

# Our Parish Liturgy . . . . .

## This Week (2 Easter A)

<b>DIVINE OFFICE</b>	<b>WEEK 2</b>
<b>ENTRANCE HYMN</b>	18.00 N/A 09.00 N/A 11.00 Musicians
<b>PENITENTIAL ACT</b>	Spoken
<b>GLORIA</b>	18.00 Spoken 09.00 Spoken 11.00 Musicians
<b>FIRST READING</b>	Acts 2:42-47 <i>'All who believed were together and had all things in common.'</i>
<b>PSALM RESPONSE</b>	<i>Give praise to the Lord, for he is good, his mercy endures for ever.</i>
<b>SECOND READING</b>	1 Peter 1:3-9 <i>'He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.'</i>
<b>GOSPEL ACCLAMATION</b>	<i>Alleluia, alleluia! You believed, Thomas, because you have seen me, says the Lord. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed. Alleluia!</i>
<b>GOSPEL READING</b>	John 20:19-31 <i>'Eight days later, Jesus came.'</i>
<b>PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS</b>	18.00 N/A 09.00 N/A 11.00 Musicians
<b>SANCTUS</b>	18.00 Spoken 09.00 Spoken 11.00 Musicians
<b>MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION</b>	18.00 Spoken 09.00 Spoken 11.00 Musicians
<b>GREAT AMEN</b>	Spoken
<b>OUR FATHER</b>	18.00 Spoken 09.00 Spoken 11.00 Musicians
<b>AGNUS DEI</b>	18.00 Spoken 09.00 Spoken 11.00 Musicians
<b>COMMUNION ANTIPHON</b>	<i>Bring your hand and feel the place of the nails, and do not be unbelieving, alleluia.</i>
<b>THANKSGIVING</b>	18.00 N/A 09.00 N/A 11.00 Musicians

<b>RECESSION</b>	18.00 N/A 09.00 N/A 11.00 Musicians
<b>Next Week (3 Easter A)</b>	
<b>DIVINE OFFICE</b>	<b>WEEK 3</b>
<b>FIRST READING</b>	Acts 2:14, 22-23 <i>'It was not possible for him to be held by death.'</i>
<b>PSALM RESPONSE</b>	<i>O Lord, you will show me the path of life.</i>
<b>SECOND READING</b>	1 Peter 1:17-21 <i>'You were ransomed with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish.'</i>
<b>GOSPEL READING</b>	Luke 24:13-35 <i>'He was known to them in the breaking of the bread.'</i>
<b>Music and text of Antiphons from Psallite, © 2005 Collegeville Composers Group. Published by Liturgical Press, MN56321. Used with Permission. One Licence No.0199</b>	

### MARRIAGE MATTERS

In his Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*, Pope Francis offers a profound insight into the joy of Christian marriage and reminds us of its place at the very heart of the Church's life. Christian marriage, he observes, 'is a sign of how much Christ loved his Church' in the covenant sealed on the cross, yet it also makes that love present in the communion of the spouses. By becoming one flesh, they embody the espousal of our human nature by the Son of God.'

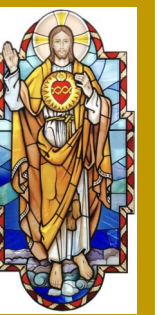
As we know, the Holy Scriptures feed and nourish our faith and help us to grow in our relationship with God and one another. It is for this reason that these scriptural reflections are offered. They should help enable married couples to focus on the richness of God's Word that we hear proclaimed each Sunday of the Year and to experience the deep joy of God's love expressed in the great Sacrament of Marriage.

### TOGETHERNESS



Our 'togetherness' in what we do and say is a 'sign' of our love and a source of joy for us. Sometimes, like Thomas, we can be stubborn, with an attitude of 'I'll believe it when I see it' creating a sense of separation and distance. But together we have the power to stop, reflect, be forgiven, and begin again.

