

Our Parish Liturgy

This Week (6 Easter A)

DIVINE OFFICE	WEEK 2
ENTRANCE HYMN	18.00 Confirmation Booklet 09.00 824 11.00 Musicians
PENITENTIAL ACT	Spoken
GLORIA	18.00 Confirmation Booklet 09.00 529 11.00 Musicians
FIRST READING	Acts 8:5-8, 14-17 <i>'y laid tn them and they received the Holy Spirit.'</i>
PSALM RESPONSE	<i>Cry out with joy to God, all the earth.</i>
SECOND READING	1 Peter 15-18 <i>'Being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit.'</i>
GOSPEL ACCLAMATION	<i>Alleluia, alleluia! If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, says the Lord, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him. Alleluia!</i>
GOSPEL READING	John 14:15-21 <i>'I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper.'</i>
PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS	18.00 Confirmation Booklet 09.00 748 11.00 Musicians
SANCTUS	18.00 Confirmation Booklet 09.00 553 11.00 Musicians
MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION	18.00 Confirmation Booklet 09.00 554b 11.00 Musicians
GREAT AMEN	18.00 Confirmation Booklet 09.00 555 11.00 Spoken
OUR FATHER	18.00 Spoken 09.00 Spoken 11.00 Musicians
AGNUS DEI	18.00 Confirmation Booklet 09.00 Spoken 11.00 Musicians
COMMUNION ANTIPHON	<i>If you love me, keep my commandments, says the Lord, and I will ask the Father and he will send you another Paraclete, to abide with you for ever, alleluia.</i>
THANKSGIVING	18.00 Confirmation Booklet 09.00 774 11.00 Musicians

RECESSION	18.00 Confirmation Booklet 09.00 934 11.00 Musicians
Next Week (7 Easter A)	
DIVINE OFFICE	WEEK 3
FIRST READING	Acts 1:12-14 <i>'All with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer.'</i>
PSALM RESPONSE	<i>I believe I shall see the Lord's goodness in the land of the living.</i>
SECOND READING	1 Peter 4:13-16 <i>'If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed.'</i>
GOSPEL READING	John 17:1-11a <i>'Father, glorify your Son.'</i>
Music and text of Antiphons from Psallite, © 2005 Collegeville Composers Group. Published by Liturgical Press, MN56321. Used with Permission. One Licence No.0199	

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.

LISTEN TO JESUS WITHIN OURSELVES AND WITHIN OUR PARTNER



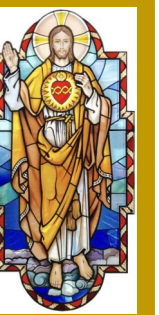
Jesus is in me and in you! In marriage we are especially called to honour that presence in our spouse every day. There may be times when we hurt each other or take each other for granted, leading to feelings of jealousy and resentment, often to arguments. At times like this the call is for forgiveness, for healing, for affirmation.

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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 24 10th May 2026 : 6th Sunday Easter Year A

THIS WEEK:

BIBLE READING PLAN

Mo	Ps. 50, 53, 60, 75
Tu	2 Sam. 10-12, 1 Chr. 19-20
We	Ps. 32, 51, 65-7, 69-70, 86, 122
Th	2 Sam. 13-15
Fr	Ps.3-4, 12-3, 28, 55

Financial News . . .

Weekend of 03/05/26

1 st Plate	£ 511:70
Standing Orders	£ 755:00
Contactless	£ 160:00
1 st Total	£ 1,426:70
2 nd Total	£ 354:20
Parish Buildings Fund	

Thankyou for your continuing generosity to your Parish.

2nd Collection . . .

This Weekend 10/05/26
None

Parishioners are able/unable to Gift Aid this by using our Parish Envelope.

Next Weekend 17/05/26

Mass Media Apostolate

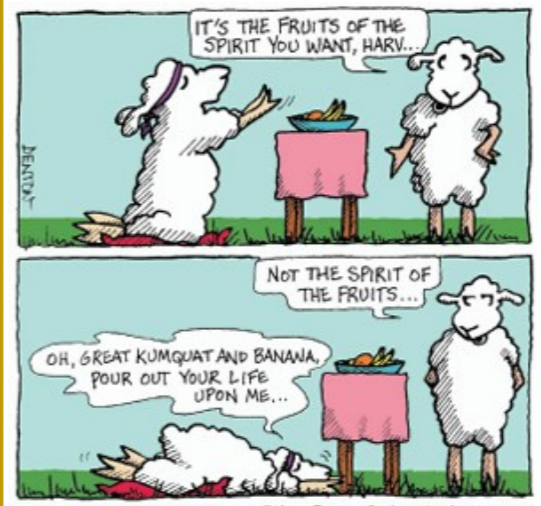
Parishioners are unable to Gift Aid this by using our Parish Envelope.

