



Dear parishioners,

1. March is traditionally dedicated to **St Joseph**, and this year, 2021, has also been specially dedicated to St Joseph by Pope Francis. The Pope has written an 'Apostolic Letter' to mark this occasion, entitled 'Patris Corde' ('With a father's heart'). In it, Pope Francis looks at different aspects of St Joseph's life and vocation – especially focussing on his spiritual fatherhood, as both guardian of Jesus and protector of the Church. The Pope also reveals his own special devotion to St Joseph, and tells us about a prayer which he has said every morning for over 40 years. The prayer runs as follows: *'Glorious Patriarch Saint Joseph, whose power makes the impossible possible, come to my aid in these times of anguish and difficulty. Take under your protection the serious and troubling situations that I commend to you, that they may have a happy outcome. My beloved father, all my trust is in you. Let it not be said that I invoked you in vain, and since you can do everything with Jesus and Mary, show me that your goodness is as great as your power. Amen.'* We might make this prayer our own, during this month of March we have now begun.
2. During Lent, we are celebrating the **Stations of the Cross** every Friday evening at 6.00 pm and every Sunday evening at 5.15 pm. When we pray the Stations, we remember the great love which led Jesus to suffer and die for us – and we ask that we be made more worthy of that love, through rejecting sin and striving to live as true disciples. Do come along and join us.
3. During Lent, we are also offering an **early Mass at 6.45 am**, on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. If you would like the opportunity to attend Mass before beginning the day's work, do come along and join us.

4. This pandemic has reminded us of the value of being part of a supportive local community and in this spirit, **we have organised a Friends of Holy Ghost group to offer practical help to those in the Parish who may need it.**

This help could include picking up prescriptions, shopping for essentials, collecting parcels - amongst other things.

If you, or someone you know in the parish, would welcome this sort of help, then please call us on 07312077830 or email us at hgbalhamvolunteers@gmail.com any day between 9am and 6pm. One of the Friends will answer and arrange help as needed from our team of volunteers.

5. 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. **Please note, we will soon be looking for stewards to assist with the special Holy Week services as well.**

THERE IS A NEW DOODLE WHERE YOU CAN SIGN UP TO HELP IN MARCH – please follow this link:

<https://doodle.com/poll/n7d4vrgvft45mfcc>

If you have any difficulty is using the Doodle, or other questions, you can email us at holyghostvolunteers@gmail.com. Thank you!

With our best wishes and every blessing,

Fr Richard and Fr Giovanni