

The Bridge

Parish of Saint John and Saint Mary Higham with Merston



JULY 2020

Online Edition



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Are we nearly there yet?

How many times have we heard that from our children on journeys that have hardly started and you have to try and explain – without disappointing – why it's going to be a bit longer. It has been like that with the opening of Churches. 'Are we near opening?' 'When is the Church going to be open?' 'When are services starting again?' They never actually stopped; they were just not held in the Church.

HM Government hinted that many things would open up on 4th July. It became clear this might include places of worship. However, this was only very recently confirmed and finally on June 29th a sixteen page guidance document was published for us to work through.

So, are we nearly there yet for public worship in S.John's? Yes, nearly, but no – not for the July 4th date so hyped-up in many quarters. That is because the Standing Committee of the PCC met the day the guidance was issued. Nothing will or can be ready in five days. Here are some reasons why.

A Risk Assessment form has to be completed, written up and published on our website and noticeboard. After almost four months closure the Church needs to be deep cleaned. *We are having to pay for this due to a lack of willing personnel.* Only then we can section-off pews to maintain social distancing rules and set up a one-way system. Our Church, which normally seats 200plus, has only room for 25 individuals, possibly 30, if people come as couples or families. The Hall, toilet, vestibule and office remain closed.

In services there can be no singing; Communion will be in one kind only [the sacred Host]; one-off service papers need be produced and isolated for 48hrs before use then taken away; any collection needs to be 'taken' as people enter, bagged and isolated for 48/72 hours before counting and banking; facemasks are recommended: all because these carry the possibility of contagion.

We had hoped to cater for a 2nd and even 3rd 'sitting' on Sundays but, as we have no volunteer cleaners after Sunday 9.30am Mass, we will have to close for 72 hours. Perhaps on Wednesday another mass then closed again until Sunday. The daily masses in between will continue to be 'Zoomed'.

One sitting only means a major headache: how people will know if they can get in or not? Even if some people continue to shield and isolate we could easily have, from our regulars, well over 30 attempting to attend on Sunday and we will HAVE TO TURN THEM AWAY!! The old BCP rule – which was totally ignored – asked people to inform the priest of their intention to receive Holy Communion the day before. We might end up having to invent or insist on something similar.

So are we nearly there yet? Nearly – but not quite. Hopefully by July 12th a system will be fixed. So keep watch on the website, social media, church noticeboard. Or email me and ask for details.

Fr James

The Bridge

Monthly Magazine of the Parish of Higham (Ss. John & Mary) with Merston

S.JOHN'S PARISH CHURCH - WORSHIP

All MASSES are currently being provided via Zoom

| | | |
|--|----------|----------|
| Monday, Wednesday, Friday & Saturday | MORNINGS | 10.00 am |
| Tuesday and Thursday | EVENINGS | 6.00 pm |
| Sunday Mass | MORNING | 10.00 am |
| | and | 11.00 am |
| Sunday Mass (Fr Peter on his Facebook) | EVENING | 6.00 pm |

Private Prayer see times published in the Bulletin each week – available on the Homepage of the website.

Please contact Father James or Father Peter if you wish to join us

NO Marriages, Banns of Marriage, Baptisms, Confessions, Confirmations, Mass, Home Communion nor Anointing of the Sick cannot take place in the Church building or in people's homes until further notice

Emergency Baptisms / Confession / Anointing Contact Fr. James

FUNERALS at the Crematorium or a Graveside service are STILL being offered .

In an emergency please contact him at any time or, if he is not available, one of the Churchwardens (details below).



PARISH The Rev'd. Canon James F. Southward

PRIEST The Vicarage, Hermitage Rd Higham, Kent, ME3 7NE.

Telephone 01634-717360 Email saintjohn.higham@yahoo.co.uk

PLEASE NOTE: FATHER JAMES IS NOT NORMALLY AVAILABLE ON THURSDAY

HON ASST PRIEST

FATHER PETER BOLTON 17 HERMITAGE ROAD, HIGHAM TEL: 01474 822726

THE

Mrs Teresa Joblin Hill Cottage Telegraph Hill, Higham

Tel: 01474-823186

CHURCHWARDENS

Mrs Helen Walker 11 S. John's Road, Higham

* Tel: 01474-396569

CHURCH HALL BOOKINGS

THE HALL IS NOT CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

* Evening calls only on these numbers please

July 2020 at S. John's, Higham

Calendar and Mass Intentions

DURING THE PANDEMIC LOCKDOWN ALL OUR MASSES ARE STREAMED LIVE EACH DAY VIA ZOOM [except Sunday 6pm] AT THE FOLLOWING TIMES

SUNDAY 10am & 11am [6pm via FACEBOOK] Weekdays 10am - except on Tues & Thurs at 6pm. Contact Fr James for access code to these services

| DAY | DATE | CELEBRATION | INTENTION |
|--|-------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Wed | 1st | Feria (Ordinary Week 13) | Refugees and exiles |
| Th | 2nd | Feria | Higham Congregationalists |
| Fri | 3rd | S. Thomas the Apostle | (f) Churches of India |
| Sat. | 4th | Feria of our Lady | (v) Walsingham |
| SUN | 5th | 14th ORDINARY SUNDAY | (+) THE PARISH |
| Mon | 6th | Feria (Ord. Week 14) | Society's Outcasts |
| Tue | 7th | Feria of S. Thomas Becket | (v) Canterbury Cathedral |
| <i>800th Anniversary of the translation of S. Thomas Becket's relics to his shrine</i> | | | |
| Wed | 8th | Feria | The bereaved |
| Th. | 9th | The Martyrs of China | (m) The Chinese Churches |
| Fri | 10th | Feria | The persecuted Church |
| Sat | 11th | S. Benedict Abbot | (f) Church in Western Europe |
| SUN | 12th | 15th ORDINARY SUNDAY | (+) THE PARISH |
| Mon | 13th | Feria (Ord. Week 15) | Unity of the Church |
| Tue | 14th | Feria <i>Monthly requiem</i> | (v) + RIPs & July anniversaries |
| Wed | 15th | S. Bonaventure Bishop, Teacher | (m) Vocations to religious life |
| Th. | 16th | Our Lady of Mount Carmel | (m) Aylesford Friary |
| Fri | 17th | Feria | Soc. of the Holy Cross |
| Sat | 18th | Feria | Christian Missionaries |
| SUN | 19th | 16th ORDINARY SUNDAY | (+) THE PARISH |
| Mon | 20th | Feria (Ord. Wk 16) | Judeo-Christian dialogue |
| Tue | 21st | Feria | The P.C.C. |
| Wed | 22nd | S. Mary Magdalen | (f) All who seek Christ Jesus |
| Th. | 23rd | S. Bridget of Sweden; Abbess | (f) Church in Northern Europe |
| Fri | 24th | S. Sharbel Makhluf priest | (m) Middle-Eastern Churches |
| Sat | 25th | S. James the Apostle | (f) Pilgrimage Centres |
| SUN | 26th | 17th ORDINARY SUNDAY | (+) THE PARISH |
| Mon | 27th | Feria (Ord. Wk 17) <i>elected 26.7.10</i> | The Bishop of Rochester |
| Tue | 28th | Feria | Church work with children |
| Wed | 29th | S. Martha of Bethany | (m) SSM Sisters at Walsingham |
| Th | 30th | Feria | The lapsed and indifferent |
| Fri | 31st | S. Ignatius Loyola priest | (m) Retreat Conductors/centres |