# Sacred Heart Parish Newsletter



for the Roman Catholic community of Cobham, Oxshott, & Stoke D'Abernon



part of the Arundel & Brighton Diocesan Trust, a Registered Charity No. 252878

Volume 07 Issue 20 12<sup>th</sup> April 2026 : 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday Easter Year A

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**THIS WEEK:**

**BIBLE READING PLAN**

Mo 1 Samuel 15-19  
Tu 1 Samuel 20-24  
We Psalms 7, 27, 31, 34  
Th Psalms 56, 120, 140-2  
Fr 1 Samuel 25-27

**Financial News . . .**

**Weekend of 05/04/26**

1<sup>st</sup> Plate £ 2752:84  
Standing Orders £ 755:00  
Contactless £ 453:00  
1<sup>st</sup> Total £ 3,960:84

**Clergy Upkeep Fund**

**Good Friday . . .**

£ 561:45  
**Holy Places of Jerusalem**

Thankyou for your continuing generosity to your Parish.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Collection . . .**

**This Weekend 12/04/26**

**Overseas Missions**  
Next Weekend 19/04/26  
None

**Bite Size . . .**

**Doubt is a pain too lonely to know that faith is his twin brother.**

**Khalil Gibran**

**Burning Heart Moments . . . . .**

The chosen readings continue to follow a pattern through this Easter season. The first reading is a speech given by Peter in the Acts of the Apostles soon after the Resurrection. He is speaking to a crowd of Jews, connecting the dots for them between King David and Jesus. He explains that David's statement of faith - "you will not abandon my soul to the netherworld, nor will you suffer your holy one to see corruption" - was a prophecy of Jesus' resurrection. The Gospel tells the story of another appearance of the risen Jesus to his friends.



"Their eyes were opened and they recognized him."

**Sheepish Question:**  
As I follow Jesus today, where do I look and listen for him?

Luke gives us a beautiful story of a common Christian shared experience: having Jesus present with us in a time sadness or distress but not recognizing him at the moment. We might wonder why "their eyes were kept from recognizing him." We have probably also had experiences where Jesus' presence was clear to us even if it wasn't clear to others. For example, we might know someone whose spouse

has died. In her grief she might feel entirely abandoned by God. From the outside, though, we can see how lovingly God is still caring for her. We can recognize how she is surrounded by the compassionate and kind acts of her friends and other family members. For some reason, she simply can't experience that as God's presence at the moment. Hopefully, with time, she will be able to look back on that "journey to Emmaus" and realize how Jesus was present with her.

The experience of not recognizing Jesus at the moment happens in good times too. Unfortunately, we don't always associate our "burning heart moments" with Jesus. St. Ignatius taught that the more we can pay attention to the movements of our hearts, the more we can discern how God is present to us and what God is inviting us to in the moment. For example, when considering a job change, or deepening a relationship, or taking up some new endeavour, if we feel "our hearts burning within us" that is a sign of Jesus' presence. Ignatius taught that, as in Luke's story, it helps to share these burning heart moments with someone else rather than keep them to ourselves. Another person can strengthen and validate our experience, share in our joy, and accompany us on the road back toward the Resurrection, not away from it.

- ### Questions of the week
- 1 Share about a time when you realized Jesus' presence with you after the fact, even though you didn't "catch" it at the time.
  - 2 When have you had a burning heart moment that clued you in to something important in your life?

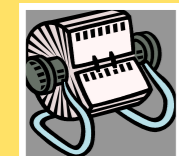
**Before Mass** - Talk to God **During Mass** - Listen to God **After Mass** - Talk to your friends

# Parish Office . . . . .



**Normal Office Hours :** Monday to Friday 09.30 - 12.30.  
**Parish Secretary :** Sarah Cox (01932) 860244  
 cobham@abdiocese.org.uk  
**Newsletter Editorial :** Items for possible inclusion in the Parish Newsletter (if there is room) need to be received (in writing please) at the Parish Office by midday on Wednesday.  
**Gift Aid Organiser :** Dan Meehan (01372) 456416  
 ga.cobham@abdiocese.org.uk  
**Safeguarding Rep. :** Mark Hillas 07436 571060  
 sg1.cobham@abdiocese.org.uk

# General Parish Information . . . . .



**Parishioner Registration :** Every household within the Parish is requested to complete a 'Parishioner Registration/Census' form so that our Parish records may be kept up to date. These forms can be obtained from the Parish Office and should be completed fully before being returned to the Parish Office.

