

2 The Grove, Kettering NN15 7QQ. Telephone 01536 512497

Website: [www.stedwardskettering.org.uk](http://www.stedwardskettering.org.uk)

Email: [parish@stedwardskettering.org.uk](mailto:parish@stedwardskettering.org.uk)

Parish Priest: Fr. Gregory Marchwiński

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Divine Mercy Sunday

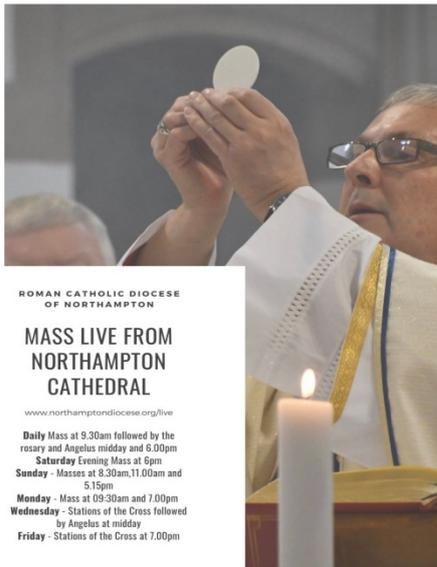
19<sup>th</sup> April, 2020

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**No Public Masses will take place in any of our Churches  
from Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March until further notice**

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## SPIRITUAL COMMUNION



Please join us in saying a **Spiritual  
Communion** at:

<http://www.stedwardskettering.org.uk/when-mcannot-be-celebrated-publicly-making-a-spiritual-communion/>

Or visit live streaming broadcasts of Mass from  
Northampton Cathedral at

<https://northamptondiocese.org/live/>

Sunday or Daily Readings:

<http://www.stedwardskettering.org.uk/spirituality/sunday-and-daily-readings/>

Keep an eye on the Vatican News channel for live streaming of events.

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en.html>

**REMINDER – DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY** Due to the current restrictions, it is not possible to fulfil the usual requirements for Divine Mercy this year. We can still venerate the image on Sunday April 19th and we can live stream Mass and partake in a spiritual communion. It is sufficient to reflect upon one's sins with a firm purpose of amendment and truly contrite heart, perhaps with the intention of going to confession when our churches reopen. The chaplet and image can be downloaded from <https://divinemeracy.life/chaplet-of-divine-mercy/> and a list of Mass times across the UK and Ireland is available at <https://www.churchservices.tv/timetable/> Some have Mass in the morning with the devotions at 3pm, others have Mass and devotions at 3pm.

### **THIS WEEK'S MASS INTENTIONS**

**Saturday** – for people infected by Covid-19

**Sunday** - Florence Sanders RIP, Wanda and family int.

**Monday** - Rose and Graham int

**Tuesday** - George Joseph

**Wednesday** - for people working in hospitals

**Thursday** - Rose and Graham int

**Friday** - Jessica Hodges int

**Saturday** – Jithu our seminarian int

**Sunday** - Chris Lally 3 Anniversary, Richard Nolan RIP, Bel Stephens RIP

To request a Mass Intention please send an email to:

[parish@stedwardskettering.org.uk](mailto:parish@stedwardskettering.org.uk)

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### **PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO HAVE RECENTLY DIED**

Please pray for those who have passed away, especially for Bernard Cox. His funeral service will take place on Wednesday, April 29 at 1.30pm at the crematorium.

### **PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK AND FOR THOSE WHO ASKED US TO PRAY.**

Let us remember especially Anthony Jarrem. May God give him patience and strength and Fr. Paul Inman (who used to be with us in Kettering) who has Covid-19.

### **SICK CALLS AT THIS DIFFICULT TIME – A MESSAGE FROM FR. GREGORY**

In accordance with official advice and to minimise the chance of me passing on infection I cannot undertake to visit the sick or housebound except in case of serious need. However please do not hesitate to call on me to visit those in imminent danger of death. Please telephone **01536 512497** with any such requests. I will of course be happy to pray for anybody who is sick but not close to death, if requested.