KEY: (+) Holy Day of Obligation; (f) Feast; (m) Memoria; (v) Votive; * Ember Days

THE JULY REQUIEM

is on Tuesday 14th July 2020 at 6.00pm

*The recently departed (and those named below) will be prayed for at this Mass.
Those named below are remembered on the Sunday before and the actual date itself.*

| | | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 st | Ivy <u>Joan</u> Miles | 18 th | Constance Ivy Ward |
| | Sheena Wilkie Dallas | 19 th | Malcolm David Ivory |
| | Alan William Michael Taylor | 20 th | Peter Anthony Hilton Kelly |
| 3 rd | Annie Morphew | | Caroline Way Quigley |
| 4 th | David Ian Gillingham | | Emily Rutherford |
| 7 th | Olive Beard | 21 st | Sr. Catherine O.H.P. |
| 9 th | Susan Linda O'Grady | | Nellie Mathilda Dodd |
| 11 th | Nicholas Austen <i>child</i> | 22 nd | Beryl Hook |
| | Ronald Alfred Cole | 23 rd | Frederick George Holt |
| 12 th | Dennis Roy Clarke | 24 th | Eileen Renwick |
| 13 th | Benjamin Thomas Rogers | | Denis John Charles Gilchrist |
| 15 th | Peggy Eileen Peters | 25 th | Frederick John Still |
| 16 th | Geoffrey Earl Raven <i>PRIEST</i> * | 26 th | Freda Stanley |
| | William Henry Wenham | 28 th | David Sherwen |
| 17 th | Edward William Mahy | 30 th | Gladys Shipman |
| | Beatrice Margaret Baker | | Frank Oliver Randall |
| | Mavis Winifred Reason | | John Leslie Austen |
| | Derek Albert Clark | | |

PLEASE NOTE: Except for previous Incumbents* of this Parish
(and where it is known that people attend this mass to pray for someone)
the names of those deceased more than 20 years have been removed from the list.
However should someone attend this requiem mass AND request the inclusion
of other names these will be included in the list of those for whom we pray.

*Save us, Saviour of the world,
for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.*

~ DAILY BIBLE READINGS ~

ONLY A FEW MINUTES A DAY following the readings used at Daily Mass
in Church - even if you cannot be there. Choose one or both readings.
There are three readings for Sundays and special holy days.

Ordinary Time WEEK 13 *JULY 1st*
W Amos 5.14-15.21-24 Matthew 8.28-34
Th Amos 7.10-17 Matthew 9.1-8
F **S. Thomas, Apostle** **July 3rd**
Ephesians 2.19-22 John 20.24-29
S Amos 9.11-15 Matthew 9.14-17

SUNDAY - WEEK 14 **JULY 5TH**
Zachariah 9.9-10
Romans 8. 9,11-13
Matthew 11.25-30

M Hosea 2.16-18.21-22 Matthew 9.18-26
T Hosea 8.4-7,11-13 Matthew 9.32-38
W Hosea 10.1-3.7-8.12 Matthew 10.1-7
Th Hosea 11.1-4.8-9 Matthew 10.7-15
F Hosea 14.2-10 Matthew 10.16-23
S **S. Benedict** **July 11th**
Proverbs 2.1-9 Matthew 19.27-29

SUNDAY – WEEK 15 **JULY 12TH**
Isaiah 55.10-11
Romans 8.18-23
Matthew 13.1-23

M Isaiah 1.10-17 Matthew 10.34-11.1
T Isaiah 7.1-9 Matthew 11.20-24
W Isaiah 10.5-7.13-16 Matthew 11.25-27
Th Isaiah 26.7-9.16-19 Matthew 11.28-30
F Isaiah 38.1-8.21-22 Matthew 12.1-8
S Micah 2.1-5 Matthew 12.14-21

SUNDAY – WEEK 16 **JULY 19TH**
Wisdom 12.13, 16-19
Romans. 8.26-27
Matthew 13.24-43

M Micah 6.1-4.6-8 Matthew 12.38-42
T Micah 7.14-15,18-20 Matt. 12.46-50
W **S. Mary Magdalen** **July 22nd**
Song of Songs 3.1-4 or 2 Corinth 5.14-17
John 20.1-2,11-18

T **S. Bridget of Sweden** **23rd July**
Galations 2.19-20 John 15.1-8
F Jeremiah 3.14-17 Matthew 13.18-23
S **S. James, Apostle** **JULY 25TH**
2 Corinthians 4.7-15 Matthew 20.20-28

SUNDAY – WEEK 17 **JULY 26TH**
1 Kings 3.5, 7-12
Romans 8.28-30
Matthew 13.44-52

M Jeremiah 13.1-11 Matt. 13.31-35
T Jeremiah 14.17-22 Matt. 13.36-43
W **S. Martha** **July 29th**
1 John 4.7-16 John 11.19-27
or Luke 10.38-42
Th Jeremiah 18.1-6 Matt. 13.47-53
F Jeremiah 26.1-9 Matt. 13.54-58

End by using the Sunday Bulletin 'Opening Prayer' or this 'Prayer after Reading Scripture'

Almighty God, we thank you for the gift of your holy word.