Should you move address within the Parish at any time please complete a new form and write 'AMENDMENT' across the top of the form. Thank you.

**Hospital :** If you are going into hospital as a 'planned admission' you are strongly encouraged to make contact with Fr Daryl well beforehand so that, if appropriate, the Sacrament of the Sick can be celebrated beforehand.

**Infant Baptism :** Infant Baptisms are intended for the children of practising parishioners only and are celebrated on five occasions during the year after parents and godparents have completed a course of preparation. There can be no celebration without this important course. The dates of the courses for the current year can be found in the application form available from the Parish Office. Baptisms do not take place during the seasons of Advent or Lent.

**Sacramental Preparation :** Notice of the availability of Application Forms for preparation for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist will be made via the Parish Newsletter between the school Summer Half Term and 31<sup>st</sup> August each year. Possible candidates for Confirmation should respond to the announcements made via the Parish Newsletter at the beginning of the Autumn school term.

Parishioners are advised that it is very difficult to imagine that any family or individual who is not regularly practising the Faith as members of our community could possibly be ready to celebrate a Sacrament of the Church.

**Marriage Preparation :** Marriages are celebrated by appointment with the Parish Priest. It should be remembered that in the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton twelve months minimum notice is required before a marriage may take place; this is a requirement of the Church for all marriages that involve a Roman Catholic (even if they are not taking place in the Catholic Church). It is also necessary that one of the parties must have a meaningful connection with the Parish. Marriages do not take place during the seasons of Advent or Lent.

**Parish Car Park :** All Parishioners attending Mass and using our Car Park need to make sure that they have fully completed our 'Parishioner Registration/Census Form' (available from the Parish Office) before using the Car Park; this ensures that your current vehicle registration is lodged in the system. Registering only needs to be done once (unless you change your car or if you use another car in the family that is not registered on the system).

**Important :** if you are not registered on the system and you use the car park you will receive a parking notice. Registered Parishioners and pre-registered visitors are able to park whilst they attend our Masses/liturgies without fear of a charge notice. (Car Park queries - parking@shpcobham.com)

**NOTE :** the Car Park does not use QR codes any found are **scams!**



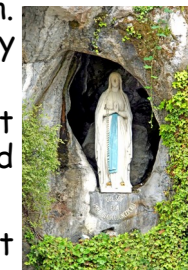
# Church Mouse (cub reporter). . .

The musings of one of God's smallest creatures on events in and around the Parish over the past seven days . . . .

A very quiet week around The Presbytery; Fr D took off in the car on Easter Sunday evening to stay with a friend in Reigate before being picked up at 04.30 to be taken to Heathrow ready to catch a plane to Toulouse and from there by coach to Lourdes. Fr D was back looking after special needs children once more. However, he was also meeting up with the 'Old & Bold' group from last year (those are more senior adults who in the past were helpers in various groups before deciding that they were now too old to be going as helpers/wranglers for the children). They were able to join in with all of the Trust liturgies during the week but otherwise have a more sedate (and calm) time without children. Fr D has been a couple of times with this older group (perhaps he's getting ready for when he could be classed as 'Old & Bold!').

