

ST FRANCIS PARISH

NEWSLETTER

St Francis Parish Halstead online:
<http://stfrancishalstead.org/home/welcome/>

Mass @ 11.00 am St Francis of Assisi – Before Mass each Saturday @ 5.15 pm The Sacrament of Reconciliation – Parish Rosary at 5:30, (Please contact Fr Felix directly to book a date/time for reconciliation)
 (Tel 01787 472477 / halstead@brcdt.org).



<u>Date</u>	<u>Time & Location</u>	<u>Intentions</u>
Saturday 18th January	6pm Vigil Mass	Health and wellbeing of Frances Willis, Patty and Paddy Dalton
Sunday 19th January Second Sunday in Ordinary Time	9am Mass St Nicholas	Eternal repose of Anne McMichan
Sunday 19th January Second Sunday in Ordinary Time	11am Mass Halstead	Health and Recovery of Anton Princen and Eternal repose of Charles Le Hardy
Monday 20th January St Fabian, Pope St Sebastian	No Mass	The sanctuary light prayer intention is for the Eternal repose of N O'Riain and birthday blessings on N Van Dulken
Tuesday 21st January St Agnes	No Mass	
Wednesday 22nd January	No Mass	
Thursday 23rd January	No Mass	
Friday 24th January St Francis de Sales, Bishop	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament @8am and Mass /@9.30am	



First reading: Isaiah 62: 1-5

Second reading: 1 Corinthians 12: 4-11

Gospel: John 2: 1-12



IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT:

- Youth Club: Every Last Saturday of the Month. Next one is coming up on 22nd of February 2025. It is open to ages 5-18.
- We are calling for sponsorship for the sanctuary lights for 2025. Write your intention and hand over to Fr Felix
- We need new choristers and youth club coordinators. If you feel disposed pleased speak with Fr Felix

The parish has a Facebook page that gets updated daily with Mass readings and other items of information.

<https://www.facebook.com/Stfrancishalsteadparish/>

- If you recently joined our parish, we would like to have your name registered in our records. Please pick up a form at the back, fill it and return it to me or drop it at the back of the church.
- It will be beneficial for you to identify with an aspect of our parish life by committing your time and resources to the good of our parish. We need reinforcements on our volunteer team. If you would like to join our Extraordinary Ministers of the Holy Eucharist, please speak to Fr. Felix.
- We are still in need of new Mass readers, a fundraising team, social organisers, church cleaners, gardeners, and youth club organisers. If you can, please help us.
- It is a wholesome thought to pray for the dead (2 Maccabees 12:46). Consider offering a Mass for your departed loved ones and also for the living. It seems the culture of offering Masses in our parish is fading. Pick a form at the church's back and fill out your intentions.
- There is a chance for communion of the sick at homes for the housebound. Please let me know if any parishioners require a visit.

- It costs approximately £4,000 monthly to run our parish. Please consider sending an offering or a standing order to the parish. You can also make a donation to St. Francis of Assisi Church. Sort code: 40-13-22. Account Number:71387014
- Everyone is welcome to participate in the Sanctuary Light sponsorship for 2024. You have the option to contribute £5.00 towards our weekly prayers for your specific intentions. Many thanks to those who signed up last year.
- Weekend collection: £442.65
- Candles/votives: £17.06
- Many thanks for your generosity to the parish.
- The Holy Water font is now available for us to use. From the tap, take some home for your use. Before using, please let Fr. Felix know. Feel free to bless yourself with the Holy Water font; however, sanitise your hands before use to minimise the risk of possible infection.

Deanery Business

22nd January 2025: Clergy dinner @ Brightlingsea

30th January 2025: Parish partnership meeting @ Lexden St Teresa's @7pm

Youth Club: Every Last Saturday of the Month. Next one is coming up on 22nd of February2025

Wednesday May 14th 2025: Deanery meeting to be held at St Francis Halstead@I lam

Father Felix Adiele

Jesus Changes Water Into Wine



Do you recognise the glory and presence of the Lord Jesus in your life? God often reveals his glory to us in the unlikeliest of places - in a cold stable at Bethlehem, at a village wedding party in Cana, on a bloody cross at Golgotha, or on the road to Emmaus. In today's Gospel reading we see the first public sign and miracle which Jesus performed. The Lord Jesus brought great blessing and joy to a newly wed couple and their wedding party. First by his presence, and second by saving them from embarrassment when the wine ran out. Changing water into wine was a remarkable act of kindness; but giving the best to last was unnecessary and unheard of. In the Old Testament

wine is seen as both a gift and blessing of God (Deuteronomy 7:13; Proverbs 3:10, Psalm 105:). That Jesus would miraculously produce 120 gallons of the best wine (many times more than needed) shows the superabundance of the blessings which he came to offer.

This miracle signifies the "new rich wine" of the Gospel and it points to the "wine of the new covenant" and the "bread of life" which Jesus provides for his disciples in the Lord's Supper or Eucharist. It also points to the Messianic banquet which Jesus will provide at the end of the age when he comes again in his glory. The miracles of Jesus demonstrate the power of God's love and mercy for his people. God's kindness knows no limits. And the ultimate expression of his love is revealed in the person of his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. He became flesh for our sake, and he died for our redemption, and he rose that we, too, might be raised up and glorified with him. Do you thirst for God and for the abundant life and blessings he offers to you?

Heavenly Father, you have revealed your glory in our Lord Jesus Christ. Fill me with your Holy Spirit that I may bring you glory in all that I do and say.

Daily Quote from the Early Church Fathers: *The touch of the Lord*, by Ephrem the Syrian (306-373 AD)

"Why did our Lord change nature at the beginning of his signs, if it was not to show that the divinity that changed nature in the interior of the jars was the same that changed nature in the womb of the virgin? And at the conclusion of the signs, he opened the tomb to show that the insatiable nature of death would not keep hold of him; he confirmed and ratified these two uncertainties of his birth and of his death. As to their nature, these waters were turned into the [fruit of] the vine; their stone vessels were not changed within their own nature. They were a symbol of his body, which was wonderfully conceived in a woman, and in a marvellous way by [the intervention of] no man within the virgin. He thus made wine out of water to teach about the manner of his conception and birth. He called upon the six jars as witness to the one virgin who gave birth to him; for the jars conceived in a unique way that was not customary for them, and they brought forth wine, and then they did not continue to produce [it]. Thus did the virgin conceive and give birth to Immanuel, and then she ceased and did not continue [to give birth]. The offspring of the jars was from smallness to grandeur, and from vileness to excellence, for from water came good wine. In this case [the birth from the virgin], however, it was from grandeur

to weakness and from glory to contempt. Yet in the case of these jars, they were for the purification of the Jews, and our Lord poured his instruction into them, to teach that he came in the way [found in] the Law and the Prophets, and he transformed everything by his teaching, just as wine [was made] from water."



Why Saint Agnes Was Canonised?

Saint Agnes of Rome was canonised for her unwavering faith and martyrdom at a young age. Despite intense persecution during the Roman Empire, Agnes refused to renounce her Christian beliefs or marry a pagan suitor, declaring her devotion to Christ. Her courage, purity, and steadfastness in the face of death inspired early Christians. Agnes was martyred around the age of 12 or 13, making her a symbol of innocence and faith. Recognised as a saint by the early Church, her canonisation honoured her sacrifice and enduring legacy as a model of virtue and fidelity to God.