May it be a lantern to our feet, a light to our paths, and a strength in our lives.

Take us and use us to love and serve everyone in the power of the Holy Spirit,
and in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

JUNIOR CHURCH GOES ONLINE DURING LOCKDOWN

You might think since the building of St John's Church has been closed during the pandemic that nothing has been happening in Junior Church – but you'd be wrong! We've been busy with:

- Mothering Sunday activities
- Filling Jelly Bean Prayer Jars during Lent
- Making crosses during Holy Week
- Creating Easter gardens
- Following Prayer Adventures during Thy Kingdom Come (between Ascension and Pentecost)
- Dressing in red and colouring in doves/flames for Pentecost
- Learning about the Trinity with shamrocks & apples

And we've celebrated birth and mourned loss together.

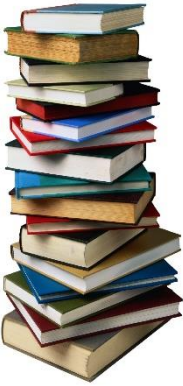
While we've always kept in touch with Junior Church families by email and social media, and used video and music in our lessons, during lockdown we've become instant experts in new technology! Some families have been taking part in online Mass via Zoom (it's the only chance we've had to see one family's new-born son and we've been able to see some of the little ones growing up before our very eyes!). We've learned to create topical digital puzzles for the children to put together. And we've learned what "augmented reality" is with the Thy Kingdom Come Adventure Prayer Map.

We can't wait to be together in person once it is safe to meet at church again. But in the meantime, we are so thankful that during this unique situation we have had the opportunities and materials available to us to share.

In our own lives we will probably take forward some of the good things we have discovered or learned during lockdown into our post-pandemic lives, and the same is true for us – Junior Church is more than an hour on a Sunday. We are united by the Spirit of God and will continue to look for new ways to connect with each other.

Nancy Hughes

LIBRARY UPDATE



information from the Library Management Team about re-opening “While we have not been able to deliver services from our buildings, our digital offer has increased, with more eBooks, eAudiobooks, eMagazines, and eNewspapers available than ever before. We have also been creating and posting digital versions of our events for you to enjoy, and our Ask a Kent Librarian and our archive enquiry services are still running. Please check these out if you have not already done so.

Following government guidance, our libraries and archive centre will remain closed until we reach step 3 of the national recovery plan. Subject to any further changes, this is expected to be in July, but exact dates are still to be confirmed.

We are planning how we can best reopen and what services we can offer while adhering to social distancing and health and safety guidelines. Key to our plans is ensuring the safety of all our customers and our staff. We will provide more updates as we move forward and we are planning to start with a limited service at pilot sites around the county. We appreciate your understanding and patience while we adapt to the changes we need to make.”

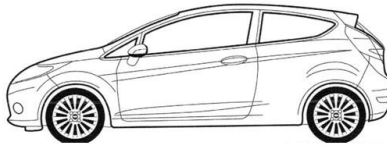
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HiARA NEWSLETTER JUNE

The month of June usually sees us looking forward to the start of visits to friends and places as well as our annual holidays. Our summer social afternoon plans would be in place by now and the sandwiches and cakes ordered.

But 2020 has proved to be a year none of us have experienced before, contact with family and friends has changed, some are using Zoom or Facetime to keep in touch, while others email and text. The easing of the lockdown has meant that small groups can now gather and the shops start to trade again. The wait goes on for pubs and restaurants to reopen along with much needed hairdressers and barbers.

I have received an email from Guy Bartlett, one of our regular guest speakers. He says he is sorry to miss seeing us and wishes all our members well and I reassured him he will be rebooked to give a talk to us as soon as we are able. We are much reliant on Government advice and the Memorial Hall Committee having the greenlight on reopening the hall to bookings.

Jenny has suggested a HiARA Facebook page, which will be another way we can share information and keep in contact. More news on this soon.

In response to my appeal to the committee asking for their “lockdown” moments, Jenny has sent the following words of “positivity”.

“Hopefully, the experts will have a grasp on the Covid 19 virus soon. They have made tremendous strides in just 3 months, learning very quickly and let’s hope they can get a grip on it before winter, or, at least find a medicine to minimise the virus if you do get it, that would be a huge step forward. We are beginning to see the light at the end of a long tunnel. We will all meet again soon.”

If you have any lockdown tales or photos you would like to share, send them over to me at jefferyelizabeth18@gmail.com and they will go in the July newsletter.

*Liz Jeffery
Chair HiARA*

CHARLES DICKENS – 150 YEARS



On Tuesday, June 9 at 11 am The Mayor of Gravesham, Cllr John Caller was given a warm welcome by Chair Cllr John Grey and Vice Chair Cllr Amanda Mendzil of Higham Parish Council, who met at the Charles Dickens village sign to mark the the death of the novelist Charles Dickens who lived at Gads Hill Higham for 13 years up to his death.

Others in attendance were Cllr Rob Gilbey and Mr Terry Morris signwriter,

who had recently restored the sign and thanks go to Plantscape for the planters and Oakleigh nurseries in Higham for the plants which included Dickens favourite flower, a red geranium.

*Cllr Liz Jeffery
Higham Parish Council.*

Bags 2 Church Need to declutter?



Have you been meaning to clear some space in your wardrobe and drawers?

Well now is the chance to do it:-

However due to lack of storage, St John's will gladly receive your unwanted clothes, shoes, bags or soft toys - place items in a **clear** bag which will be available from the Church Porch.

Leave at the garage of 81 Oak Drive (accessed in Taylor's Lane)

Wednesday 15th July 9 am to 6 pm

Thursday 16th July 9 am to 6 pm

**Please note we still cannot take
DUVETS, PILLOWS, MATTRESS COVERS.**

**We are able to accept
TOWELS, BEDDING (Sheets, blankets or duvet
covers/pillowcases) or CURTAINS.**

These bags will be collected **Friday 17th July** and in return the church will receive up to £400 a tonne.

