

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC CHURCH

3rd Sunday of Easter [26 April 2020]

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Dear family of Holy Cross,

Until we meet again in our beautiful Holy Cross parish, let us keep one another in our prayers. Please click this following link to subscribe to our morning blessings via WhatsApp: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/BMQLQw3b5s2LS8OG2TQ60N>. Kindly send this link to your family members and friends. Every day at 9am, I offer Holy Mass in our church. Please join: <http://www.holycross-catford.org.uk/livestreaming.php>. Along with Facebook and Instagram, I am also trying to create a YouTube channel for our parish. Details will be given to you soon.

Towards the end of this newsletter, a lovely reflection on today's Gospel is given by one of my friends, Rev. Dr Sahaya Selvam sdb. Diamond Ring's 6th edition and an important document sent by the diocese is also attached with this email.

Many thanks for your prayers, phone calls and messages to show your friendship and support.

United in Christ we are never alone,
Antony



HOLY CROSS PARISH IN THE EYES OF RIGHT REVEREND **PATRICK LYNCH** SS.CC

[Bishop Patrick Lynch SS CC has responsibility for the South East pastoral area of the Archdiocese of Southwark which comprises the Deaneries of Bexley, Bromley, Camberwell, Greenwich, Lambeth And Lewisham]

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction takes place every Friday and there is an opportunity for people to pray the Rosary and the Divine Mercy Novena during the week.

The parish of Holy Cross, Catford was established in the early 1900's at a time of tremendous growth in the number of Catholic churches in the Archdiocese of Southwark. Holy Cross church is one of a number of Ellis churches in the Archdiocese of Southwark and was built in 1904 and underwent significant renovations about fifteen years ago. The parish is bordered by the parishes of Sydenham, Beckenham Hill, Downham, Lee, Lewisham and Brockley. The Sunday mass attendance (675) is spread over three masses – a 6.30pm vigil mass on Saturday and masses at 10.00am and 11.30am on Sunday morning.

Parishioners at Holy Cross come from a wide variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds, eg. Britain and Ireland, Granada, St. Lucia and other islands in the Caribbean, Sri Lanka, Philippines and India, Nigeria, Ghana and other parts of West Africa, Italy and Spain and more recently from Eastern Europe particularly from Poland. While this changing profile of the parish is very noticeable in the school, the parish of Holy Cross is an excellent example of how a parish community can reach out to, welcome, integrate in a very practical way people of different social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds in the life and mission of the Church. This ever-changing cultural diversity of parishioners is a great gift to the parish of Holy Cross but is also a continuous challenge.

A key element in all that happens at Holy Cross is the strong sense of belonging that people experience in the parish and the high level of engagement of parishioners in the mission of the parish.

Parishioners are engaged in all aspects of the Church's mission – ministries connected with Liturgy and Prayer, Evangelisation and Catechesis, Family Life and Marriage, the Union of Catholic Mothers...

Parishioners give generously of their time and their talents in a wide variety of activities and ministries. This sense of participation and collaboration in mission is exemplified by the work of the Parish Council which takes responsibility for coordinating the work of the different parish ministries, groups and activities but which also promotes and develops new initiatives when necessary. There is also a good safeguarding team, a parish maintenance group that oversees the maintenance of the parish buildings and a finance committee that oversees the accounts and reviews income and expenditure. **[to be continued next week]**

Pope encourages faithful to pray the Rosary at home

Pope Francis is encouraging the faithful to pray the Rosary during the month of May, “when the People of God express with particular intensity their love and devotion for the Blessed Virgin Mary”.

In a **Letter for the Month of May**, published on the feast of St Mark the Evangelist (25 April), the Pope notes that it is a tradition to pray the Rosary at home with the family during this month. This year, he continues, “the restrictions of the pandemic have made us come to appreciate all the more this 'family' aspect, view”. That is why he is proposing to everyone to “rediscover the beauty of praying the Rosary at home in the month of May”, whether individually or in a group, “making the most of both opportunities”.



also from a spiritual point of

Pope Francis says, “the key to doing this is always simplicity, and it is easy also on the internet to find good examples of prayers to follow”. Pope Francis also proposes two new prayers to the Blessed Virgin Mary, which can be recited at the end of the Rosary. In his letter, he assures the faithful that he too will be reciting those prayers throughout the month of May, “in spiritual union with all of you”. The Pope says, “contemplating the face of Christ with the heart of Mary our Mother will make us even more united as a spiritual family and will help us overcome this time of trial”. He concludes his letter with the promise that he is praying for all of us “especially those suffering most greatly”; and he asks for our prayers as well.

Pascal Candle – Archbishop John Wilson



within us - *Christ*

end, the Alpha and the Omega, all time belongs to him, to him be glory and power.

