



PARISH OF SAINT FELIX, FELIXSTOWE

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January 10th, 2021 : THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD

**FOLLOWING THE LATEST
LOCKDOWN, OUR CHURCHES
REMAIN OPEN AND MASSES
ARE AS USUAL**

**ST.FELIX CHURCH IS OPEN DAILY
9.0AM TO 3.0PM**

Sunday Masses

Saturday 6:00pm Int. +Betty Bewick
Sunday 9:30am Int. For the People
11:00am Int.

Weekday Masses

Monday FERIA
9:30am Int.
Tuesday FERIA
9:30am Int. +Delia & Hugh Brannon
Wednesday ST.HILARY
9:30am Int. +Bill Pain
Thursday FERIA
No Mass today
Friday FERIA
11:00am Int. +Edgar Barnes
Saturday ST.FURSEY
9.30am Int.
6:00pm Int. For the People

The Daily Office

Lauds (Morning Prayer) is said a quarter of an hour before the Mass on weekdays.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

Tuesday 10.0am to 10.30am

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday 5.15pm to 5.45pm in the Sacred Heart Chapel, or by appointment.

The Rosary Friday at 11.15am

FR.JOHN WRITES

It was a great relief to learn that in this new lockdown our churches can remain open, and public worship can take place as normal. Many of us had feared that there would be a return to the churches being closed, and services suspended.

What the government has said to us in effect is this : "We recognise how important it is to you at this stressful time to be able to go into church to pray, and to be able to support each other by joining in public worship. We have taken on board how much these things matter to committed Christians. And we are aware too of the care which the churches have taken regarding sanitising and distancing, things which have made churches safe places to be in. We understand too that you draw strength not just from being together with your fellow worshippers, but from the celebration of the Sacraments, and the grace which you believe to be available there. And so we are making an exception for church buildings, allowing them to be open, and worship to continue".

What reply are we to make to this message from the state, which seems to show sensitivity and understanding? Are we to say "No thank you. I don't want to go to church. . I'm quite happy watching services taking place on the screen."

Does such a reply seem gracious, and a good witness to our faith? I think we should think very seriously before making such a reply.

PARISH NOTICEBOARD

Anniversaries this week Johanna Pope (2001), Lynn Goulden (2005), John Kaziow (2011), Roy Dawson (2009), Rutland Barsby (2005), Evelyn Gedge (2018), and Albert Schmitz (2004). May they Rest in Peace.

Money Matters Last Sunday £353.54 was given at the Offertory, and £46.75 for CAFOD.

Year of St. Joseph There has been a positive response to the two suggestions as to how we should mark the present Year of St. Joseph here : both the idea of printing a special prayer card for use at home, and the cleaning of the stonework of St. Joseph's Altar and its reredos seem to have found favour. So we will look into them further.

Mary's Meals The following message has been received : 'As we start the New Year, Mary's Meals is delighted to announce an amazing opportunity : until 31st January 2021, the UK government will match donations to our Double The Love campaign up to £2 million, providing 43,000 hungry children in Liberia with life-changing school meals. For more information on other ways to support the Double The Love Campaign, please visit www.marysmeals.org.uk/doublethelove. With our best wishes and prayers for a hopeful New Year.'

Encouragement

Last week I wrote about the things which I for one find encouraging when sometimes believing seems difficult in this secular age, and I invited you to contribute thoughts about what helps you. Anne Dance shares this with us : 'I find God in everybody and everything I do, and my life is part of his plan. Whether mundane or interesting, he is with me. You have decisions to make throughout your life and I find myself wondering what would be God's ideal direction. Always find time for people, as I am sure that is what we are here for, listening is the most valuable part of a human being. God Bless. Anne Dance.'

NEW SERIES - THE LORD'S PRAYER

WHEN YOU PRAY.....

Our Father, who art in heaven

Note that Our Lord teaches us to address God the Father, and that is what we usually do in our prayer. Yes, we can pray to Jesus, God the Son, or we can pray to God the Holy Spirit. But normally in prayer, as in the Our Father, we address the First Person of the Holy Trinity. We pray, as we say 'to the Father, through the Son, in the power of the Holy Spirit'.

The opening words of the prayer, 'Our Father', are hugely significant. By them, Jesus tells us how we are to think of Almighty God, what our relationship with him truly is : he is first and foremost our Father, not our Creator, our Lord, or our Judge. He is those things, but before all else he is our Father, who loves us and cares for us. He is our Father, we are his children. Our relationship with him is to be an intimate and deeply personal one. He is there for us, a loving Father to whom we can appeal in all our needs. This is a very wonderful and beautiful thing. It tells us something fundamental about God and about ourselves.

It also, I think, challenges us. It challenges us to live as those close to the Father's heart. When we disobey him, we are failing the One who loves us, we are letting our Father down. And when we disobey the Son's command that we should love our neighbour, we are hurting the loving heart of our Father, who is also Father of our neighbour. A good parent always hopes that his or her children will love and care for each other : it deeply saddens a parent when there is conflict and strife between their different children. Just so with God and us, to whom he has been revealed as a loving Father.

We have been taught to pray to our Father who is in heaven. It's not helpful to think of heaven as 'a place above the bright blue sky', but rather as another dimension of being, a great reality which at present is unknowable to us. We say that God dwells in 'unapproachable light', in a greater, not a lesser, reality than this visible one..