

GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY

Each one of us is made in the image and likeness of God but we are all different. God calls us to be saved as part of a community but each of us is called, as an individual, to perform some particular service. We have a vocation; we are called. At our baptisms, we were each anointed prophet, priest and King and to fulfil the promises normally made on our behalf by parents and god-parents we must give of ourselves if we ever expect to experience to the full all those joys which were promised for this world and the next.

Some people prefer to be spiritual but not religious. They avoid the problems of being part of an institution but may end up self-centred and neglect those around them in need.

The experience of the Spirit at Pentecost led the disciples to be baptised and become part of a community of faith. Jesus, the good shepherd, calls us to be members of his flock. Strange how we think of Jesus both as the shepherd and the Lamb of God? There are two sides to us all.

Rituals like sacraments strengthen us while religion can prevent us from being too spiritually self-centred. Some people are called to be priests in the sacramental sense whilst Christians in general exercise their ministry by teaching people, especial by example, by sharing the social teachings of the Church; they bring balance and reason to the community in which they live ... that is the nature of justice: the primary purpose of a ruler or king; and they give of themselves for the glory of God.

Yes, those were a few not-so-random thoughts for this Good Shepherd or Vocations Sunday. The priesthood of the laity is a phrase which has come fore since Vatican II but centuries ago St Cyprian described the complimentary natures of priesthood and how the ministerial and lay should and must work together as they share in the priesthood of Christ.

As a ministerial priest who has been told that he is ill and who must expect to take a back-seat role for at least a few months I'm looking to everybody in the parish to step up. I'm going to take a short break before I commence chemotherapy and in a fortnight's time would like to think most of us will have an import (even though it be a) small role to play in fulfilling our vocations.

I thank all those who have helped out in so many ways over recent months and years in the parish but there is so much more for us all to do. I'm going away to think how we might coordinate these change BUT I'll be back soon.

Thank you for all your cards prayers and assistance.
Fr. Kevin.

BAPTISMS: The evening for parents who wish to have their children baptised takes place on Tuesday 24th April in St Mary's Parish Hall, New Mills, at 7.00pm. All parents wishing to have their children baptised in the next few months should complete a form at the back of church and attend.

"ADOREMUS" – Liverpool 7-9 September

Question: Have you thought of being a delegate from the parish for one or more days of the Congress? Have a word with Joe Hennigan (01663 747998) or Mary Robinson (01663 745989).

Have a look at last week's Newsletter or the timetable at the back of church to help you say 'Yes'!

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTRY: Father John has temporarily commissioned three new Eucharistic Ministers to help take Holy Communion to the sick and housebound. Jackie Cecil, Deborah Laughesen and Helen Wilson will all start this important ministry, before doing their formal training later this year; please keep them in your prayers/

FATHER STAPPARD will be celebrating the Diamond Jubilee of his ordination on June 22nd with a 2.00pm mass celebrated by the Bishop, followed by a reception in Kirby Ashfield. He is hoping sufficient numbers from NM, MB and Chapel would like to attend, that a coach might be organised. He has asked Pat Atkinson to let him have names in order that he may send personal invitations. Please could those who are interested advise Pat as soon as possible (07824099542 or via the parish office) to give an indication of numbers and to keep Fr. Stappard informed. Thank you.

DIOCESAN DAY OF RENEWAL The next of these monthly events will be held on 5th May at Our Lady of Lincoln, LN2 2HE 10am-4pm. . With Mass Concelebrated by the Bishop, Healing Ministry and a Talk by Ros Powell of Birmingham Diocese. See Poster for details

PARISH PILGRIMAGE FROM FATIMA TO SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA: A small group (up to 4) David, Jim, Mary + Joe, will be travelling to the shrine at Fatima (Portugal) on the 2nd May, and then walking to the tomb of St James in Santiago de Compostela (Spain) , alongside other pilgrims from around the World – a pilgrim walk of about 500 kilometres, which is expected to take around 4 weeks... Please remember them in prayer on their spiritual journey.... If you would like any intentions left at the Fatima shrine, please leave them at either church before 30th Apr