



St. Michael's Bulletin



Saint Michael's is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham. Registered Charity N. 234216

Sonning Common, Dunsden, Peppard, Checkendon, Stoke Row, Emmer Green & Caversham Park
Priest. Father Chris Bester. Tel: 0118-972-3418 **Deacon :** Rev Francis Andrews. Tel: 0118-972-2354
Saint Martin's School, Pendennis Avenue, Caversham Park. Head; Mrs Anne Hogg, Tel: 0118-901-5544
e-mail. chris.bester@btinternet.com **website:** www.saintmichaelsonningcommon.org.uk

18th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, August 2nd, 2009
Vigil of Sunday 5.30 pm Holy Souls

9.00 am Our Parish family
Monday 9.00am Morning Prayer & Mass
Wednesday 9.00 am Eucharistic Service
Friday 9.00 am Morning Prayer & Mass

1030 am Nora Gallagher
Tuesday 9.00 am Eucharistic Service
Thursday 9.00 am Eucharistic Service
Saturday Vigil 5.30 pm Holy Souls

FOR OUR SICK PARISHIONERS.

Lord, send Your Healing Spirit on all who are in any way sick or distressed: we pray for Claudina Rodrigues, Eugenie Micotti, Joseph Bradley, Mike Coulehan, Harry Littlefair, Nancy Keogh, Donald Garland, Gerald Scullane, Jason Thatcher, David Roberts, Marie Evans, Rita Conlon, Margaret Keane, Siobhain Moran, Maureen Vinall, Frank O'Donnell, Gwen Payne, Judith Harris, Pat Walton, John Manning and the Howson family

Bring them Your healing and peace.

FOR THE DECEASED MEMBERS OF OUR PARISH FAMILY.

We pray for Bobbie Robson, Corazon Aquino and all who died recently: for all killed in wars, disasters and accidents: victims of terrorism and oppression; and for those who die of starvation or neglect. We pray for Rachele de Souza, Martin Lousley, Joyce Price, Bernard Morgan, Nicola Juniper, Sean Smith, Marie Wardle, Alan Tillotson, Mary Fogarty, Ted Dockrell, Josefa Cano and Sylvia Buffery whose anniversaries fall at this time.

Grant them the joy of Your Presence.

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SWINE FLU

At the moment there is great concern over the spread of this disease and in some areas a small amount of panic and over-reaction seems to be setting in. The Archbishop of Canterbury had suggested that Anglican churches should cease to offer communion from the chalice, and that it would be better for communicants not to receive Holy Communion on the tongue, but to receive the Host from the priest on their hands.

Within the Catholic community there is also some disagreement as to how we should proceed in order to protect ourselves from the spread of the disease. To give two examples:- In our neighbouring Portsmouth Diocese, **Bishop Crispian Hollis** has written to his priests and people and said; "I recommend the following measures:- That the Sign of Peace should be done in Indian fashion, joining you hands together and bowing the person next to you. That Holy Communion should be received on the hand and not on the tongue, nor should it be received from the chalice. Ministers should ensure that they wash their hands when arriving at church, and use 'sanitizers' to do so.

During the week we had a letter from our own Diocese. **Bishop William Kenney** tells us to be careful and sensible. He said that at the moment it is not necessary to make any changes. We should follow good hygiene practice and stay at home if we are feeling unwell.

Infection from the Chalice presents little risk, but the choice to receive rests with the individual. Holy Communion in the hand presents no risk, but receiving on the tongue could put the communicant, other communicants and the priest or minister at risk. It is the sign of peace which represents the greatest risk, particularly the hand-shake. But there is a choice of greetings, and most will make their own sensible decision. It is wise not to exaggerate the risk at the moment. Let us all be vigilant.

OUR LADY OF CAVERSHAM.

Flower Festival at St Anne's to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the shrine of Our Lady of Caversham, 15th and 16th August
ASSISTED SUICIDE

There are lots of comments in the press, and a little bit of confusion, too. In Catholic moral teaching there is a principle called "**The principle of double effect**". When an action has two consequences we should be clear about what our intention is. If I give someone in great pain a strong pain killer it will ease their suffering, but at the same time there is an unwanted side-effect which is that it drains the patient of strength and shortens their life. I do not want this to happen, but am powerless to prevent it. My intention is to relieve their pain, even though I know this will shorten the patient's life. So my action is morally correct. Some think that by giving a seriously ill patient a strong pain-killer is tantamount to helping them to die, because the drug has such an effect on the body that it drains the patient of life and strength. They are wrong, because the intention in giving such strong pain killers is simply to keep the patient out of pain, not to kill them. The good outweighs the evil, as it always must. **It is the intention which determines the morality of an action.** If I intend to lessen a patient's pain then that is praise worthy; but if I give a dose with which I intend to kill them, then that is morally wrong.

Current popular opinion seems to be in favour of allowing people the freedom to end their lives. If we make it legal, then why should we ever prevent anyone from committing suicide? If a teenager, young adult or senior citizen feels life is worthless, should we actively help them end their lives? Of course not. If we allow such a practice on the grounds that our life is our own and we can do what we like, then why should we ever prevent anyone who wishes to kill themselves? It is a slippery slope. Government will then step in, tell people they are a burden on society and must end their lives, or the State will do it for them. Those convicted of major crimes will no longer be sent prison for life, to be a burden on the tax-payer, but will be given drugs to end their lives and so make life and taxation lighter for us all. Have we forgotten Hitler, Stalin, Mao Tse-Tung, and Pol Pot?

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May we all have a rain-free week. Fr Chris