

## PARISH OF THE ENGLISH MARTYRS Goring Way

17.05.2020

Father Liam O'Connor, 37 Compton Avenue, Goring-by-Sea, West Sussex. BN12 4UE

Presbytery 01903 242624 / Church repository 01903 506890

Email: emgoring@english-martyrs.co.uk Website: [www.english-martyrs.co.uk](http://www.english-martyrs.co.uk)

Deacon Gary Bevans 01903 503514

Arundel & Brighton Diocesan Trust is a Registered Charity No: 252878

## Sixth Sunday of Easter

### ***Masses will be celebrated without a congregation***

Saturday	16 <sup>th</sup>	Andrea Pyle RIP
Sunday	17 <sup>th</sup>	Audrée Price RIP
Monday	18 <sup>th</sup>	The Parish
Tuesday	19 <sup>th</sup>	Intention of James Drago
Wednesday	20 <sup>th</sup>	For the Canonisation of Mat Talbot
Thursday	21 <sup>st</sup>	Intention of James Drago
Friday	22 <sup>nd</sup>	Michael Mascarenhas RIP
Saturday	23 <sup>rd</sup>	Patrick O'Sullivan RIP
Sunday	24 <sup>th</sup>	Norbert McCabe RIP



**TODAY'S READINGS:** Acts 8:5-8, 14-17; 1 Peter 3:15-18; John 14:15-21

**NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:** Acts 1:1-11; Ephesians 1:17-23; Matthew 28:16-20

***Thursday is the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord, a Holy Day of Obligation. Mass from English Martyrs Good Shepherd Chapel will be available on-line from 9.00 am***

**PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS:** Maithé Bennett, Frances Boylan, Halina Kuczynska-Mills & family, Rose Little, Albert Davitt, Lelia Murray, Nicholas & Mary Murphy, Anne Steere, Anthony Canneaux, Lawrence Brownlee, Margaret Birch, Lita Yong, Patrick Ryan, Brenda Peazold, Mary Wessel, Gina Palermo, Elizabeth Hoskins, Joan Cutmore, Christine Watson, Gordon Milne, Alfred Deacon, Roni Horstead, Ronnie Tyler, Jenny Begley, Bill Hogg, Breda Schlimgen, Michaela Finn, Winifred Lyons, Yvette Allen, Kerry McStravick, Lydia Van Melsen

**2. THOSE WHO HAVE DIED RECENTLY: FATHER DOUGLAS PERKINS** and those whose anniversary occurs about this time: Olive Humphrey, Pat Lucey, Pouppy Baeza, V Rev Cn Desmond McCarthy, Kathleen Simmonds, Bert Copping, Anne Berendt, Jacqueline Davies, Patricia Trantor, Mary Benson, Petronella Woods, Elizabeth Scotney,  
*May they rest in peace and rise in glory*

### **3. SPONSORS NEEDED TO HELP CHESTNUT TREE HOUSE CHILDREN'S HOSPICE:**

After the London Marathon was cancelled, Mr Byrne challenged the Chatsmore school community to consider doing a '26.2 challenge' to raise money for charity. Charities rely on big events like the London Marathon for much needed funds. So, Peter Clarke had a think about what he could do from home and decided he would do 26,200 press-ups! He is no fitness fanatic so this is a tough personal challenge. He is now up to 400 press-ups per day and has completed 4,200 to date. He hopes to complete this challenge in July. The charity he has chosen is the Chestnut Tree House Children's Hospice, which is a charity already supported by the parish. Donations may be made via this link <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/peter-cl Clarke-press-up-challenge> and will go directly to the charity. For those without the internet, please drop any sponsorship money into the Presbytery in an envelope marked 'Peter Clarke's Chestnut Tree Challenge'. Thank you in advance!

**4. 'MY DAY BY DAY BOOK':** If you are one of the ten people who regularly collect this little book from the Front Porch please either email or phone the office to let me know and I will send the next two out to you. Five gone already!

**5. FIRST HOLY COMMUNION:** Many of the young people of our parish would have made their First Holy Communion at the 10.30 am Mass today. Sadly catechetical sessions had to be suspended in March. A few of these weekly meetings will be scheduled when we are in a position to make some plans and the young people will make their First Holy Communion some time in the autumn. We continue to keep them and their families in our prayers. Shortly after our First Holy Communion Sunday the preparation programme for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion for those who will be in Year 3 and over will commence.

