



# PARISH MAGAZINE “Signs of the Times”



Eucharistic Community of  
Saint Francis de Sales and Mary Magdalene

## THE MONTH OF MAY IS DEDICATED TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

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The month of May is dedicated to **The Blessed Virgin Mary**. All but the last 4 days of the month fall within the liturgical season of **Easter**, which is represented by the liturgical colour of white - the colour of light, a symbol of joy, purity and innocence (absolute or restored). The last four days of the month (beginning the Monday after Pentecost) are in **Ordinary Time** which is represented by the liturgical colour green. This symbol of hope is the colour of the sprouting seed and arouses in the faithful the hope of reaping the eternal harvest of heaven, especially the hope of a glorious resurrection.

The world is resplendent with Spring's increased light and new growth. It is Mary's month in the Easter season and all of nature rejoices with the Queen of heaven at the Resurrection of the Son she was worthy to bear. During the remainder of Easter time, let us endeavour through the prayers of the Holy Liturgy and the Holy Rosary to deepen our gratitude for the mystery of our Baptismal rebirth in Christ.

The month of May, with its profusion of blooms was adopted by the Church in the eighteenth century as a celebration of the flowering of Mary's maidenly spirituality. With its origins in Isaiah's prophecy of the Virgin birth of the Messiah under the figure of the Blossoming Rod or Root of Jesse, the flower symbolism of Mary was extended by the Church Fathers, and in the liturgy, by applying to her the flower figures of the Sapiential Books-Canticles, Wisdom, Proverbs and Sirach.

In the medieval period, the rose was adapted as the flower symbol of the Virgin Birth, as expressed in Dante's phrase, 'The Rose wherein the Divine Word was made flesh', and depicted in the central rose windows of the great gothic cathedrals-from which came the Christmas Carol, 'Lo, How a Rose 'ere Blooming.' Also, in the medieval period, when monasteries were the centers of horticultural and agricultural knowledge, of the fields, waysides and gardens, came to be seen as symbols of Mary..."  
**John S Stokes.**

"In the hierarchy of holiness it is precisely the 'woman', Mary of Nazareth, who is the 'figure' of the Church. She 'precedes' everyone on the path to holiness; in her person 'the Church has already reached that perfection whereby she exists without spot or wrinkle".  
**John Paul II Mulieris Dignitatem, 1988**



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### The Holy Father's Intentions for the Month of May 2012:

**General:** That initiatives which defend and uphold the role of the family may be promoted within society.

**Missionary:** That Mary, Queen of the World and Star of Evangelisation, may accompany all missionaries in proclaiming her son Jesus.  
[www.apostleshipofprayer.net](http://www.apostleshipofprayer.net)

Source: [CatholicCulture.org](http://CatholicCulture.org)



# FUTURE EVENTS

## FOR THE MONTH OF MAY

Event	Date	Details
<b>Introduction to the Knights of St Columba</b>	13th	Representatives from the Knights of St Columba will and talk (no collection) to the Parishioners about it's activities after the 9.15am Mass in St Mary's.
<b>First Communion Session for the Parents of 2013 Children</b>	19th	First session for the parents for those wishing to make their First Confession and First Communion next year (2013). Pick up a form which you will find in the porch and return it, with a photocopy (not the original) of your child's baptism certificate to the parish office.
<b>NET Meeting</b>	19th	2.15pm in the Parish Meeting Room at Stony Stratford
<b>Parish Bingo</b>	19th	Come along and join in the fun. More details later - do mark the date on your calendars.
<b>Maintenance Group</b>	20th	Group meeting at 2.00pm in the Parish Meeting Room at Stony Stratford
<b>Mystagogia Mass</b>	25th	Will be held at Northampton Cathedral at 7.30pm for those received into the Church at Easter and their family/friends and sponsors.
<b>First Holy Communion Children- First Mini-Retreat and Assessment for 2013 children</b>	26th	This is the first session for the children wishing to make their First Confession and First Holy Communion in 2013. This is for any children currently in school year 2 (or above) who will be in Year 3 (or above) from September. It is very important that children attend all three of the sessions arranged for them - dates for the full course and the reception of the sacraments are on the "First Holy Communion" flyers at the back of the church in the stand marked "Catechesis in the Home".
<b>Pentecost Lunch for the Parish Volunteers</b>	27th	Pentecost lunch and barbecue at St Mary's for all those who volunteer their time to the Parish - or are interested in doing so. A "Thank You" and social in the hall and garden. More details in the newsletter later.

## FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE

Event	Date	Details
<b>Prayers for the Diamond Jubilee</b>	3rd	Prayers at 9.15am Mass and 11am Mass will be read. The prayers have been written by the Bishop's Conference in honour of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee.
<b>Bank Holiday Masses</b>	4th 5th	Mass will be at 10.00am. See weekly newsletter for location. Mass will be at 10.00am. See weekly newsletter for location.
<b>Diocesan Pilgrimage to Walsingham</b>	9th	A full day's outing - bring a packed lunch (the cafes and tea shops in Walsingham can get very crowded!). Morning spent exploring Little Walsingham village, the shrine shops and for those who wish, the abbey ruins. After lunch, gather for the mile long walk to the Catholic Shrine at the Slipper Chapel (the coach will take those unable to walk the mile) and after a short service won arrival at the shrine, free time to browse the shop, visit the tea room, pray in the chapels or go to Confession before Mass. Leave for home about 5.00pm (arrive St Mary's about 8.00pm)
<b>Corpus Christi Procession</b>	10th	Will take place at the Diocesan Shrine of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour at Great Billing, to join the procession around the village. A coach has been booked and will leave St Mary's at 1.30pm promptly and we will expect to leave Great Billing about 5pm to travel back to Stony Stratford. Cost is £10 per person - please see Dawn or Derick with your money to book a place.
<b>Churches Together in Wolverton</b>	14th	Churches Together in Wolverton (CTW) AGM will be at West End United Church Wolverton, at 7.30pm.
<b>Guild of St Jerome</b>	16th	Guild Meeting has been scheduled at 11am in the Parish Hall.
<b>Maintenance Group</b>	17th	Group meeting at the Parish Meeting Room in Stony Stratford at 2.00pm
<b>Holy Day of Obligation</b>	29th	Solemnity of Ss Peter and Paul. Masses at 10.30am at St Francis de Sales; and 7.30pm at St Mary Magdalene.
<b>Volunteers Group Meeting</b>	30th	3.00pm in the parish hall. More details later!



# SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Our spiritual life can be developed in several ways, through:

- Participating in the devotions such as: Adoration or Divine Mercy, Divine Office: morning, evening prayer, Terce and Angelus prayers throughout the day
- Providing sacred Service to the Parish and each other through one of the Guilds of The Blessed Sacrament, St Catherine, St Jerome, and St Stephen
- There are also many groups undertaking valuable works of service such as: Ministry of Music, Ministry of Youth, Cleaning, Gardening, Counting to name just a few
- Through the development of our understanding; through reading, attending the Parish Courses and those at the Maryvale Institute in Birmingham

In this section we will look at the different ways of how we can develop ourselves and participate in the fullness of our Parish Community.

**RCIA COURSE from 12.00 to 14.00 at St Francis Presbytery, Wolverton**

**Dates are:**

9th (Session 18 and 19)

23rd June (Session 20)

7th July



## A Quick Journey Through the Bible - Bible Course



The Parish has just completed its third course of "A Quick Journey Through the Bible". The course consists of eight sessions of ninety minutes (with specified pre-reading in between). Each lesson uses a DVD input followed by discussion in small groups using prescribed course materials.

*This course shows you the Bible as the incredible story of Salvation history - God's glorious plan for leading his people. It makes reading the Bible, easy, and exciting: this study helps you learn the major people, places, event and themes of the Scripture. Getting the "bigger picture" of salvation history.*

**You will discover God's plan for your life as you discover His amazing story.**

Report Back - Comments from Parishioners who have completed the Course so far:

### **How has the Study helped me understand the Bible?**

A much greater understanding of the Bible has emerged through detailed study, DVD and exploration of ideas within groups.

Clarified what context the stories were written in and shown how it all links together. The bite-sized approach using the narrative stories was refreshing and enjoyable.

### **How has this experience assisted you in understanding our Catholic Faith?**

Extended my knowledge of the faith and provided me with a stronger grounding in our roots. It re-enforces that we are part of the on-going story. The opportunity for open and frank discussion in groups was to be relished.

