

St Anthony of Padua, Oxford

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28th June 2020 – Saints Peter and Paul

Sunday Reflection from Father Pius. Today is the Solemnity of the two pillars of the Church: Peter the head of the college of Apostles and the Vicar of Christ, and Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles. Both of them proved their love for and loyalty to Christ their Lord and Master by laying down their life. St Peter was a native of Bethsaida and was a married man and fisherman with his brother Andrew. Peter is remembered for his impulsiveness; his spontaneous actions earned him spitefulness as he denied his Lord three times because of fear but won accolades for his daring outspokenness regarding the messianic nature of Jesus. Paul was an erudite scholar who wrote almost half of the New Testament books. He was a professional tent maker and a religion genius. He became a posthumous apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ.



Both great apostles, Peter and Paul were martyred for the cause of their faith and belief. We learn from these two great Apostles that no matter the force or amount of ammunition, absolutely nothing can stop the work of God. Peter being in chain and King Herod's persecution of Christians with heavy military guards could not stop God's intervention through the prayers of the disciples. When all odds were against the disciples, they resorted to prayers and God heard and answered them. Peter exclaimed: "now I know it is all true...the Lord really did send his angel and saved me from Herod and from all that the Jewish people were so certain would happen to me" (Acts 12:11). Paul too relying on the help of the Lord, said his "life is already being poured away as a libation" (2 Timothy 4:6). Therefore, he is not afraid because he does God's work with a clear conscience. Jesus confirmed this when he said: "no gates of hell will prevail against the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew 16:18-19). As we live through this great time of anxiety and instability in our world, let us pray for the faith and courage of the Apostles.

A personal thank-you from Father Pius. My appreciation and sincere thanks go to everybody who has generously offered their time and resources to support me, Fr Vincent, our parish and all of its parishioners during this pandemic. In particular I should like to thank: Penny Jenner, Jane Kennett, John Kirwan, Jonathan and Manus Henry, Geoff O'Donoghue, Shalini Lalvani, Hilary Lappage, Kit Adlington, Fran and Craig Walsh, Dominic Smith, Paul Omeje and Philip Mountford.

From the pastoral team. This weekend, as we remember two great fathers of the Church, we look forward to our church buildings reopening, first for private prayer and, soon we pray, also for mass. We don't know the details of the restrictions that may be placed on us for the latter, but we will keep you all informed of any progress. In the note below and elsewhere in this newsletter we give details of church opening both at St Anthony's and further afield. Meanwhile, live-streaming of mass continues from St Anthony's (see the Mass Times table). As restrictions lift please remember that COVID-19 is still very much with us, so do keep yourself and others safe, and let's continue to pray for all in need. St Anthony of Padua pray for us, Our Lady of Oxford watch over us.

Church reopening. You have probably heard that the government has given the go-ahead for churches to open for services from 4th July. The archdiocese has yet to draw up guidelines as to how this should happen and so it is likely that there will be a delay before this is possible. In the meantime St Anthony's will open for private prayer. This weekend the church will be open from **11am - 1pm on Saturday 27th June**. Please do NOT attend if you have any symptoms of coronavirus (in particular a fever or cough), and please follow the instructions given by the stewards. Under 16s should be accompanied by an adult. *A message from the Catholic Archbishops of England* regarding the reopening of churches for collective worship is attached to this bulletin for your convenience, and given on-line here www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/news/reopening-our-churches-for-collective-worship.

Mass Times. Masses are live-streamed daily at 10 am: see www.stanthonyofpadua.org.uk/livestream/ on our parish web site. **Mass intentions** are listed below. *New mass intentions* or the *names of those for whom you would like us to pray* should be sent to the Parish Office address by email or phone 01865 762964 / 07484 271876. **Please pray for** Jean Collard, Fr John Baggley, Ann Ashfield, Pat Hodgson and Margaret Wipp. Pray also for Kathleen McDonagh, RIP, Melody Wilson, RIP and William Hudson, RIP.

Saturday 27 th June	10:00 am	Weekday in Ordinary Time	For all suffering economic hardships
Sunday 28 th June	10:00 am	Solemnity of SS Peter and Paul	For the people of the parish
Monday 29 th June	10:00 am	Weekday in Ordinary Time	For persecuted Christians in the world
Tuesday 30 th June	10:00 am	Weekday in Ordinary Time	For the sick and the housebound
Wednesday 1 st July	10:00 am	Weekday in Ordinary Time	For everybody at St Joseph's School and St Gregory the Great Schools
Thursday 2 nd July	10:00 am	Weekday in Ordinary Time	For all health and care workers
Friday 3 rd July	10:00 am	Feast of Saint Thomas More, Apostle	For our private intentions
Saturday 4 th July	10:00 am	Weekday in Ordinary Time	For all who have died from COVID-19

Catholic church opening for private prayer & confessions. Ed Smith has sent us this summary table which we hope will be useful. Please double-check the arrangements for yourself since the situation is changing daily, and note any restrictions that apply, before setting off.

