



St John Fisher Roman Catholic Church

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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)

17th May 2015 ~ The Ascension of the Lord

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

A man in white, the astronaut Yuri Gagarin, reportedly said: "I went up to space, but I didn't encounter God". But had he listened to the two men in white who spoke to the men of Galilee, he could have saved himself the trouble of seeking God up in space. "Why do you stand looking [up] into heaven?" (Acts 1:11). As another man in white said forty days earlier on Easter morning, "he is not here" (Mk 16:6). For neither down in the grave nor up in the skies will we find our God. Where, then, is Jesus? How might Man encounter God?

St Luke says that Jesus was taken "out of [the apostles'] sight" (Acts 1:9), and yet at the same time they are told to be Christ's "witnesses... to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8). This seems rather paradoxical since the ordinary sense of witnessing means to see something or someone; it is through our senses that we ordinarily gain a witness's knowledge. But Christ is taken from their sight, so he cannot be seen. The clouds veil him, and so, Jesus is said to be beyond the perceptivity of our senses. But this does not mean that God is thus absent or unknowable or even non-existent, as Gagarin erroneously supposed. After all, St Mark says that even after his Ascension "the Lord worked with [the apostles] and confirmed the message by the signs that attended it" (Mk 16:20).



So, Christ is present and active and he can be known through signs; from these effects we can witness the Cause.

The Sign par excellence by which Christ remains present and active among us, working with his disciples, is the Eucharist, so how is it that so many can go to liturgies and see the Eucharist, and still say, like Gagarin, "I didn't encounter God"? Pope Francis speaks of how we all need, every day, at least an "openness to letting [Christ] encounter [us]": it is the openness that comes through humble faith.

For although Christ has been taken from our sight we can still come to know and love him, to believe his word, and to experience his living presence in the Liturgy and in the world through faith. Thus Jesus says to his apostles: "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you [so that] you shall be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8). So, especially in this period before Pentecost, let us pray as the apostles did: "Increase our faith!" (Lk 17:5). For it is the Holy Spirit who infuses in each of us the virtues necessary for us to be Christ's witnesses, beginning with the theological virtue of faith.

From such faith flows the desire to do good works, as Pope Francis reminded us, "Let us rediscover these corporal works of mercy: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, heal the sick, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead. And let us not forget the spiritual works of mercy: to counsel the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the afflicted, forgive offences, bear patiently those who do us ill, and pray for the living and the dead". In these various visible ways, Christ's disciples become witnesses, tangibly banishing the demons of our world, confronting deadly things, and bringing healing and new life (cf Mk 16:17f). All who witness these signs can thus know that God is here – neither up, nor down, but here; the "tabernacle of God is among men" (Rev 21:3).

Fr Shaun.

Mass Times & Intentions

Saturday 16th May (First Mass of Sunday)
18.00 People of the Parish
Sunday 17th – **THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD**
08.30 Mary Standon (Anniv)
10.00 Gabriel Faria RIP
11.30 Honor & Richard O'Connor (Anniv)
Monday 18th – Easter feria, Seventh Week of Easter
09.30 Agnes McCourt RIP
Tuesday 19th – Easter feria
09.30 Franek Szlachta (Anniv)
Wednesday 20th – Easter feria
19.00 Mr. Anton Emmanuel (3rd Anniv)
Thursday 21st – Easter feria
09.30 Chriss Ansley (Sick)
Friday 22nd – Easter feria
09.30 Tony Wolfe RIP
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.

Recently Deceased, Patrick McSharry, Joe Santhiapillai, Olive Cooke.

Pray Also For Mary Standon, Honor & Richard O'Connor, Franek Szlachta, Mr. Anton Emmanuel, William Irving, Carl Johns, James Moreland, Eugene Murray, Anne Griffin, Peter Digby, Arulamma Matthias, Aubrey Schokman, Ellen Broadrick, Ranees Saverimuttu, Kevin James Sundararajan, Robert Dorr, Theresa Hughes, Joe O'Gorman, Joe McGrath, Aldo Minoli and Bridie White whose anniversaries occur at this time.

Confirmation 2015 Our meeting on Monday, 18th May at 5.30pm will be an opportunity to order and pay for your Cathedral photograph and to collect your certificate. Let Kay know if you can't make it, 020 8429 5682 or kayoconnor@rcdow.org.uk.

Applications for First Holy Communion 2016 Will be available in the Fisher Room today at 9am-1pm and on Monday, 18th May in the presbytery 11am-1pm and in the Fisher Room 7.30pm-8.30pm, for any child who will be in school year 3 or above from September 2015. If your child was baptised outside of the parish you will need a photocopy of a baptism certificate when you register. The cost of the programme is £20.

