

# The Bridge

Parish of Saint John and Saint Mary Higham with Merston



*THE CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN,*

*There will be no mass held here this May but  
hope to be able to celebrate in St Mary's later in  
the year*

## ALL CHANGE and NO CHANGE

In 2020 we were going to collect Bridge subscriptions, and the Church Draw, in April to prevent our 'workers' collecting in the dark and wet weather. The Corona Virus crisis put a stop to that. Our answer to this at the moment is to make this Bridge [ and probably June's too] free online, or via Social Media links, until we can resume printing. Subs. will be collected later in the year and then in May/June next year and succeeding ones. Our advertisers can be found online in a separate document.

Twenty-five years ago (on May 17<sup>th</sup>) I was made Vicar of Higham (and Rector of Merston!). I have frequently taught, especially on the Dedication anniversaries of S.John's or S.Mary's that THE Church is the PEOPLE not the building. When S.Mary's closed the Church relocated to a new Parish Church building. I used to say that should the roof fall in then THE Church would have to meet perhaps in the Memorial Hall, the School, The Village Club or outside on the grass. What I, nor anyone, could have ever envisaged was the Church not being able to meet in its usual Sacred Space but not at all TOGETHER. How long this will be for remains to be seen. Yet it goes against all we understand for every image of the Christian is not as an individual but one part of the whole. We are but one stone in the Temple of Christ, one lamb in the flock, one fish in a net full, one ear of grain on a stalk, one grape in a bunch gathered for Harvest, one soul in a Communion, a fellowship. Indeed, the word Church itself means a gathered community.

My colleagues have written elsewhere about the importance of the Mass/the Eucharist and how it is important that it is offered even if we cannot receive Holy Communion. Our daily mass gatherings to offer to God 's glory and for the benefit of others - not that we might receive the Sacrament - seemed threatened by the crisis. Yet in this period of *all change* there is indeed *no change* as we continue among ourselves to offer the Holy Sacrifice in our homes. With the wonders of modern technology, and not a few initial hiccups, we have been able to do this and 'be present' as it happens. On one Sunday there were 20 'present' at a 'Zoom Mass' as we have begun to call them.

In a very real, yet physically distant, way we are indeed *in communion* with each other. Also in a way of sharing with the laity who CANNOT receive the sacrament each priest presides at just two weekday masses and therefore, in solidarity with the people, hears mass, assists in its offering by our 'presence' and response but of course does not receive.

The Church has a website – hence you are reading this through it or through the Social Media platforms we have or via an email list. The option to join us at our Masses is offered every week via the Bulletin. We cannot print it to be collected on Sundays or by popping into Church but it is sent to those who have shared email and it is also available through our Social Media outlets and the Parish website. The bulletin also has the readings on the reverse and through the generosity of the publishers these too are available. So, all change but no change in having these week by week. As 'normally' so now technologically it is possible to offer the Church the ability to worship God and give him the glory honour and praise which is his due, and our duty [Fr Peter is now quite expert at guiding people who are new to Zoom through the process]. As normally though offering and taking up the offer are different sides of the coin. 'You can take a horse to water.....' as the proverb goes.

Go on, be brave, ask about it, come and watch. If you're shy you can even 'hide' with no video view of you - though you can watch and hear. If you have Facebook then you can watch but not be seen or heard at the Sunday 6 pm but you need to talk to Fr Peter about that one. I really do look forward to 'seeing' you until all changes and we can meet again face to face literally – as if there has been no change whatsoever!

*Fr James*

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**FUNDING** The Parish still has large bills to pay not least insurance and diocesan share. The diocese, like the parishes, has gone into a new mode of technological being but, like every huge organisation, still needs its funding – and expects it. May I request that those who give weekly by stewardship envelopes continue to drop them off at 12 Villa Road [when you are undertaking exercise or a necessary journey]. FJ

# The Bridge

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

## S.JOHN'S PARISH CHURCH - WORSHIP IN MAY

### 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
Sunday Mass (Fr Peter on his Facebook)	EVENING	6.00 pm

*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 can 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](mailto: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

# May 2020 at S.John's, Higham

## Calendar and Mass Intentions

DURING THE PANDEMIC LOCKDOWN OUR SERVICES ARE STREAMED LIVE EACH DAY VIA ZOOM [[not 6pm Sunday] AT THE FOLLOWING TIMES

SUNDAY 10am [ or 6pm via FACEBOOK with Fr Peter]

Weekdays 10am except Tue & Thurs 6pm.