Helps understand the origin of the faith and its ascendancy.

### **Additional Comments:**

Of the several bible study courses I have attended in the past, this was the most fun and user-friendly of them all. It has also given me a practical toolkit to help understand and decipher the bible which up to now has been fairly "daunting" to read. I pray and hope that all parishioners will eventually go through this course.

**The Next Eight Week Course will be offered again in the Autumn. Please check the Parish Magazine and newsletters for dates. REMEMBER - THE BIBLE IS NOT JUST ANY STORY - IT IS YOUR STORY!**

**A DEEPER DIVE COURSE  
"THE GREAT ADVENTURE  
- BIBLE TIMELINE"  
COMING SOON!**

We are about to start a longer, more in-depth study for those interested in using the same format as for "The Quick Journey", except that DVD sessions are longer, and the study will be in more informal groups over at least six months. More details to follow.



# MINISTRY OF YOUTH

## 2012 First Holy Communion

### Friday 15th June - Rehearsal for those receiving the sacrament this year.

7.30pm to 9.00pm at St Mary's.

All children and at least one parent must attend so they know what they are doing on the day; and so that pews may be allocated to families.



### Sunday 17th June - First Holy Communion Mass

at 2.00pm at St Mary's. Followed by presentation of certificates in the parish hall and photographs in the garden. A "Communion breakfast" will be served to the children in the parish hall.

## CONFIRMATION SESSIONS STARTING.

Preparation for all the Sacraments is done in the home by parents, in fulfilment of the promise they make at their child's baptism, that they will bring their child up in the practice of the faith. The Parish helps you to do this by holding three sessions for parents; and three sessions for the young people themselves, in the run-up to the Sacrament of Confirmation.

The first of the **sessions for parents** is on Saturday, 23rd June, from 10am to 12 noon in the Parish Hall.

The first of the **sessions for those wishing to be confirmed** - whether they are youngsters in school year 8 or above - or perhaps adults who missed out on this Sacrament when they were younger - will be on Saturday 30th June from 10.00am to 1.00pm in the Parish Hall.

We need a **PHOTOCOPY** (not the original!) of the baptism certificate of all those wishing to be confirmed. If you have not yet handed this in - you can bring it along on one of the above sessions.

The Sacrament of Confirmation will take place in the Autumn of 2013. Details of the other sessions of the course (both for adults and also for the confirmandi themselves) are on the 20p leaflet you will find at the back of the churches in the series "Catechesis in the Home".

# MAINTAINING OUR PARISH FOR TODAY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS



LIVING THE FAITH - OUR CALL TO ACTION!

## REPORT BACK - LENTEN SOUP LUNCHESES



On Mondays in Lent, following the lunchtime Mass, we had a light lunch of homemade soup and fresh bread in the parish hall. In addition to enjoying some really excellent soups, and conversation and communion with fellow parishioners, the Lent lunches raised £128.90 which has been sent to CAFOD to support the important work they do with those in need around the world. This year, the government has promised to match all donations to CAFOD made up to May - so this amount will be doubled!



# ENGLAND FESTIVALS FOR SAINTS AND SINNERS

During the month of may we celebrate a wealth of festivals

As Spring blossoms forth and we are surrounded by new life, we spend this month full of the joy of our Easter celebration and in anticipation of the coming of the Holy Spirit, our Consoler and Advocate.



During the month of may we pray to the following saints



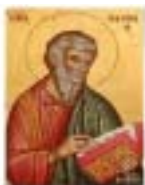
## May 1st: St Joseph the Worker

St Joseph is the husband of Our Lady and the foster-father of Jesus. Today we celebrate his witness of hard work as a carpenter who worked long hours. St Joseph teaches us that the work we do is important. Through it we give our contribution and our service to our family and society. Many countries set aside one day a year to honour workers. This encourages the dignity and appreciation of work.



## May 3rd: Philip and St James

Both of these saints were part of the original group of apostles. Philip was one of the first apostles chosen. He was born at Bethsaida, in Galilee.



