

The Abbey Parish Newsletter

20th September, 2020 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Full details of times of Services are posted in the Abbey and the other churches in the parish

Confessions: 11 a.m. on Saturdays in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel

Facebook page: search for Buckfast Abbey Parish

Liturgical Calendar:

Monday	St. Matthew
Tuesday	Dedication of Plymouth Cathedral
Wednesday	St. Pius of Pietrelcina
Thursday	Feria
Friday	Feria
Saturday	Feria

“Oremus pro invicem”

Please pray for those who are sick:

Geraldine Thompson Pat Hedges
Margaret McAvoyn Fred Cooke
Bob Beard

If you or someone you know would like to be included here, please contact Fr. Francis

Reserving your place at Holy Mass

The online booking system is now in operation. Just go to the Abbey's website, <https://www.buckfast.org.uk/> and click on “Book Mass Seating”.

Please pray for those whose anniversary occurs at this time:

Charles Boyle; Freda Knowles; Mary Ubodell; Elsie Foot; Thomas Wills; Louis Coles; James Coombes; Mrs. Cooney; Maria Tutley; Jill Thody; Pauline Grisbrook; Bishop John Kiehy; Beatrice McComas; Mary Couch; John Greg Hewett; Raymund Upham; Canon Francis Cantell; Evelyn King; Margaret Snook; Agatha Hodgson; Margaret Miller; Michael Daby; Nellie Lewis; Ruby Joint;

May they rest in peace

If you are self-isolating and need help getting food or medicine, please give Fr. Francis a call.

Phone line for prayer: call 01364 72768

Parish Priest: Fr. Francis Straw; 01364 645526; parish@buckfast.org.uk

Last weekend's collections

	Gift Aided	Online
Abbey 9 a.m.	£45.20	
Abbey 10:30 a.m.	£112.00	£50.00
Buckfastleigh Sat 5 p.m.	£7.00	£15.00
Ashburton 10:30am	£40.00	£5.00
South Brent 9 a.m.	£17.00	£10.00
Added value through gift aid		£25.00

Live-streaming of daily Mass and the Divine Office continues. You can view online in any of these places: www.buckfast.org.uk/live Youtube.com/c/BuckfastAbbey Facebook @buckfastabbeyofficialsite

Buckfast Abbey Parish Saint Vincent de Paul Group

That's a bit of a mouthful, isn't it, but we needed a name in order to be registered with the Society, so we thought up something quick as a name to call the SVP Conference which we want to set up in this parish. No doubt we can come up with a better name in due course.

'We' are the people who came to the introductory meeting. As mentioned before, fourteen people indicated their interest beforehand and all either attended in person or made us of the Zoom recording of the meeting to hear Simon Coombs, Area Rep. for the SVP, describe the spiritual background to the SVP, how it was founded and what people who belong to it these days do. There are 800,000 members worldwide, with 9,000 in this country.

The principle activity of members of the Society is reaching out to those in need. This is often as simple, and as beautiful, as being a bit of company, either visiting their home or chatting on the telephone. It could be touching base with a parishioner who no-one's seen for a few weeks to make sure they are okay. It might also involve working with local foodbanks, helping people with forms they have to fill in, doing a little shopping for them or whatever is needed; Simon emphasised that each group soon becomes self-determining so that it can respond to the real needs in their area as they are discerned from time to time.

Simon emphasised that members participate as their time and health allow; if visiting peoples' homes isn't feasible it's okay to focus on telephone contact. Or it may be that a member participates by praying with and supporting other more physically able members. The spiritual nature of the Society is an integral and cherished part of the work, as is mutual support, guidance and sharing of experience and expertise.

Deborah, a member of our parish and also the Diocesan Caritas Manager, was able to tell us about the way the SVP group in Sidmouth Parish was able to respond effectively to the social problems caused by COVID. As she wrote in her case study, "An SVP conference of 14 volunteers who supported 25 people on a regular basis, grew to support over 120 parishioners during the Covid-19 lockdown. They offered telephone support, shopping and urgent home repairs. They supported those living alone or couples who were shielding and unable to go out. The group worked closely with the Parish Priest and Parish Secretary to reach out to people who were lonely and isolated. The SVP team were augmented by additional parish volunteers as extra telephone befrienders."

Those present were enthusiastic to see the group established in our parish, so we have done a lot of form-filling in the week since we met. Once that's completed everyone can sign up to membership online. It's a bit bureaucratic to begin with, but Simon assured us that, once that hurdle is past we can focus simply on coming together to support each other in our care for anyone in need in our locality.

New members will always be welcome, so if you would like to learn more, come to a meeting to see what it's like, or you're ready to become a member, Fr. Francis would be delighted to hear from you.