If you can, light a candle this Easter Sunday as you pray, and each day of this coming Easter week. We are, individually and together, the paschal candle. The whole purpose of our existence it to be ablaze in Christ Jesus, risen and alive... [this year, our Pascal Candle painting was done by the Finaldi family. Thanks].

...For the next fifty days the new light of Easter will burn vividly in the paschal candle, the *pillar of fire* which banishes the darkness and glows to the honour of our God. This candle has no purpose but to spend itself for the glory of the Risen Christ. Like our bodies, it is marked with the cross, with the signs of beginning and of ending. Its dating reflects our lifespan. Its studs connect Christ's wounds with ours and the incense within them signifies his prayerful offering to the Father to which we are united in worship and praise. The flame is the living fire of Jesus' love, burning inextinguishably *yesterday and today, the beginning and the*



SPIRITUAL THOUGHTS



A Prayer by St. Teresa of Avila

[sent by Kath O'Sullivan]

Let nothing disturb you,
Nothing frighten you;
All things are passing;
God never changes;
Patient endurance attains all things;
Whoever possess God is wanting in nothing;
God alone suffices.

You will show me the path of life,
the fullness of joy in your presence,
at your right hand happiness for ever.
[Today's Responsorial Psalm]

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

MASS TIME	MASS INTENTIONS: 26 th April – 2 nd May
SUN 26 9.00 pm	Belvie Canjoe Bernard R.I.P.
MON 27 9.00 am	The Coughlan and Maton Families wellbeing
TUE 28 9.00 am	People of the Parish
WED 29 9.00 am	Eileen & Henry Killick R.I.P.
THU 30 9.00 am	For an end to the Pandemic
FRI 01 9.00 am	Sara Philips R.I.P.
SAT 02 9.00 am	NHS Staff wellbeing

Please note: you can request Holy Mass via email (antonymegalan@rcaos.com) or text (07367426492). **No need to send money.** We offer the Holy Mass for your intentions.

R.I.P. Please pray for the peaceful repose of the soul of **Bridget Doyle** whose funeral will be on 11 May in Hither Green Cemetery. Also pray for Mary Onojeghuo whose funeral will be on 13th May and also pray for Vincent Sabaroche whose funeral will be on 15th May. May they rest in peace.

NEWSLETTER MATTERS

We used to celebrate our parishioners' birthdays in our Holy Cross. May this lockdown not stop us celebrating our birthdays, wedding anniversaries, exam success, achievements...so please do send details and photos of your celebrations so that they can be shared and you can provide us with the opportunity to pray for you and for each other.

USEFUL LINKS

- **Morning Blessing WhatsApp link for smart phones:**
<https://chat.whatsapp.com/BMQLQw3b5s2LS8OG2TQ60N>
- **Our Holy Cross church Mass – every day at 9am:** <http://www.holycross-catford.org.uk/livestreaming.php>.
- **To Access to 24 x 7 Perpetual Adoration:** <https://www.ewtn.co.uk/live/adoration>
- **To access Holy Mass and prayers from our Lady of Walsingham Shrine:**
<https://www.walsingham.org.uk/live-stream/>
- **To access everyday Mass Readings and prayers [from Universalis]:**
<https://universalis.com/mass.htm>
- **Governments Guidance to contain the pandemic:**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>
- **Lewisham Food Bank:** <https://lewisham.foodbank.org.uk/>

For Those Admitted to Hospital

The Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care team offer support to patients, relatives, carers and staff whatever their faith or belief, religious or non-religious.

Be assured, that patients in the hospital and their relatives at home, can have access to a chaplain via the ward staff. Chaplains are available 24/7 and some are available to respond out of hours on site for emergency end of life requests. All other chaplains are on call for telephone support and advice only.



FAMILY, A DOMESTIC CHURCH



Since the Holy Mass cannot be celebrated publicly, please sustain your life of prayer, turning to the Scriptures, the Rosary, to novenas and litanies, using Catholic social media and internet resources to keep connected in the communion of faith. Live-stream celebrations of the Mass and other devotions are available from churches and shrines across the country and around the world. We encourage every Catholic - individuals, couples and families – to create, if there is not one already present, a simple shrine in their home, with a crucifix and religious images, to provide a focus until that blessed day when we are able to gather in our churches once more.