He should be returning to the Parish on Sunday evening when he will no doubt start messing about with the big white tin boxes in the utility room! Before leaving he did leave me with a schedule of what they've been doing during the week:

- **Monday** - depart Heathrow for Toulouse, coach to hotel in Lourdes, relax at a local café before evening meal with the rest of the group and night prayers.
- **Tuesday** - Mass at Sheepfold chapel (Fr D's favourite), walk to see Grotto before lunch, rest before a 'tour of town (Cachot, Boly Mill, Parish Church, Maison Paternelle) café stop, then back to hotel for dinner, before joining in Torchlight Procession.
- **Wednesday** - Stations of the Cross on the Prairie before lunch, Coach to Hosanna House, Mass in Hosanna House Chapel. Fr D to join Old & Bold for late celebration lunch in a Bartres restaurant.
- **Thursday** - Join Trust Mass in underground Basilica, Blessed Sacrament Procession, Torchlight Procession.
- **Friday** - Mass in the St Frai chapel and shops (Fr D intends to buy the special crosses for our First Eucharist candidates), drinks at a Café overlooking the river Garve.
- **Saturday** - Free time in Lourdes before catching coach to Toulouse airport and flight home (- to rest!).



# CHILDREN'S WORD SEARCH 2<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY EASTER YEAR A

Y J M N P S M B J D J Y D J S TOGETHER  
 C X I T A T F M L H O Y W A X DOUBTING  
 W X R K N Y G X P O F O M E D RECORDED  
 X M A D V Y G E A X C O R E H BELIEVED  
 R X C C J V D R L X H K V S A DISCIPLES  
 T L L U V E D A E T N E E D M MIRACLES  
 T K E S H E H I R C I N S D S TOUCHED  
 O X S C W B A S S L O C Y N T SHOWED  
 G R U O L K N Z E C L R G D N THOMAS  
 E O H D Q Z D B H J I I D E P LOCKED  
 T S I U J J S A S R S P F E Z DOORS  
 H N T F E K D P I A M I L B D JESUS  
 E T W U S N K D D U L G E E E SIGNS  
 R S R N U K P S E S L V H N S  
 R P T V S V D O U B T I N G B

LIFE  
 SIDE  
 HANDS



MEETING THE RISEN CHRIST

John 20:19-31

19It was late that Sunday evening, and the disciples were gathered together behind locked doors, because they were afraid of the Jewish authorities. Then Jesus came and stood among them. "Peace be with you," he said. 20After saying this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy at seeing the Lord. 21Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I send you." 22Then he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 23If you forgive people's sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

24One of the twelve disciples, Thomas (called the Twin), was not with them when Jesus came. 25So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

Thomas said to them, "Unless I see the scars of the nails in his hands and put my finger on those scars and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

26A week later the disciples were together again indoors, and Thomas was with them. The doors were locked, but Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." 27Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and look at my hands; then stretch out your hand and put it in my side. Stop your doubting, and believe!"

28Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

29Jesus said to him, "Do you believe because you see me? How happy are those who believe without seeing me!"

30In his disciples' presence Jesus performed many other miracles which are not written down in this book. 31But these have been written in order that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through your faith in him you may have life.

Other Readings: Acts 2:42-47; Psalm 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24; 1 Peter 1:3-9

LECTIO:

In the Synoptic Gospels and in John's Gospel, we find descriptions of a number of meetings between the disciples and the risen Christ. The entire faith of the Church is based upon the testimony of those who met Jesus alive after having seen him die on the cross. The apostle Paul strongly defends Jesus' physical resurrection in response to doubts among the Christians in Corinth (1 Corinthians 15). Jesus' resurrection confirmed all he had said and done. It also assured the disciples' faith in Jesus as the Son of God.

Thomas is not present when Jesus appears to the other disciples and he is not willing to accept their testimony. He wants to see Jesus for himself and touch his wounds. Jesus graciously allows Thomas to come to faith in his resurrection on his own terms. But Jesus is mindful of the majority of Christians who believe in his resurrection through the gift of faith, the testimony of God's word and the simple witness of other Christians who daily say, 'we believe that Jesus died and rose again'.

In this passage Jesus also commissions the disciples to continue his mission of restoring people into right relationship with God and extending God's kingdom rule on earth, saying, 'As the Father sent me, so I send you.' This is followed immediately with the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The passage ends with a clear declaration of faith. Real life is only possible lived out through faith in Jesus.



