

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 17th January 2010

✘ SECOND SUNDAY (C) ✘

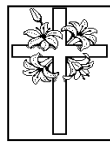
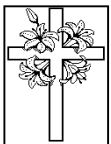
Sun 17	Saturday	6.30pm	✘ Vigil Mass: Halina Barbra and Viniare Welk
	Sunday	9.30am	✘ Mass: For Humphrey's Intention
		11.00am	✘ Mass: Pro Populo
		4.00pm	✘ Mass for the Malayalam Community
Mon 18	Feria	9.45am	<i>Morning Prayer</i>
		10.00am	✘ Mass: Intention of Weller Family
Tue 19	Feria	9.45am	<i>Morning Prayer</i>
		10.00am	✘ Mass: Eugenio Grosso RIP
Wed 20	Feria	9.45am	<i>Morning Prayer</i>
		10.00am	✘ Mass: Ben De Souza RIP
Thu 21	St Agnes	7.00am	✘ Mass: Antonietta Simone
Fri 22	Feria	9.45am	<i>Morning Prayer</i>
		10.00am	✘ Mass: Mary Ann Regan RIP
Sat 23	Our Lady	10.00am	✘ Mass: Thomas Macken RIP
		10.30am	<i>Confessions and Exposition</i>

✘ THIRD SUNDAY (C) ✘

Sun 24	Saturday	6.30pm	✘ Vigil Mass: Jean Hartnett RIP
	Sunday	9.30am	✘ Mass: Pro Populo
		11.00am	✘ Mass: Family and Loved Ones of Mrs Smith

Please pray for the repose of the souls of the following, whose anniversaries occur this week:

Brian Ross, Eileen Thorlby, Bernard Moore, Rose Smyth, Jacqueline Hunt, Phyllis Gay, William Waller, Emily Harte, Violet Cook, Emanuella Psaila, John Sleator, Susan Dalrymple, Rosemary McCarthy, Michael Dickinson, William Gavin, Dino Grancevola and Leonard Charrington.



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 Deacon Rev Michael Knight [574404]
 Hospital Chaplain Fr James Clark [830000]

— Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark - Registered Charity 235468 —

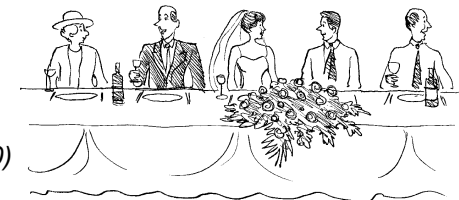
17th January 2010

✘ SECOND SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME (C) ✘

WORD of GOD

People generally serve the best wine first and keep the cheaper sort till the guests have had plenty to drink; but you have kept the best wine till now.

(John 2:10)



WORD for TODAY

It's something of an indictment that society often views Christians as stuffed shirts, as kill-joys who look with suspicion on anyone who is having a good time. The marriage at Cana ought to remind us that celebration is at the heart of our faith, a faith whose very lifeblood is eating and drinking, singing and dancing.

HAITI EARTHQUAKE We have received the following letter from CAFOD in response to the tragedy in Haiti:

"As you know, people are removing rubble with their bare hands to find survivors in Haiti, where a massive earthquake measuring 7.0 on the Richter scale has devastated the capital. We fear that more than three million people could be in need of shelter, food, clean drinking water and medicine. We know that you will be concerned about the people affected by this disaster and will want to do what you can to help. Because the need is so urgent, we would like you to hold a special collection in your parish this weekend for the CAFOD Haiti Earthquake Appeal."

There will be a retiring collection to help CAFOD's efforts in rescuing and caring for people. Please be generous in your support. Thank you.



AROUND the PARISH

WELCOME This weekend we welcome Fr Paul from India. He joins us as Fr Geoffrey takes his post-Christmas break. We hope he enjoys his stay and quickly adjusts himself to the weather.

TABLE SALE Thank you to all those who came into our table sale after Mass last Sunday. We will be holding the sale again this weekend (with some fresh items) so if you didn't get into the hall last week please do drop in today.

PARISH CENSUS We hope to be conducting a census over the coming weeks, once the weather has settled down.

ROADWORKS You will have noticed the roadworks on Railway Street across the bridge. This is to raise the kerb and stop vehicles mounting the pavements. The work is being carried out as a safety measure for the many school children using that footpath, and is expected to last for around four weeks. Should you wish to make comment to the council about these works the phone number is 01634 333333.

