



PARISH OF SAINT FELIX, FELIXSTOWE

Parish Priest : Fr. John Barnes MA VF
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May 3rd, 2020 : FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Sunday Mass

9.30am Int. +Vernon Watts

Weekday Masses

Monday FEAST OF THE ENGLISH
MARTYRS

9:30am Int .+Yannick Coat

Tuesday EASTER FERIA

9:30am Int. +Jenny Shevlin

Wednesday EASTER FERIA

9:30am Int. +Alan Deveney

Thursday EASTER FERIA

9.30am Int. + Alice and Lawrence
Butterworth

Friday EASTER FERIA

9.30am Int.

Saturday EASTER FERIA

9.30am Int.

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 Bishops' Conference.

Fr.John writes :

Dear Parishioners,

I think that the present situation, in which we are all staying at home in isolation, and unable to even attend Mass, is effecting us in different and unexpected ways. I suppose we should not expect it to be otherwise, when our normal routine is interrupted, and many of us are spending much more time alone than we usually do.

One way in which it is effecting me - and

I'd love to know whether you are experiencing anything similar - is that my memory seems to be working overtime. I'm remembering people and events from earlier in my life with a particular frequency and clarity. Am I alone in this? Personally I find it a good thing, and certainly a stimulation to prayer. It encourages us, I think, in those three parts of vocal prayer which we call Thanksgiving, Intercession, and Penitence.

First thanksgiving. Because many of the memories which come into our mind are of good times - incidents which we remember with pleasure, and people who brought us happiness, there is a clear demand for thanksgiving to God. Thanksgiving, too, for the love and mercy which God himself has shown us in the past. So many times when we have been aware of Him helping us in difficult situations, and giving us many good gifts, both spiritual and material. For all these things, all these gifts, for good times and life-enhancing people, we want to give thanks - and our memory stimulates us to this. Thanksgiving is, of course, a very special part of our life of prayer : it brings before us the depths of God's love, generosity, and patience, and help us to grow in love for him, to return love for his love for us.

And then intercession, the Prayer of Asking. It is so good to pray for the people who unexpectedly come into our mind as memory operates in its strange and unexpected ways. To ask for the blessings, protection, and assistance which those people need. Then for those of us who are older, many of the people whom our memory brings before us will now be dead. It is so good to pray for them - to assist them by our prayer. Some, whom we knew as children and young people, will have been dead for many years,

and maybe it is many years since anyone at all came to their assistance through prayer. Again, it is so right that we remember them before God now.

Finally, the Payer of Penitence. Sadly some of the people and incidents which memory brings back to us will cause us pain. How we wish that we had acted differently! How we wish that we hadn't said those unkind and hurtful words! How we wish that we'd been more patient, more generous, more loving! Well here is an opportunity for us to seek God's forgiveness, and that inner peace which his forgiveness brings. And, most important, to ACCEPT that forgiveness. Something which the devil tries to do is to keep bringing our past faults and failings back before us, causing us distress. We mustn't let him do that. We must accept the fact that God has answered our prayer of penitence with forgiveness.

Maybe your memory like mine seems to be usually active in these strange time. Let it lead you into prayer.

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The Fourth Sunday of Eastertide, and each year the Gospel reading presents us with the image of Shepherd, one of the great images used in the Gospel to describe the person and the work of Our Lord Jesus Christ. It is apt for us to think of Jesus as the Good Shepherd during Eastertide, because we are celebrating his leading us, his flock, out of condemnation to eternal death into the pastures of eternal life and joy. He does this through his saving work, his dying and is rising. He leads us towards heaven, and also as a Good Shepherd he feed us - feed us with with the Bread of Heaven, his own glorified Body and Blood.

When Our Lord speaks of himself as Shepherd, he is speaking about his work for us and his love for us. He does indeed lead us and feed us, keep us safe, and stay with us always, as a good shepherd does with his sheep. We pray that he will lead us out of our present anxiety, fear, and frustration back into a normal way of life. But also by using this image of Shepherd he is speaking about us, too. He is the Shepherd, we are the sheep. If He is like a shepherd, then we are like sheep. And that is being realistic as regards ourselves, not complimentary!

Sheep are not known for their wisdom and bidability. They easily get themselves lost, and put themselves into dangerous situations. Indeed they can be very foolish. Just as we can be. Sheep need a shepherd, and we need Our Lord to guide us and keep us safe. How fortunate we are to have such a Shepherd!

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The Bishop has written a Pastoral Letter for today, and I'm going to ask Wilf Ablard if he will kindly put it on to the website for you to read. I'm so grateful to Wilf for dealing with the Newsheet each week!

With good wishes and daily prayers,

Your friend and Parish Priest,

Fr. John

Anniversaries this week Ruby Stevenson (2011), Vernon Watts (2019), Lucy Buckwell (2002), Sr. Martha O'Malley (2002), Dorothy Real (2012), Alan Deveney (2014), Ann Button (2013), Kathleen Greaves (2000), and Winifred Barker (2004). May they Rest in Peace.

MARY'S MONTH OF MAY

We're now in Our Lady's Month of May, as well as continuing to be in Eastertide. It would be good therefore for us to say (or sing!) the *Regina Coeli* each day, in Our Lady's honour.

*You to thee, O Queen of Heaven, Alleluia!
He whom thou wast meet to bear, Alleluia!
As he promised, hath arisen, Alleluia!
Pour for us to Him thy prayer, Alleluia!*

*V. Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, Alleluia!
R. For the Lord is risen indeed, Alleluia!*

O God, who by the resurrection of thy Son, Jesus Christ, hast vouchsafed to bring joy to the whole world, grant we beseech thee, that aided by the prayers of his Mother the Virgin Mary, we too may be brought to the joys of eternal life. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.