MEDITATIO:

- Have you encountered the risen Christ and accepted his lordship and divinity? How did you come to accept Jesus as your Lord and God?
- Is your faith in Jesus something that is only formal or intellectual? How does it affect your daily life?
- What do you feel Jesus has sent you to do? What part can the Holy Spirit play in this?

ORATIO:

Prayerfully offer your life to God, especially the areas that you find difficult to surrender to his Lordship. Pray the words 'Jesus, My Lord and God' as you submit each area to him.

CONTEMPLATIO:

Three times in this passage Jesus says to his disciples 'Peace be with you'. We all need to hear these words. God's peace keeps our hearts and minds safe (Philippians 4:7). Take some time to be renewed by God's peace.

Day	Date	Time	Service / Intention	Donor
Sat.	11 <sup>th</sup> April	Easter Saturday	PLEASE NOTE : No Sacrament of Reconciliation Today	
			18.00 William Kenneth Hapgood †	Hapgood Family
			<input type="checkbox"/> Live-Stream / Recorded	
Sun.	12 <sup>th</sup> April	2 <sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY IN EASTERTIDE, YEAR A		
			09.00 M <sup>c</sup> Carthy Family	
			11.00 For the Parishioners	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Live-Stream / Recorded	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Live-Stream / Recorded	
Mon.	13 <sup>th</sup> April	Easter Weekday		
			<b>No Service Today</b>	Mass 09.30 at Walton
Tue.	14 <sup>th</sup> April	Easter Weekday	PLEASE NOTE : No Morning Prayer of the Church Today	
			09.30 <b>Requiem For Jay Adams †</b>	
			PLEASE NOTE : No Exposition of Blessed Sacrament Today	
Wed.	15 <sup>th</sup> April	Easter Weekday		
			09.15 Morning Prayer of the Church	[p.p. 126 & 493]
			09.30 Teresa M <sup>c</sup> Carthy's Intentions	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Live-Streamed	
Thu.	16 <sup>th</sup> April	Easter Weekday		
			09.15 Morning Prayer of the Church	[p.p. 137 & 493]
			09.30 Holy Souls	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Live-Streamed	
Fri.	17 <sup>th</sup> April	Easter Weekday (Day of Abstinence)		
			09.15 Morning Prayer of the Church	[p.p. 148 & 493]
			09.30 Anastasia Meehan †	D. & P. Meehan
			<input type="checkbox"/> Live-Streamed	
Sat.	18 <sup>th</sup> April	Easter Weekday		
			17.00 - 17.30 Sacrament of Reconciliation	
			18.00 Maria Featherstone †	J. & N. Begley
			<input type="checkbox"/> Live-Stream / Recorded	
Sun.	19 <sup>th</sup> April	3 <sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY IN EASTERTIDE, YEAR A		
			09.00 John Redmond †	M. Redmond
			11.00 For the Parishioners	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Live-Stream / Recorded	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Live-Stream / Recorded	

Mass may be offered for both the living and the dead and also for most other intentions. We do our best to try and accommodate specific dates but this can be especially difficult on weekends and at less than three months notice.

'Mass Intentions' are published in the Parish Newsletter on the weekend before they are celebrated although sometimes a Requiem Mass will 'bump' an intention to a later date.

Eastertide . . . . .

The Fifty days from Easter Sunday until Pentecost are celebrated in joyful exultation as one feast day, or better as one "great Sunday." The Sundays of this season rank as the paschal Sundays and, after Easter Sunday itself, are called the Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Sundays of Easter. The period of 50 sacred days ends on Pentecost Sunday. On the fortieth day after Easter the Ascension is celebrated. This solemnity directs our attention to Christ,

who ascended into heaven before the eyes of his disciples, who is now seated at the right hand of the Father, invested with royal power, who is there to prepare a place for us in the kingdom of heaven; and who is destined to come again at the end of time. The weekdays after the Ascension until the Saturday before Pentecost inclusive are a preparation for the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete. This sacred season of fifty

days comes to an end on Pentecost Sunday, which commemorates the giving of the Holy Spirit to the apostles, the beginnings of the Church and its mission to every tongue and people and nation.



