

**DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 25th JULY 2010**

**✕ SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY (C) ✕**

|               |                        |         |                                       |
|---------------|------------------------|---------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Sun 25</b> | Saturday               | 6.30pm  | ✕ Vigil Mass: Theresa Lawson RIP      |
|               | Sunday                 | 9.30am  | ✕ Mass: Pro Populo                    |
|               |                        | 11.00am | ✕ Mass: Barry and Thelma Hodgeman RIP |
| <b>Mon 26</b> | St Joachim and St Anne | 9.45am  | <i>Morning Prayer</i>                 |
|               |                        | 10.00am | ✕ Mass: The Bishop Family             |
| <b>Tue 27</b> | Feria                  | 9.45am  | <i>Morning Prayer</i>                 |
|               |                        | 10.00am | ✕ Mass: In Thanksgiving               |
| <b>Wed 28</b> | Feria                  | 9.45am  | <i>Morning Prayer</i>                 |
|               |                        | 10.00am | ✕ Mass: Angiolina Fantetti RIP        |
| <b>Thu 29</b> | St Martha              | 7.00am  | ✕ Mass: In Thanksgiving               |
| <b>Fri 30</b> | Feria                  | 9.45am  | <i>Morning Prayer</i>                 |
|               |                        | 10.00am | ✕ Mass: Angiolina Santullo            |
| <b>Sat 31</b> | St Ignatius of Loyola  | 10.00am | ✕ Mass: Kevin O'Brien                 |
|               |                        | 10.30am | <i>Confessions</i>                    |
|               |                        | 11.30am | <i>Baptism of John Alvin Robert</i>   |

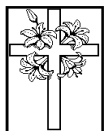
**✕ EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY (C) ✕**

|                       |          |         |  |
|-----------------------|----------|---------|--|
| <b>Sun 1st August</b> | Saturday | 6.30pm  | ✕ Vigil Mass: Mary Mahoney RIP                                     |
|                       | Sunday   | 9.30am  | ✕ Mass: Pro Populo   |
|                       |          | 11.00am | ✕ Mass: Charles and Lucia Swan<br><i>Baptism of Reuben Atimomo</i> |
|                       |          | 4.00pm  | <i>Rosary and Benediction</i>                                      |

Please pray for Joyce Hector, recently dead; and for the following whose anniversaries occur this week:

David Thomas, Richard Burgess, Giovanni De Fazio, Margaret Finlayson, Nora Percival, Baby Micky Docherty, Agnes Starck, Alma Wilkie, James Fertnig, Sarah Southey, Patrick Murphy, Norah Harris, Maureen Drake and Domenico Vella.

*May their souls and the souls of all the ✕ faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.*



# OUR LADY of GILLINGHAM

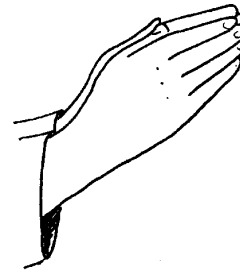


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 Parish Priest Fr Geoffrey Pointer  
 Parish Deacon Rev Michael Knight [574404]  
 Hospital Chaplain Fr James Clark [830000]

25th July 2010

Registered Charity 235468

**✕ SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY (C) ✕**



**WORD OF GOD**

Once Jesus was in a certain place praying, and when he had finished, one of his disciples said, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples".

*(Luke 11:1)*

**WORD FOR TODAY**

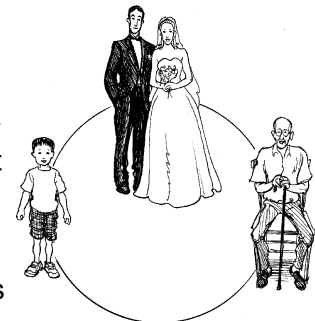
Prayer is our lifeline with God. Not to pray means that we have a weak relationship, looking on from the sidelines rather than being at the heart of things. If we never visited, wrote to, phoned, emailed or texted our friends we would lose them...

**DAY FOR LIFE (25th July)**

On the fourth Sunday of July each year we celebrate the Day for Life and recall our duty and efforts to support human life from womb to tomb. Leaflets explaining this year's theme are available at the back of church.

To help us recognise the sacredness of life at each of its stages, and as it leads to eternal life, here are some words from Pope John Paul II:

"Men and women are called to a fullness of life which far exceeds the dimensions of their earthly existence, because it consists in sharing the very life of God. The loftiness of this supernatural vocation reveals the greatness and the inestimable value of human life even in its temporal phase. Life in time, in fact, is the fundamental condition, the initial stage and an integral part of the entire unified process of human existence. It is a process which, unexpectedly and undeservedly, is enlightened by the promise and renewed by the gift of divine life, which will reach its full realisation in eternity. At the same time, it is precisely this supernatural calling which highlights the relative character of each individual's earthly life. After all, life on earth is not an "ultimate" but a "penultimate" reality; even so, it remains a sacred reality entrusted to us, to be preserved with a sense of responsibility and brought to perfection in love and in the gift of ourselves to God and to our brothers and sisters."



## AROUND the PARISH

**CONGRATULATIONS** to James Cardwell and William (Sonny) Dolan, enrolled last Sunday as altar servers into the Guild of St Stephen. We encourage those who serve regularly and who have not been enrolled to ask to be admitted into the Guild. Those who are in the Guild and who proudly wear their medals are reminded of the promises they made: • to serve regularly particularly when they are needed; • to serve with reverence and greater understanding of what they are doing. A little reminder, especially during the school holidays, that Mass is celebrated every day in our church and servers are needed during the week as well.