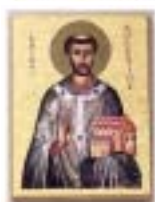
## May 14th: St Matthias

St Matthias was one of Our Lord's seventy-two disciples. He had been a follower of Jesus during his public life and as we read in the first Chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, two names were proposed, who could be replacements for Judas. One was Matthias and the other a man named Joseph, called Barsabbas. Both had been with Jesus from his baptism and in the Jordan until the resurrection. St. Matthias preached in Judea and then continued to Cappadocia (modern-day Turkey).



## May 17th: Ascension

Forty Days after the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, Jesus ascended into heaven. Along with the resurrection, the ascension functioned as a proof of Jesus' claim that he was the Messiah. Ascension Thursday marks the start of the Novena to the Holy Spirit, which is prayed until Pentecost Sunday. (In some countries, Ascension is moved to the nearest Sunday.)



## May 27th: St Augustine of Canterbury

Pope St. Gregory the Great chose St Augustine and forty other monks to preach the Gospel to the people of England. When they reached southern France, people warned them that the English were fierce. They asked the Pope's permission to give up the whole idea, but the pope asked them to go to England just the same. At Canterbury, St. Augustine built a church a monastery, and it was there that he was buried.



## May 30th: St. Joan of Arc

Joan was born in 1412. One day while she was watching her sheep, St Michael the Archangel told her to and save France. For three years she heard the voices of saints calling her to action. When she was sixteen, she began her mission.

This was the time of the Hundred Years' War. St. Joan led an army into the city of Orleans, which the English had almost captured. The English armies had to retreat.

After the victories, Joan was captured by the enemy. The French King did not even try to save her. She was put in prison and after an unfair trial, was burned at the stake.



## May 31st: The Visitation of Mary

When the Archangel Gabriel announced to Mary that her cousin Elizabeth was pregnant, Mary set out at once to visit her. What graces the Blessed Mother brought to the home of her cousin! St. John, in her womb, was cleansed of original sin and St. Elizabeth was filled with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Mary stayed three months at her cousin's home.

# MINISTRY OF HEALING



THE MINISTRY OF HEALING PROVIDES:  
PEACE, COMFORT, RELIEF AND HEALING  
TO MANY OF US DURING OUR SPIRITUAL  
JOURNEY.

## URBI ET ORBI MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE BENEDICT XVI Easter Sunday, 8th April 2012

*Dear Brothers and Sisters in Rome and throughout the world!*

*"Surrexit Christus, spes mea" – "Christ, my hope, has risen" (Easter Sequence).*

May the jubilant voice of the Church reach all of you with the words which the ancient hymn puts on the lips of Mary Magdalene, the first to encounter the risen Jesus on Easter morning. She ran to the other disciples and breathlessly announced: "I have seen the Lord!" (Jn 20:18). We too, who have journeyed through the desert of Lent and the sorrowful days of the Passion, today raise the cry of victory: "He has risen! He has truly risen!"

Every Christian relives the experience of Mary Magdalene. It involves an encounter which changes our lives: the encounter with a unique Man who lets us experience all God's goodness and truth, who frees us from evil not in a superficial and fleeting way, but sets us free radically, heals us completely and restores our dignity. This is why Mary Magdalene calls Jesus "my hope": he was the one who allowed her to be reborn, who gave her a new future, a life of goodness and freedom from evil. "Christ my hope" means that all my yearnings for goodness find in him a real possibility of fulfilment: with him I can hope for a life that is good, full and eternal, for God himself has drawn near to us, even sharing our humanity.

But Mary Magdalene, like the other disciples, was to see Jesus rejected by the leaders of the people, arrested, scourged, condemned to death and crucified. It must have been unbearable to see Goodness in person subjected to human malice, truth derided by falsehood, mercy abused by vengeance. With Jesus' death, the hope of all those who had put their trust in him seemed doomed. But that faith never completely failed: especially in the heart of the Virgin Mary, Jesus' Mother, its flame burned even in the dark of night. In this world, hope can not avoid confronting the harshness of evil. It is not thwarted by the wall of death alone, but even more by the barbs of envy and pride, falsehood and violence. Jesus passed through this mortal mesh in order to open a path to the kingdom of life. For a moment Jesus seemed vanquished: darkness had invaded the land, the silence of God was complete, hope a seemingly empty word.