DATE / MASS	WELCOME MINISTERS	READERS	EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS	REPOSITORY AFTER MASS
<b>SATURDAY</b> <b>3 Easter A</b> <b>18/04/26</b> <b>18.00</b>	Still Required; please offer	Sr Patricia	N/A at present	P. Hunt A. Essien
<b>SUNDAY</b> <b>3 Easter A</b> <b>19/04/26</b> <b>09.00</b>	Still Required; please offer	D. McEvoy	G. Fisher D. Meehan	D. Westsmith M. Smyth
<b>SUNDAY</b> <b>3 Easter A</b> <b>19/04/26</b> <b>11.00</b>	Still Required; please offer	C. Hourquebie	D. Yearley J. Foster	I. Heims S. Williams

**PLEASE REMEMBER : If you are unable to complete your particular ministry then it is your responsibility to arrange cover with another minister. In this way our Sunday Liturgies will run in a smooth and prayerful way.**



**OUR PARISH SUPPORTS THE COBHAM AREA FOODBANK**

**UPDATED LIST OF WANTED ITEMS**



Are you able to help local people in crisis by purchasing items on the list below and placing them in the Foodbank's collection point in the narthex when you come to Mass at the weekend? Thank You!

- ⇒ Tinned Meat
- ⇒ UHT Semi-Skimmed Milk
- ⇒ Fruit Squash
- ⇒ Crunchy Peanut Butter
- ⇒ Tinned Vegetables & Potatoes
- ⇒ Deodorant (men & Women)
- ⇒ Adult Toothbrushes & Toothpaste
- ⇒ Sanitary Pads
- ⇒ Shower Gel
- ⇒ UHT Fruit Juice
- ⇒ Tinned Fish
- ⇒ Tinned Fruit
- ⇒ Honey
- ⇒ Long-life Sponge Puddings
- ⇒ Hair Shampoo
- ⇒ Antibacterial Cleaning Spray
- ⇒ Sugar (500g pack)
- ⇒ Disposable Razors
- ⇒ Hair conditioner
- ⇒ Saving Foam

**Prayers Please . . . . .**

**FOR THOSE UNWELL AT THIS TIME:**

Sr Anne Bayley, Norma Begley, Fr Tony Bridson, Maggie Dongray, Tom Delbridge, Fiona Frank, Maureen Garner, baby Naomi Hunt, Michael Nutcher, Fr Sebastian Paul, Pascal Smyth, Anne Sproul and John Wilkey.

**THE RECENTLY DECEASED:**

Pauline Slater †

**ANNIVERSARIES OF DEATH:**

Alan Foster †  
Eddy Warrington †  
Elizabeth Doherty †  
Valerie Glassey †  
Clodagh Sorbie †  
Fr Patrick Emmanuel †  
Mgr James McConnon †  
Fr Archibald MacDonnell †  
Fr John Franklin †  
Fr Anthony Quinn †  
Fr Patrick Kenny †  
Canon Kevin McHugh †

**HOLY FATHER'S MONTHLY PRAYER INTENTION:**

" . . . let us pray for priests going through moments of crisis in their vocation, that they may find the accompaniment they need and that communities may support them with understanding and prayer.

*For those who are unwell.....*

*those who have died recently....*

*those whose anniversaries occur.....*

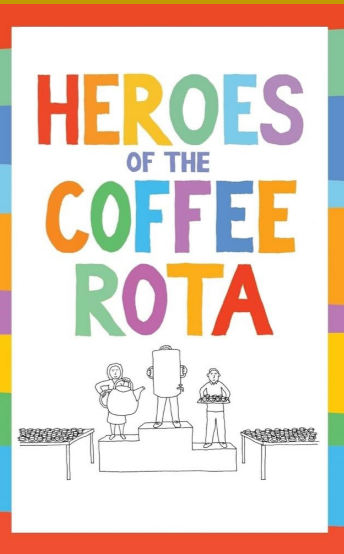
*the Holy Father's Prayer Intention....*

**11.00 SUNDAY MASS COFFEE Rota** - Our Coffee Rota volunteers will be having a well-earned rest this Sunday before returning to 'the fray' next Sunday (12<sup>th</sup> April).