For more information contact
Cheryl Robins 01474 822461

THE REASONS FOR GOING TO CHURCH

Strange times we are living through. The future consequences of coronavirus are going to be challenging, to say the least. How will our churches fare when our buildings are allowed to re-open?

One could say that the reasons for churchgoing can be put into three slots, 'Culture', 'Faith' and 'Community'. Many churchgoers would probably recognise in themselves elements of more than one.

Culture is for those who feel comfortable in church. They like the history, the language, the buildings, the liturgy and the music, which have probably been a part of their lives since they were children. All hold comforting memories.

Faith is a link with the meaning of life and its eternal promise, somewhere to seek guidance through worship and sacrament, and on which to lean in times of trouble. A belief in the words of Jesus that they are not on their own, even if sometimes it feels like it in this world.

Community is for those who like coming to church or being associated with it as a flying buttress (a phrase of Winston Churchill, who described himself as someone who supports the church from the outside). They don't have to have a commitment to the faith of the Church but are sympathetic and don't mind being with those who do.

It is likely that the 'old normality' will not be the 'new normality' and this provokes a few thoughts:

* *How many people, now out of the habit of regular community worship, will wish to return to it?*

* *How many people on the periphery of church life, will come back to it, at least in the short term?*

** How many of those who have had a regular commitment to the church, for example by serving at the altar or in its refectories, singing in choirs, doing flowers, ringing bells and polishing brasses will feel that this is a good time to make a break and do something different?*

As church people, we must consider where we go from here. The Church, everywhere in the infected world, will need to know our answer to its call. To thrive, it needs us back.

*Source: Parish Pump
Editor Terry Warburton*



*Eric took social distancing
while bell ringing very seriously.*

PREPARATION FOR RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION

When, I wonder, was the last time you received Holy Communion? You must be longing for the day when you can receive again the Bread of Angels, the Manna from on High, the body, soul and divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

I fear that there may be some who, during these months in the wilderness, have grown used to not being at Mass on a Sunday and who have become accustomed to this Sacramental absence in their lives. I hope that is not so for you. I hope you cannot wait to receive the Blessed Sacrament again.

But one thing this “Eucharistic Fast” may well have taught all of us is just how much in the past we may have taken Mass and Holy Communion for granted. It had been laid on for us in our country almost “on demand”. For a very little trouble on our part we could find the Mass on a Sunday very easily indeed.

The last few months have reminded us just how privileged we were. But had we, before the closure of our churches, taken that blessing for granted? Had we got into the habit of presenting ourselves for Holy Communion forgetful of the fact that the Sacrament is the most precious, sacred and costly gift that we could ever be given: the life of God Himself? Had Holy Communion become just too familiar?

This period of being unable to receive Holy Communion may have put into our minds these familiar words of S Paul:

Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself.

1 Corinthians 11:27-29

The old Devotional Manuals (which have sadly fallen out of use because they have not been replaced since the modern language liturgies came into being) always contained some sort of “Office of Preparation for Holy Communion”. Such an Office could be prayed the evening before or earlier on the day of Communion. I think that it is time to recover the practice of making proper preparation for receiving Holy Communion.

The book, “A Manual of Catholic Devotion” published by the Church Union in 1950 had this preface to its little office of preparation:

“We should prepare for Holy Communion:

- (1) if necessary, by a good confession;
- (2) by keeping the Church’s rule on fasting;
- (3) by quiet recollection, not engaging in unnecessary affairs beforehand;
- (4) by prayer.”

Those simple steps still apply today. But what does not work today is the language of the prayer offered in those old manuals.

We need then, a new Office of Preparation that might work for us today. It could be used on a Saturday evening, on Sunday morning before setting off for church or (less ideally) in church before Mass. It should be simple enough to learn off by heart but combine the following elements:

Begin by making the sign of the cross, saying:

+ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

A psalm – the psalms are an essential ingredient in the life of prayer.

A time to reflect: both to give thanks for all the blessing we have received in the past week (day) and to acknowledge how we have failed.

Scripture reading: probably the Gospel of the Mass one is preparing for (if not all the readings of the (Sun)day).

The Lord's Prayer.

A Collect that unites our private prayer with the prayer of the whole church. Again, the Collect for Mass might be used or something we can learn by heart. The following would be a good example:

*Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Then, on arrival in church before Mass begins, before you do anything else – **however many jobs you have to do** - kneel (if possible) to spend time with the Lord. Quieten your mind and remind yourself what a great gift is to be offered you.

(NB It is a really good idea to make sure you know what jobs you will be needed for BEFORE you get to church so that you can spend this time with the Lord. Readers should make sure that they have prepared the reading before arriving in church for Mass).

This prayer by St Thomas Aquinas can be learned off by heart and will certainly help get your mind in the right place:

*Almighty and everlasting God,
behold I come to the Sacrament of Thine only-begotten Son,
our Lord Jesus Christ:
I come as one infirm to the physician of life,
as one unclean to the fountain of mercy,
as one blind to the light of everlasting brightness,
as one poor and needy to the Lord of heaven and earth.
Therefore I implore the abundance of Thy measureless bounty
that Thou wouldst vouchsafe to heal my infirmity,
wash my uncleanness,
enlighten my blindness,
enrich my poverty and clothe my nakedness,
that I may receive the Bread of Angels,
the King of kings, the Lord of lords,
with such reverence and humility,
with such sorrow and devotion,
with such purity and faith,
with such purpose and intention
as may be profitable to my soul's salvation.
Grant unto me, I pray,
the grace of receiving not only the Sacrament of our Lord's Body
and Blood,
but also the grace and power of the Sacrament.
O most gracious God,
grant me so to receive the Body of Thine only-begotten Son,
our Lord Jesus Christ,
which He took from the Virgin Mary,
as to merit to be incorporated into His Mystical Body,
and to be numbered amongst His members.
O most loving Father,
give me grace to behold forever
Thy beloved Son with His face at last unveiled,
whom I now purpose to receive under the sacramental veil here
below. Amen.*

If anyone is interested in helping put together an Office of Preparation for Mass, please contact me and I will arrange a Zoom meeting for us to do this.

God bless you all,

Fr Peter

LOWER THAMES CROSSING UPDATE

We want your views on some refinements to the design of the [Lower Thames Crossing](#)

Consultation is open from 00.01 14 July to 23.59 12 August 2020.