**FATHER LIAM SAYS: The public celebration of Mass** will possibly be allowed – with many safety measures in place – from 4th July provided there is no worsening of the situation. It will be wonderful to have our Sunday Mass again. Sunday is a special day – but the word 'Sunday' is not used in the New Testament. In some versions of the Bible 'the first day of the week' – the Jewish way of designating this day – is mistranslated as Sunday. Another scriptural word for this special day is 'The Lord's Day'. Many European languages call Sunday after the Latin for 'The Lord's Day'.

The word 'Sunday' is derived from the Sun God and the New Testament did not wish to remind people of the pagan worship of the sun. All the days of the week in English are of pagan origin. The early Christians were glad to call their special day The Lord's Day. It was their original feast day because it was the day on which the Lord rose. For three centuries it was their only feast day, every recurrence of that day was celebrated as a little Easter.

Easter is a word not found in the Bible either. It is another pagan word. It is named after Eastre, the Saxon goddess of the dawn. East is named after her too as the sun rises in the East. The word most European countries use for Easter is derived from the Jewish word 'Pascha' the Feast of the Passover. Jesus' death and Resurrection took place around the Jewish Feast of the Passover.

All four gospels tell us that Jesus rose on 'the first day of the week'. Because of this they called it 'The Lord's Day' and celebrated it as their holy day. This was quite extraordinary because the first Christians were Jews and the Jewish Holy Day was the seventh day of the week. Sabbath means seventh day. But the Christians celebrated the Eucharist on the first day of the week. They changed the sabbath. We don't know of any command of Jesus for them to do it. They just did it. They felt that the day of the Resurrection was sacred. In Acts of Apostles Chapter 20 we hear of Paul and his companions at Troas (Troy) in Greece: 'On the first day of the week we met to break bread.' In his first letter to the Corinthians Paul refers to the gathering of Christians on the first day of the week, putting money aside to help needy Christians. (16:2) Sunday Mass was a feature of their lives though they would use different words to describe it. At this time there was no explicit law obliging Christians to take part in Sunday Mass. In spite of violent persecutions by successive Roman Emperors Christians continued to cling to their faith and to the Eucharist. We have a moving account of how the Christians of North Africa bore witness to their faith in the Acts of the Martyrs. In the town of Abitina fifty Christians were arrested at the conclusion of the Eucharist on the Lord's Day. Not one of them denied taking part in Christian worship. Their spokesperson, Emeritus, when questioned under torture said: 'we cannot live without the Eucharist.'

With the conversion of the Emperor Constantine the era of persecution came to an end. Now it was easier to become a Christian than to remain a pagan. The Emperor decreed in 321 that Sunday should be observed everywhere as a day of rest. With this new found freedom laxity soon set in and many Christians found that they could all too easily live without the Eucharist. When we gradually pick up our numbers again we must reach out to those who have been particularly badly affected by the virus. Mary's Meals have continued to carry on their good work as best they can. We were due to have had a collection for them just before we were all

overtaken by events. One or two collections for CAFOD would be very much in order also at some time in the autumn.

The Covid-19 virus is causing havoc to a Native American tribe. The Navajo and Hopi tribes belong to the Choctaw Nation and when their plight became known in mid-March many Irish people began to respond. Back in 1847 these tribes were so moved by the suffering caused to the Irish people by the Great Famine that they sent donations across the Atlantic to Ireland to help people they did not know and had no connection with. The Choctaw Nation were still reeling from their own disasters which they called their 'Trail of Tears'. They were driven from their own homelands and endured famine and all kinds of hardship. Many of their population of 60,000 died of hunger. Their elders were appalled to learn about the suffering in Ireland. Most of the people were totally reliant on potatoes for food. The land produced great quantities of grain and beef but this was in the vast farms owned by landowners, many of them absent landlords. Most people owned little land of poor quality only able to produce the humble potato. For three successive years this crop was devastated by blight which resulted in the deaths of about one million people and the emigration of another million. The Choctaw peoples responded while wealthier nations did little. They donated \$170 equivalent to about £4,000 in today's money. They now live across Utah, Arizona and New Mexico. There have been a number of events in recent years marking the great generosity of these people shown to the people of Ireland 173 years ago. Now they have raised about 2 million euros to help those hard-hit American tribes who in the midst of their own desperate woes reached out to Ireland in its need.

We all belong to the same family of God. We show we belong by reaching out to those in need.

May God bless you,  
Fr. Liam.