

SATURDAY 12th TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A)
 17:00 at Greenstead Solemn Mass *Our Parish Community*

SUNDAY 13th TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A)
 09:00 at Greenstead Solemn Mass *Sheila Frost RIP (A de S)*
 10:45 at Greenstead Solemn Mass *Fr Conrad Smith RIP*

MONDAY 14th EXALTATION (TRIUMPH) OF THE HOLY CROSS
 09:15 at Greenstead Mass *Ita Sheehan's Int*

TUESDAY 15th Our Lady of Sorrows
 09:15 at Greenstead Mass *Kitty Bruce RIP*

WEDNESDAY 16th St Cornelius, P, and Cyprian, Bp, Mm
 09:45 at Greenstead Mass

THURSDAY 17th St Robert Bellarmine, Bp, D
 NO MASS

FRIDAY 18th Feria
 19:00 at Greenstead Mass

SATURDAY 19th Feria
 12:00 at Greenstead

Because numbers are limited to 30 in the church, all parishioners must pre-register their details and Mass preferences in writing to Fr Jon before attending.

CONFESSIONS are now available, but by appointment only.

Chantry List for the coming week:

We pray for the happy repose of the souls of all the faithful departed, especially for those whose anniversary of death occurs at this time: *Patrick Kehoe (19); Concepta Harrington (98); Nellie Lang (88); Stan Tomkins (18); Pauline Bailey (08); Grace Thomas (98).*
May their souls rest in peace. Amen.

Our prayers for the Sick & Suffering include:

Anne C. Ellen Kirby, Violet Felton, Lily Dopson, Pat Croucher, Angela L, Barry S, Kerri H, Betty B, Sid B, Maura G, John F, Gary R, Marjorie S, Elaine S, Genette F, John W, Teresa H, Noel K, Christopher D, Dean K, Carmelo S, Peter W, Gina O, Samantha B, Jenny C, John, Isaac Nelson, Ann Mary B, Alice R, Brian B, Steve F, Kay Shaw, Sophia, Jasinthia Anton de Madonsa, Catherine Ford.

THE HOLY FATHER'S INTENTIONS FOR SEPTEMBER. Respect for the Planet's Resources: We pray that the planet's resources will not be plundered but shared in a just and respectful manner.

CONTACTS:

Fr Jon Ravensdale: – Parish Priest – 21 Blackthorn Ave, Colchester CO4 3QD

☎01206 870460 e-mail: sjpchurch@btinternet.com

Web Site: www.stjohnpayne.org.uk

Ann Roughan – Lay Pastoral Assistant & Steward of the Gospel. - ☎07889101762

Gene Horgan – Hall Administrator - ☎ 07939 086034

Petrina Murphy - Health and Safety Officer.

The Canonesses: 74, Howe Close, Colchester, CO4 3XD – ☎ 867296

Brentwood Diocesan Trust Registered Charity No. 234092

St John Payne Catholic Parish

Greenstead, Ardleigh and Mistley

We of St John Payne Catholic Parish seek to reflect the joyful life-affirming power of Christ's Living Presence among all where Essex meets East Anglia.



24th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A)

Week beginning 13th September 2020

(Education Day)

Our Forgiving Lord

We cannot celebrate today the Lord of compassion and love, the Lord who died for us and who lives to intercede for us, unless each of us has forgiven his brother from his heart.

Entrance Antiphon: You are just, O Lord, and your judgement is right; treat your servant in accord with your merciful love.

1st Reading:

Ecclesiasticus
 27:30 - 28:7

Forgive your neighbour the hurt he does you, and when you pray, your sins will be forgiven.

Responsorial Psalm

R/. The Lord is compassion and love, slow to anger and rich in mercy..

2nd Reading:

St Paul to the
 Romans 14:7-9

Alive or dead we belong to the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

*Speak, Lord, your servant is listening:
 you have the message of eternal life.*

Alleluia!

Gospel Reading:

Matthew: 18:21-35

I do not tell you to forgive seven times, but seventy-seven times



We would respectfully ask that you please ensure that all mobile phones are switched off while you are in church.

SCAM WARNING: There have been yet more scamming attempts. The latest coming from someone posing as the Television Licensing Authority, telling people that their T.V. Licence is about to expire. – **Beware!**

FR JON WRITES: We have now reached the maximum number allowed in church for the Sunday 9am Mass as well as for the 10:45am Mass. This is good news, as it means more and more are returning to church. What is not such good news is that there are still some people registering for Masses on the 'off-chance' that they **may or may not** attend. In fairness to everybody I am compelled to take steps to prevent places being blocked, thus preventing others from attending Mass.

