

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

Grove Crescent Road, Stratford, London, E15 1B

SUNDAY CYCLE: YEAR A (Matthew)

WEEKDAYS CYCLE: YEAR 1

The 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time - 29th October 2023



We gather today as a community of believers, called by God our Father to love him and serve him, and to love our neighbours. We commit ourselves to service, especially for those in the greatest need, and to mirror Christ's own compassion. Jesus invites us to shed the ways of the world, to turn away from its temptations, and to open our hearts to other people.

Today's Readings:

1st Reading: Exodus 22:20-26: The Lord will hear the cry of those who call out to him, for he is full of compassion.

Response to the Psalm: I love you, Lord, my strength.

2nd Reading: 1 Thessalonians 1:5-10: The people who broke with idolatry and converted to God now follow the risen Jesus.

Gospel: Matthew 22:34-40: The greatest commandments are to love God and to love our neighbour.

"The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments"

The Pharisees believed in all of the written Hebrew Scriptures ("the law and the prophets") as well as the oral interpretations of the law. These included 613 precepts, which were divided into categories of greater or lesser importance. The Sadducees accepted only the first five books of the law (the Pentateuch) and rejected oral tradition. Both groups were opposed to Jesus. A scribe, an expert in the law, challenged Jesus by asking which of the laws was greater than all the others. Jesus summed up the entire law with two commands: to love God and to love your neighbour as yourself. **The first commandment that Jesus quoted** was Deuteronomy 6:5. That verse was part of the 'Shema', the basic creed of Judaism with which every Jewish service still opens. It means that human beings must give God their total love.

The second commandment that Jesus quoted came from Leviticus 19:18.

Love for God must issue forth in love for other people. But the order of the commandments must be noted: love for one another is **firmly grounded** in **the love of God**. To be truly religious is to love God and to love human beings made in God's own image. The whole law is based upon these two commandments. Jesus perfectly fulfilled this law of love in his words and deeds.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

WEDNESDAY 1ST NOVEMBER – ALL SAINTS DAY – HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION – MASSES AT 12:15PM & 7:30PM

THURSDAY 2ND NOVEMBER – ALL SOULS DAY – MASSES AT 12:15PM & 7:30PM.

SUNDAY 12TH NOVEMBER - INVITATION FROM THE UKRAINIAN COMMUNITY – See next weeks Newsletter.

MONDAY 13TH NOVEMBER 2023 – BI-ANNUAL MASS FOR THE DEAD AT ST PATRICKS CEMETERY AT 11:30AM. PENSIONERS CHRISTMAS DINNER – December 2023 watch this space!!

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, Syria & Morocco, following the devastating earthquakes, also, the people of Libya who suffered floods recently. We also pray for peace in the Holy Land.

Wednesday this week:

1 NOVEMBER:

ALL SAINTS - Holy Day

MASS: 12.15pm & 7.30pm.

All the saints are remembered today, especially those whose holiness went unnoticed. We are called to join with them in living lives of true sanctity so that we may enjoy, even in this life, the blessings of heaven.

Today's Readings

Apocalypse 7:2-4. 9-14: John sees a vision of an uncountable number of saints worshipping God and the Lamb.

1 John 3:1-3: God's love for us means that our destiny is to be like Christ.

Matthew 5:1-12: The promised blessings of the humble disciples of Christ.

"Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven"

In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus revealed the character that he expected from his followers. The "Beatitudes," which Jesus exalted, was the attitude of trust and humility represented by the poor, the suffering, and the persecuted. At the time of Jesus, affliction and poverty were thought to be punishment for one's sins, and good health and material prosperity were seen as rewards for one's righteousness. Jesus reversed human expectations of those who were thought to be fortunate. He announced that true happiness (Greek: makarios – blessed) was not found in wealth and power. Jesus promised eternal reward for all who humbly sought God's will despite hardships. But the "blessedness" that the disciples received is not some future glory; it is the blessedness that exists in the here and now. Jesus exemplified every Beatitude. He was poor and gentle and meek. He grieved over sin and hungered and thirsted for God's justice (12:18). He was merciful (12:16-21) and single-hearted in his desire to do God's will. Jesus suffered persecution and died to bring about God's kingdom (27:50). He gave us the ideal that every Christian should constantly pursue in order to be holy people, worthy of God's reign. Pope Francis said, "There is no Saint without a past, and there is no sinner without a future."

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION CLASSES

The first introductory meeting for all parents, guardians and children in preparation for the **Sacrament of Reconciliation and Holy Communion in 2024** will be on **SUNDAY NOVEMBER 12TH at 2pm in the Church.** It is important to attend this first meeting. This meeting is for those who have completed the necessary application forms. There will be a further meeting on **Sunday November 19th beginning at 2pm in the Church.**

Thursday this week:

2 NOVEMBER:

ALL SOULS DAY

The Commemoration of all the Faithful

Departed

MASS: 12.15pm & 7.30pm.

(Wisdom 3:1-9; Psalm 23; Romans 6:3-9; or any readings taken from the Masses for the Dead)

For this is the will of my Father that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life, and I shall raise him on the last day." Jesus came into the world to reveal God's reign, yet some refused to believe in him. They did not understand that he was the fullness of God's revelation and the source of eternal salvation.

They failed to comprehend the meaning of the miraculous sign of the bread that Jesus gave the people in the wilderness. He was the life-giving "bread" sent by God who would satisfy the people's hunger and thirst forever. Jesus did not reject anyone who came to him in faith. Just as he was careful not to lose a single fragment of the miraculous loaves, none of the souls God entrusted to him would perish; they would share in his resurrection. For believers, life was changed at death, not ended. **NOTE:** Historically, the custom of praying for the dead dates back as the 2nd book of Maccabees. The custom of setting a special day of intercession apart for the faithful departed was first established in 998, and soon spread. While November 2nd remains the liturgical celebration, the entire month of November is associated in the Catholic tradition with prayer for the departed. The November Dead List is a list of all the names remembered. These are placed near the altar on which the holy sacrifice of the Mass is offered.

CONFIRMATION – 2024

The first meeting for all the **Confirmation Candidates** will be on **Friday 17th November 2023 at 7pm in the Large Hall.** It is important to attend this meeting.

Grove Crescent Rd, Stratford, E15 1BJ 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 Michael O'Grady, OFM (Parish Priest)

Fr Brian McGrath, OFM

Fr Yusuf Bagh, OFM

Fr Stephen Sciberras, OFM

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

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

Allen Pastoral Assistant:

Derek Hoddy Tel: 0208 534 1964 Email:

stratford@friar.org

Website: stfrancisassistratford.com

