



ST FRANCIS PARISH

NEWSLETTER



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 9th May	6pm Vigil Mass	Eternal repose of Sean Dullea
Sunday 10th May Sixth Sunday of Easter	9am Mass St Nicholas	Health, healing and wellbeing of all
Sunday 10th May Sixth Sunday of Easter	11am Mass Halstead	Health, healing and wellbeing of all
Monday 11th May	No Mass	The sanctuary light prayer intention is for the repose of Father Emile Nkumu
Tuesday 12th May Ss Achilleus, Nereus, Pancras	No Mass	
Wednesday 13th May Our Lady of Fatima		
Thursday 14th May	Ascension of the Lord Mass at 6:30pm	
Friday 15th May	Exposition/Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament 8.30am and Mass@ 9.30am	<p><i>First reading: Acts 8:5-8</i></p> <p><i>Second reading: 1 Peter 3: 15-18</i></p> <p><i>Gospel: John 14: 15-21</i></p>



IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT:➤ **Youth Day at Castle Hedingham – Saturday, 20 June 2026**

We're excited to invite all young people in the parish to a special Youth Day at Castle Hedingham on Saturday, 20 June 2026. This day is designed to help our youth connect with their peers, grow in faith, and gain valuable life skills such as CV writing and more. Thanks to the remaining portion of the Our Lady of Ransom Grant, which will subsidise the trip. Each young person is asked to contribute £5.00 to help cover operational and staffing costs. All food and venue expenses will be fully covered by the grant. It's going to be a meaningful, fun, and enriching day — we'd love to see our young people there.

➤ **Our Parish Youth Club takes place on the last Saturday of the month. It is open to ages 5-18.****Deanery Business**➤ **Feast day of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Light, spouse of the Holy Spirit**

You are all invited to join Bishop Alan and the priests of the Colchester Deanery for Mass in celebration of the feast day of Our Lady of Light on Saturday 16th May 2026. The day will commence with a walking procession on the sea front commencing at 10.00am. Bishop Alan will preside at the Mass at 11.00am. All attending are invited to bring some flowers to place at the Shrine during the Penitential Rite. A reception will be held in the parish hall following the Mass.

➤ **We are calling for sponsorship for the sanctuary lights for 2026. Write your intention and "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.

- 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. 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 2026. 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: £24.14**
- **Halstead coffee: £28.01**
- **Second collection : £9.77**
- **Weekend collection: £265.79**
- 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 Saturday 30th of May 2026**
- **Coffee morning on Friday from 10am to midday**

Why did Jesus leave his disciples forty days after his resurrection? Forty is a significant number in the Scriptures. Moses went to the mountain to seek the face of God for forty days in prayer and fasting. The people of Israel were in the wilderness for forty years in preparation for their entry into the promised land. Elijah fasted for forty days as he journeyed in the wilderness to the mountain of God. For forty days after his resurrection Jesus appeared numerous times to his disciples to assure them that he had risen indeed and to prepare them for the task of carrying on the work which he began during his earthy ministry.

The Risen Lord is with us always to the end of time

Jesus' departure and ascension into heaven was both an end and a beginning for his disciples. While it was the end of Jesus' physical presence with his beloved disciples, it marked the beginning of Jesus' presence with them in a new way. Jesus promised that he would be with them always to the end of time (Matthew 28:20). Now as the glorified and risen Lord and Saviour, ascended to the right hand of the Father in heaven, Jesus promised to send them the Holy Spirit who would anoint them with power from on high on the Feast of Pentecost, just as Jesus was anointed for his ministry at the River Jordan (Luke 3:21-22, 4:1, 18). When the Lord Jesus departed physically from the apostles, they were not left in sorrow or grief. Instead, they were filled with joy and with great anticipation for the coming of the Holy Spirit.

The Risen Lord empowers us to carry on his work

Why did the Risen Lord ascend into heaven? The Father raised the glorified body of his Son and enthroned him in glory at his right hand in heaven. The Lord Jesus in his glorified body now reigns as Lord over the heavens

and the earth - over all that he has created. The Risen Lord reigns from the throne in heaven as our Merciful Redeemer and Gracious King. He intercedes for us and he empowers us through the outpouring of his Holy Spirit. The Lord Jesus gives us new life in his Spirit and he strengthens us in faith, hope and love so we can serve him and carry on his work as citizens of his kingdom here on earth.

You will be my witnesses to the ends of the earth

Jesus' last words to his disciples point to the key mission and task he has entrusted to his followers on earth - to be his witnesses and ambassadors to the ends of the earth so that all peoples, tribes, and nations may hear the good news that Jesus Christ has come to set us free from sin, Satan, and death and has won for us a kingdom of peace, joy, and righteousness that will last forever.

How can we be effective witnesses for Christ? Jesus told his disciples, "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you - and you shall be my witnesses... to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Jesus gives his followers the same power he received when the Holy Spirit came upon him and anointed him at the beginning of his mission (John 1:32-33). The Gospel is the power of God, the power to release people from their burden of sin, guilt, and oppression, and the power to heal, restore, and make us whole. Do you believe in the power of the Gospel to change and transform your life?

We are ambassadors for Jesus Christ

Paul the Apostle reminds us that we are called to be ambassadors for Jesus Christ. Just as ambassadors are appointed to represent their country and to speak on behalf of their nation's ruler, we, too are appointed by the Lord Jesus to speak on his behalf and to bring others into a close and personal encounter with the Lord and Ruler of heaven and earth.

This is the great commission which the risen Christ gives to the whole church. All believers have been given a share in this task - to be heralds of the good news and ambassadors for Jesus Christ, the only saviour of the world. We have not been left alone in this task, for the risen Lord works in and through us by the power of his Holy Spirit. Today we witness a new Pentecost as the Lord pours out his Holy Spirit upon his people to renew and strengthen the body of Christ and to equip it for effective ministry and mission world-wide. Do you witness to others the joy of the Gospel and the hope of the resurrection?



Bible Study

Wednesday 20th May 2pm.

At Southey Green

We welcome new members, please get in touch if you require more information.

07702244880



Pilgrimage to Assisi 7 - 11 September 2026. Cost £695 not including extras from Stansted. Details at the back of the church or

enquiries@johntours.com or

07859824279

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To hire the Church hall please contact Lynda Jackson on 07855 464876