YEAR of PRIESTHOOD For the remainder of this year for priests (which concludes on the Feast of the Sacred Heart, 11th June 2010) we shall be exposing the Blessed Sacrament on most Saturdays after the morning Mass for the duration of Confessions. There are prayer lists for priests on the windowsills in the porch. Please take one, and also a list of the priests in the Diocese.

VACANCY St Mary's School has a vacancy for a cleaner. See the notice in the porch.

AROUND the DIOCESE and BEYOND

CHRISTIAN UNITY OCTAVE (18th-25th January) The following prayer is one that has been suggested for us to

use during the Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity 2010:

Take us from where we are, to where you want us to be; make us not merely guardians of a heritage, but living signs of your coming Kingdom; fire us with passion for justice and peace between all people; fill us with that faith, hope and love which embody the Gospel; and through the power of the Holy Spirit make us one. That the world may believe, that your name may be enthroned in our nation, that your Church may more effectively be your body, we commit ourselves to love you, serve you, and follow you as pilgrims not strangers.

A DAY WITH MARY We have received notices of the various *Day with Mary* events for this year, together with a poster of the various pilgrimages. These are displayed on the noticeboards in the porch. The next *Day with Mary* is Saturday 30th January at St Osmund, Castelnau, London SW13. For further details the poster is in the porch.

PARTNERS IN MINISTRY The Christian Education Centre in Totting Bec are running a variety of courses and celebrations during the year, both in London and at Aylesford. There is a poster on the noticeboard detailing the various activities, and also individual notices with more details.

RITE OF ELECTION For all those wishing to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church there will be a service at St George's Cathedral on Saturday 20th February. There will be a preview evening on 9th February at The Hermitage, West Malling. Details on the notice board in the porch. Please contact Deacon Michael if you wish to attend.

MARRIAGE 2010 There will be mar-

riage preparation courses on Sunday March 7th, Sunday 9th May and Sunday 6th June, all provided by Marriage Care. The cost of the course is £55, and details and an application form are available from Fr Geoffrey.

FAITH IN FOCUS: AN ALL-SINGING ALL DANCING SAVIOUR Someone once said that the definition of a Puritan is a person who has a constant nagging feeling that someone, somewhere, is enjoying themselves! We laugh, but actually it's quite easy to be taken for a Puritan when in fact you're simply a Christian. That's because we Christians have sometimes allowed ourselves to be painted into a corner where we're thought of as stuffed shirts or kill-joys. Rightly or wrongly we've taken on the image of censorious people who view pleasure with suspicion and whose first words are usually "Thou shalt not..." rather than "Oh, that looks good; can I have a go?" Why should we be thought of as disapproving when our saviour was quite clearly at home eating and drinking, singing and dancing? Why should we want to reduce the glorious Middle Eastern nuptial festivity to a grape-juice Temperance affair? Could it be because at heart we find it hard to believe fully in the incarnation? Yes, we accept that God took flesh in the person of the baby Jesus. But to accept that Jesus was identical to us in that he enjoyed a good day out, singing and dancing, eating and drinking...? Are we going too far here? Are we uncomfortable thinking that Jesus actually provided more wine when the guests had already quaffed what the family had provided? Wasn't that a bit irresponsible, encouraging alcoholism perhaps? Are we put off by the tone of voice that Jesus uses for his mother, something

that only a son would be allowed to get away with, something that demonstrated familiarity and mutual understanding? Once God became a human being there was nothing about our human nature that was left unredeemed. The incarnation means that by becoming a man Jesus shows us how to become fully human. Jesus is God's way to be a man, God's way to be a woman. Sometimes we need to open our eyes wide to the good things that God has put around us. We need to thank God for the wonder of life and love, for the many gifts that bless our rising and resting. Sometimes we need to take off our hair shirts, to set aside our dictionary of disapproval and simply take pleasure in what God wants us to enjoy. Why drink only water when your God wants to give you wine?

ATTENDANCE Last weekend, unsurprisingly, Mass attendance was well down due to the condition of roads and pavements after the snow. We received **£377.66** in the offertory collection, and there was a donation of **£10** towards the building fund. Thank you. Recycling of newspapers etc. has paid us **£50.80** from Smurfit Kappa. **This Sunday** there will be a retiring collection in response to the earthquake in Haiti. The money will go to CAFOD to help look after those affected. Please give generously. This Sunday is also Peace Sunday. The theme this year is "If you want to cultivate peace, protect creation". As the Catholic Movement for peace in England and Wales, *Pax Christi* relies on our support to continue its work of peacemaking. **The voluntary collection** that was scheduled to take place this weekend has now been moved to next weekend, owing to the CAFOD earthquake appeal.