Contact Fr James for access to these services

<u>DAY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>CELEBRATION</u>		<u>INTENTION</u>
Fri	1st	S.Joseph the Worker	(m)	All anxious about their work
Sat	2nd	S.Athanasius <i>Bishop, Teacher</i>	(m)	Ordinands/ministry students
<b>SUN</b>	<b>3RD</b>	<b>4TH SUNDAY OF EASTER</b>	(+)	<b>THE PARISH</b>
Mon	4th	<b>English Martyrs</b> of C16 <sup>th</sup> -17 <sup>th</sup>	(f)	Local Roman Catholics
Tue	5th	Eastertide Feria		Biblelands Christians
Wed	6th	<b>S.John</b> at the Latin Gate	(m)	S.John's Congregation
Th.	7th	Eastertide Feria		Higham Congregationalists
Fri	8th	<b>The Re-Dedication of the Cathedral</b> AD1130	(f)	The Cathedral
Sat.	9th	Eastertide Feria - of Our Lady	(v)	Walsingham
<b>SUN</b>	<b>10TH</b>	<b>5TH SUNDAY OF EASTER</b>	(+)	<b>THE PARISH</b>
Mon	11th	Eastertide Feria		Christian Aid Week
Tue	12th	Eastertide Feria		Persecuted Christians
Wed	13th	Our Lady of Fatima	(m)	Sick & disabled
Th.	14th	<b>S.Matthias, Apostle</b>	(f)	Bishop Norman
Fri	15th	Eastertide Feria req. intention		+RIP's & Anniversaries
Sat	16th	S.Simon Stock, <i>Carmelite Friar</i>	(m)	Aylesford Friary
<b>SUN</b>	<b>17TH *</b>	<b>6TH SUNDAY OF EASTER</b>	(+)	<b>THE PARISH</b>
Mon	18th *	Eastertide Feria		Christian Missionaries
Tue	19th *	S.Dunstan <i>Archbishop</i>	(m)	Archbishop of Canterbury.
Wed	20th *	Eastertide Feria		local farmers/businesses
<b>Th.</b>	<b>21st</b>	<b>THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD</b>	9.30AM (+)	The Cathedral
		<i>HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION</i>	6.30PM	<b>THE PARISH</b>
Fri.	22nd	Eastertide Feria		Soc.of the Holy Cross
Sat	23rd	Eastertide Feria - of Our Lady	(v)	In honour O.L. of Higham
<b>SUN</b>	<b>24TH</b>	<b>7TH SUNDAY OF EASTER</b>	(+)	<b>THE PARISH</b>
Mon	25 <sup>th</sup>	S.Bede <i>the Venerable</i>	(m)	The Northern Dioceses
Tue	26th	S.Philip Neri	(m)	Christian Teachers
Wed	27th	<b>S.Augustine</b> of Canterbury	(f)	The Church in England
Th.	28th	Eastertide Feria		Christian Unity
Fri	29th	S.Paul VI <i>pope</i>		Pope Francis
Sat	30th	Eastertide Feria - of Our Lady in Eastertide	(v)	The Church's mission
<b>SUN</b>	<b>31ST</b>	<b>PENTECOST - END OF EASTER</b>	(+)	<b>THE PARISH</b>

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

## ~ DAILY BIBLE READINGS ~

ONLY A FEW MINUTES A DAY following the readings used at Daily Mass  
in Church - even if you can't be there. Choose one or both readings.

There are three readings for Sundays and special holy days.

F **S. Joseph the Worker** *May 1st*  
Colossians 3.14-17,23-24 Matt 13.54-58  
S Acts 9.31-42 John 6.60-69

**4TH SUNDAY OF EASTER** *MAY 3RD*  
Acts 2.14.36-41 1 Peter 2.20-25  
John 10.1-10

M **THE ENGLISH MARTYRS** *MAY 4TH*  
Acts 7.55-60 Matt 1-.17-20

T Acts 11.19-26 John 10.22-30

W **S. John at the Latin Gate** *May 6th*  
Rev. 1.9-18 John 21.19b-24

Th Acts 13.13-25 John 13.16-20

F **Cathedral's Re-Consecration Anniv. 1130**  
Ezekiel 43.1-7 or 1 Peter 2.4-9  
Matt 16.13-19 or John 2.13-22

S Acts 13.44-52 John 14.7-14

**5TH SUNDAY OF EASTER** *MAY 10TH*  
Acts 6.1-7 1 Peter 2.4-9  
John 14.1-12

M Acts 14.5-18 John 14.21-26

T Acts 14.19-28 John 14.27-31

W Acts 15.1-6 John 15.1-8

Th **S. MATTHIAS** *MAY 14TH*  
Acts 1.15-26 John 15.9-17

F Acts 15.22-31 John 15.12-17

S Acts 16.1-10 John 15.18-21

**6TH SUNDAY OF EASTER** *MAY 17TH*  
Acts 8.5-8.14-17 1 Peter 3.15-18  
John 14.15-21

M Acts 16.11-15 John 15.26 - 16.4

T Acts 16.22-34 John 16.5-11

W Acts 17. 15,22-18.1 John 16.12-15

### **THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD**

**THURSDAY** *MAY 21ST*  
Acts 1.1-11 Ephesians 1.17-23  
Matthew 28.16-20

F Acts 18.9-18 John 16.20-23

S Acts 18.23-28 John 16.23-28

**7TH SUNDAY OF EASTER** *MAY 24TH*  
Acts 1.12-14 1 Peter 4.13-16  
John 17.1-11

M Acts 19.1-8 John 16.29-33

T Acts 20.17-27 John 17.1-11

W **S. AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY** *MAY 27TH*  
1 Thessalonians 2.2-8  
Matt. 9.35-37 or Luke 10.1-9

Th Acts 20.30, 23.6-11 John 17.20-26

F Acts 25.13-21 John 21.15-19

S Acts 28.16-20,30-31 John 21.20-25

**PENTECOST** *MAY 31ST*  
Acts 2.1-11 1 Corinthians 12.3-7,12-13  
John 20.19-23

*Eastertide ends - Ordinary Time resumes at Week 9*

*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.

