



CATHOLIC PARISH OF
ST. ELIZABETH OF PORTUGAL
Newsletter

Twelfth Sunday of the Year Sunday 25th June 2017

Mass Book: Page 93

The Sunday Experience

In last week's newsletter I mentioned the importance of what I called the "Sunday Experience". In the past the most common reasons for people to attend church were that they had faith and wanted to worship God. Today the situation is more complicated. It remains true that established Christians attend church as a consequence of their faith and their desire to pay honour to the Lord. However, with the growth of secularisation, the number of people who fall into that category has decreased dramatically and continues to fall in most places. At the same time there are growing numbers of people who go to church in the hope of finding some deeper meaning to their lives. They are open to religion even though

they may have a very tenuous understanding of what exactly they are searching for. The significant thing is that unless they are made to feel alien or out of place there is a good chance they will come again and enter into a process of discernment that eventually leads them to faith. The window of opportunity is very small: I mentioned last week that most visitors decide whether to return within **seven minutes** of attending a church.

This week The Telegraph posted an article under the rather cumbersome, heading: "One in six young people are Christian as visits to church buildings inspire them to convert". If our parishes are to grow we need to take a number of things into account. First of all we need to make an active effort to welcome the

stranger - which is, after all, a Biblical precept. Part of welcoming the stranger is putting up with inconveniences. Sadly it has sometimes happened in our parish that some parishioners have made mums struggling with small children feel unwelcome. In the Gospels Jesus himself is very explicit about the fate of people who do not welcome the stranger.

We must also accept that not everyone who comes to church has the benefit of the same religious formation we have received. That is why it is so important that we offer formation possibilities for those who want to know more about Christ or who want to grow as Christ's disciples.

There is also a need for us all to acknowledge

Parish Life & News

the importance of the “Sunday experience”. What is it like for a stranger who walks through our doors? Does anyone welcome them? Are they expected to know where hymn books are, what page to turn to in the Missal, and where they can sit? Does anyone even smile at them or introduce themselves by name?

One aspect of the Sunday experience is the music. Music is one of those things that tends to divide congregations and the feedback from the “Big Conversation” suggests that there are some strong feelings in our parish as well. We have changed our Sunday evening music to a more contemporary style. That Mass has seen a 70% increase in attendance and most of the people who attend say they - or their children - like the music. If the music makes the Mass more accessible to young people and therefore we keep them longer, there is more of a chance that they will think

about their faith and grow attached to it. We also changed the musical style at the 9.30am Family Mass which has had a more mixed response. Some people like it and others, not unreasonably, miss some of the more traditional and familiar Catholic hymns so we are looking at how we can recover a more traditional hymnody for that Mass while not losing the more accessible contemporary style. The 11.00am Mass remains our Solemn Mass with hymns and Latin chants and while we are always striving to improve, there are no plans to change the style of music at that Mass.

The “Sunday experience” is all about first impressions. Jesus says we welcome him whenever we welcome the stranger. That is why it is so important for us to strive always to improve the experience of those who come to Church here. Whatever we do for them we are also doing for Christ. It is an integral part of our worship.



Parish Feast Day - Tuesday 4th July

The social committee are organising the party that will take place after the 7pm Mass on the 4th July. We are providing the savoury canapes and drinks and are asking parishioners to donate bite size desserts/cakes. We will be in the crypt from 6.30pm onwards if people want to drop of donations before Mass.

We also need volunteers to help serve food and drink and clear up on the night. If you would like to donate some bite size desserts or help on the night please contact Anna McNulty-Howard at amcnultyhoward@yahoo.co.uk or on 07740434749.

Parish Life & News

Fr Damian Saez

Many of you will remember Fr Damian Saez whom we welcome back to our parish for a short holiday. Fr Damian is trying to improve his English and would welcome a chance to meet with parishioners and have conversations with them.

Jean Vanier

A remarkable film about the Catholic philosopher Jean Vanier and the L'Arche communities he founded was released in the UK on the 23 June. The film tells the story of the search for love and friendship by the intellectually disabled members of the the L'Arche communities in France and Bethlehem. All screenings across the UK are listed here: www.summerintheforest.com. For those unable to go, you will be able to download the video from the website at a special reduced price for parishioners. You will need to quote a Parish discount code SUMMER2017.

First Holy Communion Enrolment

All children (including those at St Elizabeth's School) must enrol for First Communion preparation through the parish where they attend Mass.

The enrolment forms for First Communion are now available at the back of the Church. They must be returned to us by Saturday 15th July. First Communion **does not** have to take place in Year 3 and you are welcome to defer preparation to a later year if you wish.

Parish Mission

We still **desperately** need accommodation for our missionaries on the nights of **7th & 8th** July. Floorspace is fine. Please let me know if you can help.

Teenagers

Y-Disciple is a five-week formation module for teenagers. We have three more sessions this term. All teenagers are welcome. We meet in the crypt of the Church at 6.00pm and will be finished by 7.45pm.

Exciting Training Opportunity

If you are keen to see how our faith can be shared with young children (age 3-6), using beautiful hands-on materials, and in a way that leads to joy and peaceful contemplation, you might like to consider signing up for the **Catechesis of the Good Shepherd** course thing place here at St Elizabeth's from 17-22 July. In a retreat-like atmosphere, participants will experience 25 presentations based either on Scripture or an aspect of the Mass and have an opportunity to practise presenting and making materials, as well as taking part in lectures and group discussion. ***A number of places have been reserved for parishioners so do get in touch soon if you would like one.*** To find out more and to register please follow this link: <http://www.cgsuk.org/becoming-a-catechist> or contact Christine Byrne at children@stelizabethschurch.org.uk.

Thank You

The Offering last week came to:

Gift Aid	£209.00
Not Gift Aid	£567.70
Total	£776.70

The second collection for Bishops' Day for Life Fund came to £115.63.

Church Suite

We manage our parish database, rotas, emails and many other things through Church Suite. You can access "Church Suite" online or download it as an app to your smartphone or tablet device & contact us for a link.



Social Media



stelizabethschurch.org.uk



StLizRichmond/



@StLizRichmond

Mass Intentions this Week

This Week

Saturday

5.30pm

Sunday

9.30am

11.00am

5.30pm

Monday

9.00am

Tuesday

9.00am

Wednesday

9.00am

Thursday

9.00am

8.00pm

Friday

10.00am

Saturday

5.30pm

Sunday

9.30am

11.00am

5.30pm

Twelfth Sunday

Joan Windsor

Holy Souls

Pro Populo

St Josemaria Escriva

Michele Tan's Int

St Cyril of Alexandria

Holy Souls

St Irenaeus

Holy Souls

SS Peter & Paul

Holy Day of Obligation

Louis Tan

First Martyrs of Rome

Holy Souls

Leonard & Ethelreda Brewer

Thirteenth Sunday

Pro Populo

Ralph Fytton's Intention

Please Pray For:

Kenneth Alps, Raymond and Marie Toal, Ben Horgan, Ella Dale, Stella Richards, Anne Wilkinson.

Fr Stephen Langridge MA Oxon.

St Elizabeth of Portugal

The Vineyard,

Richmond,

TW10 6AQ

Tel. 020 8940 2439

E. frstephen@stelizabethschurch.org.uk

Parish Surgery:

To see Fr Stephen without the need for an appointment please come to the Parish Surgery which usually takes place between 6.30pm & 8.00pm on Tuesday evenings. It is important to check the calendar on the parish website to confirm the date.