We are proposing a number of refinements to the design of the project following feedback received from earlier consultations, discussions with local stakeholders, ongoing design development and new technical data.

They include:

- minor changes to elements of the highways design
- updated paths for walkers, cyclists and horse riders
- proposals for redirecting and upgrading utilities
- more detailed landscaping proposals
- further developed ecological mitigation measures

The feedback from this consultation will help Highways England develop its application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) planned for submission later this year.

Find out more

Online consultation

Our proposals will be available to view on our dedicated [consultation website](#), available from 00.01 on 14 July 2020.

You will also be able to explore maps and visit our online exhibition.

Home delivery

If you do not have access to the internet or experience problems downloading the consultation materials, we can send one printed copy of the guide to consultation, a response form and Freepost return envelope, maps, and other documents directly to your home. You can [request materials here](#), or by calling **0300 123 5000** or emailing us at info@lowerthamescrossing.co.uk.

Telephone Surgery

You can book a call back from a member of the project team who will answer your questions on the proposed changes. Call backs will be made Monday to Friday, 12pm to 7pm, between 14 July and 12 August.

You can book an appointment from 14 July here or by calling **0300 123 5000**.

How to have your say

From 14 July you can submit a response by using one of the methods below, which are all free to use. Please note, we cannot guarantee that responses sent by any other means will be considered.

Online response form

Fill in the [online response form](#).

Freepost

Post your response form or comments to:

FREEPOST LTC CONSULTATION

(The Freepost address is the only text needed on the envelope, and no stamp is required.)

Email

Email your comments to: LTC.CONSULTATION@TRAVERSE.LTD

Telephone

To book an appointment to speak to someone who can help you fill out a form over the phone, please call us on **0300 123 5000**.



Saints Joachim and Anne

These are the names traditionally ascribed to Our Lady's parents; yet we have no historical evidence of anything about their lives let alone their names. Stories about Mary's parents come via legend and tradition. The oldest story, from an ancient document, the 'Gospel of James', isn't trustworthy as a fact, or as history, certainly not as the word of God. The document states that, after years of childlessness, an angel appeared to the couple announcing that they would have a child. In very much the same way as the Prophet Samuel's mother Hannah (Anna) promised to dedicate him

to God (1 Sam.1:11) so S.Anne also promised to dedicate her child to God.

What can we learn from characters we know nothing about? How can we honour them? Our focus must turn to WHY they are honoured in the Church. Whatever information we have, or lack, the truth is the parents of Mary nurtured her, taught her, brought her up to be a worthy Mother of God. Their teaching led Mary to respond to God's request with faith, "Let it be done to me as you will." Their example of parenting was probably Mary's pattern as she brought up her own son, Jesus Christ, Son of God. Their faith would have laid foundations of courage and strength that allowed Mary to stand by the cross as her son was crucified, and yet still believe. Such people, whatever their name, are exemplary models for all Christian parents.

Devotion to S.Anne developed in Europe through a French legend which said that Ss. Mary Magdalene, Lazarus, Martha, and other disciples crossed the Mediterranean Sea and landed near Marseilles, where they shared the message of Jesus' death and resurrection. It is claimed they brought with them the remains of S.Anne. Legend further says the bishop St. Auspice buried S.Anne in a cave under the church of St. Mary, Apt (modern Provence). When barbarians invaded the area the cave was filled with debris and almost forgotten, until dug out by miners 600 years later. Sailors and miners in the Marseilles area then spread their devotion to S.Anne to other parts of Europe and beyond. Ancient shrines of S.Anne still exist in Jerusalem, Apt and [as patroness of Brittany] a great 17th century shrine, Ste. Anne d'Auray, was built in her honour; remaining one of the Europe's largest pilgrimage centres.

Recognising Ss. Joachim and Anne as grandparents of our Lord Jesus Christ on their feast day, July 26th, we'd usually offer Mass for Christian grandparents. Falling on a Sunday this year the festival lapses. Do still pray though that day for Christian grandparents and others.



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HIGHAM VILLAGE WEBSITE

To see the latest village news, Annual Parish Newsletters, What's On and

Parish Council go to www.higham-kent-pc.gov.uk

If your group or society plans an event or meeting and you want more advertising, just let me know so that it can be added to the village website to spread the word. Club and society contact details are always needed to update and extend the online list of groups. If your society has a website, then we can list this as well and link back to you.

Higham is a buzzing, friendly village so lets share this feeling on our parish website!

Robert Gilby, Webmaster

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“...I (CAN’T) ABSOLVE YOU OF ALL YOUR SINS...”

The lockdown brought about the immediate closure of churches and therefore of public worship. We have reflected a lot on the consequent withdrawal of Holy Communion from our regular spiritual life. For all of us this is an unprecedented crisis and we have had to come to terms with it until normality can be restored.

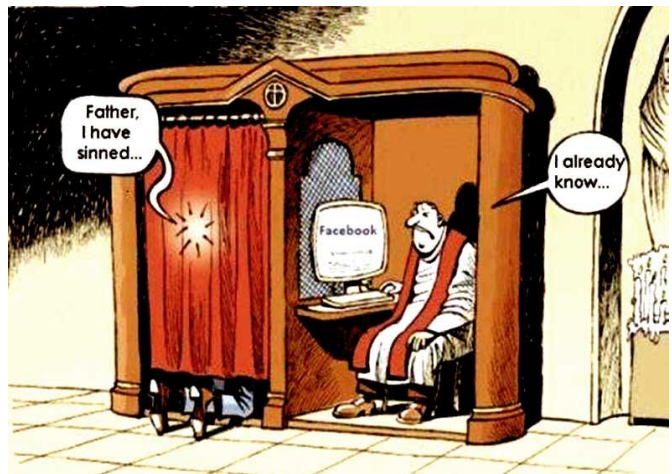
Another sacrament that has had to be withdrawn for the duration is Reconciliation – Confession. It is impossible for the priest and the penitent to be close enough together in the appropriate way to ensure confidentiality. You might think that the encounter could take place by telephone, but this is not allowed. The confidentiality and secrecy of the sacrament could not be guaranteed by the system and might thereby be compromised. It would not be

impossible for someone else to be listening in.