Bite Size . . .

Seek truth and you will find a path.

Frank Slaughter

While much of the book of the Acts of the Apostles follows the work and travels of Peter and Paul, today's passage tells us that other believers were doing healing work in Jesus' name too. In this case, Philip ventured out of the Jewish crowds to go to the city of Samaria, a place that historically many Jews avoided. Samaritans shared some of the history and beliefs of the Jews but were seen as traitors to the faith, partly because they refused to go to Jerusalem for worship. That didn't phase Philip or slow God's work, though, because the Samaritans eagerly received "the word of God" and became believers in Christ too. The story has echoes of the Samaritans who quickly came to believe in Jesus after the woman at the well introduced them to him.



"He will give you another Advocate to be with you always, the Spirit of truth."

Sheepish Question:

As you pray to the Holy Spirit, are you more attentive to the gifts you receive or to the giver?

This Gospel reading picks up just a few verses after last week's Gospel left off. Jesus is still speaking to the disciples on the night before he dies. The disciples are still worried and

concerned by Jesus' predictions of betrayal and denial. Jesus continues to reassure them, now introducing the promise of the Holy Spirit, sometimes called the "Advocate" or the "Paraclete."

Just as Jesus explained to Philip in last Sunday's Gospel reading (that Philip already knew the Father because Philip knew Jesus), he explains that the apostles also already know the Spirit. Like those confused disciples, we might first protest that we don't know the Spirit either. If we pay attention to our experiences, though, and think back to times when we have instinctively known the truth or what was the right thing to do, we can spot how the Spirit was with us. Maybe we had a flash of insight, or some one said something that we instantly recognized as right for us, or we had an unexplained experience of comfort or strength in a difficult situation. Those experiences are experiences of the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, present and working within us.

Questions of the week

- 1 When have you had an experience of the Holy Spirit's presence or guidance, even if you didn't recognise it at the time?
- 2 When have you had an experience of feeling peace, comfort, or strength despite an outward struggle you were experiencing?



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.

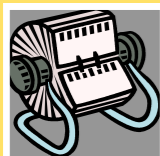
Parish Secretary : Sarah Cox (01932) 860244
cobham@abdiocese.org.uk

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 31st 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

Fr D has been away at the annual Canon Law Conference for the past week; this time held in Glasgow

- Mon. - Flight to Glasgow from London Heathrow
- Arrivals and Check-in
- Registration and Afternoon Tea
- Opening of Conference
- Session 1 'Marriage Preparation and the Validity of Ecclesiastical Marriages Today.'
- Dinner
- Tue. - Breakfast
- Mass
- Group Photograph
- Session 2 'The Canonical Implications of Assisted Suicide.'
- Session 3 'Conscience, Ecclesial Communion, and Canon Law.'
- Session 4 'Diocesan Marriage Tribunals or Inter-Diocesan Tribunals.'
- Dinner
- Wed. - Breakfast
- Mass
- Session 5 'Canonical Considerations for Parish Governance after an Unplanned Priestly Absence.'
- Thu. - Breakfast
- Mass
- AGM Canon Law Society of Great Britain and Ireland.
- Session 7 'Comparative Analysis of the Penal Judicial Process and the Metropolitan Police Service Gross Misconduct Procedure.'
- Session 8 'Q & A Session Marriage Tribunal and General Canonical Matters.'
- Drinks Reception and Gala Dinner
- Fri. - Breakfast
- Flight from Glasgow to London Heathrow

After all of this he came back exhausted!



