

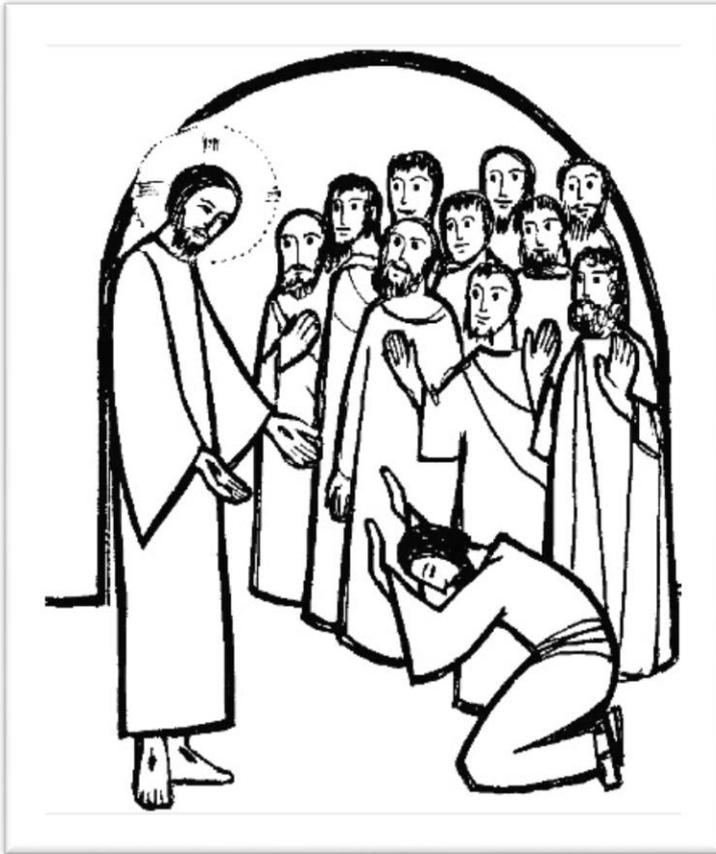
# ParishNews



**Blessed Sacrament Parish Heavitree Exeter**

**19 April 2020. Second Sunday of Easter, Divine Mercy Sunday. Year A**

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## Eight days later, he came among them

We often forget that Easter is not just a day, but a season – the longest in the Church's year, in fact! We are given fifty glorious days of Spring and Summer to prolong our baptismal joy, fifty glorious days of basking in the light of the risen Saviour. It seems a shame that after the efforts we put into Lent we don't celebrate Eastertide with the same enthusiasm.

The readings of this Season have their origins in the instruction given to the newly baptised in the early Church: in Lent, the readings were the basis of catechesis on the forthcoming baptism; in Easter the readings are 'Mystagogy' - a type of teaching where the newly baptised ('neophytes') learn through taking part in the

celebration of the sacraments and hearing the word. On the Sundays we hear who Jesus is, and on weekdays hear about Baptism and the Eucharist. This 'Mystagogy' is not just to nourish the neophytes, but to help all of us deepen our life in the risen Lord Jesus. This Sunday we are with the disciples in the Upper Room, where eight days after the Resurrection Jesus comes among them - as he comes among us.

## Alleluia! He is Risen! Happy Easter!

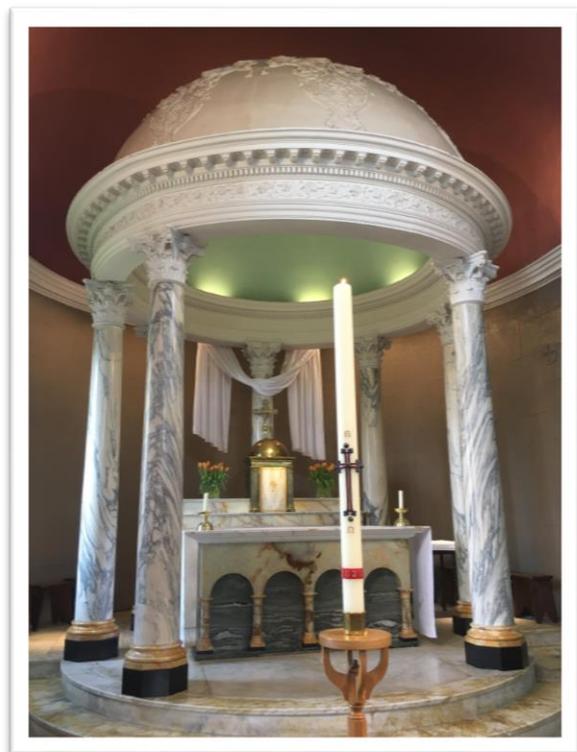
It's been so strange not to be able to greet you as you arrive at or leave church these last days, but I greet you now with the same enthusiasm I would if we were face to face! Happy Easter! Alleluia! I hope and pray that you were able to celebrate in some way as individuals or families, that you were able to make last Sunday a very special day.