News from the Diocese: Due to the lockdown, any celebrations of the **Sacrament of Confirmation** arranged before 31 July 2020 will not take place as planned. If restrictions are lifted before 31 July, and a celebration of Confirmation is possible, I will send a decree of delegation to Parish Priests to administer Confirmation to candidates from their parishes so that a local celebration can be arranged. **Archbishop John Wilson.**

HOLY MASS TODAY

Entrance Hymn: **Love Divine** [hymn no 801]

Communion Hymn: **O Bread of Heaven**
[hymn no 662]

Final Hymn: **Christ be our light** [hymn no 883]



First reading - Acts 2:14,22-33

God raised this man Jesus to life, and all of us are witnesses to this

On the day of Pentecost Peter stood up with the Eleven and addressed the crowd in a loud voice: ‘Men of Israel, listen to what I am going to say: Jesus the Nazarene was a man commended to you by God by the miracles and portents and signs that God worked through him when he was among you, as you all know. This man, who was put into your power by the deliberate intention and foreknowledge of God, you took and had crucified by men outside the Law. You killed him, but God raised him to life, freeing him from the pangs of Hades; for it was impossible for him to be held in its power since, as David says of him:

I saw the Lord before me always,
for with him at my right hand nothing can shake me.
So my heart was glad
and my tongue cried out with joy;
my body, too, will rest in the hope
that you will not abandon my soul to Hades
nor allow your holy one to experience corruption.
You have made known the way of life to me,
you will fill me with gladness through your presence.

‘Brothers, no one can deny that the patriarch David himself is dead and buried: his tomb is still with us. But since he was a prophet, and knew that God had sworn him an oath to make one of his descendants succeed him on the throne, what he foresaw and spoke about was the resurrection of the Christ: he is the one who was not abandoned to Hades, and whose body did not experience

corruption. God raised this man Jesus to life, and all of us are witnesses to that. Now raised to the heights by God's right hand, he has received from the Father the Holy Spirit, who was promised, and what you see and hear is the outpouring of that Spirit.'

The word of the Lord.

All reply: **Thanks be to God.**

Responsorial Psalm - Psalm 15(16):1-2,5,7-11

Show us, Lord, the path of life.

Preserve me, God, I take refuge in you.

I say to the Lord: 'You are my God.

O Lord, it is you who are my portion and cup;
it is you yourself who are my prize.'

Show us, Lord, the path of life.

I will bless the Lord who gives me counsel,
who even at night directs my heart.

I keep the Lord ever in my sight:
since he is at my right hand, I shall stand firm.

Show us, Lord, the path of life.

And so my heart rejoices, my soul is glad;
even my body shall rest in safety.
For you will not leave my soul among the dead,
nor let your beloved know decay.

Show us, Lord, the path of life.

You will show me the path of life,
the fullness of joy in your presence,
at your right-hand happiness for ever.

Show us, Lord, the path of life.

Second reading - 1 Peter 1:17-21

Your ransom was paid in the precious blood of Christ

If you are acknowledging as your Father one who has no favourites and judges everyone according to what he has done, you must be scrupulously careful as long as you are living away from your home. Remember, the ransom that was paid to free you from the useless way of life your ancestors handed down was not paid in anything corruptible, neither in silver nor gold, but in the precious blood of a lamb without spot or stain, namely Christ; who, though known since before the world was made, has been revealed only in our time, the end of the ages, for your sake. Through him you now have faith in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory for that very reason – so that you would have faith and hope in God.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation cf.Lk24:32

Alleluia, alleluia!

Lord Jesus, explain the Scriptures to us.

Make our hearts burn within us as you talk to us.

Alleluia!

Gospel - Luke 24:13-35

They recognised him at the breaking of bread

Two of the disciples of Jesus were on their way to a village called Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking together about all that had happened. Now as they talked this over, Jesus himself came up and walked by their side; but something prevented them from recognising him. He said to them, ‘What matters are you discussing as you walk along?’ They stopped short, their faces downcast.

Then one of them, called Cleopas, answered him, ‘You must be the only person staying in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have been happening there these last few days.’ ‘What things?’ he asked. ‘All about Jesus of Nazareth’ they answered ‘who proved he was a great prophet by the things he said and did in the sight of God and of the whole people; and how our chief priests and our leaders handed him over to be sentenced to death, and had him crucified. Our own hope had been that he would be the one to set Israel free. And this is not all: two whole days have gone by since it all happened; and

some women from our group have astounded us: they went to the tomb in the early morning, and when they did not find the body, they came back to tell us they had seen a vision of angels who declared he was alive. Some of our friends went to the tomb and found everything exactly as the women had reported, but of him they saw nothing.'

Then he said to them, 'You foolish men! So slow to believe the full message of the prophets! Was it not ordained that the Christ should suffer and so enter into his glory?' Then, starting with Moses and going through all the prophets, he explained to them the passages throughout the scriptures that were about himself.

When they drew near to the village to which they were going, he made as if to go on; but they pressed him to stay with them. 'It is nearly evening' they said 'and the day is almost over.' So he went in to stay with them. Now while he was with them at table, he took the bread and said the blessing; then he broke it and handed it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognised him; but he had vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, 'Did not our hearts burn within us as he talked to us on the road and explained the scriptures to us?'

They set out that instant and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven assembled together with their companions, who said to them, 'Yes, it is true. The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.' Then they told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised him at the breaking of bread.