CHILDREN'S WORD SEARCH 6TH SUNDAY EASTER YEAR A

B L L A D W G C L A I A X R N
 D X S L S G N C O S A M I O O
 Q N R H P K Y O I M H S A I K
 N O R M I O L E R S M O K A X
 W I U K R A C C E P T A W B K
 H F Y U I E M O B G H Z N E A
 H J T G T V C C V V B A S D J
 G W N H N I N O Q W G D N S E
 F X S L D M Y U K H Q F P S F
 R C T K I H Y N C T H O G M R
 Z Z G L O V E S R G L R T Y D FATHER
 F A T H E R E E P A B E R S Y ASK
 M U R O P S O L I E T V U E E FOREVER
 K O O B E Y V O M Z M E T L O WORLD
 H C Q N E I P R Z B F R H F U COMMAND

Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit



John 14:16

- ORPHANS
- OBEY
- LIVE
- MYSELF
- COUNSELLOR
- SPIRIT
- TRUTH
- SHOW
- LOVE
- ACCEPT

A PRICELESS GIFT

John 14:15-21

¹⁵“If you love me, you will obey my commandments. ¹⁶I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, who will stay with you for ever. ¹⁷He is the Spirit who reveals the truth about God. The world cannot receive him, because it cannot see him or know him. But you know him, because he remains with you and is in you. ¹⁸“When I go, you will not be left all alone; I will come back to you. ¹⁹In a little while the world will see me no more, but you will see me; and because I live, you also will live. ²⁰When that day comes, you will know that I am in my Father and that you are in me, just as I am in you. ²¹“Those who accept my commandments and obey them are the ones who love me. My Father will love those who love me; I too will love them and reveal myself to them.”

Other Readings: Acts 8:5-8, 14-17; Psalm 66:1-7, 16, 20; 1 Peter 3:15-18

LECTIO:

This reading from John takes us right to the heart of the Passover supper and Jesus’ final instructions for his most intimate friends and disciples. Jesus has some important points to make about his relationship with the disciples and what will happen when he goes away and the Father sends the Holy Spirit to them. The Holy Spirit will come with an important guarantee, his permanent presence with every disciple (verses 16-17). The world, or non-believers, cannot receive the Holy Spirit because they cannot see or know him. But the disciples will. The Holy Spirit is called ‘another Helper’, that is in addition to Jesus himself. In many ways the world stands in opposition to the disciples and Jesus but John chooses not to develop that theme here. Jesus doesn’t go into any details about his return but leaves the disciples with the promise that ‘I will come back for you’. So his resurrection and return is promised here in verse 18. These verses reveal the deep concern Jesus has for his beloved disciples in the face of the coming storm. Woven throughout this lesson in love is Jesus’ invitation to his disciples to live out their love for him. But he knows the disciples need all the help they can get. So Jesus turns to his Father to ask for the gift of the Holy Spirit on behalf of his disciples. The Holy Spirit loves those who love Jesus and who keep his commandments. He also acts as advocate, helper and teacher, sustaining the disciples along the sometimes challenging path of obedience to Jesus and his commandments. All these themes are woven into a rich tapestry of teaching. In these few verses, which are part of a much longer passage of teaching, complex ideas are spelt out with great simplicity and clarity.



MEDITATIO:

- The Holy Spirit has various roles but Jesus pinpoints perhaps the most important in verse 17, to reveal ‘the truth about God’. We constantly need to be reminded about what God is really like because our view of God can so easily be distorted. Love and obedience will flow more easily the deeper our understanding of God’s nature. Take some time to reflect on this.
- What part does the Holy Spirit play in your relationship with God? What do you do to sustain this relationship? When are you most aware of the Holy Spirit’s guidance?

ORATIO:

The liturgy today uses Psalm 66, or part of it, to sing God’s praises. Use some verses from this psalm to praise God, or maybe speak or write your own song of praise. Alternatively, try drawing a simple picture to express your praise. Reflect on the events of the last week. Praise God for his presence with you throughout all that has happened, whether good or bad.

CONTEMPLATIO:

Which of the themes in today’s teaching particularly touched your heart and spirit? Ask the Holy Spirit to show you what God wants you to see and how you need to respond.