University chaplaincy small chapel	10-12pm weekdays, 4-6 Sundays
Blackfriars	10-12pm Thursday, Friday, Saturday
St Gregory & Augustine, Summertown	5-7pm weekdays, 3-5pm weekends. Confession by appointment
The Oratory	2-5pm every day
St Anthony of Padua, Marston	11am-1pm Saturday, 27th June (4th July, 11th July TBC)
Holy Rood	Not currently open - no plans yet
Corpus Christi, Headington	Sat 11-1pm, Sunday 12.30-2.30pm
Greyfriars	Unknown
Our Lady Help of Christians, Cowley	Planning to open 10-12pm Sat and Sun, from 27th June

Keeping in touch. We send a weekly **Bulletin** by email (hand-delivered for those without on-line access). Please let us know if you would like to join our email list, and forward the bulletin to anybody who may be interested. We have a **WhatsApp** group. Let Shalini Lalvani know (via the parish email address) if you would like to join. Please like and follow our **Facebook** page www.facebook.com/saop.oxford.

During the coronavirus crisis, in case of urgent needs due to illness or if you or someone you know in the parish requires support, help with shopping or just a chat, please contact Penny Jenner (01865 762964 or 07484 271876; stanthonyop.oxford@rcaob.org.uk). For the latest NHS advice see: www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/. For Oxford City Council's local advice and information page: www.oxford.gov.uk/coronavirus.

On-line prayer and faith resources

There are a range of resources on our parish website stanthonyofpadua.org.uk:

- *Pray As You Go*, a daily podcast created by the Jesuits with a Scripture reading and reflection.
- The *Bishops' Conference of England and Wales* short order of service for use by families when mass is unavailable.
- *Children's Liturgy* from CAFOD including links for a live children's liturgy session.
- *Universalis* is an app for iOS, Android, Windows and Mac, which provides the readings for Mass each day, as well as the Divine Office.
- *EWTN – TV* is a Catholic TV channel: www.ewtn.com/tv
- Our sister churches Corpus Christi, Headington, and Greyfriars, Iffley Road, also have very informative newsletters and web-sites with various resources, and details of live-streamed Masses: corpuschristiheadington.co.uk and greyfriarsoxford.weebly.com.

Offertory during lockdown. The Archdiocese has set up a web page which allows us to make offertory donations to our own parish: www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/news/supporting-your-parish-financially. There is an orange button that you choose for one or more single donations. During the subsequent steps you select the parish you want from the "Donating to" drop-down menu (Oxford: St Anthony). Please choose the option to *Gift Aid* your donation if you pay any tax (the government then gives us 25p in every pound on top of what you donate). If you would like to make a regular donation by standing order just email the parish office and we will send you the necessary details.

The Foodbank needs your help. As a result of the economic pressures caused by lockdown, our local food bank has seen a doubling in requests for food parcels, and is currently providing 500 parcels a month to families in need. Please consider contributing non-perishable food goods (they are especially in need of tinned meat products, coffee and tinned vegetables and fruit). If you feel you can help please take any donations to the back of St Francis' Church, 226 Hollow Way, OX3 7JF (on Mondays or Thursdays between 11am and 1pm). If you would like someone to pick up your donation from your home, please email jane.kennett@googlemail.com. Thank you.

Calling all young people! We invite all young people of secondary school age to join Fran, Bro Paul, his youth team and young people from Greyfriars for a virtual youth group on Wednesday evenings from 7:30-8:30 pm. To find out more, email Fran Walsh f.walsh@dbmac.org.uk.

The Archdiocese is seeking a voluntary part time **Trust Secretary** to assist the Trustees in good "corporate practices". Details can be found on www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/jobs. Please bring this to the attention of any parishioner who you feel might be both suitable and interested.

Parish Zoom meetings. To access a Zoom meeting visit zoom.us/join and type in the ID number given in the table.

Meeting or activity	When	Zoom ID (password if needed)
Night Prayer / Compline	Monday to Friday at 9 pm for <i>ca.</i> 20 minutes (please sign in a couple of minutes before the start time)	753-7894-1695 (password NP1306)
Women's group	Monday evenings from 8:30 pm.	820-1241-9527
Men's group	Thursday evenings. Please contact Dominic Vella (dominic.vella@cantab.net) for details of the current program.	
Parish on-line "tea, coffee, juice and biscuits"	Sunday after the 11am mass at Corpus Christi	929-5988-4912

Parish Clergy: Fr. Pius Duke, MSP; Fr. Vincent Omokpakpo, MSP
The Parish is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham: Registered Charity No. 234216

