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The Parish of S Michael and All Angels. Abbey Wood.

Sunday 12 July 2020

The External Solemnity of

THE TRANSLATION OF S THOMAS OF CANTERBURY

We are now allowed to offer public worship again and the Sunday Mass has resumed. It may be some weeks however before everyone can be with us on a Sunday and so we are sending this sheet out to keep us all in touch. . Even if you cannot be with us you will be in our prayers.. Please pass sheets or information on to those for whom we don't have an email address.



**COME TOGETHER THIS
SUNDAY.
PARISH MASS**

10:00

TIMES OF PRAYER.

This week our church will be open for prayer on

Wednesday 09:30-10:30

Please come and pray and be with God.

OUR MASSES AND WORSHIP THIS WEEK

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|--------|--|--------------------------|
| Mon 13 | S. Mildred | Mass 18:00 |
| Tue 14 | Tuesday of week 15 in Ordinary Time | Mass Sine populo |
| Wed 15 | Saint Bonaventure, Bishop, Doctor | Mass 09:00 |
| Thu 16 | Our Lady of Mount Carmel | Mass Sine populo |
| Fri 17 | Friday of week 15 in Ordinary Time | |
| Sat 18 | Saturday memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary | Mass Sine populo |
| Sun 19 | 16TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME | PARISH MASS 10:00 |

OUR PARISH LIFE

Coming together again.

MASS THIS WEEK. This Sunday we gather together for Parish Mass at 10am.

This week there will be public masses at 18:00 on Monday Evening and at 09:00 on Wednesday Morning. Mass on other days will continue to be said without a congregation for a short while.

WHAT IS OUR WORSHIP BE LIKE ? We have laid out our Church to allow Social Distancing and we have to do a lot of things in a different way. At the moment we are not allowed to sing to sing but our mass is accompanied on the organ. We cant have any Refreshments etc after mass and there won't be a Kids Zone for a while – but we will think of other ways of welcoming children and welcoming each other. Come along and join the fun!

WHO CAN COME TO CHURCH ON SUNDAY?.

You **must not come** to church, if you have symptoms of Covid 19 or have tested positive or you have been in contact with someone who has or may have the Virus. You also should not come if you are quarantining.

We would **strongly encourage you not to come** at the moment if you are vulnerable or have been told to shield or isolate, unless a medical professional has said that it would be ok and that also you feel happy at being in a public place. If you have any questions or uncertainty, please have a chat with Fr David. Please only come back to church when you feel happy to do so. We miss you, but we want you to be safe.

THEY WERE QUEUING OUT OF THE DOORS? Probably we will see a gradual increase in number at our worship over the coming weeks. Even with social distancing our church can still accommodate a large number of people safely. However if we feel that the

numbers present are too large to distance safely, we will have to stop people coming in, should this happens Fr David will either say another mass or administer Holy Communion to those unable come in. If it happens on a regular basis then we have more than one mass each Sunday.

LECTORS. Over the next Sundays at Mass, we will need some help – Could you be a reader at Sunday Mass? You will have to read the First Reading, the Psalm with its response and the Second Reading. Then later in the mass you will read the biddings in the Intercessions.

BUILDERS. You may have notices that our church is surrounded by scaffolding! This because work started this week on the restoration of our stonework and windows and getting our church building fit for another 112 years.

Please be careful around the scaffolding and if you in church while people are working, please take extra care and obey any safety instructions.



OPENING OUR COMMUNITY. The abbey Arms is now open and so have a pub again .

Greggs is open and so we have food again. The Barbers are open and so we don't have any hair again. Please support our community and its businesses.

CONFIRMATION. As Parish life resumes, we will shortly begin preparing candidates for Confirmation. If you would like to be confirmed please contact Fr David to have a chat about what is involved. The confirmation will be in S Michaels in October,

WEEKLY OFFERINGS. We know that this will be a time of financial hardship for many, but regular giving is vital if we are to survive as a Parish. As in most shops we discourage giving in cash, but a plate will be by the church door if you cannot give in other ways. If you would like to give by Internet banking, the details are **Sort Code 30-99-88, Account No 00160771, Account Name is PCC Saint Michael and All Angels Abbey Wood.** In the reference section please put your name followed by; 'Offering'. Thank you for your support.