And lo, on the dawn of the day after the Sabbath, the tomb is found empty. Jesus then shows himself to Mary Magdalene, to the other women, to his disciples. Faith is born anew, more alive and strong than ever, now invincible since it is based on a decisive experience: "Death with life contended: combat strangely ended! Life's own champion, slain, now lives to reign". The signs of the resurrection testify to the victory of life over death, love over hatred, mercy over vengeance: "The tomb the living did enclose, I saw Christ's glory as he rose! The angels there attesting, shroud with grave-clothes resting".

Dear brothers and sisters! If Jesus is risen, then – and only then – has something truly new happened, something that changes the state of humanity and the world. Then he, Jesus, is someone in whom we can put absolute trust; we can put our trust not only in his message but *in Jesus himself*, for the Risen One does not belong to the *past*, but is *present* today, alive. Christ is hope and comfort in a particular way for those Christian communities suffering most for their faith on account of discrimination and persecution. And he is present as a force of hope through his Church, which is close to all human situations of suffering and injustice.

May the risen Christ grant hope to the Middle East and enable all the ethnic, cultural and religious groups in that region to work together to advance the common good and respect for human rights. Particularly in Syria, may there be an end to bloodshed and an immediate commitment to the path of respect, dialogue and reconciliation, as called for by the international community. May the many refugees from that country who are in need of humanitarian assistance find the acceptance and solidarity capable of relieving their dreadful sufferings. May the paschal victory encourage the Iraqi people to spare no effort in pursuing the path of stability and development. In the Holy Land, may Israelis and Palestinians courageously take up anew the peace process.

May the Lord, the victor over evil and death, sustain the Christian communities of the African continent; may he grant them hope in facing their difficulties, and make them peacemakers and agents of development in the societies to which they belong.

May the risen Jesus comfort the suffering populations of the Horn of Africa and favour their reconciliation; may he help the Great Lakes Region, Sudan and South Sudan, and grant their inhabitants the power of forgiveness. In Mali, now experiencing delicate political developments, may the glorious Christ grant peace and stability. To Nigeria, which in recent times has experienced savage terrorist attacks, may the joy of Easter grant the strength needed to take up anew the building of a society which is peaceful and respectful of the religious freedom of all its citizens.