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## **PLEASE PRAY FOR FR. JO KIZITO**

At this difficult time for us in the UK, can we also remember in our prayers Fr Jo Kizito and his work with Refugees in Uganda. As in this country Public Mass has been suspended but unlike in this country he has to cope with all sorts of other viruses, malnutrition and poverty among the many thousands in his camp.

**Fr Jo's Easter Message can be seen later in this newsletter.**

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*Mass being celebrated in the Chapel in the Presbytery*

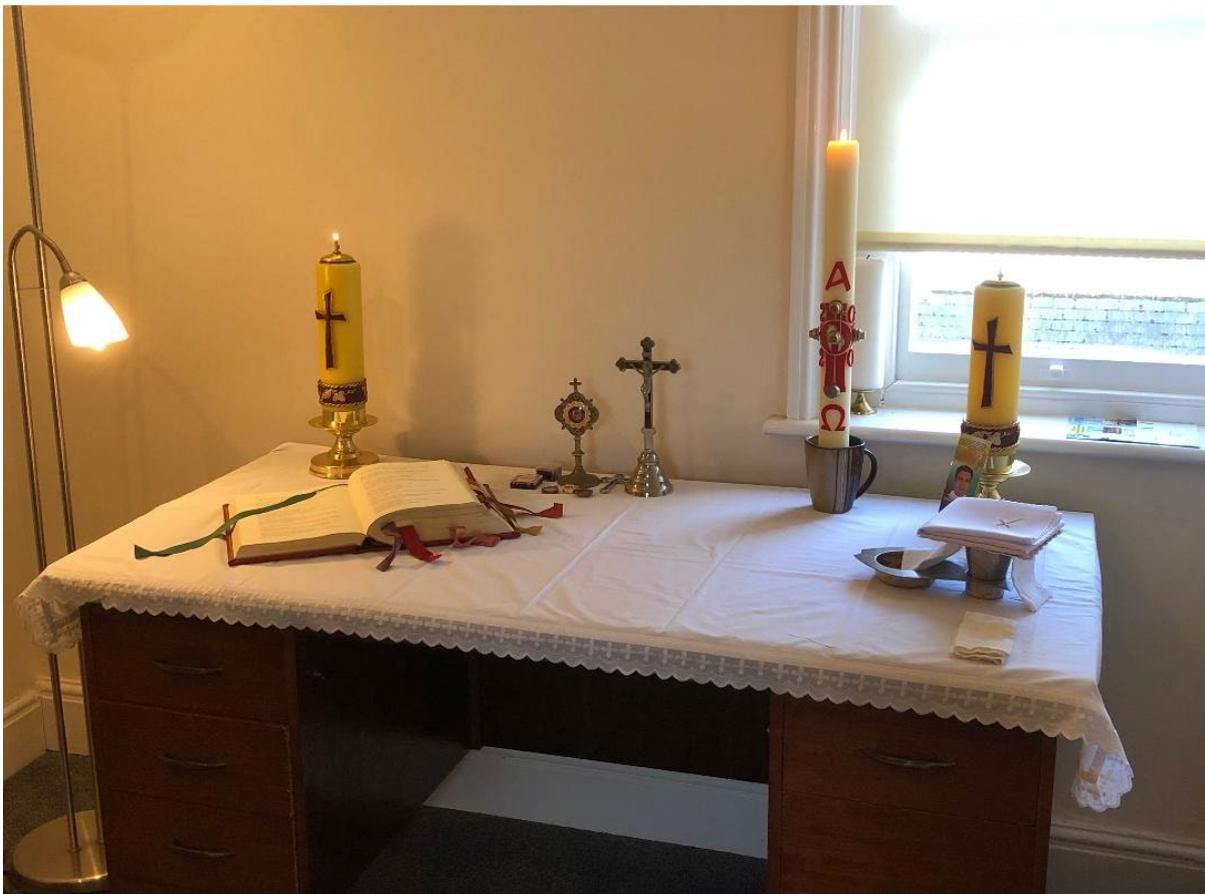
## **STREAMING THE MASS INTO OUR "CHURCH AT HOME"**

