John Fisher Church.*

**PLEASE PRINT**

Name.....

Address.....

Tel.....

Email.....

Number of bricks @ £10 each.....

Total Amount £.....

Name of Person you wish to appear on the certificate

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