The Gospel of the Lord.

All reply:

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

REFLECTION ON TODAY'S GOSPEL

[by **Rev. Dr Sahaya G. Selvam**, sdb – Fr Sahaya is a friend of Fr Antony]

The Eucharistic Celebration at Emmaus

The Structure of the Eucharistic Celebration

How many parts the Holy Mass have? The Roman rite of the Eucharistic celebration has four parts:

1. Introductory Rite: from the entrance hymn to the Opening Prayer (which is also called 'The Collect').
2. Liturgy of the Word: from the first reading to the bidding prayers.
3. Liturgy of the Eucharist: from the offertory procession till the Prayer after Communion.

4. Concluding Rite: the blessing, dismissal and the concluding hymn.

These four parts of the Eucharistic celebration are recognizable in the gospel passage of today which describes the encounter between Jesus and the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. In a sense, Jesus is celebrating the Mass with them.

1. Introductory Rite – Lk 24:13-24
2. Liturgy of the Word – Lk 24:25-27
3. Liturgy of the Eucharist – Lk 24:28-31
4. Concluding Rite – Lk 24:31-35

In the first part, we see that the two disciples are running away from Jerusalem because they had lost hope in Jesus. They speak about Jesus in the past tense, and their story shows a lot of confusion and discouragement. They had invested three or so good years on Jesus, and apparently everything had come to naught. Jesus joins them in their situation of hopelessness and begins the celebration of the Eucharist. He collects (listens to) their concerns as he walks with them. Jesus builds a close relationship with them, and establishes a context in which to share with them the Word of God.

In the second part – the Liturgy of the Word, Jesus begins to challenge the two men. He uses the Word of God to suggest some deep meaning to the recent events in their lives, that they had not simply wasted their life with Jesus. *“Then, starting with Moses and going through all the prophets, he explained to them the passages throughout the scriptures that were about himself” (Lk 24:27).* We do not know what method did Jesus use in breaking the Word to them, but surely their hearts were burning within them as they listened to him on the road.

Having established a relationship with the disciples, and having shared the Word of God, now it is time for the Liturgy of the Eucharist. This is the third part of the Eucharistic celebration. Jesus pretends as if to travel on: he gives them an option to see if they would want to go on beyond the Word-heard to the Word-made-flesh! The disciples invite him, *“Stay with us, Lord/sir.”* So Jesus goes to stay with them. *“Now while he was with them at table, he took the bread and said the blessing; then he broke it and handed it to them” (Lk 24:30).* These words sound very liturgical; and perhaps they come from the celebration of the Breaking of Bread in the early Christian communities. *“And their eyes were opened and they recognised him; but he had vanished from their sight” (Lk 24:30-31).*

After recognising the Risen Lord, the disciples feel empowered. They now want to go back to Jerusalem to share their experience, and to give hope to those who are still waiting to experience Jesus. This is the fourth part of the Eucharistic celebration: the dismissal and mission. *“Then they told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised him at the breaking of bread”* (Lk 24:35).

The Meaning of the Eucharist in the Light of the Emmaus Encounter

What was happening to those two disciples as they walked through the different parts of the celebration with Jesus himself; and what should be happening to us as we journey through the different parts of the mass?

Part 1 – Oh, what a life?

Part 2 – Yes, life does have meaning.

Part 3 – Aha, He is alive!

Part 4 – I want to give hope to others!

1. In the beginning of the mass, may be, we come with our own problems and issues. Perhaps we are frustrated; we are discouraged. We say, “Oh what a life!” We may be feeling like running away from our responsibilities; running away from our faith; running away from our communities. The Introductory Rite of the mass welcomes us, makes us feel at home, invites us to acknowledge our state and feel comforted by the Penitential Rite.

2. In the Liturgy of the Word, we listen to the Word of God. This part of the liturgy helps us find meaning to the events of our lives in the light of the Word of God. The purpose of the Scripture readings or the homily is basically to find meaning to the events of our present life, and to become aware that everything is under the watchful eye of God. At the end of it, we are able to say, “Yes, everything does have a meaning!”

3. To deepen that meaning and to climax it in a God-experience we move on to the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The Liturgy of the Eucharist gives us the possibility of experiencing God in Christ. We experience Him as risen. “He is alive!” He is with us! He has not abandoned me. He gives me hope. This is the core of receiving communion. We get strengthened to continue our lives meaningfully.

4. Finally, having experienced Christ we are now ready to go back to where we came from. May be nothing would have changed in our environment, but since we are empowered by the Word and Sacrament,

we want to bring hope to our situations. We are sent as apostles – “Go in the peace of Christ!”

May this Eucharistic celebration, and indeed, every Eucharistic celebration, be an opportunity for us to experience the Risen Lord! May this experience transform us, and thus empower us to transform the world around us.