It came as no surprise when the government recently announced an extension to the lockdown in our country. So, we enter a further period of three weeks or more of social distancing and staying home. This may fill some of us with fear and dread but it should also be a source of joy for the opportunity to encounter God and the church in a different way. Many clergy have been amazed at the number of hits being made on church websites, like our own cathedral, where the Mass can be streamed into peoples' homes during the current situation of enforced church closures. In some

places the number of people accessing church live stream webcams has increased by more than tenfold on a daily basis, and more on Sundays! This is not only for Masses but Adoration, Rosary, Reflections and Holy hours. You may have seen a cartoon doing the rounds where the devil is taunting God by saying to Him: "With the coronavirus I have closed every church in the world". But God turns to him and says "Yes and I have opened a church in every home!".

While our church buildings have been closed to the public, our homes have become churches and places where we have encountered God in a very special way. Jesus stands with us in our homes in this extended lockdown and says to all of us "Peace be with you, do not be afraid for I am with you". Interestingly this was the theme of the Gospel reading on the day that the lockdown extension was announced. Please pray especially for those people who are in apartment blocks in cities with no open space or garden in which to enjoy the fresh air, and for people who are living alone; also for families confined indoors with an abusive person.

You can choose your church and time convenient to you at <https://www.churchservices.tv/timetable/> There are many churches listed on this website also which are celebrating Divine Mercy around 3pm (the hour of greatest mercy) on Sunday if you would like to partake in that devotion. The churches listed in red on that website also record their Masses so that you can access them at any time.



*Altar in the Chapel in St.Edward's Presbytery*



***Reflection Based on the Gospel of the II Sunday of Easter***  
***Divine Mercy Sunday***

We have got a very interesting picture of the Apostles in today's gospel. It is hard to believe that this is the group of Jesus' disciples who had already experienced the Resurrection, because women told them about the empty grave and the angels they had met there. The apostles have already seen joy and astonishment on the faces of many people. Meanwhile, we heard in the gospel that the door to the Upper Room was still closed and the hearts of the disciples were still frightened.

One of the most important heroes of this gospel is, of course, Thomas. Maybe we do not have the best associations with this apostle of Jesus. Maybe many of us would like to judge Thomas very harshly and maybe we would like to criticize him for his unbelief. But today, let's try to see a completely different picture of Thomas. From the very beginning of his friendship with Jesus, Thomas associated great hopes with his Master. From the moment he met him, Jesus became the meaning of his life.

Therefore, for many reasons, we can understand the attitude and behaviour of this apostle who, after the death of his Master, became very disappointed and wanted to prove that Jesus is alive. He did not want to be lied to in such an important and fundamental matter, and therefore he wanted to check, touch and see the wounds of his Master. As we heard in the gospel - Jesus answered his request, but Thomas, frightened by the sight of Jesus, changed his mind and didn't take advantage of this opportunity to touch his side. It was enough that he saw, and then that great feeling for his Master and Lord was reborn again.

Why, today, on the second Sunday after Easter, do we focus so much on the figure of the Apostle Thomas? First of all, it seems to me that this figure is very close for many of us especially at this time of pandemic and isolation. Why?

I think that each of us has or had many questions and doubts about faith; and each of us constantly look for answers to them - just like Thomas.

When I read this gospel a few days ago, I was wondering why Thomas was looking for an answer to his dilemmas in solitude and why he left the community of his friends - the Apostles. Loneliness was certainly not the best way to deal with the hardships and dilemmas. And I think that it can be similar in our lives. When we experience difficult moments and when we ask ourselves various questions about faith: Where is God? Is he really alive or can we really meet him? - very often in such moments - just like Thomas, we move away from a community that is our church or a parish, we leave our friends choosing loneliness.

Therefore, today's gospel teaches us that it is always worth staying in the community of believers - in the community of true disciples of Jesus, because only there can we meet the resurrected Jesus and only there can we find answers to the most important questions.

