



Parish of Our Lady Help of Christians & St Lawrence

39-41 West Street, Olney MK46 5HH

**Diocese of Northampton**

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22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2022 Psalter Week 2	Sixth Sunday of Easter	
First Reading	<b>Acts of the Apostles 15:1-2. 22-29</b> <i>It has been decided by the Holy Spirit and by ourselves not to saddle you with any burden beyond these essentials.</i>	
Responsorial Psalm	<b>Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you.</b>	
Second Reading	<b>Apocalypse 21:10-14. 22-23</b> <i>He showed me the holy city coming down out of heaven.</i>	
Gospel Acclamation	<b>Alleluia, alleluia! Jesus said: 'If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him.'</b> <b>Alleluia!</b>	
Gospel	<b>John 14:23-29</b> <i>The Holy Spirit will remind you of all I have said to you.</i>	
Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> May +	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Vigil Mass – (David Beadle RIP)</b>
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> May +	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Mass – (Harris Family Int.)</b>
Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> May <i>Feria</i>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Mass – (Bridget Robbins Int.)</b>
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> May <b>PATRONAL SOLEMNITY OF OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>Mass – (Bernie Wogan RIP)</b>
Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> May <b>St Bede the Venerable, Priest &amp; Doctor – mem.</b>		<b>No Parish Mass today</b>
Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup> May <b>ASCENSION OF THE LORD – Solemnity</b>	<b>10.00am</b> <b>7.00pm</b>	<b>Mass – (Rix family Int. + J &amp; J Palmer RIP)</b> <b>Mass – (For the Parish)</b>
Friday – 27 <sup>th</sup> May <b>ST AUGUSTINE, Apostle of England - Feast</b>	<b>9.15am</b> <b>10.00am</b>	<b>Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament</b> <b>Mass – (Malcom Saw RIP)</b>
Saturday – 28 <sup>th</sup> May <i>Feria</i>	<b>10.00am</b> <b>10.30am</b>	<b>Mass (Samantha Jess Int.)</b> <b>Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament</b>
<b>SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER</b>		
Saturday – 28 <sup>th</sup> May+	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Vigil Mass – (For the Parish)</b>
Sunday – 29 <sup>th</sup> May+	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Mass – (Michael Tarrant RIP)</b>

**There will be a Second Collection next weekend for 'Catholic Use of the Media'**



## Platinum Jubilee Celebration

As you will know, this year Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II will be celebrating her Platinum Jubilee. To mark this very special occasion, we invite parishioners to join us for tea/coffee & cake after the **Sunday morning Mass on 5<sup>th</sup> June** (Pentecost Sunday). If you would like to offer your help then please contact **Áine Cooper on 07714 347880**.



## Amazing Grace 250

The opening weekend of events and activities celebrating the 250th year of John Newton's penning of Amazing Grace here in Olney, begins on Friday 15th July.

On **Friday 15th July**, the Open University hosts the first day of its two-day Amazing Grace conference at the Open University in Milton Keynes. It will include talks and discussion based on papers from academics across the world. Amazing Grace is one of the world's most recorded songs/hymns. It is sung all over the world and has many different meanings for its 21st century listeners and performers.

On **Saturday 16th July**, in conjunction with the Open University & Olney Parish Church where Newton first spoke the words of Amazing Grace as part of his 1773 New Year's Day sermon, will host a day of talks and a panel discussion open to all in the community. Leading experts, Professor Bruce Hindmarsh from Canada and Professor Anthony Reddie from the UK will deliver talks. The afternoon panel, chaired by the Rev Jonathan Aitken \*(author of the seminal book on John Newton 'From Disgrace to Amazing Grace') will be joined by an illustrious discussion panel including Bishop Rose Wilkin-Hudson, Bishop of Dover, previously chaplain to the House of Commons. There will also be a short piano recital.

Tickets are now **FREE** for both conferences as additional funding has been made available by the Open University on the following link:

<https://fass.open.ac.uk/research/conferences/amazing-grace>

On **Sunday 17th July at 7.30pm** the opening concert of AG 250 will take place at the parish church of St Peter and Paul, Olney. This community focused concert, organised by the church will include Olney Brass and will provide the first opportunity to hear the new 'Sweet Sound' Gospel Choir formed as a legacy of AG250. Arrangements are being finalised over the next two weeks and it is very much hoped that a Combined Choir representing the four churches of Olney will also participate. Tickets are expected to be on sale from the beginning of June.

**IMPORTANT** – if you wish to contact Denise by email, please only use the following address:

[ourladyolney@btconnect.com](mailto:ourladyolney@btconnect.com)



## Spring Plenary 2022 Resolution

*An invitation from the Bishops of England and Wales*

### **This is the bread come down from heaven (John 6:58)**

A beautiful hallmark of the Catholic faith is the profound desire to participate in the Holy Mass and share in the Eucharist. We do so with deep gratitude and joy. The Eucharist gives the Church her identity – “The Eucharist makes the Church, and the Church makes the Eucharist.” It enables us to worship Almighty God, to support each other on our journey of faith, and to be a visible sign of faith in the world. This hallmark is supported and strengthened by the precept that our fundamental Christian duty is to worship God by participating in the celebration of Mass. Attending Mass on Sundays and Holy Days is the greatest of all privileges, sometimes referred to as “the Sunday Obligation.”