Bidding prayers for Sunday June 28th 2020

Priest: With faith in God's love and mercy we bring Him our prayers

Reader:

We pray for the church, for the clergy and religious and all who dedicate their lives to the service of God, especially Frs Pius, Vincent and Mervyn. May the Lord guide them in all that they do. *Lord in your mercy..*

We pray for our parish community as we prepare to open St Anthony's for Mass in the near future. May we strive to reflect God's great love in our daily lives, as we support each other and our clergy at this difficult but exciting time. *Lord in your mercy..*

We pray for those whose faith is tested in times of challenge, and for those who seek to support them. May their faith be strengthened through the words of the Gospel and in the example of others. *Lord in your mercy..*

We pray for our political leaders. May they be guided by the principles of love and compassion for those most in need during these times of great economic challenge. *Lord in your mercy..*

We pray for all those who strive for peace and justice in our world. May peoples of all faiths and colour be united in the common goals of mutual respect and love for our fellow man. *Lord in your mercy..*

We pray for the sick of the parish and for those who look after them. We remember those in care homes. May the most vulnerable be protected against infection by Covid-19. *Lord in your mercy..*

We pray for those who have died, and for those whose anniversaries occur around this time. May they share the light of your presence, and may those left behind find comfort in their bereavement. *Lord in your mercy..*

Together with Mary, the mother of Jesus, we pray together: *Hail Mary ..*

Let us pray in silence as we offer our own intentions

Priest: Heavenly Father we ask you to hear the prayers that we offer through the same Christ our Lord.

Amen

A Message from the Metropolitan Archbishops of the Catholic Church in England

Dear Brothers and sisters in Christ,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

On Tuesday we heard the announcement that, from the 4th July this year, places of worship will be able to reopen for prayer and services. We welcome this news with great joy. Since the lockdown began, members of all faiths have faced restrictions on how they have been able to celebrate important religious festivals. Our own experience of Easter was unlike any other we have known. Now, in our churches, and with our people, we can look forward again to celebrating the central mysteries of our faith in the Holy Eucharist.

The recent reopening of our churches for individual private prayer was an important milestone on our journey towards resuming communal worship. Our churches that have opened have put in place all the measures needed to ensure the risks of virus transmission are minimised. This includes effective hand sanitisation, social distancing, and cleaning. We remain committed to making sure these systems of hygiene and infection control meet Government and public health standards.

We want to thank everyone within the Catholic community for sustaining the life of faith in such creative ways, not least in the family home. We thank our priests for celebrating Mass faithfully for their people, and for the innovative ways in which they have enabled participation through live-streaming and other means. We are grateful for the pastoral care shown by our clergy to those for whom this time of lockdown has been especially difficult, and, in particular, towards those who have been bereaved. We recognise too the chaplaincy services that have played a vital role in supporting those most in need. Gaining from the experience of all that we have been through, and bringing those lessons into the future, we must now look forward.

With the easing of restrictions on worship with congregations, we tread carefully along the path that lies ahead. Our lives have been changed by the experience of the pandemic and it is clear that we cannot simply return to how things were before lockdown. We remain centred on the Lord Jesus and His command at the Last Supper to "*do this in memory of me.*" We must now rebuild what it means to be Eucharistic communities, holding fast to all that we hold dear, while at the same time exploring creative ways to meet changed circumstances.

It is important to reaffirm that, at present, the obligation to attend Sunday Mass remains suspended. A significant number of churches may remain closed as they are unable to meet the requirements for opening for individual prayer. Fulfilling these requirements is a precondition for any church opening after the 4th July for the celebration of Mass with a congregation.

Please be aware that there will be a limit on the number of people who can attend Mass in our churches. This will be determined locally in accordance with social distancing requirements. We therefore need to reflect carefully on how and when we might be able to attend Mass. We cannot return immediately to our customary practices. This next step is not, in any sense, a moment when we are going 'back to normal.'

We ask every Catholic to think carefully about how and when they will return to Mass. Our priests may need to consider whether it is possible to celebrate additional Masses at the weekends. Given there is no Sunday obligation, we ask you to consider the possibility of attending Mass on a weekday. This will ease the pressure of numbers for Sunday celebrations and allow a gradual return to the Eucharist for more people.

Moving forward, there will still be many people who cannot attend Mass in person. We therefore ask parishes, wherever possible, to continue live-streaming Sunday Mass, both for those who remain shielding and vulnerable, and also for those unable to leave home because of advanced age or illness.

When we return to Mass there will be some differences in how the celebration takes place. For the time being, there will be no congregational singing and Mass will be shorter than usual. None of this detracts from the centrality of our encounter with the Risen Christ in the Eucharist. We ask everyone to respect and follow the guidance that will be issued and the instructions in each church.