Thank you for the many greetings I have received; cards, emails, telephone messages, even the odd bottle of dry white wine! It's been heartening and humbling and makes a huge difference.

None of us have experienced an Easter like it. Celebrating the services of the Triduum was a real challenge. I've never really celebrated Mass on my own before let alone the Triduum. The Missal doesn't have an option for the priest to celebrate alone, Mass is a community activity, the worship of the people, so the Church always expects a congregation, however small, even if it's just the priest and a server. So celebrating the Mass of the Lord's Supper, the Good Friday celebration of the Passion and then the Easter Vigil on my own is something I never want to have to do again!

The thing that brought me comfort was the knowledge that, in fact I wasn't alone. Yes, I was the only

person in the church at the time, but knowing that you were at home, joining in prayer and worship, gave me the courage and strength to carry on. Praying for you all and drawing you into the celebration spiritually was a privilege. It's a privilege I recognise every time I celebrate Mass (whether you're there or not!). I am praying for you all daily and I know you are praying for me.



I'm conscious too of course when I celebrate Mass and say my prayers of those who continue to be caught up in this terrible situation with the Coronavirus; conscious of so many of you in the parish who work caring for those who are sick, vulnerable, elderly and alone. With the church being so close to the hospital it is impossible to forget the dedication and selfless devotion of our nurses, doctors, cleaners, paramedics and support workers who are offering themselves to help others. May you all be richly blessed and kept safe. And may the Lord send his strength and grace to all who are sick, not just those suffering from the virus but all in our community who are struggling today.

And of course there are so many others whose work allows us to continue in some way with our lives, you know who you are and we are grateful. What would we do without you.

I mentioned in the last newsletter that I had placed the large crucifix in our church on the steps of the sanctuary

the day the church was closed. It had been the focus of my prayer in the last days of Lent. That has now been replaced by flowers adorning the altar and a white cloth draped from the cupola signifying the cloth which wrapped the body of Jesus – often symbolically placed on an empty cross. Jesus is risen. He is the hope that fills our hearts this Eastertide. He is the Good News who brings us life.

When he entered the upper room where the disciples were, isolated and hidden, frightened and alone, Jesus uttered the words which have resonated across the ages: "Peace be with you". He offered them the Holy Spirit and told Thomas to believe. Thomas uttered in astonishment "My Lord and my God".

May the Peace of the Lord be with you all this week, May our faith be strengthened so that we may all acclaim Jesus as Our Lord and Our God. Alleluia!

God bless you all. *Fr Jonathan.*

## Bishop Mark - "Our Shared Vulnerability; thoughts on Coronavirus"

Radio Devon, Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

I have often thought that shared vulnerability unites us more than shared strength. This is certainly so during this pandemic. We are all either infected or affected. Of that there is no doubt. We're all more aware of our own mortality. We all worry for elderly relatives or the medically compromised in our families. We find it hard not to be physically in the company of our friends and those we love. The tender care of the great band of carers is something we celebrate and cheer for, as if they were sports heroes or famous celebrities. And rightly so. Walking on the street for exercise or queuing for essential shopping, we all feel rather awkward as we observe the social distancing that is necessary. Stepping into the street, to keep the required two meters apart, we discover strangers smiling as we greet one another. I hope some of this isn't lost when we eventually come through this crisis. There is a shared solidarity, a recognition of our common humanity that highlights the best of us. We are entering the most important week of the year, at least for Christians. A time when we remember that God entered fully into our human vulnerability. In Jesus, He knew what it was to shed tears for a loved one who had died. He experienced the agony of not knowing how it was all going to turn out. He was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a Cross. This is the source of our hope. No longer is weakness shameful or tenderness to be scorned. Shared vulnerability is not something to be afraid of. It is but

one step, which opens up new possibilities. The promise of a new beginning, a new life. Let us take the risk to be vulnerable before one another. After all, God did.....