Today is also the **Feast of Divine Mercy**, which we celebrate for the 20th time. Perhaps many of us know and remember the beginning of this feast and the famous pilgrimage of Saint Pope John Paul II to Krakow, when the Pope established the second Sunday after Easter as the Feast of Divine Mercy. Perhaps many of us read the diary of Saint Sister Faustina, which has been translated into all languages and is the most-popular book in the world, right after the Bible!

As a Polish priest, today I could talk a lot about God's Mercy; about Saint Sister Faustina and John Paul II. But I would like to write you something very personal today. As you know, I was born in Poland and for many years I was a priest of the Diocese of Płock. It was in this city, in Płock, by the Vistula River, where I studied in a seminary for six years and I was ordained a priest in 2007.

If you have read the Diary of Saint Sister Faustina - in which she described her unusual encounters and dialogues with Jesus - if you know this interesting and unusual book, you know that this city - Płock is mentioned there many times. It was just there that Sister Faustina lived for several years and that's where Jesus said to her: *"Paint an image according to the pattern you see, with the signature: Jesus I Trust in You. I desire that this image be venerated, first in your chapel, and throughout the whole world"*.

I want to tell you that I am very grateful to God, because very often during my studies I could visit this unusual and holy place. I could go there to pray and imagine young Faustina - a simple and uneducated religious sister (baking bread - it was her daily hard work in the convent where she lived). Today she is a great saint, well known throughout the world - we call her the secretary of God's mercy.

I would like to finish today's reflection with a beautiful prayer written by Saint Faustina:

***Help me, O Lord that my eyes may be merciful, so that I may never judge from appearances, but look for what is beautiful in my neighbours and come to their rescue.***

***Help me that my ears may be merciful, so that I may give heed to my neighbours' needs and not be indifferent to their pains.***

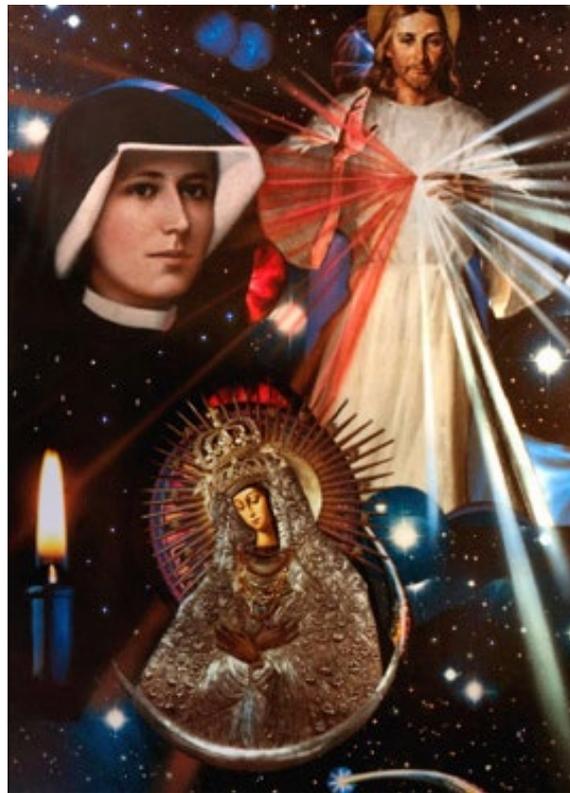
***Help me, O Lord that my tongue may be merciful, so that I should never speak negatively of my neighbour, but have a word of comfort and forgiveness for all.***

***Help me, O Lord, that my hands may be merciful and filled with good deeds, so that I may do only good to my neighbours and take upon myself the more difficult and toilsome tasks.***

***Help me, that my feet may be merciful, so that I may hurry to assist my neighbour, overcoming my own fatigue and weariness. My true rest is in the service of my neighbour.***

***I will refuse my heart to no one. I will be sincere even with those who, I know, will abuse my kindness. I will bear my own suffering in silence. May your mercy, O Lord, rest upon me.***

***O my Jesus, transform me into yourself, for you can do all things. Amen.***





## FATHER JO'S EASTER MESSAGE 2020

Fr Jo Kizito wrote a letter to the Parish for Easter but due to postal delays it has not arrived yet; however, as the camp's electricity supply has just been restored after several weeks, he was able to send an email message which arrived on Maundy Thursday.