That would be very scary! So, those who want to make their confession will just have to wait. But, what about people who know they are coming to the end of their earthly life

and want the Sacrament as part of their final preparation to leave?

There has to be some sort of compromise even if it may be ‘clumsy’ or unorthodox in practice. Apart from that scenario should the situation really bother us? Can we not just put our sins and the absolution they need on hold? Well, we’ll have to do that but it makes us consider what regular confession is all about



First, the Sacrament is God's gift to his church. Christ entrusted to St Peter and the Apostle, and thereby the Apostolic Ministry of the Church past and present to bring people forgiveness and reconciliation with God after the ruinous effect of sin.

Second, we are all sinners and need God's constant forgiveness to progress in the Christ life and to convert our lives to the likeness of Christ. Sometimes people have said to me "I can't really think of anything sinful in my life". The response is "Think again". There are two basic types of sin. The first is 'serious' sins (which we used to call deadly or mortal) – sins which break the Ten Commandments and may be counted as bringing condemnation on ourselves even if nobody else knows what we've done. Second is 'smaller' sins (used to be called venial) – more petty things like yawning during a sermon or saying bad words. Most sins, greater or smaller, involve giving way to greed, jealousy, seeking control, sexual impulses and, above all, the tongue. Needless to say, we don't all commit the same sins and each person is different. All sins, greater or smaller are offences against charity – the love of God and of our neighbour. Sometimes something happened just once but the memory of it remains with us, making us uneasy. Most of us have 'besetting' sins – bad habits which are difficult to control or get rid of. These may go on for a long time and be part of our daily rhythm of life, but not excusable for that reason.

In examining ourselves and working out what needs to be eradicated and changed the most reliable guide we have is our conscience. Conscience is a basic human response to what is going on in our lives. But conscience in the developed Christian sense means 'an informed conscience', imbued with Christian moral teaching to discern between right and wrong. Even if we rebel against what our conscience might say to us, we know, deep within ourselves, that it is right and calls for action. This is how God's grace works within us for the good of our soul.

There are two other ways in which we approach God for his forgiveness. The first is in our private prayers and thoughts as we react to the daily course of our life. We turn to God and ask his forgiveness – or do we? This is very good practice in itself but we are often haphazard and easily let other things get in the way, or we block things out of our mind. How often our prayers are rushed or we simply don't find the time to properly look into ourselves. The second is acknowledging together our sinfulness and asking God's forgiveness at the beginning of mass. But this doesn't give us time to look into ourselves. Often this action is combined with the Kyries – Lord, have mercy etc. This is becoming increasingly vague and sometimes has very little penitential content. We all ought to know the prayer of confession at the beginning of mass even if it isn't used each time- it's direct and purposeful.



So, we come back to the Sacrament of Confession or Reconciliation as it is properly called today. Many people are afraid of this – it's scary opening yourself up to another human being, even if he is a priest who cannot

and never will repeat what you say. He is exercising a ministry given by Christ to his Church and has only a pastoral interest in your spiritual well-being. He will never shout at you or laugh at you. The priest is not there to condemn you or to

reprove you. He may gently guide you if you are confused or uncertain about something. He may give you advice but this is not the main purpose of the exercise. We are seeking absolution, that is freedom, from the burden of sin. When he says “... **I absolve you from all your sins...**” we are freed and given grace to continue our journey of faith. Will we sin again? Quite probably, especially if you are talking about a ‘besetting sin’. It may take a while to rid yourself of its grip. People often say that they have a great sense of freedom and peace as they walk away after confession and feel that a burden has been lifted. Confession is not meant to be a once-only sacrament but a regular part of our Christian practice. Some people like to go regularly throughout the year; others in conjunction with the great festival and seasons. The minimum requirement is to include it as part of your preparation to celebrate Easter.

When the lockdown is over and we can once more come close to each other it will be possible to go to confession again. If you have never been or gave up the practice long ago, consider availing yourself of this grace. It is a great gift of Christ to his Church, the best way of dealing with our sins and finding forgiveness. Don't hesitate to approach your priests to make the arrangements or talk about it. This is one of the most important things they are called to do.

With best wishes and constant prayer

fr Andrew

DON'T FORGET EASYFUNDRAISING

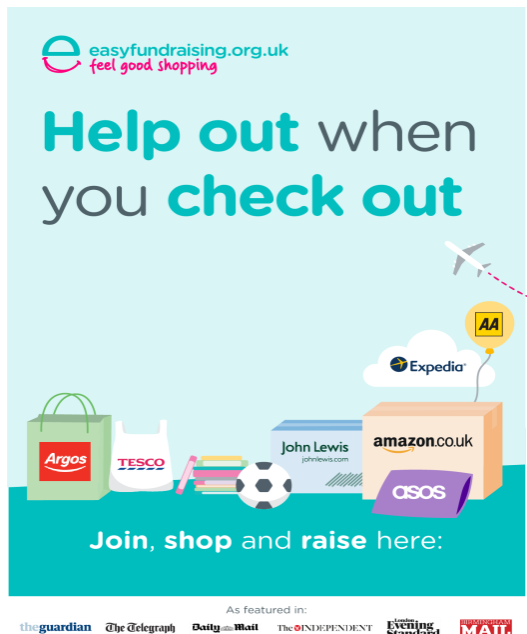
Don't forget that if you shop online for food, clothes, holidays – when you can! or gifts you will support St John's Church if you become a member of **Easyfundraising** since many businesses donate a set amount or percentage of your purchase values to a chosen cause.

Simply search for Easyfundraising, register your details and identify your cause. If you use a mobile device download the App, make your purchases through the app and the cause will benefit. On a computer you have already reached the right site when you became a member. Just bookmark or add the page to your favourites.

By the end of June 2020 over £606 plus Gift Aid had been donated until April 2019) at no cost to the members.

Full details of how to join, etc, are available by using the links on the home page of St John's Church website:
www.highamparishchurch.org.uk.

Why not give it a try?



Liz Croker
Easyfundraising Administrator
St John's Church

CAN'T GET TO MASS FAST ENOUGH? WHY NOT ZOOM?



zoom

My sofa is more comfortable than the pews. I get to lie-in on a Sunday, rather than frantically cat-herding a toddler out of the house to get to church on time. It's (arguably) ok if I am still in my PJs.