# THE MAY 'REQUIEM'

will be offered on Friday 15th May 2020 @ 10AM

*The recently deceased, and this month's anniversary list of names [below], are specially prayed for at this Mass.*

*Anniversary names are remembered on the date and the Sunday prior to it.*

1 <sup>st</sup>	<u>Annie</u> Douglass Summers	15 <sup>th</sup>	Sylvia Maureen George
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Prudence Williams		Derek Gordon Hook
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Annie Alice Want	16 <sup>th</sup>	Nelly <u>Violet</u> Still
	Fred. Haskins		Vera May Blackall
	John Albert Husband	17 <sup>th</sup>	Andrew Aloysius McMahon
5 <sup>th</sup>	Nellie Georgina ('Peggy') Miller		Beatrice Maud ('Betty') Drayton
6 <sup>th</sup>	Joseph Norman Birkett		Donald Edward Whitebread
	Jeanne Audrey Stevens	18 <sup>th</sup>	Isaac Glendinning
8 <sup>th</sup>	Ethel <u>Grace</u> Williams	23 <sup>rd</sup>	Alan Stanley ('Chris') Frier
9 <sup>th</sup>	Bevan Dyson		Peggy Littlewood
	Edward Wallace Martin	25 <sup>th</sup>	Randall Davidson <i>BISHOP</i>
11 <sup>th</sup>	George Edward Glendinning		Michael Derek Jeal
	David Thomas <i>BISHOP</i>	26 <sup>th</sup>	Alfred Ernest Gammon
12 <sup>th</sup>	Ivy Edna Evers		Grace Preston
14 <sup>th</sup>	Edith May Growsns	28 <sup>th</sup>	Robert <u>John</u> Price
	David Dunn <i>PRIEST</i>	29 <sup>th</sup>	Peter James Giannotti
	Roger Calder <i>PRIEST</i>	31 <sup>st</sup>	Bridget Mary Wilkinson

*Also at this Requiem - deceased benefactors & communicants of S.Mary's*

*NOTE: The deceased of 20 years and more are removed from the list: except for previous Incumbents of the parish, previous Diocesan Bishops and where it is known someone attends the requiem mass to pray for a person / some people.*

*However, if anyone attend the requiem AND requests the inclusion of other names beforehand these will, of course, be included in those for whom we pray.*

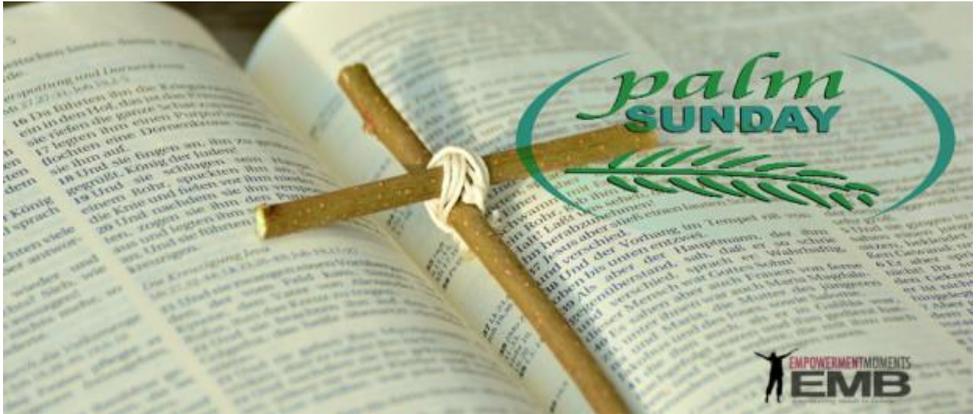
*Alleluia! We proclaim your Death O Lord,  
and profess your Resurrection, until you come again. Alleluia!*

## ***“May the light of Christ rising in glory scatter the darkness of heart and mind” – appendix***

Last month I wrote about some of the great saints who made the light of Christ shine in the way they reached out to the poorest and most vulnerable in society – any society and at any time. The rest of us are inspired but can only do the best we can. The problem with this that it becomes very easy to talk about rescuing those in need without doing very much about it. The late writer Christopher Hitchens, scourge of religions and Christianity in particular, said of St Mother Theresa of Calcutta that she loved poverty rather than the poor and that she used the poor to promote her extreme conservative Catholicism. This was profoundly wrong and spiteful in respect of Mother Theresa. However, he makes an important distinction between idea and action. It's easy to sit back and talk about issues but do nothing to make a real change. It's an indictment on us that when Christopher Hitchens looked out he saw nothing that made him question his 'anti-theism' and glimpse the risen Christ.

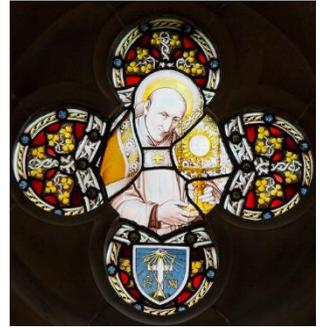
### **A Spiritual Communion**

It was quite a shock when the tightening grip of the Corona Virus pandemic meant that all churches would have to be closed immediately. Not even the parish clergy would be allowed to use them for prayer. [The last time this happened was in 1208 when Pope Innocent III, in the course of his quarrel with King John put England under a papal interdict. Churches were closed and no sacraments were allowed.] In this diocese the clergy are being threatened with disciplinary action if they do not conform (no comment, for the moment). Even more sad is that the closed churches mean that there are no public masses provided for parishioners. No acts of worship, no sanctuary for prayer, no baptism, confirmations, marriages or funerals in church and no observation of the beautiful ceremonies of Holy Week and Easter.



