

Mass Intentions for week commencing 2nd May 2021

Sat 1 st Sun 2 nd	10:00am 6:00pm 10:30am	Vigil of 5th Sunday of Easter (B) 5th Sunday of Easter (B) St Athanasius	Private Intention Myrna James People of the Parish
Mon 3 rd	10:00am	Sts Philip and James, Apostles	Clergy & Religious
Tue 4 th	10:00am	The English Martyrs	Rosemary Daniel's Intention
Wed 5 th	10:00am	Feria	Ana Lusac's Intention
Thur 6 th	10:00am	Feria	Shirley's Intention
Fri 7 th	10:00am	Feria	Rebecca's Intention
Sat 8 th	10:00am 6:00pm	Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Vigil of 6th Sunday of Easter (B)	Private Intention People of the Parish

Reflection: Last Sunday we prayed for vocations and reflected on the Good Shepherd whose divine initiative calls for a generous response. Jesus, our Good Shepherd, shows His tenderness and courage as He tackles His opponents face to face. He confronts those who steal the dignity of the little ones. He names the wolves in sheep's clothing. He is willing to leave His enemies looking embarrassed and weak. He warns His followers about the rough terrain ahead; and He goes there before them. He is defensive when people attack His own followers. He is realistic about people's wayward ways. He endures isolation and insult. He faces His own fear, but stays loyal. He searches for the lost sheep until He finds it. He risks being slaughtered Himself. He does lay down His life for His sheep. In today's first reading, we observe St. Paul's transformation from persecutor of Christians to a good example of Shepherd of souls. Because of his past, Christians were initially suspicious of Paul and many Jews were hostile to him. Paul refuses to go into hiding or retire from his new career as a missionary; he cannot, because he believes that he has been appointed by God to be an apostle. Paul affirms his belief in the divine authority of his appointment. He also admits that he is fearful and trembling when he appears before people. The need to overcome any suspicion about his authority makes Paul an energetic preacher, a tireless traveller and a fierce debater. He is a great example of authentic humanity as his character manifests traits of being sensitive, impulsive, obstinate, moody, thoughtful, demanding, driven, and caring. His idealism is tempered by his sense of realism, and his own struggle always serves to educate his spirituality. He was a man who longed for friendship and the affection of people as his Second letter to the Corinthians (2:2-3) expresses: "I may have hurt you but, if so, I have hurt the only people who could give me any joy...it was not to make you feel hurt but to let you know how much love I have for you".

May is the month traditionally dedicated to Mary. This would be a good occasion to join us in reciting the Holy Rosary before weekday Masses. **The Memorare: Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help or sought your intercession was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, we fly unto you, O Virgin of Virgins, Our Mother. To you we come, before you we stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not our petitions, but in your mercy hear and answer them. Amen.**

Let us Dream: Easter reflections - The Spirituality Committee of the Bishops' Conference has produced a series of reflections based on the Holy Father's book Let us Dream for individual and parish use. The reflection can be accessed via this link: <https://rcstortford.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/6.-Let-us-Dream- -EasterResource.pdf>.

Humour: Two missionaries rang the bell of an elderly lady's house. When she opened the door, they said to her: "Have you found Jesus?" The lady replied: "I am sorry to disappoint you, we are Catholics. We have not lost Him".

St. Ann's Catholic Church



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Surrexit Christus, Alleluia! Cantate Domino, Alleluia!

Christ is Risen, Alleluia!

New Parishioners: Welcome to St. Ann's Parish! Please take a Parish Registration Form from the back of the church or website and kindly fill it out and return it to the Parish Office as it is important to do this.

National Day of Prayer for the Victims and Survivors of Abuse will take place on 4th May 2021 – Let us mark this day in our parish community, with appropriate prayers on the day and perhaps on the Sunday beforehand. We will use helpful resources for this day prepared by the Let's be Honest group.

The Catholic Bishops of England Wales encourage Catholics to place Sunday Mass at the heart of their post-pandemic lives. The Bishops have issued a reflection on post-pandemic recovery and the challenges faced by the Church in encouraging people back to the Church and her Sacraments. The Bishops met for their spring plenary meeting from 19 – 22 April 2021. In a reflection titled The Day of the Lord, the Bishops praise families, parish communities and those who have worked tirelessly in hospitals, care homes, schools and prisons during these challenging times of ill-health, grief and isolation. The Bishops salute the leadership of our priests and express gratitude for the 'immense efforts' of those who have provided food for those most in need. Whilst acknowledging the creative and diverse methods of outreach during the pandemic – not least the live streaming of Mass – attention then turns to the post-pandemic world. The Bishops recognise that it is impossible to predict the pace at which we will emerge from the pandemic but state "what is clear is the challenge we face of bringing our communities and the practice of the faith to a still greater expression and strength." They identify the groups of people they are seeking to reach: a) There are the fearful and weary, anxious about coming into the enclosed spaces of our churches; those who have simply lost the habit of coming to church. Personal contact, clear reassurance, and sensitive invitations will all be needed. b) There are those who will have reassessed their pattern of life and priorities. The practice of faith within the community of the Catholic Church may not be among those priorities. A gap may have opened up, or widened, between the spiritual dimension of their lives and any communal expression of that spiritual quest. They represent a particular focus and concern for our outreach. c) There are those whom we might describe as the 'Covid curious', those who have come into contact with the Catholic Church through our presence on the internet – a contact we may be able to develop through our continuing presence across diverse media platforms. The greatest treasure is, of course, the sacramental life of the Church and at its heart, the Eucharist. "It is the Eucharist, the celebration of the Mass, that makes the Church; and it is the Church, in the gift of the Holy Spirit, which makes the Eucharist. "At this moment, then, we need to have in our sights the need to restore to its rightful centrality in our lives the Sunday Mass, encouraging each to take his or her place once again in the assembly of our brothers and sisters.