In disturbed times it always pays to look for the positives, and so I have identified some of the merits of the Zoom Masses. OK, so the above examples might not be the best fruits of my labour. What are the real positives?

Well, despite all that has happened, the 'holy sacrifice of the Mass' continues to be offered. This is reason to give thanks to God indeed. And as S Thomas knew only too well, it helps us to see the body of Christ in order to know and believe. Zoom/Facebook-streamed services have allowed this to happen for us.



The congregation has been able to maintain its unity as a living part of the body of Christ, in practical terms largely through the means of technology. Not only that, the Church in general as well as S John's has found that Christ's invitation has been accepted by those who haven't previously attended non-virtual services.

Like with any readjustment there were technical glitches of virtually every sort going, but with time and growing confidence these were overcome and overall Zoom and the other platforms have served us well. On the other hand...

Whilst S John Vianney compared spiritual communion to the blowing of a fire's embers to make them burn brightly again, it is not a complete substitute for Sacramental Communion. Don't we all long to approach the Altar once more, surrounded by brothers and sisters in Christ and icons of the Church in Heaven, and physically eat of His flesh and drink of His blood?

It is reassuring that no lockdown can stop God from coming to us and for us to orient ourselves to him and receive Him, but soon lockdown will recede and we will emerge again. What, if anything, will we take away spiritually from this time and how will it serve us in the future of our faith journey?

Chris Hanson



PRAYERS AND POEMS

Good to know

The little word of love,
the right time and place
Will be blessed by God above,
and watered by His grace.

Author unknown

I am only one

I am only one, but I am one.
I cannot do everything, but I can do something.
What I can do, I ought to do,
And what I ought to do, by the grace of God I will do.
- *Anon*

Our Daily Bread

Give us we pray
The bread we need today
Or, Lord, at least
Provide us with some yeast!

We'll feast our eyes
To see the yeast-dough rise
No fun we lack
When we then knock it back.

Once more it proves,
Then to the oven moves
And then we haste
That nice fresh bread to taste!

By Nigel Beeton

Source: Parish Pump

Submitting Articles or Items to The Bridge

Editors: Liz Croker
Chris Hanson

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HIGHAM VILLAGE CLUB (CIU)



33 Hermitage Road, Higham, Rochester, Kent, ME3 7DD
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The Club is currently closed as we are following Government guidelines, we are hoping to open 4th July.

Please check our Club website or telephone the Club

Join our Website for up to the minute news on all events

www.highamvillageclub.co.uk

The club has a hall which can be hired out for

Private functions to members and non-members.

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23RD PSALM FOR THE HARD-PRESSED STUDENT

The Lord is my real instructor and I shall not want.

He gives me peace, when chaos is all around me.

He gently reminds me to pray before I speak and to do things
without
complaining.

He reminds me that He, and not my school, is my Salvation.

He restores my sanity every day and guides my decisions that I
might honour
Him in everything I do.

Even though I face absurd amounts of social isolation, live
streaming and exams, I will not stop - for He is with me!

His presence, His peace, and His power will see me through.

He will raise me up, even if I fail to get a good grade.

He claims me as His own and knows that I have done my best.

His faithfulness and love are better than any A+.

In eternity it won't matter what degree I got.

When it's all said and done, I'll be working for Him a whole lot longer
than

I'll be in school (even when it doesn't feel like it) and for that, I bless
His name!

Author unknown

Source: Parish Pump

The queue

While waiting in a long queue early one morning for the supermarket to open for us 'seniors', I was surprised to see a young man saunter along and try to cut in at the front of the queue. A furious old lady waved her cane at him, and he quickly backed away.

A moment later, the young man tried again. He managed to dodge the old lady, but then two old men started shouting at him. Again, the young man backed away.

But he wasn't giving up, and soon the young man approached the queue for the third time. By now, all of us pensioners were ready for him, an angry wall of opposition.

The young man stood there for a moment, and then shrugged his shoulders. "If you people won't let me unlock the door, none of you will ever get in to shop."



HIGHAM SUNFLOWER PROJECT

The Knit and Natter group have now started knitting sunflowers. It is planned that they will be available around the village for donations to be made towards Higham Helping Hands Project.



SMILE LINES

Why did God make mothers?

Here are some of the answers seven-year-olds gave to the following questions...

Why did God give you your mother and not some other mum?

God knew she likes me a lot more than other kids' mums like me.

What kind of little girl was your mum?

I don't know because I wasn't there, but my guess would be pretty bossy.

What did your mum need to know about your dad before she married him?

His last name.

Why did your mum marry your dad?

She got too old to do anything else with him.

What's the difference between mums & dads?

Mum knows how to talk to teachers without scaring them.

What would it take to make your mum perfect?

On the inside she's already perfect. Outside, I think some kind of plastic surgery.

Source: Parish Pump

JULY 2020 Donation Guide

**The next collection-is Saturday 25th and Sunday 26th July
8 am to 8 pm**

**PLEASE NOTE: FOR JUNE THE FOODBANK HAVE SPECIALLY REQUESTED THAT WE
GIVE PRIORITY TO THE HIGHLIGHTED ITEMS BELOW**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Instant packets of cup of soup ✓ Tinned ham & corned beef ✓ Tinned potatoes & smash ✓ Meals in tins - ravioli, chilli con carne, curry ✓ Instant packets of noodles, pasta and rice ✓ Tinned rice pudding & custard ✓ Small bottles of squash | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cereal bars & crisps ✓ Small bottles of washing up liquid Toiletries ✓ Men & women's deodorant ✓ Bio laundry tablets |
|---|---|

Also required:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meat pies • UHT whole and semi skimmed milk <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tin macaroni cheese • Tin spaghetti and sausages • Rice • tinned custard • Juice • Tinned vegetables • Instant packets of cous cous • Spreads – jam and peanut butter marmite <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetarian foods • Coffee, tea, hot chocolate, sugar. • Jars of pasta sauce • Cereals, sweet & chocolate biscuits | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jars of pasta sauce • Cereals, sweet & chocolate biscuits • Tinned fruit, sponge puddings, <p>Cleaning and toiletries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household cleaners, spray polish • Toothpaste, toothbrushes, bars of soap • Ladies personal toiletries, toilet rolls • Nappies size 4 & 5 • Shaving foam/gel, body spray • Shampoo • Hand soap • Shower gel, |
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SCIENTIST REFLECTS: SUFFERING AND THE IMAGE OF GOD

As I write, volunteers are distributing food to people who have been deprived of their usual ways of earning an income during the lockdown in a Majority World country. I became involved in raising money for this initiative very recently, and saw videos from the first people to receive packages. There were expressions of happiness, hope, quiet sadness, resignation, desperation – most often a mixture of several of these feelings at the same time.