Therefore, Please be take note that if someone fails to attend a Mass for which they have registered, for two weeks in succession, their names will be removed from the register and they would then have to reapply.

Please remember, facemasks MUST now be worn in church. Of course, these will have to be removed in order to receive Communion. The protocol for this is as follows; On leaving your seat, and just prior to entering the centre aisle, you should remove your facemask (not merely pulling it down under your chin) and approach the Communion station in the usual way. You should replace your facemask once you have retaken your seat.

If you have a medical exemption certificate from wearing a facemask this must be shown to the steward when entering church.

Children under the age of 11 years are not required to wear face masks.

Also, once you have been allocated a seat, you must remain there throughout Mass, only leaving your seat to receive Communion or a blessing. Baskets for your offerings are placed at both the entrance and exit to the church.

Anyone displaying symptoms of Covid-19, or who has any reason to believe that they have been in contact with someone who has, should not attend church or volunteer in any capacity until they have received medical advice that it is safe to do so.

HOME COMMUNION: As the more vulnerable members of our parish are not yet able to attend Mass due to shielding, Fr Jon will continue to bring Communion to individuals, or to groups of up to five, in open areas and private gardens.

AN ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

*My Jesus,
I believe that you are present in this Holy Sacrament of the altar.
I love you above all things
and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul.
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,
come spiritually into my soul so that I may unite myself wholly to you
now and forever.*

OFFERTORIES: Last week's offertory collections amounted to £312.03

You can make regular or one-off donations at any time. By going to the following website <https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/donations/?parish=greenstead-with-ardleigh-and-mistley> where you can also find Gift Aid forms if you are a taxpayer. To set up a standing order please email sjpchurch@btinternet.com for details.

GIFT AID YEAR END DONATION STATEMENTS are now available to collect when you come to Mass. Sorry for the delay.

THE LECTIO DIVINA GROUP (Sacred Reading) have changed their meeting day to Tuesday of every week (except the first Tuesday of each month) in Judy's garden/carport at 10.00a.m. for about 45 minutes to pray the following Sunday's Gospel. If you would like to join us there or spiritually from your own home phone Judy on 01206 869601 for details and to enable group numbers to be arranged in line with present rules.

LADIES COFFEE MORNING: October is usually our Macmillan Coffee Morning, we cannot let this pass without making some sort of contribution. Please let me have ideas as how we can do this. Make cakes for our friends and family, send me the money? Meet at a garden centre... Philpots has a large coffee shop and outdoor area. Or I could make cakes to order and deliver. Hope you are all well and healthy. Please help this very worthy cause. Contact 826491 or email: bulmer.george@yahoo.co.uk.

CHORAL VESPERS: Livestream of Vespers with Brentwood Cathedral musicians are available at 5.30pm on Wednesdays and Fridays on either Facebook ("Brentwood Cathedral Music") or YouTube ("Vespers Brentwood Cathedral Music")

WALSINGHAM HOUSE: During lockdown, from April to August, we were able to work with Basildon Council so that Walsingham House served as a refuge for women fleeing domestic abuse. We accommodated five women and three children, and the House was truly a haven of peace and safety for them. We could not talk about the work at the time, obviously, but we do ask you to keep all those who were resident here in your prayers.

NEWSLETTER: Send items for next week's newsletter by Wednesday evening to Carol Batchelor in the Church Office at sjpchurch@btinternet.com

For GDPR reasons emails should not be sent to Carol's private email address.

View newsletters online at www.stjohnpayne.org.uk/weekly-newsletters

FR JON'S PRAYER FOR THE WHOLE PARISH:

*May Our Lady's love embrace us;
May St Michael guard and protect us;
May St John Payne, and all the saints pray for us;
And may Almighty God bless us, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*

24th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Year A

‘Our Forgiving Lord’.

We cannot celebrate today the Lord of compassion and love, the Lord who died for us and who lives to intercede for us, unless each of us has forgiven his brother from his heart.

(Readings: Ecclesiasticus 27: 30 - 28: 7. Forgive your neighbour the hurt he does you, and when you pray, your sins will be forgiven.

Romans 14: 7-9. Alive or dead we belong to the Lord.

Matthew 18: 21-35. I do not tell you to forgive seven times, but seventy-seven times.

We have much to thank Saint Peter for, not least, for his enquiring mind, and his quick tongue. Time after time, he enthusiastically rushed into question after question, and his quizzical impetuosity drew from Jesus a teaching that is divinely timeless.

