



PARISH OF SAINT FELIX, FELIXSTOWE

Parish Priest : Fr. John Barnes MA VF
The Presbytery, 8, Gainsborough Road, Felixstowe, IP11 7HT
Tel.01394 282561 e-mail frjohnfelixstowe@gmail.com

Parish Website: stfelixfelixstowe.uk Helping Hands - 07342722521

April 26th, 2020 : THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

Sunday Masses

9:30am Int. For the People

Weekday Masses

Monday EASTER FERIA
9:30am Int. Sr.Helen RJM
Tuesday FERIA
9:30am Int. Olive Badcock
Wednesday FEAST OF ST.CATHERINE OF SIENA
9:30am Int. The Orton Family
Thursday FERIA
Friday EASTER FERIA
9.30am Int. +A cousin who has died
Saturday ST.ATHANASIUS
9.30am Inr. +Tess Brown

The above are all private Masses, since St.Felix, like all other Catholic churches, remains closed for the duration of the Coronavirus pandemic, by order of the Bishop's Conference.

Fr.John writes :

Dear Parishioners,

I'm sure that there must be a fairy story about a king who would not allow there to be a mirror in any of the rooms of his palace. He decreed that anyone who introduced a mirror into his palace would be put to death. One day an old man in a heavy cloak came to the palace, and demanded to see the king. On being admitted to his presence, he drew out from beneath his cloak a large sparkling mirror, and held it up before the king. The king was furious, and ordered the old man to be taken away and executed. But the old man asked if he

might ask one question, only one, and receive an answer, before he was taken away. Reluctantly the king gave him leave. Whereupon the old man asked why, why was it that the king would never risk seeing himself in a mirror? The king had promised to answer the question, and bound by his promise, he said that it was because he knew he was ugly, a fact of which he never wanted to be reminded. The old man replied that if he only looked in a mirror, then he would be able to see to make himself less ugly : he could wash his face, cut his hair, shave his beard, and put on clean smart clothes. The king thought about what had been said, and then released the old man, and wisely followed the advice which he had given.....

In our normal everyday life - something which already seems rather distant - it's possible for us to so fill our days with activity - activity of body and of mind - that we don't stop and look at ourselves as we truly are. We don't, as it were, look into a mirror. Probably this is something of which we are not aware. But it could be that we don't want to see ourselves as we are, as God sees us. That we don't want to stop and ask 'ultimate questions' about our life, our character, our actions, our purpose, our destiny, our principles, our motives, our hopes, our fears our and our beliefs. Maybe there is a sense in which like the king in the story we don't want to look into a mirror, we don't want to be confronted by the truth. And in our busy normal lives we can easily avoid doing so, This refusal may superficially avoid us discomfort and pain. But it will also prevent us from seeing what need to be changed in our lives - indeed as regards the person we are. Now, of course, it's different. We've got spare time. We can and we should look into that mirror.

Perhaps we have found ourselves saying to the people we've talked to in these recent days 'how good it will be when everything gets back to normal' But do we want EVERYTHING about ourselves to 'get back to normal'? Maybe there are things about us which need to change. And it would be sad if we didn't use this time of suspension to let God's grace penetrate our hearts and lives. Lord, let me see myself as you see me. And help me to change what needs to be changed in my thinking, speaking, and action. Then these long and difficult days will indeed have been a time of grace for us.

.....

Today's Gospel reading is the wonderful account of the disciples on the road to Emmaus. Do you remember the rich young man who came to Jesus, and Jesus asked him to sell all his goods and follow him? The rich young man went away sad, he couldn't bring himself to do what Jesus asked, and in doing so he lost that golden opportunity to be with Jesus and learn from him. In the Emmaus story, the two disciples didn't lose their golden opportunity. When they reached the village, they invited Jesus into their home, and by doing so they came to that thrilling encounter with the risen Christ at their table. If they'd not invited him in, they would have missed that once-for-all opportunity. We learn that we too must seize the opportunities we are given to encounter Jesus, in our prayer and worship, and in the lives of the people around us. We mustn't miss out!

.....

I'm so glad that you all seem to be well, and free from the wretched coronavirus. I think we are all being very sensible, and not giving it the opportunity to spread. I pray for you all each day as I say Mass in the empty church at 9.30am, and also when I go in there to say the Offices.

With every blessing,

Your friend and Parish Priest,

Fr. John

Anniversaries this week Stanislaw Janikowski (2015), Patricia Amey (2007), Peter

Sutcliffe (2017), and Denise Croskell (2001).
May they Rest in Peace.

EASTER

*Rise heart, thy Lord is risen. Sing his praise
Without delays
Who takes thee by the hand, that thou likewise
With him mayest rise :
That, as his death calcined thee to dust,
His life may make thee gold, and much more
Just.*

George Herbert 1598-1633

EASTER

*Most glorious Lord of life, that on this day
Didst make thy triumph over death and sin;
And having harrowed hell didst bring away
Captivity thence captive, us to win :
This joyous day, dear Lord, with joy begin,
And grant that we for whom thou didst die
Being with thy dear blood clean washed from
sin,
May live forever in felicity.*

Edmund Spencer 1552-1599

Getting it right.....

It's amazing how easily the truth can become distorted ! Someone told me yesterday that they'd heard that I had 'asked the bishop to allow me to retire'. The truth is this. Last month I reached my seventy-fifth birthday, and every bishop, priest, and deacon is required by the rules of the Church to offer his resignation on that birthday. So I duly wrote to the bishop, as required, offering my resignation as Parish Priest and Dean, but adding that I was ready to do whatever he asked of me. He 'phoned. and asked me what I'd like to do. I said that if I go on feeling as well as I do at present, I would like to go on for a few more years as a Parish Priest. He said he would like me to do that, but that as is usual in these cases, we will review it year by year. So there is the truth : I have NOT asked to retire. I do hope that this won't cause you any dismay or disappointment!