***“Thank you a million times for keeping me close to your thoughts and prayers- what a gift a virtue only given by the Holy Spirit. The news (an Easter greeting emailed from Kettering) is quite inspiring and nostalgically takes me back to the beautiful memories of St Edwards Parish community where due to the present structure, I may not be able to access. God knows. Thank You”***

Up to 9th April Covid-19 had not entered his Kyangwali Refugee Camp, which is now home to 120655 refugees (it housed 38136, in 2015), from such places as Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya and the Sudan. As the practice is to provide each arriving family with a plot of land and materials to build a basic shelter, there may not be the dangerous overcrowding which some refugee camps have to cope with. The whole settlement covers 38 square miles. In normal times there are 32 humanitarian organisations working in the camp, all supervised by UNHCR, but at this time of crisis many have evacuated from the Camp, putting more strain on Fr Jo's "St Patrick's Spacid Organisation", which has responsibility for the "Integral Development of Refugees which incorporates Spiritual Animation"

Fr Jo writes ***“As you may imagine, today, without the approved medical cure of the Pandemic Virus, everyone looks for God's intervention. Here Fr Jo looks like the solution. Everyone is looking at me. It is the most challenging situation that I have ever faced in this type of Postolate.”***

As in the whole of Uganda all of the seven Chapels of Fr Jo's Mission have been closed. He is having to say Mass in a small room with only one other person, the project coordinator able to attend.

**Footnote** Recently we experienced a hiccup in forwarding, in a secure way, money to Fr Jo, but, that problem has been resolved now, so, once things return to normal, the parish will be able to transfer donations to him again.



## **Pope Francis' Urbi et Orbi message, delivered April 12 at the Basilica of St. Peter.**

Dear brothers and sisters, Happy Easter!

Today the Church's proclamation echoes throughout the world: "Jesus Christ is risen!" – "He is truly risen."

Like a new flame this Good News springs up in the night: the night of a world already faced with epochal challenges and now oppressed by a pandemic severely testing our whole human family. In this night, the Church's voice rings out: "Christ, my hope, is risen!"

This is a different "contagion", a message transmitted from heart to heart – for every human heart awaits this Good News. It is the contagion of hope: "Christ, my hope, is risen!" This is no magic formula that makes problems vanish. No, the resurrection of Christ is not that. Instead, it is the victory of love over the root of evil, a victory that does not "by-pass" suffering and death, but passes through them, opening a path in the abyss, transforming evil into good: this is the unique hallmark of the power of God.

The Risen Lord is also the Crucified One, not someone else. In his glorious body he bears indelible wounds: wounds that have become windows of hope. Let us turn our gaze to him that he may heal the wounds of an afflicted humanity.

Today my thoughts turn in the first place to the many who have been directly affected by the coronavirus: the sick, those who have died and family members who mourn the loss of their loved ones, to whom, in some cases, they were unable even to bid a final farewell. May the Lord of life welcome the departed into his kingdom and grant comfort and hope to those still suffering, especially the elderly and those who are alone. May he never withdraw his consolation and help from those who are especially vulnerable, such as persons who work in nursing homes, or live in barracks and prisons. For many, this is an Easter of solitude lived amid the sorrow and hardship that the pandemic is causing, from physical suffering to economic difficulties.

This disease has not only deprived us of human closeness, but also of the possibility of receiving in person the consolation that flows from the sacraments, particularly the Eucharist and Reconciliation. In many countries, it has not been possible to approach them, but the Lord has not left us alone! United in our prayer, we are convinced that he has laid his hand upon us, firmly reassuring us: Do not be afraid, "I have risen and I am with you still!"