"As I have loved you," said the Lord Jesus, *"so you must love each other."* (Jn 13:34) The lockdown has brought forth remarkable acts of charity, of loving kindness, from Catholics across our communities as they have cared for the needy and vulnerable. We have seen love in action through charitable works, and through the service of many front-line keyworkers who are members of our Church. Now we can begin to return to the source of that charity, Christ himself, present for us sacramentally, body, blood, soul and divinity, in Holy Communion. As we prepare to gather again to worship, let us, respectful of each other, come together in thanksgiving to God for the immense gift of the Holy Eucharist.

Yours devotedly in Christ

✠ Vincent Cardinal Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster

✠ Malcolm McMahon OP, Archbishop of Liverpool

✠ Bernard Longley, Archbishop of Birmingham

✠ John Wilson, Archbishop of Southwark

This letter is addressed to the Catholic Community in England; the opening of the Catholic Churches in Wales is devolved to the Welsh Assembly who are still evaluating their position on opening Places of Worship.

SUNDAY PLUS

Welcome!

A Year of the Word



“Who do you say I am?”

by Paul Higginson

In today's Gospel, Jesus says to the disciples, “Who do you say I am?” It's a question that Jesus also puts to each of us. How will we answer? Who is Jesus for you? Is

he a distant historical figure who said some nice things but has little relevance to your life and the world of today? Is he a philosophical dreamer who asks you to “turn the other cheek” or “give all you have to the poor” – high-minded ideas that are impossible to put into

practice? Is he just another good man, a holy man, to be studied and admired perhaps? Is he someone of whom to be slightly fearful – someone who will one day judge us, and perhaps find us wanting? Or someone you consider on a Sunday, but to whom you rarely give a thought for the rest of the week? At some point all of us have to honestly answer this question. For Peter, Jesus was the Son of Man, God in human form, the Word made flesh. It was this acceptance that led Peter to become a disciple

of Jesus, to forge a friendship with him that would enable him to live a life of real meaning – “to live life to the full”. The question that Jesus posed was an invitation to enter into a life of love – loving God and all those he created. This is what is on offer to us today from the living God, who asks us to ponder anew that same question – “Who do you say I am?”

Paul Higginson is the Assistant Principal at the Catholic Sixth Form College in Harrow and has been a parish catechist for thirty years.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help

by Anne M Walsh

Yesterday we celebrated the feast of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, today often also known as Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

In 1866, Pope Pius IX entrusted the Redemptorists with the icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour and gave them a mission to “make her known.”

All over the world, people come before this wondrous icon, in joy and sorrow, in hope and fear, in sickness and in need. We come to see Mary and her Son – and also to be seen by them.

Mary does indeed see us, encountering us in the realities of our lives but loving us too much to leave us where we are. With a mother's love, she calls us to more.

She challenges us to gaze on our broken world with her eyes of love and compassion and to reach out to those who most need her perpetual help today.

Anne M Walsh is the Director of Partnership in Mission of the Redemptorist Conference of North America.

Lord, to be honest, I really don't welcome every person and every opportunity you offer me. I'm pretty good at finding excuses to avoid some of them. Yet you welcome everyone, regardless of their identity and circumstances. Help me to be more welcoming. Help me to be like you. 🙏 Amen.

A little bit lost

by Rachel Thompson

We've known for decades that global warming threatens our existence, but it was a lone teenager who mobilised people around the world to take action. Greta Thunberg spoke more clearly than the scientific research. People, more than ideas, are what make a difference.

It was the person of Jesus who changed the disciples. Jesus himself isn't really interested in the ideas people have about him: he wants to know if the disciples really know him; “Who do you say I am?” Much as I love thinking about and discussing theological ideas, they aren't what matters. Ideas about Jesus are not the same as knowing Jesus.

Today I am challenged to make time to welcome Jesus and to

allow him to meet me in the heart of who I am. Recognising Jesus will, I believe, be what enables us to also recognise how we might take action to make a difference in the world.

Whilst working as Redemptorist Publications' Children's Editor, Rachel Thompson is also a secondary school teacher, wife and mum.

“If we look at our neighbours without mercy, we cannot understand their suffering and difficulties. And if we look at our neighbours without mercy, we also run the risk of God looking at us without mercy. Today, I see only a great desire for friendship and help.”

Pope Francis

Today:
Acts 12:1-11
2 Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18
Matthew 16:13-19

Monday:
Amos 2:6-10, 13-16
Matthew 8:18-22

Tuesday:
Amos 3:1-8; 4:11-12
Matthew 8:23-27

Wednesday:
Amos 5:14-15, 21-24
Matthew 8:28-34

Thursday:
Amos 7:10-17
Matthew 9:1-8

Friday:
Ephesians
2:19-22
John 20:24-29

Saturday:
Amos 9:11-15
Matthew 9:14-17

Next Sunday:
Zechariah 9:9-10
Romans 8:9, 11-13
Matthew 11:25-30