I missed the Palm Sunday procession (I walked alone around my garden with an olive branch singing 'All glory laud and honour'), the altar of Repose on Maundy Thursday, venerating the Cross on Good Friday and following the Paschal candle into the dark church on Holy Saturday among many other things. Even more difficult is that people were immediately deprived of Holy Communion. This is indeed a spiritual shock – to go overnight from being a Sunday and perhaps a daily communication to having no access to Holy Communion. The practical reason for this is understandable and must be followed in the interest of the fight against the virus. Nevertheless, this a profoundly unhappy state in which to be. There will have been times in the past when it was simply impossible to receive Holy Communion (work, sickness, travelling, etc) but the church door has never been slammed shut before. Yet all is not lost. Immediately clergy have set up temporary altars and shrines in their homes and celebrated mass there. Many have been able to provide online access to the mass (at St John's we have developed our Skype groups and latterly Zoom), enabling people to take an audio-visual part in mass). Thank goodness we have so many new opportunities to connect with one another like this. We are able to take part in the celebration of mass but we are still not able to receive Holy Communion (Fr Peter has written very powerfully elsewhere in this edition of the importance and duty of offering mass daily whether or not we receive Holy Communion).

In these circumstances the Church offers us the “Spiritual Communion” when we are unable to receive the actual Bread and Wine of the Altar. This is not ‘second best’ but it is a compensation. It’s an act of desire to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord and a prayer that God will grant us his inward grace. It can take one of many forms. The one we have been using is that of St Alphonsus Liguori, a great spiritual master:



***Oh Jesus,  
I believe that you are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.  
I love you above all things,  
And I desire to receive You in my soul.  
Since I cannot at this moment  
Receive you sacramentally,  
Come at least spiritually into my heart.  
I embrace you as if You were already there  
And unite myself wholly to You.  
Never let me be separated from You. Amen***

This helps us as a spiritual gift in this difficult period. But It only comes into force through necessity. It cannot be used when we could well have received Holy Communion but for various unacceptable reason chose to absent ourselves. There are many people today in various part of the world who would love to receive Holy Communion regularly but who very seldom get the ministry of a priest in their church community. The reduction of parish clergy in our country means that some communicants cannot be sure of having mass each Sunday in their church. The present situation will be more familiar to them. The act of ‘spiritual communion’ helps in times like these and helps us look forward to the day when we once again receive Our Lord in his Sacramental form. Most of us haven’t had to consider this before.

It'd be a good idea to learn St Alphonsus' prayer, or a similar one, by heart so that we can use it when we may be cut off from altar, priest or church for whatever reason (being ill, out of reach of a church, travelling or having to work, etc). It can be put to good use.

On Good Friday Cardinal Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster celebrated the Liturgy of the Lord's Death in Westminster Cathedral watched by at least 8,000 people online. When it came to the time to receive Holy Communion (the Host only on this day) he said that he was painfully aware that all those joining him in the worship were unable to communicate. Therefore, he said, he was not going to receive Holy Communion, in solidarity with the rest of us denied Holy Communion by the pandemic. In a period of powerful silence, he united us all in an act of spiritual communion.

When the pandemic is over and we can have access to our churches again we may come back with more awareness of how much they mean to us. Hopefully we will appreciate even more the place of mass and Holy Communion in our lives and how blessed we are to have the daily mass in our churches and immediate access to the Blessed Sacrament. Having survived this perilous time we will have a renewed understanding of how blessed we are and what it means to belong to the Body of Christ. It will also have made us think about what is essential to our lives as Christians. With what greater inward and outer joy will we return to the Blessed Sacrament, to the Lord's House and to each other

With best wishes and constant prayer

*fr Andrew*

# HIGHAM MEMORIAL HALL

## Trustees

Following our announcement that Higham Memorial Hall is looking for new Trustees, a number of people have expressed interest, for which we thank them. Sadly, the current lock-down due to Coronavirus, has resulted in a delay to our proposed plan to hold a public meeting at which we will present the current situation and, hopefully, find a solution to the continued running of the hall. In the meantime, the current Trustees will continue to run the Hall as usual for 12 months. Once the restrictions have been lifted we will get the Hall up and running as usual as soon as possible. A new date for the Public meeting will be posted in due course and we can continue from where we are now. It is inappropriate to discuss specific issues with individuals at this time but anyone who has expressed an interest will be contacted once we get back to normal. The primary requirement is that Trustees must be willing to donate their time, bearing in mind the Trustees are **TOTALLY** responsible for raising **all funding**, their duties will include:

To manage and maintain the Memorial Hall to a high standard for the benefit of the people of Higham Village and in accordance with the terms of the **Charity Commission** (Higham Memorial Hall is a registered charity)

To ensure all monies are used correctly

To ensure health and safety regulations are complied with

To attend monthly committee meetings

To set hiring fees for local and commercial bookings

To be hands on where required.