May Jesus, our Passover, grant strength and hope to doctors and nurses, who everywhere offer a witness of care and love for our neighbours, to the point of exhaustion and not infrequently at the expense of their own health. Our gratitude and affection go to them, to all who work diligently to guarantee the essential services necessary for civil society, and to the law enforcement and military personnel who in many countries have helped ease people's difficulties and sufferings.

In these weeks, the lives of millions of people have suddenly changed. For many, remaining at home has been an opportunity to reflect, to withdraw from the frenetic pace of life, stay with loved ones and enjoy their company. For many, though, this is also a time of worry about an uncertain future, about jobs that are at risk and about other consequences of the current crisis. I encourage political leaders to work actively for the common good, to provide the means and resources needed to enable everyone to lead a dignified life and, when circumstances allow, to assist them in resuming their normal daily activities.

This is not a time for indifference, because the whole world is suffering and needs to be united in facing the pandemic. May the risen Jesus grant hope to all the poor, to those living on the peripheries, to refugees and the homeless. May these, the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters living in the cities and peripheries of every part of the world, not be abandoned. Let us ensure that they do not lack basic necessities (all the more difficult to find now that many businesses are closed) such as medicine and especially the possibility of adequate health care. In light of the present circumstances, may international sanctions be relaxed, since these make it difficult for countries on which they have been imposed to provide adequate support to their citizens, and may all nations be put in a position to meet the greatest needs of the moment through the reduction, if not the forgiveness, of the debt burdening the balance sheets of the poorest nations.

This is not a time for self-centeredness, because the challenge we are facing is shared by all, without distinguishing between persons. Among the many areas of the world affected by the coronavirus, I think in a special way of Europe. After the

Second World War, this beloved continent was able to rise again, thanks to a concrete spirit of solidarity that enabled it to overcome the rivalries of the past. It is more urgent than ever, especially in the present circumstances, that these rivalries do not regain force, but that all recognize themselves as part of a single family and support one another. The European Union is presently facing an epochal challenge, on which will depend not only its future but that of the whole world. Let us not lose the opportunity to give further proof of solidarity, also by turning to innovative solutions. The only alternative is the selfishness of particular interests and the temptation of a return to the past, at the risk of severely damaging the peaceful coexistence and development of future generations.

This is not a time for division. May Christ our peace enlighten all who have responsibility in conflicts, that they may have the courage to support the appeal for an immediate global ceasefire in all corners of the world. This is not a time for continuing to manufacture and deal in arms, spending vast amounts of money that ought to be used to care for others and save lives. Rather, may this be a time for finally ending the long war that has caused such great bloodshed in Syria, the conflict in Yemen and the hostilities in Iraq and in Lebanon. May this be the time when Israelis and Palestinians resume dialogue in order to find a stable and lasting solution that will allow both to live in peace. May the sufferings of the people who live in the eastern regions of Ukraine come to an end. May the terrorist attacks carried out against so many innocent people in different African countries come to an end.

This is not a time for forgetfulness. The crisis we are facing should not make us forget the many other crises that bring suffering to so many people. May the Lord of life be close to all those in Asia and Africa who are experiencing grave humanitarian crises, as in the Province of Cabo Delgado in the north of Mozambique. May he warm the hearts of the many refugees displaced because of wars, drought and famine. May he grant protection to migrants and refugees, many of them children, who are living in unbearable conditions, especially in Libya and on the border between Greece and Turkey. And I don't want to forget the island of Lesbos. In Venezuela, may he enable concrete and immediate solutions to be reached that can permit international assistance to a population suffering from the grave political, socio- economic and health situation.

Dear brothers and sisters, Indifference, self-centeredness, division and forgetfulness are not words we want to hear at this time. We want to ban these words forever. They seem to prevail when fear and death overwhelm us, that is, when we do not let the Lord Jesus triumph in our hearts and lives. May Christ, who has already defeated death and opened for us the way to eternal salvation, dispel the darkness of our suffering humanity and lead us into the light of his glorious day, a day that knows no end.

With these reflections, I would like to wish you all a happy Easter.

**Pope Francis**

EASTER SUNDAY - MASS OF THE DAY-"URBI ET ORBI" BLESSING