We can't currently accept cards, but we hope to be able to do this in the near future.

SACRISTY HELP. It may be a while before our regular Sacristy team can be fully active again, so in the interim we need some help.

We urgently need someone to wash purificators etc and to iron them.

It would help the clergy, if somebody could take over from them the washing of the sacred vessels after the end of mass on a Sunday morning. The Guidance says that they need to be washed in soapy water and dried with a paper towel. Disposable gloves are available.

AN UNLIKELY SAINT.

The 7 July 1220 was great and marvellous day in Canterbury Cathedral. On that day with great solemnity the body of S. Thomas Becket was moved from the tomb in the crypt, in which he had been quickly and fearfully buried following his killing in 1170 and transferred to a marvellous new shrine in the main body of the Cathedral. The Shrine that was to become the object of countless pilgrim journeys through the following centuries. There after every year the 7 July was kept as the feast of his translation.

This year sees the 800 anniversary of that Translation and the 850 anniversary of his martyrdom on 29 December.

S. Thomas of Canterbury was born in London around 1120, to a comfortable but not rich Norman Family. As a boy he was educated by the Augustinian canons of Merton Priory and later at a grammar school in the city of London, and it seems also for a period at the University of Paris. As a young man Thomas secured a position in the household of Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury. He became trusted by Theodore and began a career in Church Administration. He was ordained as a Deacon and held the position of Archdeacon of Canterbury. Thomas however was perhaps was noted more for his administrative and political skills rather than for his holiness and prayer.

Thomas Becket efficiency as an administrator attracted the attention of the young King Henry II and probably on Theodore's recommendation, he entered the royal service and became Lord Chancellor. He was a confident of the king and together they shared their love of hunting. Thomas led an embassy to France noted for its show and magnificence, and on one occasion led the royal forces in combat.

On Theodore's death in 1162 Henry appointed Thomas to the vacant see at Canterbury. Thomas was hastily ordained priest the day before he was consecrated Bishop.

But as Archbishop the relationship between Thomas and Henry began to wane. Thomas stood up for the rights and privileges of the church, he was no puppet Archbishop. The crisis came to a head at a meeting at Henry's palace at Clarendon in 1164. The King made demands on the church which Thomas refused to accept. Thomas fled to the safety of lands under the protection of the King of France. He became an Archbishop in exile. Crisis followed crisis and attempts at reconciliation, all of which in the end failed. However, in the winter of 1170 Thomas boldly and recklessly returned to England and once again entered his place and Cathedral in Canterbury. It was here that some young thuggish knights set out to deal with him, seeing him as the enemy of the King. They met him in his place, he fled through the cloister to the Cathedral. It was dusk, the Monks were just finishing their vespers, the clerks were just getting ready to sing the episcopal vespers. The sound of the knight's forceful entry was heard as the chant died down, and the clatter of swords as the knights split open Thomas Becket's skull.

Thomas is an unlikely saint, more an administrator than a holy man, but someone who grew in his vocation when he realised the demand God made of him as an Archbishop and as he prayed and read the scriptures in French monasteries during his exile. It was the ordinary people of the city of Canterbury, who first saw him as a saint, who rushed into the cathedral and bathed their handkerchiefs in his blood, rather than at first the monks. That recognised the martyr's death that cries out the glory of God.

In 1178 another administrator of King Henry, Richard de Lucy one of the Justiciars of England, founded an abbey of Augustinian Canons on his lands at Lessness in Kent. He was nearing the end of his life and wanted a community to pray for his soul. He dedicated it to Our Lady and S. Thomas Becket. The Saint who life in all its dimensions Richard de Lucy had witnessed as such close hands. One of the Abbeys proudest possessions was part of the tunic stained with S. Thomas' blood that he had been wearing when he died. From Lessness Abbey of course we get Abbey Wood.

Fr David

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