

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 26th April Feast of Divine Mercy	6pm Vigil Mass	Health and successful operation for Linda Jones
Sunday 27th April Divine Mercy Sunday	9am Mass St Nicholas	Wellbeing of all
Sunday 27th April Divine Mercy Sunday	I am Mass Halstead	Eternal repose of Helen & Emma Mary Funnell
Monday 28th April Saint George - patron saint of England	No Mass	The sanctuary light prayer intention is for the remembrance of the departed in our Easter lilies list
Tuesday 29th April St Catherine of Siena	No Mass	
Wednesday 30th April St Pius V, Pope	No Mass	
Thursday 1st May St Joseph the Worker	No Mass	
Friday 2nd May St Athanasius	Exposition and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament @ 8am and Mass @9.30	



First reading: Acts 5: 12-16

Second reading: Revelation 1: 9-11, 12-13, 17-19

Gospel: John 20:19-31

Jesus, I trust in you!

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT:

- Special thanks to all those who made our Easter celebration a success. And more thanks for your donation to the parish clergy.
- Our Parish Youth club takes place at the last Saturday of the month. The next one is coming up on the 31st of May 2025 at 11am. It is open to ages 5-18.
- We are calling for sponsorship for the sanctuary lights for 2025. Write your intention and hand it over to Fr. Felix.
- We need new choristers and youth club coordinators. If you feel disposed, please 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.
- **Candles/ votive: £40.52**
- **Holy Places collection: £153.71**
- **Easter clergy collection: £1,185.38**
- **Mass intention for April. £35.00**
- **Sanctuary light donation: £10.00**
- 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.

For your diaries:

- **Youth Club: Every Last Saturday of the Month. Next one is coming up on 31st of May 2025.**

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

Divine Mercy Sunday, observed on the Second Sunday of Easter, originates from the visions of St. Faustina Kowalska, a Polish nun, in the 1930s. Jesus appeared to her, revealing His message of divine mercy, emphasising forgiveness and love for all humanity. He requested a feast on the first Sunday after Easter to honour His mercy, promising abundant graces for those who confess and receive Communion that day. St. Faustina recorded these revelations in her diary, detailing Jesus' desire for a novena of prayers and the veneration of the Divine Mercy image, inscribed with "Jesus, I trust in You." Initially, the devotion faced skepticism, and Faustina's writings were temporarily suppressed. However, her confessor, Fr. Michael Sopoćko, promoted the message, and the devotion spread among Polish Catholics. In 2000, Pope John Paul II, a compatriot of Faustina, canonised her and established Divine Mercy Sunday universally, fulfilling Jesus' request. The feast underscores God's boundless mercy, aligning with Easter's themes of resurrection and redemption. Today, it's celebrated worldwide, with millions participating in novenas, venerating the Divine Mercy image, and seeking the promised graces through sacramental participation.



Catherine of Siena was canonised in 1461 by Pope Pius II due to her extraordinary holiness, profound influence on the Church, and exemplary life of faith. Born in 1347, during the Black Death, she exhibited intense piety from childhood, dedicating herself to God through a Dominican tertiary vow. Her mystical experiences, including visions of Christ and a "spiritual espousal," underscored her deep union with God, inspiring her spiritual writings, like *The Dialogue*, which revealed divine truths. Catherine's impact extended beyond mysticism. She fearlessly advised popes, notably urging Pope Gregory XI to return the papacy from Avignon to Rome, strengthening Church unity during a turbulent era. Her tireless work for peace, reconciling feuding Italian factions, and her care for the poor and sick exemplified Christian charity. Despite her lack of formal education, her theological insights and letters to clergy and laity demonstrated wisdom that shaped Church reform. Her simple life, marked by fasting and selfless service, and her death at 33 from illness cemented her reputation for sanctity. Miracles attributed to her intercession after death further confirmed her holiness. Canonisation recognised her as a model of faith, courage, and service, later earning her the titles of Doctor of the Church and co-patroness of Europe.



Pope Francis, born Jorge Mario Bergoglio on December 17, 1936, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, died on April 21, 2025, at 88. The first Latin American and Jesuit pope, elected in 2013, he championed social justice, and environmental care. His controversial attempts at reforms, advocating for the poor, migrants, and interfaith dialogue, tried to reshape the Catholic Church but sparked a fierce conservative resistance. Despite health struggles, including a stroke, he remained active, blessing crowds at Easter 2025. Francis requested a simple burial at Santa Maria Maggiore.



Have the courage to go against the tide of current values that do not conform to the path of Jesus.

Pope Francis



Owing to Pope Francis' funeral the new date is **Saturday 3rd May at 10am** in the Church Hall, outside St Francis on Colchester Road. Please consider donating anything that is clean, presentable and of some value: you can leave them with Father Felix or arrange to drop them off outside the hall: contact details are at the top of the newsletter. If you have a few minutes, come along and browse what's on offer and make a contribution - I have found some real bargains, such as pair of decent Logue suede desert boots for £2 last year!

If you have a few minutes to help set up the Hall on Friday 2nd May from 10am, that would be greatly appreciated.

Most of the best stuff is snapped up by 11:30 on the sale day, so come early if you want to find a bargain!

Jonathon