News from our Parish School (Courtesy of Mitzi)

<http://www.st-marysrc.devon.sch.uk/>

I have to confess, I was going to tell you this week how hard it has been in school with the added pressures of being Covid secure, against the backdrop of the daily news of escalating figures making one feel that it will be when, not if, we have to send a group of children home because of a suspected case of Covid. But then, two things happened. Firstly, we received an email from a parent who lives nearby offering to help with escorting the children up and down the hill to ease the burden on staff and, secondly, a parent sent a photo of their child sporting not one, but two, Blue Peter badges! The offer from a parent reminded me that people do care about what we do and are actively thinking of ways we can help each other through tricky times. As for the child with the Blue Peter badges, well, as you may already know, I am of a generation for whom a Blue Peter badge is a most coveted prize. My initial reaction is to be very jealous and to think of ways of getting my hands on those badges and then I remind myself that I am in my late fifties and that would be very unseemly behaviour. My second, more grown up, reaction is to remember that I was also going to tell you about a number of successes we celebrated in our newsletter this week. Our children entered a literacy competition before the summer and one of our children won first prize for a piece of poetry out of entries of more than six hundred. Other children had highly commended entries. The children had also entered the CPRE Devon annual art and writing competitions and again our children were most successful - St Mary's won "Best Overall School" in the writing competition and two children won individual prizes and several others had highly commended in both the writing and art competitions.

These successes will endure and be treasured memories long after Covid has become a thing of the past. It is a reminder that, however hard it is to keep going, it is imperative that we all continue to provide opportunities for our children to flourish and not allow Covid to become an excuse for anything, least of all poor achievement. And anyway, we at St Mary's, as I have told you in the past, are made of tough stuff and there is plenty of determination left to keep us going (although we haven't faced "The Walk" in torrential rain yet - I may not be so chipper then!).

Home Mission Sunday

Whilst it's important to do all we can to help those we love and care for to have an encounter with the person of Jesus Christ, it's brought to life through the Holy Spirit touching their lives in some way. This is not an excuse to sit back and give up, but to get more involved. It's a call to prayer.

Prayer is the cornerstone of our faith. We can pray for confidence to step out and share our faith with others or to ask God who he wants us to reach with his Good News. It's also vital to pray for the people we know, love or care for to encounter Christ in some way.

'Evangelization will never be possible without the action of the Holy Spirit.'

Pope Paul VI – *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 75 (Evangelisation in the Modern World)

In the book of Acts, once the apostles see Jesus ascend to heaven, they gather in continuous prayer.

In the 19th Century Blessed Elena Guerra, the found of the Sisters of the Holy Spirit felt it was important that the Church be renewed to the passion of the first Christians at Pentecost and petitioned Pope Leo XIII in the following manner: "Pentecost is not over. In fact, it is continuously going on in every time and in every place because the Holy Spirit desired to give himself to all and all who want him can always receive him, so we do not envy the apostles and the first believers, we have only to dispose ourselves like them to receive him well, and he will come to us as he did to them."

In recent years many Christian denominations through the world have also been praying for this intention through a prayer initiative called 'Thy Kingdom Come.' By joining this initiative, we are therefore renewing our desire for the Kingdom of God to be made real in the lives of those we know and love through the power of the Holy Spirit.

There are some inspiring short films you can watch about 'Thy Kingdom Come' on the Home Mission website:

<https://homemission.org.uk/home/prayer-for-evangelisation/thy-kingdom-come/>

Marriage Matters:

Reflections on the Sunday readings.

'My thoughts are not your thoughts'

God can put thoughts into our minds, but how can we ensure these make a difference to our lives? St Paul says, "Avoid anything in your everyday lives that would be unworthy of the Gospel of Christ": for example, the need to measure what we contribute within the relationship. Our Sacrament isn't a 50/50 arrangement but a 100%/100% unconditional commitment.

He fills your mouth with laughter and your lips with rejoicing" (Job 8:21)

Famous last words: "Computers in the future may weigh no more than 1.5 tons." (Popular Mechanics, forecasting the relentless march of science, 1949)... "I think there is a world market for maybe five computers." (Thomas Watson, chairman of IBM, 1943)... "I have travelled the length and breadth of this country and talked with the best people, and I can assure you that data processing is a fad that won't last out the year." (The editor in charge of business books for Prentice Hall, 1957)... "There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home." (Ken Olson, President, Chairman and founder of Digital Equipment Corp., 1977)... "This 'telephone' has too many shortcomings to be seriously considered as a means of communication. The device is inherently of no value to us." (Western Union internal memo, 1876)