*Happy Easter to all!*



# USEFUL CONTACT INFORMATION

<p><b>PARISH WEBSITE, INTRANET &amp; E-MAILS</b>  <a href="http://www.saints-francis-and-mary.org.uk">http://www.saints-francis-and-mary.org.uk</a>  <a href="http://www.dignet2.co.uk">http://www.dignet2.co.uk</a>          bernard.barrett@dignet2.co.uk          Parish Priest: Fr. Bernard Barrett</p>		<p>PLEASE NOTE  <b>DIGNET2</b>  <b>IS THE PARISH INTRANET</b>  <b>FOR ADMIN PURPOSES ONLY</b>  <b>AND IS NOT THE WEBSITE</b></p>
<p><b>PARISH DETAILS FOR CHURCH OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES</b>          Radcliffe Street, Wolverton          Tel: 313162.          Priest's Residence: 22 Stratford Road, Wolverton, MK12 5LJ</p>	<p><b>PARISH DETAILS FOR CHURCH OF ST MARY' MAGDALENE</b>          105 High Street, Stony Stratford.          Tel: 564363.          Parish House: 105 High Street Stony Stratford, MK11 1AT</p>	<p><b>GENERAL ENQUIRIES CONTACT</b>          Dawn Clark or Angela Tavener who are based at St Mary's Presbytery Monday and Wednesday between 9.30 &amp; 11.30 each week or e-mail <a href="mailto:office@dignet2.co.uk">office@dignet2.co.uk</a></p>
<p><b>PARISH SURGERY SESSION</b>          Sessions are available for Parishioners with Fr. Bernard with 15 minute slots. To book a session please contact Dawn at the Parish Office as usual between 09.30 to 11.30 on Monday and Wednesday each week to arrange a surgery time. Note: times, days and locations may vary.</p>	<p><b>HOSPITAL CHAPLAINCY TEAM</b>          If you are a Catholic or you know some one who is a Catholic who is going into MK General Hospital please notify the Catholic Chaplaincy team via Daphne Preece on 01908 243700.  <b>Please do not contact Fr. Allan directly - ring the Lay team.</b></p>	<p><b>PRAYERS FOR THE SICK</b>          All our sick are remembered in a general prayer for healing at each Sunday Mass. The sick are prayed for by name at the monthly Healing Mass. If you would like to add a name to the list for the Healing Mass, please contact: <a href="mailto:alan.mason@dignet2.co.uk">alan.mason@dignet2.co.uk</a> or telephone the parish office.</p>
<p><b>NEED TO PUT A NOTICE IN THE NEWSLETTER</b>          Contact Noreen or Dawn on <a href="mailto:newsletter@dignet2.co.uk">newsletter@dignet2.co.uk</a> or see Dawn in the Parish Office.          Copy deadline: Tuesday's at 12noon</p> <p><b>OR HAVE A POSTER GENERATED FOR PARISH ACTIVITIES</b> - please contact Dawn or Noreen (2-weeks notice required)</p>	<p><b>NEED A MASS BOOKLET IN ANOTHER LANGUAGE?</b>  <b>- 50p per copy</b>          Then speak to Dawn in the Parish Office.          Languages available are:          French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Czech, Polish</p>	<p><b>NEED TO BOOK THE PARISH HALL?</b>          E-mail: <a href="mailto:hallbooking@dignet2.co.uk">hallbooking@dignet2.co.uk</a>          Or call the Parish office 564363 during office hours.          You will be contacted by a member of the Admin Team who will confirm your booking or discuss alternatives.</p>
<p><b>EMERGENCY CALL PROCEDURE ONLY</b>          If you cannot get hold of Fr. Bernard at the Presbytery at Stony Stratford or Wolverton, and it is an emergency then contact one of the following who have an emergency number:</p>	<p><b>REPAIRS/CHURCH MAINTENANCE</b>          Any repairs/maintenance needed please notify the maintenance team on e-mail: <a href="mailto:maintenance@dignet2.co.uk">maintenance@dignet2.co.uk</a></p>	<p><b>CURRENT AND NEW PARISHIONERS</b>          If you would like to register onto the Parish Database, you can do this on on-line by accessing - <a href="http://www.dignet2.co.uk">www.dignet2.co.uk</a> and selecting the option "Parish Database"</p>
<p><b>St Mary's:</b>          Janet Tate (01908 510216)          Derick Rooney (265819)</p> <p><b>St Francis:</b>          Dawn Clark (07761 583307)          Mary Baker (312171)</p>	<p><b>SVP CONTACT</b>          Tel: 07919 557288          or          e-mail:  <a href="mailto:svp@dignet2.co.uk">svp@dignet2.co.uk</a></p>	<p><b>LEGION OF MARY CONTACT</b>          Tel: Mary (Legion President) on 07921 480027          or          E-mail: <a href="mailto:legion@dignet2.co.uk">legion@dignet2.co.uk</a></p>
<p><b>BAPTISMS BY APPOINTMENT ONLY</b>          You must speak to Fr. Bernard after a Sunday Mass.          Contacts: Pauline Hart on 511897 or Christine Simmons on 371896          Email: <a href="mailto:baptism@dignet2.co.uk">baptism@dignet2.co.uk</a></p>	<p><b>MARRIAGES ONE YEAR'S NOTICE REQUIRED</b>          Contact Janet Tate for any enquiries about preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage:          Email:  <a href="mailto:marriage@dignet2.co.uk">marriage@dignet2.co.uk</a></p>	<p><b>RCIA &amp; CONVERTS COURSE</b>          Contact Fr. Bernard          Tel: 313162 or          E-mail: <a href="mailto:bernard.barrett@dignet2.co.uk">bernard.barrett@dignet2.co.uk</a></p>

## MASS INTENTIONS

If you wish a Mass to be offered, complete a Mass Intention Form and pop it into the Parish Office at St Mary's or with the collection at Mass. Please specify *either* which Church you would like the intention said in, or a date. Remember to **include money for a Mass Card, if you need one and money for a stamp, if you need the card posted to you.** (Masses may be rescheduled if a funeral Mass takes place). **PLEASE NOTE THAT MASS CARDS COST 60P.** Mass intentions, all slots up to July are now full. There are plenty of slots available in July. Check with the parish office for the current availability of Mass dates, or see the weekly newsletter. Please book **at least 6 weeks** before the date you want for anniversaries!