**YOUNG PARISHIONERS** The Children's Liturgy at 9.30 Mass is closed for the summer break. We begin again on 5th September.

**SCHOOLS** As our schools break up for the summer we would like to thank all of the teachers, staff and helpers who work so hard to ensure that our children receive a first class education, as well as a good grounding in the Catholic Faith. Our best wishes go to all of Year Six from St Mary's who move on to their secondary schools in September, and all the leavers at St John Fisher who take up their further education places or enter the world of work.

**FRIDAY MASS** Since moving the First Friday Mass to the evening the numbers attending have dropped by over a half. It was hoped that making this move once a month would give more people a chance to come to Mass; this seems not to have been the case. In view of this, Mass on the first Friday of the month will revert to its morning schedule from August. Sorry it didn't work out.

**ANNUAL TRIP to JOSS BAY** This great day for the whole family will be on

Sunday 8th August this year, the coach will leave after the 9.30 Mass. The cost for adults is £6, and £3 for children under 15 years. To book please phone John Formosa on 573378.

## AROUND the DIOCESE and BEYOND

**CAFOD SUPPORTERS' DAY** 11th September from 10am to 2.30pm in the Amigo Hall (on the right hand side of the main door of St George's Cathedral). A day when CAFOD supporters can hear first-hand accounts of the work which is being done in Rwanda. Coffee, tea and soft drinks will be provided but bring your own packed lunch. See the notice in the porch or email [Southwark@cafod.org.uk](mailto:Southwark@cafod.org.uk).

**DIOCESAN LOURDES PILGRIMAGE** All are invited to join the Annual Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes from 20th to 27th August. Travel by rail from £630, by air from £680 or by coach from £465. Young helpers' fare (by coach) £455. For further information and booking forms contact: Deacon Michael Kennedy (Pilgrimage Director) 4 Orbel Street, Battersea, London, SW11 3NZ, [rcaspilgrim@btinter-net.com](mailto:rcaspilgrim@btinter-net.com), tel. 07521 519482.

**THE VISIT of POPE BENEDICT** Take with you a copy of the leaflet produced in conjunction with the Bishops' Conferences of England and Wales, and that of Scotland. It is intended to give as much background information as possible about the visit of the Holy Father to this country in September. For more information have a look at the Papal Website ([www.thepapalvisit.org.uk](http://www.thepapalvisit.org.uk)) which has been especially created to promote, support and provide information about the Holy Father's visit. ♦ Our Diocese, along with all the others, has been invited to travel to the main events: the Hyde Park Prayer Vigil on

Saturday 18th September in the afternoon and the Beatification Mass in Birmingham on Sunday 19th September. We need someone to organize the parish bookings and travel. If anyone is interested please see Fr Geoffrey who has just received all the details.

**FAITH IN FOCUS: JACKPOT PRAYER?** A woman who was on a diet came into work with a huge chocolate cream cake. When her friends asked if she had stopped dieting she told them that God wanted her to have the cake. "I saw it in the bakery and prayed to God to let there be a parking spot outside, if he wanted me to have the cake. And on the 10th time round, there was the parking place!" Prayer is a strange thing. Some people feel the need to tell God a shopping list of things that they want, as if he didn't already know what they need! And often we ourselves don't realise what we really need and we pray for things that we think will make life better, but which everyone else knows will be our ruin. The same happens when an alcoholic prays for a bottle of whisky. There are those who tend to think that prayer is like a religious fruit machine, a divine one-arm-bandit. You put your request in, pull the handle and eventually you hit the jackpot. Of course, this would be to treat God like some sort of robot that did not have our welfare at heart. It's the sort of prayer that people make to win the lottery. So it's hardly surprising that people talk about unanswered prayer. The very thought that God would completely ignore us when we turn to him is ridiculous. But scripture tells us that sometimes we are asking for the wrong thing or with the wrong motives and that's why we don't receive what we want. Prayer is always answered; it's just that sometimes the answer is "no", or it comes in a way we

didn't expect. When we look at the prayer that Jesus taught us, the Our Father or the Lord's Prayer, we notice that there is a lot of emphasis at the beginning on God's will being done in all things, and the values of God's kingdom permeating our thoughts and actions. Maybe if we remained open in our prayer, telling God of our needs and desires, but asking him to help us become conformed to his will, then we would start to change our approach to prayer, wanting to be part of God's plan rather than getting him to change his plans to suit ours. Prayer would become a request to change us. And maybe that's why we have to wait until the second half of the Our Father before we get round to asking for things...

**ATTENDANCE** We welcomed **381** people at church last weekend and received **£622.80** in the offertory; thank you. Last Saturday's Quiz Night raised **£220** for the Building Fund; our thanks to the organisers. This fund also received **£220** in donations, and a further **£187** was received from those attending Mass at the hospital towards funding the Papal visit. ♦ Our thanks to all those who have Git Aid envelopes; we have just received a very useful **£6,222.50** in refunds from HM Revenue and Customs, along with **£421.83** in recycling credits from Medway Council. ♦ This Sunday is nominated by the Bishops' Conference as a **Day for Life**, and is dedicated to raising awareness about the meaning and value of human life at every stage and in every condition. There is a **retiring collection** this week to assist the work of the Anscombe Bioethics Centre (formerly the Linacre Centre for Healthcare Ethics) and other life-related activities supported by the Church. Envelopes are available and please pick up a leaflet to guide you in prayer today.