

TO CONTACT THE PARISH/FATHER NEIL

The Presbytery, Hillside Lane, Neath, SA11 1TG. Phone – 01639 643323

Parish Website – www.catholicchurchneath.org.uk

The St. Joseph's Community Support Group. If you need help with shopping, collecting prescriptions etc please contact Fr. Neil or Siobhan (07811931971) **YOU ARE NOT ALONE!** We hope to keep in contact with all parishioners over seventy by post – provided that stamps (and envelopes) are still available and the postal service continues to function. Otherwise, the Newsletter will continue to appear (God willing and health permitting) on the Parish Website each week. If you are aware of other parishioners who may not otherwise be aware of the help being offered by the St. Joseph's Support Group, please pass this information on to them. **MANY THANKS** to all our volunteers for helping those in need at this difficult and challenging time. Thank you to Siobhan for co-ordinating the Community Support Group, and to our SVP Group and Legion of Mary for keeping in contact with parishioners by phone

CORONAVIRUS - IMPORTANT UP-DATE - PLEASE NOTE

The Archbishops of England and Wales are engaged with the Westminster government on the desire of Catholics that churches should re-open for private prayers and devotions. In Wales the Faith Communities Forum is actively engaged with the Deputy First Minister, Jane Hutt, on how to lift restrictions on places of worship. The big question relates to **controlling and stewarding** access, and how places of worship are to be sanitised. A further meeting will take place on 3rd June.

If and when permission is given for our churches to re-open, they will be subject to strict health and safety conditions as are all public buildings. Archbishop George Stack informs us that amongst these will be the necessity to provide in churches – (1) social distancing measures, seating arrangements, one way system, exits and entrances, clear signage, restricted times etc (2) attendance management, queuing, ticketing, online registration, stewarding etc (3) staggering of attendance by age or vulnerability (4) infection control issues such as Holy Water stoups, leaflets, hymn books, missals, newsletters, candles, all of which can harbour the virus (5) PPE materials, sanitiser, deep cleaning materials, surface cleaning materials etc (6) liturgical issues, distribution of Holy Communion, frequency of Masses, devotions, organisation of Memorial Masses, care of the bereaved. (6) two or three volunteers – under the age of seventy – to implement these policies in order to keep churches open at specific times. The safeguarding of clergy over the age of seventy and those with underlying health issues will obviously be a priority. (8) in the first instance, large strategically placed churches would be opened. Whether large or small churches would need to ensure compliance with the above requisites. Before the churches can begin to re-open here in the Diocese of Menevia, there needs to be a diocesan wide supply of PPE and sanitising equipment – even to enter the church for private prayer. The church authorities are working on an initial order for a supply covering the next three months. This will involve a significant cost for each parish. Please see, on the Parish Website, **“A Message from the Metropolitan Archbishops of the Catholic Church in England and Wales”**.

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.

Unite against Coronavirus – Once again there is an urgent appeal that as many of us as possible sign the petition asking the UK Government to work with other world leaders to help the most vulnerable in our global family to cope with this crisis. (see the petition on cafod.org.uk/coronaviruscampaign). Our brothers and sisters in developing countries face the pandemic with fragile health systems with few, if any, ventilators and intensive care beds. Food prices have risen and the poorest have lost their jobs and income through wholesale lockdowns. Lack of access to washing facilities and limited ability to social distance will lead to loss of life on a massive scale. Please sign today if you have not already done so. Thank you. (Sandra)

Ellen “Nell” O’Connell (RIP). Please remember Nell and the family in your prayers. Nell died last weekend and her graveside funeral took place at Llantwit Cemetery on Friday. *Eternal rest grant unto her O Lord, And let perpetual light shine upon her. May she rest in peace Amen*

Parish Collections. **MANY THANKS** to all who have continued to donate to the Church over recent weeks through cash gifts, cheques, parish envelopes and standing orders with the bank. **WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL.** For those who have asked – for donations and Standing Orders – the details of our (St. Joseph's) bank account are – Branch Code 54-10-19 – Account Number 01520296 – (Diocese of Menevia Neath Parish) Nat West, 35 Green Street, Neath, SA11 1DB.

The Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity - 7th June 2020

It is very appropriate that, in the Liturgical Calendar of the Church, Pentecost Sunday is followed immediately by the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity, because on the Day of Pentecost we witness that Unity of the Godhead, of which the Athanasian Creed speaks,

“ Now this is the Catholic Faith: We worship one God in the Trinity and the Trinity in Unity, without either confusing the Persons or dividing the Substance; for the Person of the Father is one, the Person of the Son another, the Person of the Holy Spirit another; but the Godhead of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is One; their glory equal, their majesty equally eternal”

On the Day of Pentecost we see the Three Persons of the Holy and Blessed Trinity working together in Unity of Will and Purpose, of One Substance but in Three Persons. Thus the Holy Spirit is sent down upon the Church by the Risen and Ascended Jesus, but the Holy Spirit **proceeds** from the Father (St.John 15 v 26), and thus is sent down upon the Church also by the Father (St.John 14 v 26) but **through** Jesus the Son, Who has received the Promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, Whom the Son, now pours out upon the Church (Acts 1 v 4; 2 v 33).

Thus the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son. It is the Will of God and His vocation for us that through the Holy Spirit, the Son lives within us (Romans 4 v 6), and that, through the Son, we receive the Holy Spirit through Whom Jesus comes to us. Thus Jesus says to the disciples, on the night of the Last Supper, “ We will come and make our home in him (the believer) ” (St.John 14 v 23) - “Thou in Me, and I in Thee, and they in Us” (St.John 17 v 21). As members of the Body of Christ, through the Holy Spirit, we now have access to the Father through the Son - “ we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ through Whom we have obtained access to this grace – sharing the glory of God (Romans 5 v 12) and thus, at every Mass, we offer our prayers “through Him, and in Him and with Him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit”.

Thus the Father lives in us through Jesus living in us through the Holy Spirit! - and through the Holy Spirit we have **access** to the Father through the Son, “ for through Him we have access in One Spirit to the Father” (Ephesians 2 v 18), and all this flows to us from (and in and through) the Precious Blood of Jesus - “ the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Hebrews 10 v 10), for “when Christ had offered for all time a single Sacrifice for sin, He sat down at the right hand of God” (10 v 12) and thus we now “ have confidence to enter into the Sanctuary by the Blood of Jesus, by the new and living way which He opened for us – and since we have a great High Priest over the House of God, **let us draw near** with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience (Confession) and our bodies washed with pure water” (Baptism) (Hebrews 10 v 19 – 22). This is God’s **gracious invitation** to us, on this Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity. An invitation from the Father, and from the Son and from the Holy Spirit! – an invitation through Jesus, to be caught up into the Life of the Holy and Blessed Trinity! What an invitation! Why do we hold back - from repentance, conversion, forgiveness of sin, new life and participation in the Divine Life of God Himself? (2 Peter 1 v 4).

In the Blessed Virgin Mary, Daughter of God the Father, Spouse of God the Holy Spirit, Mother of God the Son, we see the Church already perfected and caught up into the Life of the Most Holy Trinity, and we pray that, through her maternal prayers and intercessions, we may follow where she has gone - that we might share in the graces and perfection of her Immaculate Heart on that Day when Jesus her Divine Son “presents the Church to Himself in splendour, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish” (Ephesians 5 v 26/27) – a description of Our Lady today, in heaven, and what the Church will be on that Day.

At the Annunciation, Mary conceived the Son, when the Holy Spirit came upon her from the Most High (St.Luke 1 v 35). At the Baptismal Font, the power of the Most High overshadowed us, and Jesus was conceived in us by the Holy Spirit – on this Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity, we pray that we might surrender ourselves to that baptismal vocation and that, like Mary, we may be caught up into the Life of the Most Holy Trinity through the coming down of the Holy Spirit upon us in a New Pentecost. Come, Holy Spirit! Mother of God, pray for us!

“ I beg you, Holy Virgin, that I may receive Jesus from the Holy Spirit, by Whom you brought Jesus forth. May my soul receive Jesus through the Holy Spirit by Whom your flesh conceived Jesus. May I love Jesus in the Holy Spirit in Whom you adore Jesus as Lord and gaze upon Him as your Son” (St.Idelphonsus of Toledo)