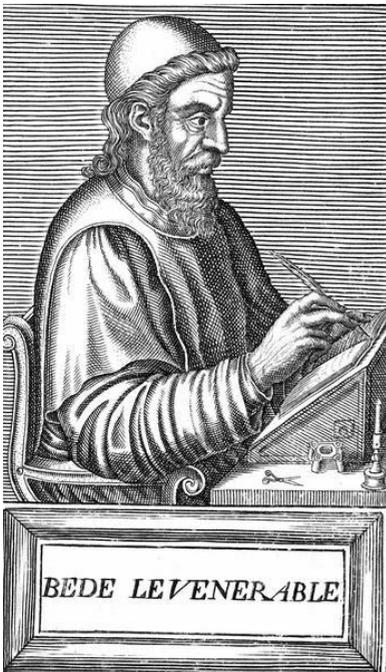
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As some of you will know over last winter we experienced some breakdowns to our main hall heater. As it is about 35 years old it has done well and although it now seems to be working ok we think now is the time it became a priority.

## DAILY MASS

When I was young(er) I remember that not a few people at my home church were committed to daily attendance at Mass. They clearly saw it as their vocation. For them, it was not a question of whether they felt like it or had time to do it. Going to Mass every day was part of their rule of life. There were others who were committed to going to Mass regularly on particular days; again, this was not a matter of feeling but of vocation. It was included in a rule of life. For such folk only sickness or something major would have kept them away.

I have often thought that it is sad that there are fewer such people in the Church of England of today. But over the past few days, as I have been reflecting on how public Mass has become impossible for a while, I have come to see that this massive decline in commitment to the daily Mass is not so much a cause for sadness, rather it is a complete disaster for the Church of England.



My musings began when I saw a letter from a brother priest from this Diocese explaining why he would continue to celebrate Mass without a congregation. He quoted from that great English Saint of the 8<sup>th</sup> century, the Venerable Bede:

*'A priest who neglects to say Mass deprives the Most Holy Trinity of the honour which is his due, the angels of a source of joy, the sinner of forgiveness, the just of assistance, the departed of relief, the whole Church of spiritual benefit, and himself of a salutary medicine.'*

There is a great deal packed into those few words but, in essence, he says that if a priest fails to say Mass the whole Universe loses out! For the offering of Mass affects a real change for the forgiveness of sinners, for the wellbeing of the world, for the journey of the departed on their way to heaven and, not least, for the salvation of the priest himself. Make no mistake, says the Venerable Bede: when Mass is not said, it all goes tragically wrong.

So, saying Mass makes a real, objective difference to the universe. The failure to say Mass is a disaster for the universe. Sadly, of late, we have concentrated on the reception of Holy Communion rather than on the Offering of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. We have so come to love “frequent Communion” that we have forgotten that Holy Communion is, if you like, a wonderful by-product of the Mass but it is not all that the Mass is. What really matters is that Mass is offered.

It is worth remembering that the folk whom I recall attending Mass day in and day out, would have been brought up at a time when reception of Holy Communion was much less frequent than it is today. It is also worth remembering that our obligation is to attend Mass every single Sunday, but we are only obliged to receive Holy Communion at Easter and Christmas (and Whitsun). This reminds us that the offering of the Mass, Sunday by Sunday and (where possible) day by day is absolutely essential but different considerations come into play when we consider whether we should receive Holy Communion: not least, whether we have properly prepared or whether to do so would be to receive “unworthily”. (I Corinthians 11:27)

Reception of Holy Communion is a wonderful thing. No doubt you have been made aware of this at a time when you have been deprived of Holy Communion. But this deprivation reminds us that it is not our right. It is God’s gracious gift. Perhaps when the gift is restored, we should remind ourselves just how precious a gift it is, and we should resolve now never again to take this gift for granted nor allow ourselves to approach Holy Communion without first making proper preparation.

But even though Holy Communion has been withheld from us, the offering of the Mass has gone on. All those benefits of which the Venerable Bede spoke are still available to Christ's Church have been made available to us today. In these unusual times, priests have had to celebrate without laity present.

