



***St Francis of Assisi***  
***Parish Newsletter***  
**800 YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE**  
**FRANCISCANS ARRIVAL IN THE UK.**



**ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI**

Grove Crescent Road, Stratford, London, E15 1BJ

**SUNDAY CYCLE: B (MARK)**

**WEEKDAYS CYCLE: II**



**28th April 2024 - 5th Sunday of Easter**

It is only through our union with Christ in the Eucharist that we are empowered to bear the fruits of his love in our lives. Jesus uses the image of the vine and its life stages to deepen our appreciation of this truth. Whoever remains in Christ bears fruit in plenty.

**Today's readings**

**Acts 9:26-31:** Saul preaches fearlessly in the name of the Lord on his return to Jerusalem.

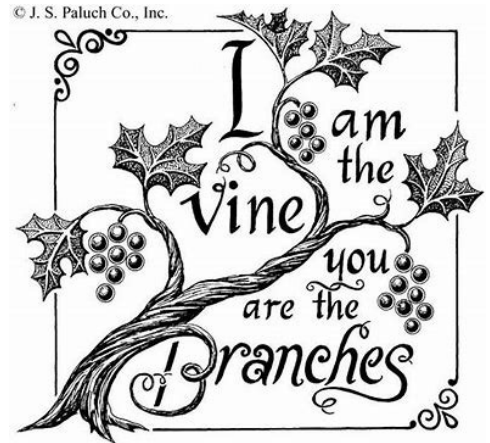
**RESPONSE TO THE PSALM: You, Lord, are my praise in the great assembly.**

**1 John 3:18-24:** Whoever keeps Christ's commandments lives in God and God lives in them.

**John 15:1-8:** Whoever remains in me, with me in him, bears fruit in plenty.

**"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower"**

Few cultivated crops are richer in symbolism in the bible than the vine. The prophet Isaiah used this metaphor when he spoke of Israel as a vineyard that had been nurtured and cared for by God, the vinedresser, yet failed to bear fruit. Jesus used the image of the vine and the branches to talk about the community he had founded. The vine and the branches need one another. Just as a branch gets its sap from the tree, so we derive our life from God. Jesus declared himself to be the true vine whose Father was the vine grower. Jesus' Church would be the new Israel that would bear good fruit only when united to him. Withered branches, which separated themselves from the vine, would be cut off; they were only good for fuel for the fire. Good branches would be pruned in order to increase their yield. Jesus spoke this discourse at the Last Supper. The "fruit of the vine" that Jesus gave us is his life-giving presence in the saving cup that nourishes the faithful.



<b>SUNDAY:</b>	<b>28<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2024 – THE REPOSITORY WILL OPEN AFTER ALL SUNDAY MASSES – CASH ONLY PLEASE.</b>
<b>SUNDAY:</b>	<b>28<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2024 – FIRST HOLY COMMUNION MEETING IN THE LARGE HALL – 2PM.</b>
<b>FRIDAY:</b>	<b>10<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2024 – FUNERAL MASS – MR. M. MASSICOTE, R.I.P.</b>
<b>SATURDAY:</b>	<b>25<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2024 – PILGRIMAGE TO WALSINGHAM – NO MORE PLACES AVAILABLE.</b>
<b>TUESDAY:</b>	<b>28<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2024 – NO MASS OR NOVENA – FRIARS AT A MEETING</b>

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, and all countries where there is war. We also pray for peace in the Hol

**ALTAR LINEN** - We need another volunteer to go on the Rota for laundering the Altar Linen. Please hand in your name to take part in this important work. Full instruction available.



**GIFT AID ENVELOPES FOR 2024/2025.**

The new Gift Aid Envelopes are available for collection at the back of the Church.



**Thought for the week:**

*“The first and most fundamental of all human rights is the right to life, and when this right is denied all other rights are threatened ... A society will be judged on the basis of how it treats its weakest members; and among the most vulnerable are surely the unborn and the dying.”*  
 (Pope St John Paul II, 2000)

The month of May, with its profusion of flowers, was adopted by the Church as a celebration of the



flowering of Mary's spirituality. In Isaiah's prophecy of the Virgin birth of the Messiah, the figure of the 'Blossoming Rod', or 'Root of Jesse', the flower symbolism of Mary was extended by the Church Fathers, and, in the liturgy, by applying to her the flower figures of the Biblical books of Canticles, Wisdom, Proverbs and Sirach. In the medieval period, the rose was adopted as the flower symbol of the Virgin Birth, as expressed in Dante's phrase, 'The Rose wherein the Divine Word was made flesh,' and depicted in the rose windows of the great gothic cathedrals, from which came the Christmas carol, 'Lo, How a Rose 'ere Blooming.' Also with the spread of the **Franciscan** love of nature, the rose of the fields, waysides and gardens, came to be seen as symbols of Mary.

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNION**

**MEETING**

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

There will be a meeting of the First Communion Candidates, Parents and Guardians

**AT 2PM TODAY IN THE LARGE HALL.**

We look forward to seeing you all there.

**THE REPOSITORY**

Will be open after all Sunday Masses **TODAY 28<sup>th</sup> April 2024.** Candles, Cards, Rosary Beads. Cash only please.

**Youth Facilitator**

The Local Parishes have employed a Youth Facilitator. Her name is **Olivia Ohonmele**. She will help us with our mission to the young people. We thank Paula for all her work on behalf of the Parish. We will keep you informed on any new developments. Please keep Olivia and Paula in your prayers.

**May is blossom**

**time.** Blossoms do not grow on the main trunk of the tree or on the sturdy branches but on the fragile twigs and tendrils. When we hear that our vocation is to be bearers of the mission of Christ our first reaction may be a sense of our inadequacy. But history shows that many of the people who bore most fruit in God's service were people who were conscious of their past failures. Moses had murdered a man. King David's moment of lust instigated a train of evil deeds. Paul had persecuted the followers of Jesus. The great secret of ministry whether in teaching, parenting, works of compassion, the pursuit of justice, liturgical service is keeping contact with **home**. And **home** means **Jesus Christ**.



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

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

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

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