Day	Date	Time	Service / Intention	Donor
Sat.	9 th May	17.00-17.30	Easter Weekday Sacrament of Reconciliation	
		18.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Live-Stream / Recorded	Msgr Barry Wymes † C.
Sun.	10 th May		6TH SUNDAY IN EASTERTIDE, YEAR A	
		09.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Live-Stream / Recorded	For the Parishioners
		11.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Live-Stream / Recorded	Dorothy Allen † J. & E Yates
Mon.	11 th May		Easter Weekday No Service Today	Mass 09.30 at Walton
Tue.	12 th May		The Carthusian Martyrs [Diocesan Saints]	
		09.00		Morning Prayer of the Church [p.p. 116 & 493]
		09.30	<input type="checkbox"/> Live-Streamed	Sarah Allen J. & E. Yates
		10.00 - 11.00		Exposition of Blessed Sacrament for Private Prayer
Wed.	13 th May		Easter Weekday	
		09.15		Morning Prayer of the Church [p.p. 126 & 493]
		09.30	<input type="checkbox"/> Live-Streamed	Cesk Sokoli & Family M.
Thu.	14 th May		THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD [HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION]	
				PLEASE NOTE : No Morning Prayer of the Church Today [p.p. 137 & 493]
		09.30	<input type="checkbox"/> Live-Streamed	Stan McKeeve † C. & S McKeeve
		19.30		For the Parishioners
Fri.	15 th May		Easter Weekday (<i>Day of Abstinence</i>)	
		09.15		Morning Prayer of the Church [p.p. 148 & 493]
		09.30	<input type="checkbox"/> Live-Streamed	Margaret Wingfield † J. & E. Yates
Sat.	16 th May	17.00 - 17.30	Easter Weekday Sacrament of Reconciliation	
		18.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Live-Stream / Recorded	Eileen Yates † J. & E. Yates
Sun.	17 th May		7TH SUNDAY IN EASTERTIDE, YEAR A	
		09.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Live-Stream / Recorded	For the Parishioners
		11.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Live-Stream / Recorded	Eddie McDaid † C. Hannan

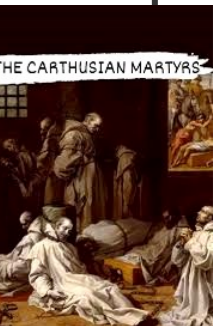
Mass may be offered for both the living and the dead and also for most other intentions. We do our best to try and accommodate specific dates but this can be especially difficult on weekends and at less than three months notice.

The Carthusian Martyrs

The Carthusian martyrs are those members of the Carthusian monastic order who were persecuted and killed because of their Christian faith and their adherence to the Catholic religion. As an enclosed order the Carthusians do not, on principle, put forward causes for their members, though causes have been promoted by others on their behalf. The Carthusian order was founded in 1084 by St Bruno of Cologne, and is an eremitic order, holding to the principle

of withdrawal from the world to a life of silent contemplation and prayer. They are often viewed as hermits that live in common, having no active apostolate outside their Charterhouse. Carthusian life is dramatically different as compared to Benedictine Monasticism, the most prevalent form in the west. Today the Carthusians are a small order comprising 25 houses worldwide with just 350 male and 75 female members. In 1537 during the English

Reformation the London Charterhouse was dissolved and its members were imprisoned before later being executed. Eighteen of these, the Carthusian Martyrs of London, were beatified in 1886 by Pope Leo XIII; three of these (Augustine Webster, John Houghton and Robert Lawrence) were canonized in 1970 by Pope Paul VI with other English martyrs as the Forty Martyrs of England and Wales.



DATE / MASS	WELCOME MINISTERS	READERS	EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS	REPOSITORY AFTER MASS
SATURDAY 7 Easter A 16/05/26 18.00	Still Required; please offer	Sr Patricia	N/A at present	P. Hunt A. Essien
SUNDAY 7 Easter A 17/05/26 09.00	Still Required; please offer	Sr Maria	D. McEvoy P. Carello	D. Westsmith M. Smyth
SUNDAY 7 Easter A 17/05/26 11.00	Still Required; please offer	N. Twist	P. Hourquebie C. Hourquebie	M. Smith C. Kendall

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!

- ⇒ UHT Fruit Juice
- ⇒ UHT Semi-Skimmed Milk
- ⇒ Fruit Squash
- ⇒ Peanut Butter
- ⇒ Tinned Vegetables & Potatoes
- ⇒ Porridge
- ⇒ Deodorant (for men & women)
- ⇒ All-Purpose Floor Cleaner
- ⇒ Hair Shampoo & Conditioner
- ⇒ Laundry Powder / Liquid / Capsules
- ⇒ Tinned Fish
- ⇒ Tinned Meat
- ⇒ Tinned Custard
- ⇒ Marmite
- ⇒ Microwave Rice Pouches
- ⇒ Tomato Ketchup
- ⇒ Antibacterial Multipurpose Spray
- ⇒ Bleach
- ⇒ Baby Wipes
- ⇒ Liquid Hand Soap

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.

ANNIVERSARIES OF DEATH:
Florence Quirke †
Brenda Coane †
William Murphy †
Philomena Heyward †
Graham Stevens-Donkin †

HOLY FATHER'S MONTHLY PRAYER INTENTION:
. . . . "Let us pray that everyone, from large producers to small consumers, be committed to avoid wasting food, and to ensure that everyone has access to quality food."