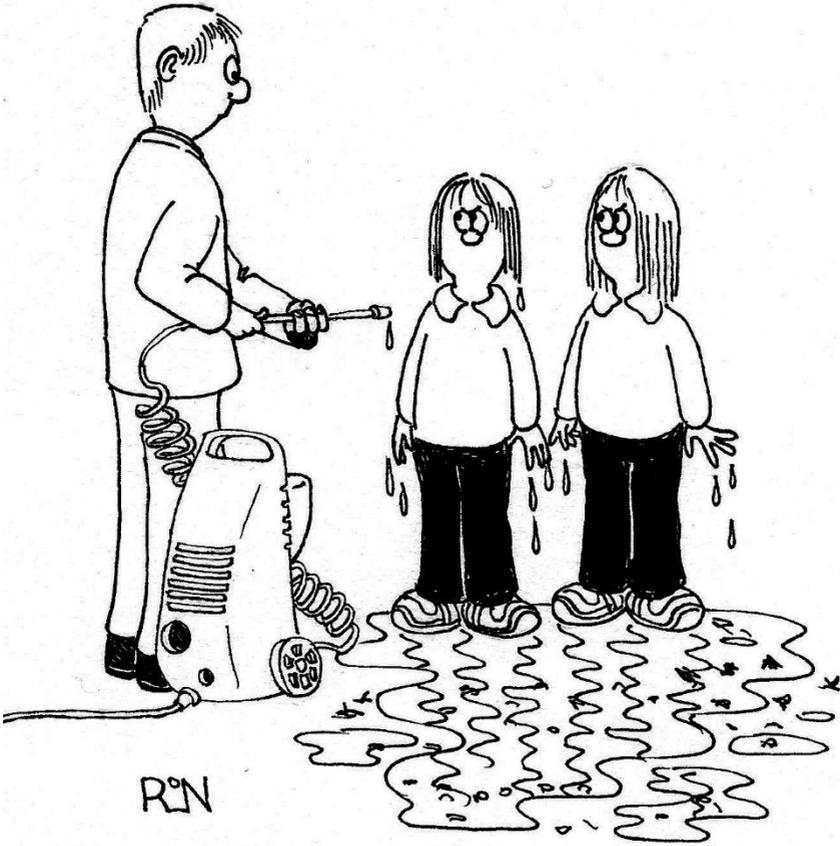
A couple of weeks ago some were asking whether this was even possible. Normally the celebration of Mass is the offering of priest and people together. Surely, people said, there is something quite wrong with a priest celebrating without the laity being present. The use of streaming technology eased the conscience of many because that enabled the participation by the laity at a distance. Others just concluded, with St Bede, the Mass must just go on! Somebody even argued that since the priest is also a member of the laity, he is quite able to answer himself.

Many weeks on, and priests saying Mass on their own is almost the norm. But it is NOT the norm. The norm is that priest and people celebrate Mass together with each playing his or her part. The priest has his part, but the part of the laity is vital too: they read, they serve, they ring the bell and, crucially, they make their responses. It is obviously daft for the priest to answer himself: "And with your Spirit"!

So, when public Masses are restored (and I pray God that that will be soon) remind yourselves that you have learned during this time of deprivation that the Mass is something absolutely essential to yourself, your departed loved ones, to those who are sick and, indeed, to the well-being of the whole of creation. Given that you have made this discovery about the Mass, ask yourself this: Is God calling me to be one of those people who attend Mass daily to ensure that it is offered daily? If that is not your calling, then ask this: Should I at least attend Mass on one more day in the week than I do now (and incorporate that into my Rule of Life) so that I too may help ensure that Mass can be offered daily?

May God bless you and protect you and your loved ones in this dangerous time.

*Fr Peter*



RIN

*The twins had been doing Messy Church at home.*

## KNIT AND NATTER

Over the past few weeks you can imagine that the members of this group have not been idle! With keen eyed Facebook followers in the group they have kept members informed as to how they can help Darent Valley Hospital by providing much needed items:

- Knitted hearts for patients to hold during their last hours and straps for the staff to use at the back of masks to make them more comfortable



- Sewing scrubs and scrub bags.



In addition, they have continued to support the village school in their eco project by collecting their non-recyclable plastic egg crisp packets, biscuit wrappers, any other clean food wrappings. These are firstly washed and dried – you may have seen them on someone's washing line! Then cut up or shredded and stuffed into a 2 litre drinks bottle to form an ecobrick – which had to weigh at least 500 gm – no mean feat.

Many thanks ladies for all that you have been doing. Keep Knitting, keep safe and hope to see you soon.

## CONGRATULATIONS FATHER JAMES

17<sup>th</sup> May 2020 – 25 years the incumbent at St John's



"I think I've finally become fully accepted here. After 25 years, the villagers have stopped calling me, The new incumbent !"

## MANY CONGRATULATIONS TO

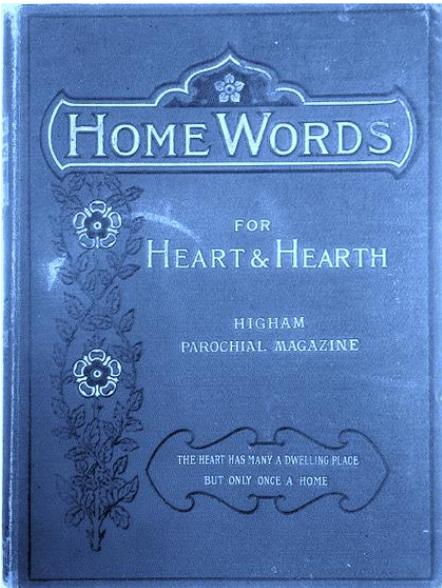
Wendy and Edward Hance celebrating their 60<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary on 23<sup>rd</sup> April.



## HIGHAM IN 1895

This article is from a piece taken from The Higham Parochial magazine of that year thanks to the then vicar. In December the years collection of magazines could be taken to the vicarage with the sum of 1s 2d for which he would get them bound and several copies of them have survived.

There were 56 baptisms, several of the names still recognisable and 32 people were confirmed. Less pleasing to read was that of the 11 burials, three were children of 5 years and under as there was an outbreak of scarlet fever. Notes of the Vestry meeting in April reads that after appointing the churchwarden the meeting was adjourned as usual to the Sir John Falstaff public house which is surprising as monthly meetings of the Temperance Society were generally quite well attended.