I believe that our cries for answers at times like this, and our deep longing for things to be better, kinder, more just, less painful and chaotic, are a sign that we are made in the image of God. The Bible describes God creating men and women, instructing them to rule over the earth, and giving them the freedom to choose what they will do. The world God made was described as “very good”, but human wrongdoing caused a rift between people and God, and also between us and the rest of creation.

From a scientist’s perspective, it seems that the *potential* for accidents, disease and death – for both animals and humans – may have been part of God’s very good creation, and there was a real threat of famine, albeit far rarer than in our current mismanaged version of creation? How would we have managed life in what Genesis describes as an un-subdued world if our relationship with God hadn’t broken down, and evil hadn’t been unleashed? Maybe painful experiences would have been experienced as challenges that brought us closer to each other and to God, rather than bringing us the experience of suffering (which I would define more particularly as involving distress, isolation and fear)? Of course, these are theoretical questions that no one can answer, but perhaps they are worth exploring.

God has already responded to suffering at a root level by taking it on Himself. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus broke the power of sin and death. We do not yet see the final results of those decisive actions – the end of suffering for all those who trust Him –

but we can already feel their impact. For example, many people have experienced the wonderful effect, either in their own lives or by receiving kindness from others, which is described by these words: “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh” (Ezekiel 36:26).

Some of the people who received food yesterday were, in the words of the community team leader, “really desperate”, but yet they still trust God to meet their needs. My hope is that the worldwide Church will, with God’s help, be part of the answer to their prayers – demonstrating our true status as people made in the image of God.

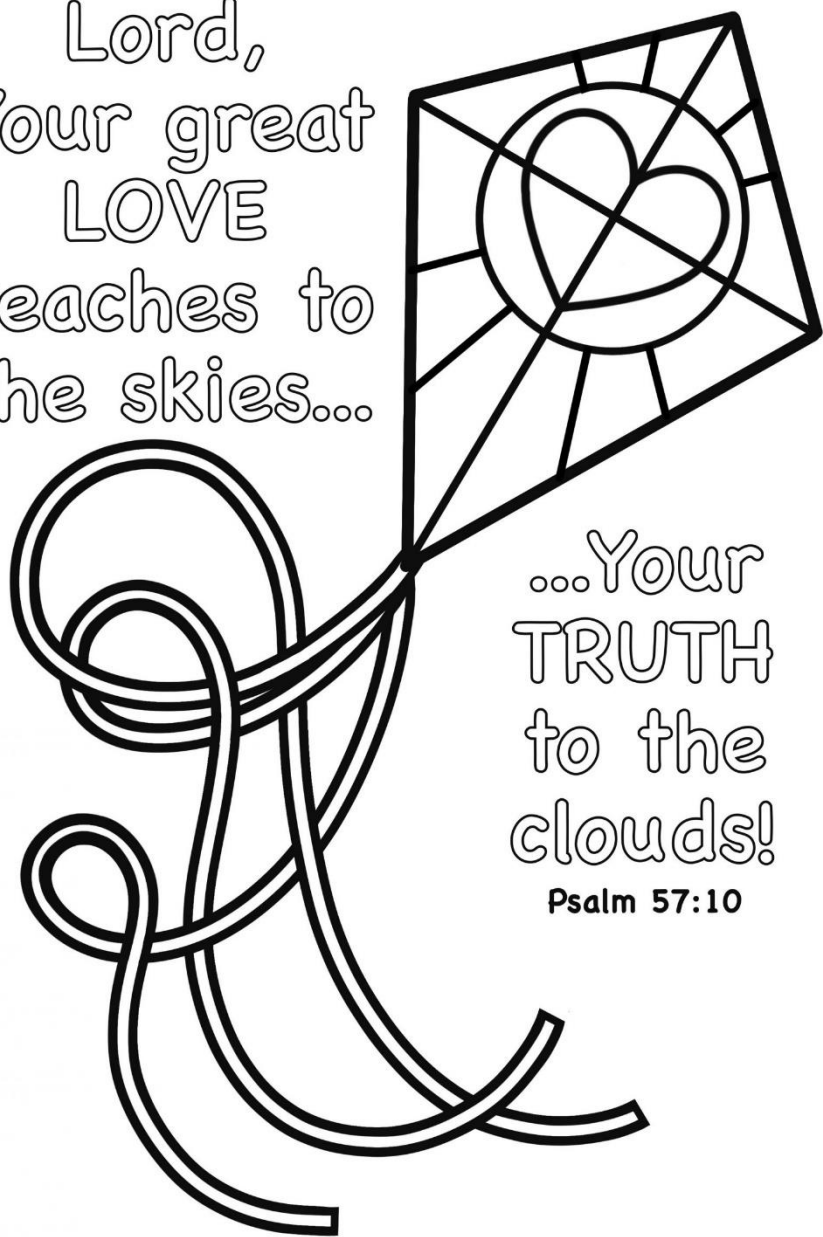
Source: Parish Pump
Dr Ruth M Bancewicz

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| 7 | 3 | | | | 6 | | | 8 |
| | 8 | 1 | 9 | | | | | |
| | | | | | 4 | | 3 | |

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| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 9 | 7 | 8 | 2 | 1 |
| 8 | 2 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 9 | 4 | 3 |
| 1 | 9 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 7 |
| 2 | 7 | 9 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 6 |
| 5 | 4 | 8 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 9 |
| 6 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 9 | 2 | 8 | 4 |
| 7 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 9 | 8 |
| 4 | 8 | 1 | 9 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 6 | 5 |
| 9 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 2 |

Lord,
Your great
LOVE
reaches to
the skies...



...Your
TRUTH
to the
clouds!

Psalm 57:10