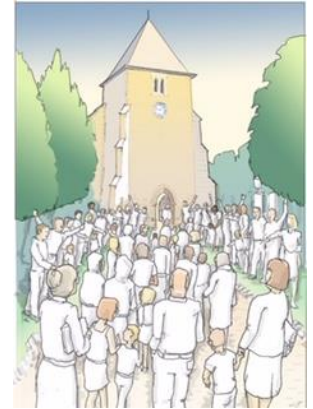


St. Mary's Weekly Newsletter

Dear Friends,

As we carry on in these unprecedented times of isolation and lockdown, and with our church doors closed, I thought it may be nice to have a weekly newsletter to keep us all in touch. While we cannot meet face to face, I do hope that many of you are able to access the live-streamed services that we continue to do daily. I do pray that these times are helping us to be together as the 'church' while not physically together in the church building. There are also some prayers and music being added to the church Facebook page too. Do please keep looking at the church website (www.stmaryshadlow.org.uk) for news and services, and the church Facebook page. As these times of lockdown continue, I hope we will continue at St. Mary's to find new ways of being together till we can all be physically together again.



Every blessing,

Nicky rev.nickyharvey@gmail.com 01732 852564 07919 075470

Homily from Wednesday 22nd April 2020 – John 3: 16-21

Our Gospel reading from John this morning begins with the words: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son," I wonder how many times throughout the years we have heard these simple yet powerful words? We know that Jesus came to earth for us and we know that Jesus died for us, but do we truly grasp and comprehend the depth of God's love for us?

During difficult or painful times in our lives, even during these times of lockdown and restrictions due to Covid-19, it can often be more difficult to trust God. At these times, God may appear to be absent or indifferent to us. Yet God is at our side, walking with us, gracing us with his constant presence, and loving us every step of our way. At other times, we may believe that we are unworthy of God's love. This belief may arise from knowing that we have done something we know was sinful or hurtful of another, or it may come from our own belief that we are not loveable for whatever reason.

But God's love is very different from human love. God's love never fails or falters because the essence of God's being is love. Many of us will have heard the words: "God is love" from a very young age. Yet at times we struggle to believe and trust in that reality!

So today in whatever we do, may we open our hearts and lives to God's love. Take time to bask in God's love. To feel the warmth of God's love in the sunshine. To see God's love in the beauty of creation. To find God's love in our tasks and conversations. God's arms of love are open to us and he is waiting for us. Will we respond to his love today?

Amen

Parish News

The food bank continues to operate from St. Mary's, and it has been a busy time! Many thanks to all those who have contributed financially during this difficult time. Your donations have helped us to keep us stocked up, as well as enabling us to give out fresh milk, bread, fresh fruit or veg as well as the usual tinned goods to those in need. If you would like to contribute or need some help from the food bank please contact Rev.Nicky Harvey on 01732 852564 or Barbara Smith on 01732 852174.

The Hadlow Parish Assistance Scheme is running well with 125 people being supported by 70 volunteers. Those requiring assistance are buddied up with a volunteer to provide support such as collecting medication, shopping, posting letters, dog walking or a friendly phone call. If you would like to register with this scheme, then please contact Mel in the Parish Council office on 01732 851878.

Collect for the 3rd Sunday of Easter

Almighty Father, who in your great mercy gladdened the disciples with the sight of the risen Lord: give us such knowledge of his presence with us, that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life and serve you continually in righteousness and truth; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen

We pray for those who have recently died:

Kenneth MacKenzie
Joan Ball

From our Book of Remembrance, we pray for:

Colin James Large (24th)
John Joseph Barden (26th)
Mary Grace Kemp (1st)
Lara Pragnell (1st)
Gertrude Field (1st)

We pray for those living in:

Puttenden Road
Pittswood
High House Lane