For those who are unwell.....
those who have died recently....
those whose anniversaries occur.....
the Holy Father's Prayer Intention....

THE RECENTLY DECEASED:
None

11.00 SUNDAY MASS COFFEE Rota - 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).

24 HOURS ADORATION WITH THE LORD - As we prepare for coming of Pentecost this year the Epsom Deanery will be holding an extended time of prayer for 24 hours. The event will take place in **St Joseph's Church, Epsom, KT18 7JQ** commencing with **10.00 Mass on Friday 22nd May** and concluding with **Mass at 10.00 Saturday 23rd May**. This is a graced moment for us all to gather in prayer around the Lord in the Eucharist - to pray, to adore, to be silent, and to hold the brokenness of our world before the healing presence of Christ.

The event will be divided into 1 hour slots to which parishioners from all across the Deanery are invited to commit to coming to the church and spending 1 hour in prayer. We need at least two people to commit to each hour (so that is a minimum of 48 people across the Deanery).

If you are unable to offer an hour you can come at any time for as long or short a time as you can manage during the 24 hour period - and of course more than two people can sign up for any particular hour. Particular hours in need of sign up are for the night-owls...1am, 5am and a little later Saturday morning at 8am.

Those who are sick or housebound and unable to attend are invited to send their prayer intentions (in writing and in good time) via their local Parish Office and these will be placed before the Blessed Sacrament.

There will also be opportunities to pray the Rosary, celebrate Reconciliation, and join in communal prayer at specific times (more information to follow).

Sign-Up Sheets are available in all the Epsom Deanery Churches.

For those who would like to attend but do not have transport, it is hoped to coordinate lift-sharing through the Parish Offices of the church where you are registered. Once we have a clearer picture of who may require assistance and who is able to offer a lift, we can try to make the necessary arrangements.

As St Theresa of Avila said in the 16th Century, 'the world is on fire' - how much more so today. May the Lord bless all our efforts and desires to bring His Peace into the world.

Fr Simon Hall, Epsom, on behalf of the Deanery

MASS FOR JUBILARIAN PRIESTS OF THE DIOCESE - 28 May, 12.00, Arundel Cathedral. Join the priests of our Diocese who are celebrating 25, 40, 50 and 60 years of priestly ordination, to give thanks for their years of service at this special Mass in Arundel Cathedral. All are welcome.

CORPUS CHRISTI CARPET OF FLOWERS - 3-4 June, Arundel Cathedral. Experience Arundel's beautiful Carpet of Flowers, celebrating the Feast of Corpus Christi. View the carpet 09.30 - 19.00 (Weds) and 09.30 - 17.30 (Thurs). Mass, followed by a procession to Arundel Castle, begins at 17.30 on Thursday. All are welcome.

MONTH OF PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS - Our 'Diocesan Vocations Team' has launched a special month of prayer for vocations beginning this Sunday. As Catholics, we know that God has a plan for each one of us and has called us by name, through our baptism, to holiness of life. He continues to call out to us each day to be his disciples; some to the married life, some to the single life, some to religious life, and some to the priesthood. In his Message for the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, Pope Leo has highlighted the importance of daily prayer and cultivating a personal relationship with God. Special 'Vocations' prayer leaflets are available in the church narthex - please take one (and use it).

KING CHARLES AND CONGRESS CLEARLY KNOW WHAT THE MAGNA CARTA IS - After what has been several months of dangerously deteriorating relations between Britain and the United States, a lot was hanging on this week's visit of King Charles III. When it was originally planned it was intended to reflect the unanimity of our two nations across a whole range of political and economic issues, but President Donald Trump's decision to take military action towards Iran - and the diplomatic consequences of Britain's reluctance to get involved directly in the joint US-Israeli war - made the Royal visit less of a relaxed celebration and far more of a desperate rescue mission.



Beyond the banquets and the ceremonial occasions, it was the King's joint address to Congress on Tuesday afternoon that had everyone holding their breath - not least because a charm offensive and gentle humour was promised and no-one was quite sure how that was going to play out. Preparing such a critically important speech would never be left to the King alone, and many hands would have worked to craft a text that on the one hand enabled the monarch to flex his warm personality and wry humour, but equally ensured that the requirements of Buckingham Palace, Downing Street and the Foreign Office were in lockstep in the final version. It is said that the king scrutinised each printed draft, marking suggestions by hand in red ink - and changes were being made right up to the morning of the delivery to Congress.