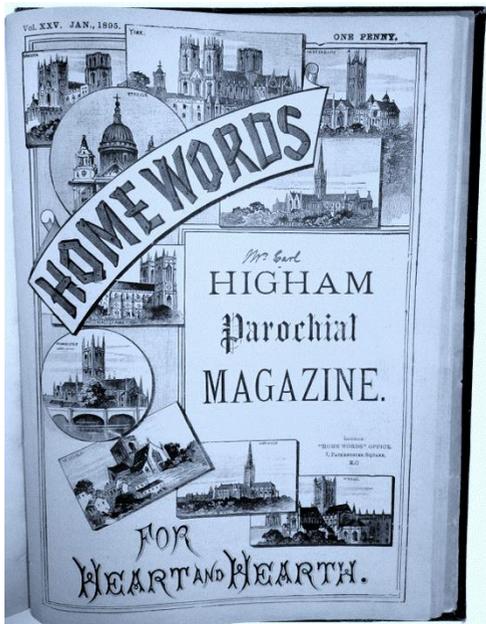
Weather wise February was exceptionally cold with frozen and burst pipes everywhere and a fund was set up to help the unemployed as the land was too frozen to be

worked. The rest of the year was very dry, with rain even in April being welcomed. Reports of the school were good but they still owed £110.00 for the building of the previous year a new infant's schoolroom, however by the end of the year the deficit was only £9.00.

Several entertainments, home produce social events were held to raise funds for this and other causes which usually involved the band.

July was a busy month with a flower show which was well supported, an outing of the two choirs to Herne Bay and 309 children went to a party in the meadows of Dairy Farm given by Mrs Whitebread who sadly died later in the year.

School summer holidays were not at any set date but were set when the hops were ripe so that the children could help with the hop picking. This year the school closed on Thursday 29th August with hop picking starting the following Monday, the yield was better than expected after such a dry summer, however hops were becoming uneconomical to grow due to imports and hop substitutes.



Having written all this the then vicar went off to Wales on holiday for a month. Would he have done so if he thought all was not well with the village?

*Written by Barbara Manley*

**Dates are likely to change and will be confirmed**

## **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 **PROVISIONAL DATES**

**Sunday 28th June to 6 pm Tuesday 30th June.**

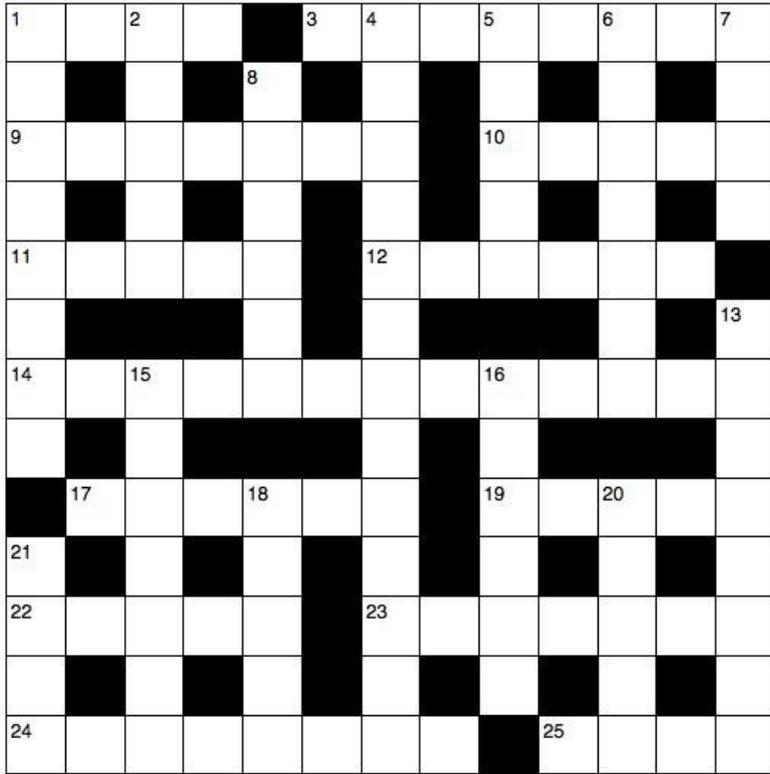
**Please note we still cannot take  
DUVETS, PILLOWS, MATTRESS COVERS.**

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

Place items in a clear bag which are available from the  
Church Porch

These bags will be collected Wednesday 1st July and  
in return the church will receive up to £400 a tonne.

For more information contact  
Cheryl Robins 01474 822861



**Crosswords Clues - Answers at back**

**Across**

1 'Therefore let us — passing judgment on one another' (Romans 14:13) (4)

3 'I — — these persons here present' (Marriage service) (4,4)

9 According to a prearranged timetable (Numbers 28:3) (7)

10 Group of eight (5)

11 The cell into which the Philippian jailer put Paul and Silas (Acts 16:24) (5)

12 — Taylor, pioneer missionary to China (6)

14 Otherwise known as the Eucharist, Breaking of Bread, the Lord's Table (4,9)

17 'So that after I have preached to others, I — will not be disqualified for the prize' (1

Corinthians 9:27) (6)

