



ST FRANCIS PARISH

NEWSLETTER



Mass Times

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time & Location</u>	<u>Intentions</u>
Friday 17th July	Exposition/Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament 8.30am and Mass@ 9.30am	
Saturday 18th July	6pm Vigil Mass	Eternal repose of Derek Jones
Sunday 19th July 16th Sunday	9am Mass St Nicholas	Deceased relatives and friends of Donna and Trevor Hopkins
Sunday 19th July 16th Sunday	11am Mass Halstead	Health and wellbeing of all
Monday 21st July	No Mass	The sanctuary light prayer intention is for those suffering and experiencing illness.
Tuesday 21st July St Lawrence of Brindisi, Priest	No Mass	
Wednesday 22nd July St Mary Magdalene	No Mass	
Thursday 23rd July	No Mass	
Friday 24th July St Sharbel Makhoul	Exposition/Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament 8.30am and Mass@ 9.30am	
Saturday 25th July Ss James, Apostle, Christopher	6pm Vigil Mass	
Sunday 26th July 17th Sunday		



First reading: Wisdom 12:13, 16-19

Second reading: Romans 8: 26-27

Gospel: Matthew 13: 24-43



IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT:

- Special thanks for those who helped to set, stayed back, provided food and tidied up after our garden party. Thank you.
- The St Vincent de Paul Group is looking for a single bed to support a young mother in need. If you have a single bed you are able to donate, please speak to Deborah Hendy or Fr Felix. Thank you for your generosity.
- 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: £0.00
- Second Collection for Stella Maris: £69.32
- Weekend collection: £372.30
- Hedingham coffee: £43.00
- Halstead coffee: £13.60
- 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 25 of July 2026
- Coffee morning on every other Friday from 10am to midday



Father Felix

From Darkness to Light: Plato's Cave and Christ Our Light

Many people are familiar with Plato's famous Allegory of the Cave. In this story, a group of prisoners have spent their entire lives chained inside a cave, seeing only shadows cast upon a wall. Believing these shadows to be reality, they cannot imagine anything beyond them. When one prisoner is finally set free, he discovers the beauty and truth of the world outside. Returning to share his discovery, he is met with disbelief and rejection.

Although written centuries before the birth of Christ, Plato's story offers a striking image of the human search for truth. As Catholics, we recognise that Jesus Christ is the fulfilment of that search. He declares, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12). Christ does not simply point us towards truth—He is the Truth, leading us from the darkness of sin into the light of God's love.

Like the prisoners in the cave, we can sometimes become comfortable with

limited ways of seeing the world. Our faith invites us to look beyond fear, selfishness, and false values, allowing the Gospel to transform our hearts and minds. Through prayer, the Scriptures, the teaching of the Church, and above all the grace we receive in the Sacraments, Christ continually leads us into a deeper understanding of God's presence.

The freed prisoner in Plato's story was rejected when he returned to share the truth. Jesus, too, was rejected by many, yet through His Death and Resurrection He overcame sin and death, opening the way to eternal life for all who believe in Him.

As we continue our journey of faith, may we allow Christ, the Light of the World, to guide us each day, so that we may reflect His light to our families, our parish, and everyone we meet.



Ann Widdecombe was raised in the Church of England and remained an Anglican for much of her life. Over many years, however, she became increasingly drawn to the teachings and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, particularly its clear moral doctrine, apostolic continuity, and authority. After a period of prayer, study, and reflection, she was received into the Catholic Church at Easter in 1993. Widdecombe has often described her conversion as a search for truth rather than a rejection of her Anglican roots. Since then, she had spoken openly about how her Catholic faith has shaped both her public service and her personal life. One of her final public comments about her faith was:

"The duty of the Church is to lead, not to follow."



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/@me for reconciliation)
(Tel 01787 472477 / halstead@brcdt.org).

Parish Garden Party 12th July

The event was a real pleasure to attend, with lots of delicious food from around the world. A big thanks to all volunteers who made it possible, those who donated, attended and joined the church community.

Monthly Draw Winners:

April

£50: Verity Jones. £25 Josh and M Hendy

May:

£50: Doreen Moses. £25 Jessie Malloney, Enida Gomez

June

£50 Malcolm Edney. £25 Caroline Davies, Joe Mussey



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