

TO CONTACT THE PARISH/FATHER NEIL

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## **Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2020 – All Saints' Day**

### **SECOND LOCKDOWN!**

**( Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October – Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November)**

As announced by the First Minister of Wales, Mark Drakeford, all places of worship in Wales have been asked to close from **23<sup>rd</sup> October until 9<sup>th</sup> November**, but allowing funerals and weddings to take place under the usual pandemic restrictions. This is very disappointing for those places of worship (like ourselves) which have been observing the necessary precautions ( sanitising gel, masks, social distancing etc ) to enable public worship to continue. The precedent of the State requiring the suspension of public worship ( the freedom of religion ) is an unhappy precedent It is unfortunate that there seems to have been no discussion about these important issues although, on this occasion, agreeing to accommodate the requirements (demands) of the civic authorities. What are the limits to the authority of the State? Are there limits?

Our public celebration of Mass will resume on **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> November** with Mass at 9-30 a.m. (St.Joseph's ) and 11-00a.m. ( St.John Kemble). Please continue to pray that through these ups and downs of public life, the Lord will work in us His deeper and more perfect Will for the Church and that through this disruption of our community (and liturgical) life as the Body of Christ, He will bring us through to Resurrection and a New Pentecost. Come, Holy Spirit! Come, Lord Jesus!

**Remembrance Sunday (8<sup>th</sup> November)** There will be no Rosary and Blessing of the Graves this year.

**Anniversaries:** Edwina Peoples (2010); Doreen Murnane (2015); Roger Bennet (2012 ); Mary Martin (2003); Gerald O'Brien (2005); Felix Wluka (2003); Leslie Collins (2007); *Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord. And let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.*

**Driveway Appeal** Many thanks for donations to Parish Funds/Driveway Appeal. All donations gratefully received. We now have £2,000 in the Driveway Fund. Many thanks.

**The Parish S.V.P Group/St.Joseph's Community Support Group/Legion of Mary (and others).** We are very grateful to all those who have kept in contact by phone and helped out with shopping and in other ways, often behind the scene and unknown to others, since the beginning of lockdown. **THANK YOU TO YOU ALL! N.B. If you are still self-isolating – this help is still available.**

**Pastoral Visits** Please note that Fr.Neil is happy to call if you are continuing to self-isolate at home but would appreciate a visit. However - wearing masks and observing social distancing - this must be at your own risk (!). Except for emergencies, Fr.Neil will not call uninvited during the pandemic. **Please note: At present, the Sacrament of Reconciliation – by arrangement.**

**A Coronavirus Prayer.** " Lord Jesus Christ, You travelled through towns and villages ' curing every disease and illness'. At Your command, the sick were made well. Come now to our aid, in the midst of this global pandemic, and send down Your blessing and healing upon us and protect our healthcare workers. Bring us through to Resurrection and a New Pentecost. For Thy Name's sake. Amen.

## **THE FEAST OF ALL SAINTS – 2020**

This month of November is a month of remembrance. A month of looking back, of remembering, of celebrating, of giving thanks.

In December ( in Advent) we shall be looking **forward** - ( the beginning of a New Year in the calender of the Church ) – but November is the closing of the year. The leaves fall, the nights draw in, and the late autumn of the year helps us to reflect on the autumn of life and on the more sober aspects of life, especially in this time of plague when, perhaps ( and hopefully ) we become more conscious of the frailty and the gift of life.

November is a time of reflection. We remember those who have gone before us – especially during this last year and in the pandemic. We reflect on the mystery of life, so wonderful, so tragic, so deep - and so fleeting. An opportunity to reflect. How wasteful we are of life! Precious moments wasted in trivia. Life slipping through our fingers like the grains of sand in an egg-timer.

The Feast of All Saints invites us to respond to the melancholy of life with a new commitment to live a deeper life, a richer life. How rich and deep were the lives of the saints! Today we celebrate that ( in the lives of the saints ) we see the fullness of life. “ I have come that you might have life” says Jesus “and have it abundantly” (St.John 10 v 10). St.John tells us at the beginning of his gospel that it is from the “ **fullness**” of Christ that we receive “ grace upon grace” ( 1 v 16 ). But ( of course ) to be filled with the fullness of Christ, we must ourselves be empty. Jesus cannot fill us with Himself if we ourselves are already full of other things! The saints are those who have made room for Jesus – through sacrifices. And today they surround us. They cheer us on. They pray for us. We are surrounded by an unseen host! They fight for us in “heavenly places” because we fight “ not against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers”. Ours is a spiritual warfare. And that battle passes through every human heart. A great battle ( a great spiritual warfare ) is taking place. The primary forces at work in our world are not economic, or social or political or cultural – but spiritual. Pope Saint John Paul II said ( on several occasions ) that he thought we were approaching the Final Battle, and in that battle the angels and the saints are themselves involved, fighting for us, fighting with us, encouraging us – calling us forward, and upward and inward into a deeper reality and experience of the life of grace.

So, on this Feast of All Saints, we petition the saints to intercede for us, we make a new surrender to the life of grace and we pray – ( we continue to pray ) - that the Risen, Ascended and Glorified Jesus will revive us and renew us ( after, in and through these darker days ) through a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit in a New Pentecost, through the prayers of the saints and through the intercession of our Blessed Lady.

*O Mary, Most Holy, who in the Immaculate Conception became the Temple of God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, pray for us.*

**May the Holy Spirit come soon, And renew the face of the earth.**

*O Mary, Most Holy, who in the Mystery of the Incarnation became the Mother of God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, pray for us.*

**May the Holy Spirit come soon, And renew the face of the earth.**

*O Mary Most Holy, who while praying together with the Apostles in the Upper Room were baptised with fire and the Holy Spirit, pray for us.*

**May the Holy Spirit come soon, And renew the face of the earth.**

*Send forth Your Spirit, O Lord and renew the face of the earth!*

*May Your Spirit come, O Lord, and may He transform us interiorly with His gifts. May He create in us a new heart so that, in all things, we may please You and accomplish Your Holy Will, through the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the prayers of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.*

**Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us.. Come, Holy Spirit!**