19 Attend to (3,2)

22 Approximately (Acts 4:4) (5)

23 Tea rite (anag.) (7)

24 Rule of sovereign (8)

25 Test (anag.) (4)

**Down**

- 1 The name of the street where Judas lived in Damascus and where Saul of Tarsus stayed (Acts 9:11) (8)
- 2 ‘The playing of the merry — , sweet singing in the choir’ (5)
- 4 ‘We have been saying that — — was credited to him as righteous’ (Romans 4:9) (8,5)
- 5 Dr Martyn — Jones, famous for his ministry at Westminster Chapel (5)
- 6 Port at which Paul landed on his way to Rome (Acts 28:13) (7)

- 7 Observe (Ruth 3:4) (4)
- 8 Minister of religion (6)
- 13 ‘I am — of this man’s blood. It is your responsibility’ (Matthew 27:24) (8)
- 15 ‘Greater love has no one than this, that he — — his life for his friends’ (John 15:13) (3,4)
- 16 Archbishop who calculated that the world began in 4004BC (6)
- 18 ‘No one can — the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit’ (John 3:5) (5)
- 20 Establish by law (5)

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

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Solution at the back

## SMILE LINES

### Why Jesus walked on water

A tourist, planning a trip to the Holy Land, was aghast when he found it would cost £50 an hour to rent a boat on the Sea of Galilee. "Goodness," he objected to the travel agent. "In England it would not have been more than £20."

"That might be true," said the travel agent, "but you have to take into account that the Sea of Galilee is water on which our Lord Himself walked."

"Well, at £50 an hour for a boat," said the tourist, "it's no wonder He walked."

\*\*

### Incomplete

I'm not a complete idiot. Some parts are missing.

\*\*

### Rings

They have Dial-a-Prayer for atheists now - you call up and it rings and rings but nobody answers.

\*\*

### Good and kind

The retiring sidesman was instructing his youthful successor in his Sunday morning duties. "And remember, my boy," he said, "that we have nothing but good, kind Christians in this church – until you try to put someone else in their pew."

\*\*

### Asleep

A young man fell asleep in the Sunday morning service, and soon began to snore. The preacher stopped and impatiently motioned to the young boy beside the man to wake him up. The boy said: "Wake him up yourself, you put him to sleep."

\*\*

### Meow

"What is your kitty's name, James?" asked the visitor.

"Ben Hur," said James.

"That's a funny name for a cat. Why did you name it that?"

"Well, we just called him Ben - until he had kittens."

\*\*\*

## **Parental excuses**

These are actual 'excuse notes' from parents excusing their children from missing school (includes original spelling):

~ My son is under a doctor's care and should not take P.E. today. Please execute him.

~ Please excuse Lisa for being absent. She was sick and I had her shot.

~ Dear School: Please excuse John being absent on Jan. 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, and also 33.

~ Please excuse Roland from P.E. for a few days. Yesterday he fell out of a tree and misplaced his hip.

~ John has been absent because he had two teeth taken out of his face.

~ Carlos was absent yesterday because he was playing football. He was hurt in the growing part.

~ Megan could not come to school today because she has been bothered by very close veins.

~ Chris will not be in school cus he has an acre in his side.

~ Please excuse Ray Friday from school. He has very loose vowels.

~ Please excuse Tommy for being absent yesterday. He had diarrhea and his boots leak.

~ Irving was absent yesterday because he missed his bust.

~ Please excuse Jimmy for being. It was his father's fault.

~ I kept Billie home because she had to go Christmas shopping because I don't know what size she wear.

~ Please excuse Jennifer for missing school yesterday. We forgot to get the Sunday paper off the porch, and when we found it Monday, we thought it was Sunday.

~ Sally won't be in school a week from Friday. We have to attend her funeral.

~ Please excuse Jason for being absent yesterday. He had a cold and could not breed well.

*Source: Parish Pump*

The next collection-is Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May

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

- ✓ **Tinned ham & corned beef**
- ✓ **Meals in tins - ravioli, chilli con carne, curry**
- ✓ **Tinned potatoes & smash**
- ✓ **Instant packets of noodles**
- ✓ **UHT whole and semi skimmed milk**
- ✓ **Small bags of white rice**

Also required:

- Meat pies
- Tin macaroni cheese
- Tin spaghetti and sausages tinned custard
- Tinned potatoes
- Juice and squash
- Tinned vegetables
- Instant packets of cous cous
- Spreads – jam and peanut butter marmite
- Packet soup
- Vegetarian foods

- Tinned rice pudding**
- ✓ **Cereal bars**
- ✓ **Small bottles of washing up liquid**
- ✓ **Shower gel, men & women's deodorant**
- ✓ **Bio laundry tablets**

- Coffee, tea, hot chocolate, sugar.
- Jars of pasta sauce
- Cereals, sweet & chocolate biscuits
- Tinned fruit, sponge puddings,
- 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

**Thank You very much for your support**

Gravesham Foodbank hosted by RCGG Life Start

Connections & supported by Gravesham Churches Together

Registered charity number 1135341 Registered in England & Wales

graveshamfoodbank@gmail.com

[www.gravesham.foodbank.org.uk](http://www.gravesham.foodbank.org.uk)



Solutions:

S	T	O	P		C	A	L	L	U	P	O	N
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	M	Y	S	E	L	F		S	E	E	T	O
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4	7	5	2	9	1	8	6	3
1	8	6	4	3	5	7	9	2
3	9	2	7	8	6	4	5	1

Source: Parish Pump