Currently we are looking for parishioners (especially those who use the 11.00 coffee session) to consider becoming new members of the Coffee Rota (like any rota, the greater the number of volunteers the less often the same names crop up). This role is ideal for younger families to take part in as well as others (married or single).



**UPDATED 'LAUDATE' HYMN BOOK** - Through the kindness of one of our parishioners we have recently purchased the 'updated' version of our hymn book 'Laudate.' The new copies are fully compatible with the new translation of the Mass which took effect on the First Sunday of Advent 2011 (that musical settings of the sung parts of the Mass must receive approval from the Bishops of England and Wales and shortened/truncated renderings must not be used), also several hymns have been 'edited' to take account of instructions from the Bishops of England and Wales's Liturgy Department (principally that the word 'Yahweh' must not be used in the liturgy). The books are currently being stamped with the Parish seal and having strong PVC covers placed on them after which we will start to use them at Mass and ask around if any other parish can make use of the old ones. Of course their use here in the Sacred Heart was a 'second existence' for them, having come from Thames Ditton to us!



**2<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY EASTER, SUNDAY OF THE EASTER OCTAVE, DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY - Christos Anesti! Alithos Anesti!** These Greek acclamations mean "Christ is Risen! He is truly Risen!" and in the Christian East - both Catholic and Orthodox - these acclamations replace the usual greetings of hello and goodbye during the fifty days between Easter and Pentecost, the liturgical season of Easter or Eastertide. During Eastertide, the first eight days have a special identity, and today in the liturgical calendar - eight days after Easter Sunday - has three names: 1) the Octave Day of Easter, 2) the Second Sunday of Easter, and 3) Divine Mercy Sunday.



The number eight has special meaning in the sacred liturgy because it is a symbol of the new creation. The drama of creation unfolded over seven symbolic days, and the eighth day is the sign of God's pluperfect love revealed in the new creation. This is foreshadowed in the Old Covenant through circumcision taking place eight days after birth and is confirmed by the Resurrection taking place on Sunday, both the first day of the week and the eighth day. Accordingly, in the liturgical calendar the eight days from Easter Sunday until today are kept as one festive celebration of the Resurrection, and today completes the eighth day or Octave of Easter.

Moreover, because the Gospel appointed for today speaks of the divine power to forgive sins which the Lord Jesus gave to his Apostles when he first appeared to them after his Resurrection, the emphasis of the liturgy today is on the great mercy of God. Modern devotion to the Lord Jesus as the embodiment of Divine Mercy is connected to the spirituality of St Faustina, a Polish mystic and religious sister who was canonised by Pope John Paul II, who died on the eve of Divine Mercy Sunday in 2005. Pope John Paul II asked that the Second Sunday of Easter would be kept each year as 'Divine Mercy Sunday,' and this beautiful title draws our attention today to the way in which that mercy is ordinarily extended to us after our Baptism: by going to Confession in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

In his first Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium* or Joy of the Gospel, Pope Francis explained that as a teenager he had a life changing experience of mercy by going to Confession:

*"After making my confession I felt something had changed. I was not the same. I had heard something like a voice or a call."*

This moment of mercy in the life of Jorge Bergoglio helps explain his burning desire to share God's mercy with others, and as Pope Francis he described the Church as a "community [that] has an endless desire to show mercy, the fruit of its own experience of the power of the Father's infinite mercy" (EG, 24). Let us keep this Octave of Easter, Divine Mercy Sunday, by resolving to seek the Lord's mercy for ourselves and to be instruments of that mercy for others. *Christos Anesti! Alithos Anesti!*