Since the beginning of the Covid pandemic, until the present time, we have shared with you our judgment that the situation of the last two years has meant that the Sunday Obligation has been impeded and has needed to be fulfilled in other ways. We thank God that this situation has now changed. The pressing challenges of the pandemic have lessened significantly. Most people have resumed the wide range of normal activities, no longer restricted by the previous Covid measures. We therefore believe that the reasons which have prevented Catholics from attending Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation no longer apply.

We understand there will still be some members of our congregations who, for reasons of health, do not feel safe enough to return to Mass. It has always been the understanding of the Church that when the freedom of any Catholic to attend Mass in person is impeded for a serious reason, because of situations such as ill health, care for the sick or legitimate fear, this is not a breach of the Sunday Obligation.

Our Catholic people and parishes have benefitted during these difficult times from the online streaming of Mass and other services. “Virtual viewing” of Mass online does not fulfil the Sunday Obligation. It may, however, be a source of continual spiritual comfort to those who cannot attend Mass in person, for example those who are elderly and sick, for whom the obligation does not apply. In this context, we recognise gratefully the ministry of those who administer Holy Communion to the elderly, sick and housebound.

We are grateful to our clergy, religious and lay faithful who have served our parishes, schools and communities with dedication and distinction throughout this pandemic. Now we look forward with renewed faith and confidence.

In the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the Lord’s Supper, the Lord Jesus entrusted to us the precious gift of Himself. With humility, we glory in being a Eucharistic people for whom attendance at Mass is essential. Looking forward to the forthcoming feast of Pentecost, we now invite all Catholics who have not yet done so to return to attending Mass in person.

As the Church needs the witness of the presence of each person, so too each believer needs to journey in faith and worship with their fellow disciples. Nourished by our encounter with the Risen Lord Jesus, fed with His Word and His Body and Blood in Holy Communion, and supported by the presence of each other, we receive strength week by week, to serve the Lord and glorify Him with our lives.

*Approved by the Plenary Assembly of the Bishops’ Conference  
Friday 6 May 2022*

## Reflection on the Solemnity of The Ascension



This coming Thursday, the Church will be celebrating the Solemnity of The Ascension - the ascent of Jesus Christ into heaven on the 40th day after his resurrection. The Feast of the Ascension ranks with Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost in the universality of its observance among Christians and has been celebrated 40 days after Easter in both Eastern and Western Christianity since the 4th century. Prior to that time, the Ascension was commemorated as a part of the celebration of the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

Just before the passion and suffering of Jesus, his friends and followers witnessed him being betrayed, denied and condemned. They stood at a distance and watched him die a very public and humiliating death – some of them even deserted him. When they were told by some of the others that they had seen the Lord, they refused to believe them; they doubted. Eventually, after seeing the risen Lord for themselves several times, they believed that he had indeed risen from the dead. And now Jesus is preparing them for his departure and his return to heaven. The disciples thought they had lost Jesus once when he died, now they have to face the reality of life without him again – Jesus is leaving them – but he is not leaving them alone; he is not deserting or abandoning them. The reality is that he is going to be with them in a very personal and intimate way. In the Gospels, Jesus told his followers that he would give them another Advocate to be with them forever; *“The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all that I have said to you.”* John 14:26

Before Jesus takes his leave of them, he passes on and entrusts them with the responsibility of carrying on his mission of proclaiming the Good News of the Gospel and of establishing the Kingdom of God. This ordinary group of men and women are the ones who were chosen by Jesus to be heralds and witnesses of the resurrection. Through their words and actions, the world will know that Jesus is alive and more alive and present than ever he was. As the earthly life of Jesus ends, theirs and our mission and ministry begins.

Today that responsibility now belongs to us. The first friends and followers of Jesus are our ancestors and we are their descendants. It is now up to each of us in our way to carry on the mission and ministry of Jesus. Through us today, the world will know that Jesus is alive, present and active in our world. As Pope Francis says to each of us *“every Christian is a missionary to the extent that they have experienced the love of God in Jesus.”*

Even as we celebrate the solemnity of The Ascension, it is most important that we understand and believe that Jesus has not left, deserted or abandoned us. He is with us when we are able to gather together at the celebration of Mass; he is with us when we reach out to support one another with our love; he is with us in both the good times and bad times in our lives. As he tells us in the Gospel, *“Go therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And know that I am with you always, yes, to the end of time.”* Matthew 28:19-20

May Our Lady, Help of Christians, Our Lady of Peace, St Joseph, St Lawrence, St John Henry Newman, St Rita, St Edmund, St Bede, St Augustine, pray for us all as we continue to bask in the joys of Easter.

With our love and prayers, Fr David and Deacon Peter