



Dear parishioners,

Once again, we bring you a weekly update, including some forthcoming feasts and an important note about face coverings in church.

Saint Lawrence of Rome

Our 'saint of the week' is St Lawrence, a deacon of Rome, who was martyred in AD 258. Lawrence is famous for a trick he played on the Roman prefect, who was carrying out a persecution of the Church. He was ordered to hand over all the treasures of the Church, and agreed to do this, but said he would need a little time to gather all the treasure together. The prefect agreed to the delay, and Lawrence used the time to distribute all the money the Church had to the poorest people in Rome. On the day appointed, Lawrence then turned up at the prefect's office accompanied by the poor people, whom he then proudly presented to the official: 'These' he said 'are the real treasure of the Church!'. The prefect was so furious he ordered Lawrence to be killed by roasting him over an open fire – for which reason Lawrence's symbol in art is a gridiron (as seen in the picture here). St Lawrence reminds us that Christ's Church must always be on the side of the poorest and most in need, whoever they may be.

Face-coverings now required in church

As you have probably seen reported in the media, the Government has changed its rules on face coverings, so that they are now required in places of public worship as from Saturday 8th August. I am sure I can rely on parishioners to be responsible in this regard. Please note that children up to the age of 11 are exempt from this rule, as are a number of adults, for various reasons which can be found on the Government's website (www.gov.uk). Obviously, those with a valid reason not to wear a face covering are still welcome to attend Mass. It is important that we all do our very best to limit the spread of COVID-19, and that we are also sensitive to the situation of others.

Our Catholic bishops, in their document 'Guidance for the Celebration of Mass', clarify that: 'As those on the sanctuary are sufficiently distant from the congregation, there is no need to wear face coverings'. This applies to the priest and servers, and also (for fairly obvious reasons) to any readers while they are actually carrying out their ministry. Readers should remove their face covering when they get to the lectern, and then replace it when they have finished the readings.

Solemnity of the Assumption

Next weekend (15/16th August) we will celebrate the Assumption of Our Lady into heaven.

With best wishes and every blessing,

Fr Richard