+Mark O'Toole

Bishop of Plymouth

## Parish finances

Thank you so much to those of you who have enquired about setting up a standing order so we can continue to pay the bills. In these troubling times it is comforting to know how much people care about our beloved parish. If others wish to make a standing order, please email the parish office at [exeter-heavitree@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:exeter-heavitree@prcdtr.org.uk) and please include your telephone number. You can also be advised how you can gift aid your donation. We understand that during these difficult times, other people may be buying your essentials and you therefore need to keep your cash available to pay these kind volunteers, so please feel free to post a cheque [made payable to PRCDTR Heavitree RC Parish] to the Presbytery if this is easier. If neither of these options are suitable for you, please put aside your weekly cash offerings and/or gift aid envelopes until Masses resume.

## What has happened to the Sunday Obligation?

The obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation is suspended at the moment.

## SOS - let us know if you need help

We have tried to contact a number of people who we think may need some help or support but please do let us know via the parish email or the parish phone number 01392 274724 if there is any way we can provide practical support for you and your families in the coming days and weeks. We have a team of volunteers who can be contacted if you, or someone you know are in self-isolation and need food, medication or a friendly chat. If you can also volunteer to help please also let the parish office know.

## Keep up to date

Please see the parish Facebook page **Blessed Sacrament Exeter** and the parish website [blessedsacrament.org.uk](http://blessedsacrament.org.uk) for up to date information and spiritual support.

## Mass recording and live streaming

Fr Jonathan will hopefully be posting a recording of Sunday Mass each Sunday morning on the Blessed Sacrament Facebook page and YouTube channel. Bishop Mark is live-streaming Mass from the Cathedral each day at 11:00am and evening prayer at 4:30pm. There is a link for the YouTube channel on the Diocese of Plymouth Facebook page.

## Blessed Sacrament YouTube channel

One of the ways we are trying to support you these days is by posting films which appeal to families and young people. Maria, our pastoral assistant, Erik our parish youth worker, and some of the youngsters in our parish have all made films which they hope will engage you with your faith in a new way. Check them out at [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCX95PzuiQFbA99uMfpDi3KA?view\\_as=subscriber](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCX95PzuiQFbA99uMfpDi3KA?view_as=subscriber)

## Diocesan YouTube channel

Bishop Mark is live streaming Mass each day and afternoon prayer on the following channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8KUEwsXFK3VBLEfn4H1tBw>

## Online Masses in Polish

These are the Masses from Jasna Góra: Mass stream: <https://jasnagora.pl/pl/media/na-zywo/kaplica-matki-bozej/> Mass times: <https://jasnagora.pl/pl/dla-pielgrzymow/program-dnia/>

## More Mass online

There are also several churches within the Diocese of Westminster which have live streaming: [www.churchservices.tv](http://www.churchservices.tv) EWTN or Catholic TV can be watched on Sky or on the internet at [www.ewtn.co.uk](http://www.ewtn.co.uk) or [www.catholictv.org](http://www.catholictv.org)

## CAFOD

Cafod are hosting a live online children's liturgy for families, on Sundays at 10.00am. Check out <https://cafod.org.uk/Education/Children-s-liturgy> to find out how to register.

## Pope Francis on mercy...

God's fatherly care extends to everyone, like the care of a shepherd for his flock, but it is particularly concerned for the needs of the sheep who are wounded, weary or ill. Jesus told us that the Father stoops to help those overcome by physical or moral poverty; the more serious their condition is His divine mercy revealed.

## Pope's April Intention

We pray that those suffering from addiction may be helped and accompanied.

## The Pope tweets...

From the open heart of the Crucified one, God's love reaches each one of us. Let us allow His gaze to rest on us. We will understand that we are not alone, but loved, for the Lord does not abandon us and He never, ever forgets us.

## Into your hands Lord...

Please pray for the repose of the souls of Sean Curtis, Dorothy Kirwan, Brian Kennedy and Anne Sanderson who have recently died. May they rest in peace and may their families and friends find comfort and consolation at this particularly trying time.

## Prayers of Hope - every Sunday at 7.00pm

During the Coronavirus crisis thousands of Christians across Britain are praying together at 7.00pm every Sunday evening. This began on Sunday 22 March after the Presidents of Churches Together in England issued a joint call to prayer. The response was phenomenal. St Paul tells us to pray continually. However, it helps to know that others are also praying at a specific time, so we encourage you to pray at 7.00pm on Sunday evening.

