



1. On Thursday we celebrated the **Solemnity of the Ascension**, and now we are waiting for the great feast of **PENTECOST** which falls 9 days later. These nine days form the original 'novena', a nine days period of special prayer, in which the church implores a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon all believers. In our own parish – dedicated as it is to the Holy Ghost – let us pray that we too, each one of us, may enjoy a renewal in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, first given to us at our baptism.
2. For those of you who use the **Gift Aid envelopes** for your weekly donations, **the new boxes of envelopes have arrived**. They run from June when the old boxes run out (apart from some spares). During the restrictions many parishioners have made out generous standing orders and these now make the larger part of the regular donations to the parish. However, for those who want to continue with envelopes and would like to get their new set, please contact the Gift Aid organiser, Denis Cross, balhamgac@rcaos.org.uk, tel. 020 8682 0988, to arrange delivery. Please also tell him if you have been an envelope member and now have decided to change to standing order/bankers' payments.
3. Please don't forget that we still need your help with **stewarding** in church. Our churches are permitted by law to open and hold services during the lockdown, but they need to be safe places. **Our very special gratitude goes out to our stewards**, whose work is now more important than ever. If you value our open churches, and the ability to come to Mass, please do consider volunteering as a steward – we need your help.

We are now looking for stewards to help with Masses during May. Please follow the link below:

<https://doodle.com/poll/9yx5pqu9kp9zwbmk>

4. This Saturday, 15th May, we continue a series of **First Holy Communion Masses** for the children of the parish. A little later in the term (June 12th and June 19th) we will celebrate similar Masses for the candidates who have been preparing for their Confirmation (some of who have been waiting for over a year, due to the pandemic and lockdown). Please do keep these young people in your prayers over these next few weeks, as they take this important step in their Catholic faith.

Please note – on these Saturdays there will still be a parish Mass at 10.00 am, however, there will not be Confessions after that Mass, as the First Holy Communion/Confirmation Masses will follow almost immediately. Confessions will still be available on Sunday afternoons, during the Holy Hour (5.00 – 5.45 pm), or after one of the 9.30 weekday Masses.

With our prayers and best wishes for the Easter season,

Fr Richard and Fr Giovanni

