



# St Francis of Assisi

## Parish Newsletter

*"We have been called to heal wounds, to unite what has fallen apart and to bring home those who have lost their way".*  
*St. Francis.*



### **ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI CHURCH**

Grove Crescent Road, Stratford, London, E15 1BJ



### **Sixth Sunday of Easter – 14<sup>th</sup> May 2023.**

Jesus promises that he will not leave us orphans, but will send the Holy Spirit to be with us and defend us. Gathered today by that same Spirit, let us offer our praise and our thanks to God. Jesus died once and for all, for the forgiveness of sins, so that we might have life. Let us confidently ask for mercy.

### **Today's Readings:**

**Acts 8:5-8. 14-17:** The Holy Spirit is given to those who have accepted Christ and been baptised.

### **Response to the Psalm:**

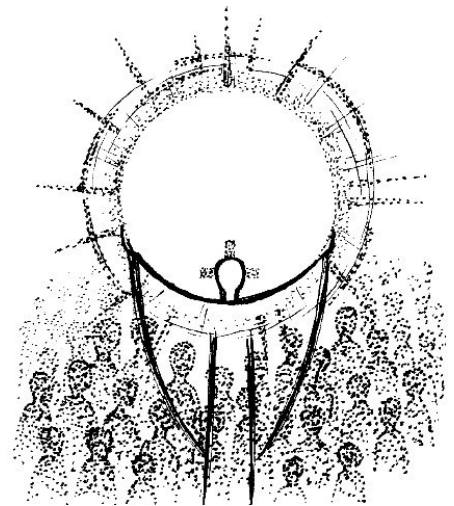
**Cry out with joy to God, all the earth.**

**1 Peter 3:15-18:** Peter says that followers of Jesus must be prepared to suffer, just as Christ our Lord suffered for our salvation.

**John 14:15-21:** Through our love of Christ, we are drawn into the very life of the God who is Father, Son and Spirit.

**"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you"**

Jesus taught his disciples about the intimate unity that existed between him and his Father. Everything that Jesus said and did was in obedience to his Father's word. The Father's love so filled Jesus that it overflowed to his followers through the Spirit. His disciples would remain in Jesus' love if they were obedient to his "new" command: to love one another as he loved them. Jesus' commandment to love God and to love your neighbour as yourself, fulfilled and summed up all the other commandments. There was no other commandment greater than these. Jesus' disciples were loyal to the mission he had entrusted to them, of revealing his love to the world. They were his "friends" if they demonstrated that love by their readiness to lay down their lives as he did. Jesus did not ask his followers to do anything that he himself was unwilling to do. He would prove his love on Calvary by offering his life for the sake of his friends.



**Dates for your Diary:** 18<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2023 – HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION – THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD – Masses at 12:15pm & 7:30pm. . **FROM NOW UNTIL 30<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2023**– The National Gallery, Trafalgar Square, exhibition exploring ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI. **TO CELEBRATE THE 150<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE FRANCISCANS IN STRATFORD: SAT. 17<sup>th</sup> JUNE – PICNIC IN THE OLYMPIC PARK (Weather Permitting). SUN. 18<sup>th</sup> JUNE - REFRESHMENTS AFTER ALL MASSES IN THE LARGE HALL. WEDNESDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> JUNE THANKSGIVING MASS – Time to be confirmed. 29<sup>th</sup> JULY 2023 – PARISH COACH TRIP TO THE SEA SIDE - WALTON-ON-THE-NAZE – Watch for more info.**

Pray for those who have died, and those whose Anniversaries occur around this time, also, please pray for the sick, and, remember the People of Ukraine. Our thoughts and prayers for the people of Turkey and Syria following the devastating earthquake.

## St Francis at National Gallery

Major Exhibition  
**6 May to 30 July**  
10am to 6pm

**FREE**

*Well worth a visit!*

**21<sup>st</sup> June 1873 – June 2023**

**150 years of the Franciscans serving  
the people of Stratford.**

**“We have been called to heal wounds, to  
unite what has fallen apart and to bring  
home those who have lost their  
way”.**

St Francis

**Parish celebrations to mark this  
Anniversary:**

**Saturday June 17:** Picnic in the Olympic  
Park (weather permitting).

**Sunday June 18:** Refreshments in the  
Large Hall, after all Masses.

**Wednesday June 21:** Thanksgiving Mass –  
***Time To Be Confirmed.***

*“An intimate friendship with Christ.*

### **THE THRESHOLDS OF HOPE EASTER TALKS AT STRATFORD**

explore what it means to have an intimate  
friendship with Christ. Wednesdays 17<sup>th</sup> &  
24<sup>th</sup> May 7.30pm - 9pm. The next talk, (A Third  
Spring) Mgr. John Armitage on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at  
St Francis of Assisi, Stratford, E15 1BJ. A warm  
welcome. We are most grateful to the Brentwood  
Diocesan Vicariate for Adult Formation for  
reaching out, with these three talks, to the London  
area of the Diocese.

### **St Francis Leprosy Guild:**

**Eileen Murray of the St Francis Leprosy  
Guild will be speaking about the Guild at  
each Mass today,**

## **SOLEMNITY OF THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD**

**THURSDAY, MAY 18 – Mass at 12:15pm & 7:30pm**  
(Holy Day)

The feast of the Ascension of the Lord, the entry of the  
risen Jesus into glory, which means into the direct  
presence of God the Father. This event represents the  
destiny promised to all the disciples of Jesus.

### **Today's Readings**

**Acts 1:1-11:** Luke, the writer of the Acts of the Apostles,  
depicts Jesus' ascension into heaven.

**Ephesians 1:17-23:** Paul tells us that, as a result of the  
Easter mystery, Christ is now the supreme power in the  
universe.

**Matthew 28:16-20:** Matthew gives his account of the  
final appearance of Jesus to the eleven apostles in  
Galilee. Jesus gives them instruction about their mission  
and a promise of his continued presence among them.



**“And behold, I am with you  
always, until the end of the age”**

When Jesus' mission on earth was  
completed, "in the fullness of time"  
(Greek: pleroma kairos) he  
ascended to the Father, filling all  
creation with his divine presence.  
During his earthly ministry, Jesus'  
mission was to the "lost sheep of the

House of Israel" At his ascension he expanded his  
mission to encompass the whole world, fulfilling the  
promise to Abraham that, in him, all nations would be  
blessed. Jesus reassured his disciples by promising them  
that his abiding presence and authority would sustain  
them in their mission as they baptised in the name of the  
Father, Son, and Spirit. In his ascension to the Father,  
Jesus went before us so that we might grow into the  
"fullness" of the stature of the children of God. At his  
birth, Jesus was called "Emmanuel," which means, "God  
is with us". The Spirit of the Risen Christ continues to be  
with the Church to guide and protect it until the end of  
time.

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### **Masses**

**Monday to Friday** 12:15. **Tuesday**, after Mass, St Anthony Novena.

**Saturday:** Morning Prayer: 9:40am Mass 10am followed by Holy Hour  
Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament until 11:30am.

**Confession: Saturday:** 10:30am - 11:30am & 5pm - 5:45pm

**Sunday:** 6pm Saturday, 9am, 10:15am, 12 noon &  
4:30pm (Ukrainian).

Fr Patrick Lonsdale, OFM (Guardian)

Fr Michael O'Grady, OFM (Parish Priest)

Fr Brian McGrath, OFM

Fr Yusuf Bagh, OFM

Address: The Friary, 160 The Grove, Stratford, E15 1NS.

**Parish Office: Monday to Friday 9:30am - 3pm**

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