## The God Who Speaks

The next sessions have had to be postponed, but the talks have been recorded and are available at [www.plymouth-diocese.org.uk](http://www.plymouth-diocese.org.uk) and on Facebook @plymouthdiocese. 1. How Catholics Read the Bible; 2. Christ in the Old Testament; 3. The Fulfilment of the Covenant in the New Testament. Let's use our 'lockdown' time profitably. Further Scriptural resources are available: [www.stpaulrepository.com](http://www.stpaulrepository.com).

## Wednesday Word is now online!

Wednesday Word is an opportunity to prepare for Sunday Mass by listening to and reflecting on the upcoming Sunday Gospel with a group of friendly parishioners. We have run a successful group since September in the Richard Reynolds Centre.

**Wednesday Word faith group now online** We running a Wednesday Word group every Wednesday at 2.00pm through a live conference call. Even if this is something new for you or out of your comfort zone, we encourage you to be brave and have a go; you will be greeted by friendly helpful parish faces! This type of technology is new to many of us and we are all learning together. We recommended that you use a laptop or iPad to join the meeting, but if you don't have access to this equipment, it is possible to dial into the meeting using a telephone. We will send you simple instructions and a link to click on in order to join us. If you would like to participate in this group next week, please email Maria Quinn [exeter-pastoral-assistant@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:exeter-pastoral-assistant@prcdtr.org.uk) by Tuesday at 5:00. She will email you a link with the very simple steps of how to join us for the meeting. If you would like to join a Wednesday Word group and an evening slot would be more convenient for you, please email Maria with your details and what time of day would be best. We would love to be able to accommodate this. With prayers and best wishes, the Blessed Sacrament Team

## Walk with Me Easter Booklets

We have a number of these booklets available. If you would like one please either email the parish office at [Exeter-heavitree@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:Exeter-heavitree@prcdtr.org.uk) or call Lesley on 07712 216724 and one can be posted out to you.

## Exeter Foodbank

The Foodbank would still appreciate any donations. Everyone is finding it hard to get food items at the moment but please spare a little for those who have none. Thank you. It will not be possible to leave your donations at the Church at this time. Why not save them up and we can collect them in the future or add them to the collection baskets in the supermarkets.

## Joy of Hope Course

This can be downloaded by clicking on this link: [The Joy of Hope: D/L Course](#) and entering the password JOH19down. This is for your personal use and should not be shared. If you have any problems downloading, please contact us.

## We await further news about the following:

2020 Plymouth Diocese Pilgrimages to Lourdes, Knock, Medjugorje

Diocesan Catechetical Summer Camps 2020

Diocesan Retreats 2020

International Eucharist Congress

Joel's Bar

## Catholic Children's Society

The Catholic Children's Society (Plymouth) is looking for enthusiastic, new Trustee Directors to fill vacancies that have arisen as a result of retirement. We are particularly keen to achieve a more diverse board of trustees and we welcome applications from all sections of the community. The Board meets at least four times a year and whilst the position is voluntary and unpaid, reasonable travelling expenses are paid as per our policy. To find out more, please contact Shelagh Fearnley or Andrea Rodgers on 01364 645420 for an informal chat and an information pack.

## Additional resources

During School Closures please find attached a list of suggested resources. We also encourage families to join the Diocese of Plymouth Youth Events Facebook page so that we can share experiences and resources along with offering moral support through this time.

## Preparing for Baptism

The remainder of our March baptism preparation course had to be cancelled. Future courses are due to be held on July 11, 18, 25 and Nov 14, 21, 28. We will advise anyone interested in future courses if they will be going ahead on these dates or not.

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## The Word

**SUNDAY 19 APRIL** *Second Sunday of Easter – Divine Mercy*

FIRST READING

Acts 2:42-47

*The faithful all lived together and owned everything in common.*

The whole community remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers. The many miracles and signs worked through the apostles made a deep impression on everyone. The faithful all lived together and owned everything in common; they sold their goods and possessions and shared out the proceeds among themselves according to what each one needed. They went as a body to the Temple every day but met in their houses for the breaking of bread; they shared their food gladly and generously; they praised God and were looked up to by everyone. Day by day the Lord added to their community those destined to be saved.