Applications for Confirmation 2016 Can be made on Monday, 8th June between 5pm and 7pm. The candidates must attend themselves. Applications can be made from anyone who in September 2015 will be in school year 9 or above.

Job Vacancy We have two cleaning positions within the Parish. The first is for a cleaner for our Parish centre, Mon to Fri 6.30am-8.30am. The second is for a cleaner/ironer for the presbytery, 6 hours a week. Closing date: 22nd May. Please contact Julie Dauncey at our HR department on juliedauncey@rcdow.org.uk.

Proclaim '15 Last Sunday's Gospel was a timely reminder of the parish's involvement in the national **PROCLAIM '15** project and commissions us "...**To go out and bear fruit, fruit that will last**" (John 15:16). It is three months since the beginning of Lent and the time when many of us met in groups to consider the three resource leaflets. In order to help me formulate a summary of the project in this parish, I ask group leaders/ representatives and individuals to provide me with an evaluation of their experiences in using the resource materials. My email address is neilcocking@waitrose.com.

Altar Servers On 23rd/24th May **Team B** will serve.

SJF Ladies Club Meeting on Wednesday, 20th May after 7pm Mass. We will have a Games evening.

Church Cleaners and Counters Needed! Several of our very hard working and long serving church cleaners are having to hang up their dusters so if you could spare one hour every 4 or 5 weeks, either on a Thursday, Friday or Saturday morning, please contact Ena Bocarro, ena.bocarro@talktalk.net. We also require more counters for Sunday mornings, if you can help please contact Ena.

Bethany Group Next meeting on Thursday, 21st May at 7.30pm.

Rome Reunion A reunion supper will take place for those people who went on the pilgrimage last year to Rome on Friday, 22nd May at 7.30pm. Please let Teresa Arrigo know if you can attend t.arrigo@virgin.net.

Scampagnata Tickets are ready for collection after all Masses in the porch from this weekend. Cheques made payable to St. John Fisher Church. You can still order tickets, £10 for adults, £5 for children, by signing the sheets in the porch. Please come along and support this event which is a fundraiser to help us pay for the new sanctuary. The Scampagnata – BBQ Italian style will be held on the lawn in front of the presbytery on Sunday, 31st May at 12.30pm.

SJF Young Adults Group This is a space for all Young Adults in their 20s and 30s to come together, to get to know one another and get more involved in the life of the parish and the diocese, discuss and grow in their faith, as well as socialise. Everyone is welcome. **We meet on the first Sunday of the month after the 11.30am Mass in the Fisher Room. Next Meeting on Sunday, 7th June.** Contact Johnpromise, promisemagnus@yahoo.com or Sherna Bhadresa, sherna_bhadresa@msn.com / 07785 615791 for more info. Our Facebook page is: 'SJF Young Adults'.

"The Pain and the Passion: The Privilege of Making a Difference" The Harrow group of Action by Christians against Torture (ACAT) invite you to a talk by Baroness Cox, founder and CEO of Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust (HART) at Christ Church, Roxeth Hill, HA2 0JN on Tuesday, 2nd June at 8pm. Created a life peer in 1982, Baroness Cox's work has taken her on many missions to conflict zones, allowing her to obtain first hand evidence of human rights violations and humanitarian needs.

Vocation Discernment Group for adults (18-30's) Meets on Friday, 22nd May, 7-9pm in the Hinsley Room next to Westminster Cathedral. Two of our London-based Missionaries of Charity sisters will be speaking on Mother Teresa's gift to the Church. For more info, contact Fr Richard at richardnesbitt@rcdow.org.uk.

Spirit in the City Festival Welcomes Saltmine Theatre's production of THREE WITNESSES - a remarkable play based on the Gospel of St Luke for its London premiere at Notre Dame de France church on Wednesday, 10th June 2015 at 7.30pm. An evening not to be missed! Tickets £7, www.bit.ly/3wtickets or call 020 7440 2663. More info at www.spiritinthecity.org.

Did you attend The Sacred Heart Language College? Working with the charity Future First, we are setting up an Alumni Association to reconnect with our former students and keep in touch with our school leavers. You can support us in many ways, from volunteers and in-school speakers, to work experience providers but mainly as an inspiration to our present pupils. You can sign up and share the link with other past pupils to the network using the following link <https://networks.futurefirst.org.uk/former-student/sacredheartlanguage>. Thank you for your support.

Marie Wright, Governor