On this occasion Peter wanted to bring before Jesus the whole subject of forgiveness. He probably thought that he was being very generous, forgiving not just three times, as prescribed by the Rabbis of his day, but by doubling it, and then adding on another one, just for good measure. He may have even expected Jesus to pat him on the back and say what a good and gracious fellow he was, being quite so forgiving to his guilt-ridden neighbours. But to his surprise Jesus said, “Not seven, I tell you, but seventy-seven times.” Or to put it another way, “there must be no limit to your forgiveness.”

The fact that Peter put a limit to the number of times he should forgive, showed that he didn’t really understand the true nature, and the true meaning of forgiveness.

It is an undeniable truth that, if a limit to the number of times for forgiveness was laid down, it would, necessarily, require a very complicated, almost legalistic, system of bookkeeping, one that would make any loving relationship, all but, impossible.

Jesus answers Peter by telling the story of how God forgives. – There was once a servant who was forgiven a very great debt. After being forgiven he, then, went out and dealt abominably with a fellow servant, who owed him a debt that was paltry in comparison to the debt he had, himself, just been forgiven. The fact is, he would not forgive his fellow servant. And for this, he was utterly condemned. And we would all say, rightly so! And yet, the majority of us are unable to exercise forgiveness as God does. So, Jesus teaches us, in the ‘Lord’s Prayer’, to be fair; to ask our heavenly Father to forgive us, in the same way we, ourselves forgive. – “As we forgive those who trespass against us”.

But here is the crux of our problem. Just how do we forgive? With few exceptions, when we do actually forgive, it tends to be grudgingly, saying such things as;

“I suppose I have to accept your explanation, and your apology.

But I’ll never forget what you did”.

Or;

“Well, okay, I’ll forgive you. But things can never be the same between us again.”

Imagine where we would be, if God forgave us like that!

We, almost invariably, forgive in direct proportion to the insult, or to the injury, we feel we have personally received. We rarely, if ever, forgive in proportion to the genuine sorrow, or remorse, felt by the one who has hurt us.

Our ‘forgiveness’ tends to be formal, given in a superior way, where weeks, and months, even years can pass, before the ‘wrong’ done to us, lessens, or doesn’t bother us in the same way anymore.

Where would we be if God forgave us like that?

And when we do forgive, it is almost invariably conditional:

“Very well, I’ll overlook what you have done, just this once. But remember, if the same thing ever happens again, I won’t want to know. It will be the end. Have I made myself clear?”

Again, where would we be if God forgave us like that?

The absolute, unconditional generosity of God’s forgiveness is perfectly portrayed for us in the parable of the ‘Prodigal Son’. You will all remember how the father goes out to meet the prodigal on his return. So it is, with Divine forgiveness. God comes to meet us half-way. And that is just as well for us, for, if our heavenly Father didn’t, we could never find the grace of repentance, once we had turned away from his friendship.

Thankfully, the reality is that, in his divine love, God always comes, moreover, he runs to meet the sinner, without exception. And Jesus stresses the ‘instantaneous effect’ our contrition has on God, on whose absolution, whose complete, unreserved forgiveness follows our contrition in that very same instant.

As Christians we should not only know this to be true, we should, and can, expect God to always behave in this way.

How different we are from God! – When we are offended, we can take a cruel, almost perverse pleasure in withholding our pardon, at least, for a time, even though we know that, sooner or later, we are bound to give way. – How petty! – How brutal we can be!

All too often, people take satisfaction in nursing, and brooding, over their ‘injured dignity’ as long as possible. – And then, they give themselves enormous credit for the ‘self-righteous generosity’ of their clemency – that is – when they eventually *do* forgive.

Again, the parable of the ‘Prodigal Son’ teaches us just how different, and just how complete, God’s forgiveness is. The Prodigal is dressed in the best robe, with fresh shoes for his tired feet. The fatted calf is killed in his honour. And a ring is put on his finger. – Isn’t this how we experience God’s absolution?

Of course, there still remains a debt to be paid, be it on this side of the grave, or on the other, for justice has to be done. Even so, we *are* forgiven... absolutely... instantly... there and then!

Jesus teaches us that if God, so, forgives us our offences, we must, likewise, forgive those who offend us. It is *not* enough for us to grudgingly extend a formal hand of feigned reconciliation to those who hurt us, merely in order to avoid a scene, or just to keep up appearances. No! We must forgive from our hearts, just as Our Lord says. And, as far as possible, the offence should be as if it had never happened.

“Lord, how often must I forgive my brother, as often as seven times?”

“Not seven, I tell you, but seventy-seven times.”