## Psalm Response

*Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, for his love has no end.*

Let the sons of Israel say:

'His love has no end.'

Let the sons of Aaron say:

'His love has no end,

Let those who fear the Lord say:

'His love has no end.' R

I was thrust, thrust down and falling

but the Lord was my helper.

The Lord is my strength and my song;

he was my saviour.

There are shouts of joy and victory

In the tents of the just. R

The stone which the builder rejected

Has become the corner stone.

This is the work of the Lord,

A marvel in our eyes.

This day was made by the Lord;

We rejoice and are glad. R

## SECOND READING

1Peter 1:3-9

*In his great mercy he has given us a new birth as his sons by raising Jesus from the dead.*

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy has given us a new birth as his sons, by raising Jesus Christ from the dead, so that we have a sure hope and the promise of an inheritance that can never be spoilt or soiled and never fade away, because it is being kept for you in the heavens. Through your faith, God's power will guard you until the salvation which has been prepared is revealed at the end of time. This is a cause of great joy for you, even though you may for a short time have to bear being plagued by all sorts of trials; so that, when Jesus Christ is revealed, your faith will have been tested and proved like gold – only it is more precious than gold, which is corruptible even though it bears testing by fire – and then you will have praise and glory and honour. You did not see him, yet you love him; and still without seeing him, you are already filled with a joy so glorious that it cannot be described, because you believe; and you are sure of the end to which your faith looks forward, that is, the salvation of your souls.

## GOSPEL

John 20:19-31

*Eight days later, Jesus came.*

In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, 'Peace be with you', and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again, 'Peace be with you.

'As the Father sent me,

so am I sending you.'

After saying this he breathed on them and said:

'Receive the Holy Spirit.

For those whose sins you forgive,

they are forgiven;

for those whose sins you retain,

they are retained.'

Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. When the disciples said, 'We have seen the Lord', he answered, 'Unless I see the holes that the nails made in his hands and can put my finger into the holes they made, and unless I can put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe.' Eight days later the disciples were in the house again and Thomas was with them. The

doors were closed, but Jesus came in and stood among them. 'Peace be with you' he said. Then he spoke to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; look, here are my hands. Give me your hand; put it into my side. Doubt no longer but believe.' Thomas replied, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him: 'You believe because you can see me. Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe.' There were many other signs that Jesus worked and the disciples saw, but they are not recorded in this book. These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name.

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## **SUNDAY 26 APRIL** *Third Sunday of Easter*

### FIRST READING

Acts 2:14.22-33

*It was impossible for him to be held in the power of Hades.*

### Psalm Response

*Show us, Lord, the path of life.*

### SECOND READING

1 Peter 1:17-21

*Your ransom was paid in the precious blood of a lamb without spot or stain, namely, Christ*

### GOSPEL

Luke 24:13-35

*They recognised him in the breaking of bread.*

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## Mass Intentions

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| Sunday 19 April                                    | <i>Theresa McDonnell RIP</i>                                       |
| Monday 20 April                                    | <i>Dorothy Kirwan RIP</i>  |
| Tuesday 21 April                                   | <i>All in our hospitals –<br/>St Anselm the sick and the staff</i> |
| Wednesday 22 April                                 | <i>People of the Parish</i>  |
| Thursday 23 April                                  | <i>Frank Lyn RIP</i>   |
| <i>St George Martyr<br/>Patron of England</i>      |  |
| Friday 24 April                                    | <i>Anne Leach RIP</i>  |
| Saturday 25 April                                  |  |
| <i>St Mark- Evangelist</i>                         |  |
| Sunday 26 April                                    | <i>People of the Parish</i>  |
| Wednesday 29 April                                 |  |
| <i>St Catherine of Sienna<br/>Patron of Europe</i> |  |
| Saturday 2 May                                     |  |
| <i>St Athanasius</i>                               |  |
| Sunday 3 May                                       | World day of Prayer for Vocations                                  |
| Monday 4 May                                       | <i>Private Intention</i>   |
| <i>The English Martyrs</i>                         |  |
| Tuesday 5 May                                      |  |
| <i>St Richard Reynolds</i>                         |  |

## Attachments:

'Sunday Message' Mass Sheet.  
Look & Ichthus Children's Sheets.  
Additional Resources  
Making an Act of Spiritual Communion  
Cardinal's Easter Message

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