

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 1st February	6pm Vigil Mass	
Sunday 2nd February Presentation of the Lord	9am Mass St Nicholas	Eternal repose of Daniel Chadwick
Sunday 2nd February Presentation of the Lord	11am Mass Halstead	Eternal repose of Thomas & Maureen O'Connor and Brian Jackson, health & healing of Marie Yen
Monday 3rd February St Blaise, Bishop St Ansgar, Bishop	No Mass	The sanctuary light prayer intention is for the health and wellbeing of all
Tuesday 4th February	No Mass	
Wednesday 5th February St Agatha	No Mass	
Thursday 6th February St Paul Miki and companions	No Mass	
Friday 7th February	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament @8am and Mass /@9.30am	



First reading: Malachi 3: 1-4

Second reading: Hebrews 2: 14-18

Gospel: Luke 2: 22-40



IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT:

- * There will be a Crib collection (second) this weekend for support to Brentwood Youth Society
- * On the 24th January Jackie Tyler was 85 - to celebrate we will be having a birthday celebration after the 11am Mass on Sunday 9th in Halstead to thank God for His provision
- * Next Sunday there will be a second collection for Lourdes pilgrims and the sick
- * 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: £413.35
- Candles/votives: £21.96
- Second Collection: Crib Collection/Donation:
- Mass intentions for January: £50.00
- 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

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

Wednesday May 14th 2025: Deanery meeting to held at St Francis Halstead@11am.

Father Felix Adiele

Glory To God In The Highest...

The aim of the second session of our First Holy Communion programme was to look at:

- how we celebrate Mass as a special occasion
- how we say "Thank you" to God for all we have
- the part played by The Gloria in our Mass Liturgy

We started our session with a shared prayer that we read together and it was really good to note that the children were very comfortable being active participants. As a "Starter" to our session we reminded ourselves about the Bible, its different parts and the name of our Church.

Our Word Game - We gave the children a card with a single word and then challenged them to describe or explain the word so that the others in the group would get the meaning. Some of the words were general vocabulary such as - *cars, elephants, chocolate* - others were more demanding such as - *Priest, Church, God, Pray* - and related more to the Communion programme. The group were absolutely superb and everyone participated and contributed to the activity - with some really excellent answers.

We followed this up with some group work that looked at

When do we say thank you and who do we say thank you to? Once again we were very impressed by the way the group engaged with the content - some of their answers are recorded as slides on the attached presentation.

We then looked at "Special Occasions" and the group added their own ideas that included - *Birthday, Christmas, Halloween,*

Weddings, Meeting with friends - etc.

We introduced the idea that attending Mass, and participating in the Eucharist (Thanksgiving), is a Special Occasion and that coming to a Mass is a reason to celebrate individually and collectively.

We finished our session by looking at a Guide To Prayer using the word "ACTS"

A Asking God for something

C Celebrating what God has done for us

T Thanking God

S Saying Sorry to God

The group were given a new version of "The Gloria" that we have written specifically for them to try and help them with understanding the Gloria we say together at Mass. We ended the session by reading this version of "The Gloria" together.

Thank you for your continuing support and we look forward to the children furthering the knowledge and understanding at Mass in Halstead or Castle Hedingham.

Nigel



Confronting the sin of indifference and unbelief

When Jesus first proclaimed the good news of God's kingdom to his own townspeople at Nazareth (Luke 4:23-27), he did not hesitate to confront them with their sin of indifference and unbelief. He startled his listeners in the synagogue at Nazareth with a seeming rebuke that no prophet or servant of God could receive honour among his own people. He then angered them when he complimented Gentiles (non-Jews) who had shown more faith in God than the "chosen ones" of Israel. Some who despised the Gentiles (non-Jews) even spoke of them as "fuel for the fires of hell." Jesus' praise for "outsiders" offended the ears of his own people because they were blind-sighted to God's merciful plan of redemption for all the nations. The word of rebuke spoken by



Jesus was met with indignation and hostility. The Nazarenes forcibly threw him out of their town and would have done him physical harm had he not stopped them.

We all stand in need of God's grace and merciful help every day and every moment of our lives. Scripture tells us that "the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning" (Lamentations 3:22-23). God gives grace to the humble who seek him with expectant faith and with a repentant heart that wants to be made whole and clean again.

The Lord Jesus will set us free from every sinful habit and every harmful way of relating to our neighbour, if we allow him to cleanse and heal us. If we want to walk in freedom and grow in love and holiness, then we must humbly renounce our sinful ways and submit to Christ's instruction and healing discipline in our lives. Scripture tells us that the Lord disciplines us *for our good that we may share his holiness* (Hebrews 12:10). Do you want the Lord Jesus to set you free and make you whole again? Ask him to show you the way to walk in his healing love and truth.

