



The Catholic Church in Jersey

Diocese of Portsmouth

From the Catholic Dean
Monsignor Nicholas France MBE

Friday 8 September 2017

Dear Catholic Parishioners

September always marks a time of new beginnings within the faith communities of our seven Jersey churches. With children returning to school and students packing what they need for college or university, we adults are reminded of our own school days, which can make us think we are beginning a New Year. And so we are in the life of our Island Catholic Parish.

While in September the wedding season ends, at the same time we commence our annual pastoral programmes of sacramental preparation for those eligible for First Communion or Confirmation and ongoing preparation for Baptism and Marriage.

Your Priests, Deacons and lay Pastoral Assistants have been reflecting in recent months that perhaps we have been making the mistake in past years of concentrating on preparing children for the sacraments, rather than their parents. The thinking behind this is that unless parents are committed to the practice of their Catholic faith, there is not much chance of their children embracing a relationship with Jesus Christ and his Church.

So, this year we intend to focus much more on parents, who wish their children to make their First Communion or their teenagers to enrol in the Confirmation Programme.

We have also been encouraged by our Bishop to challenge more strongly those seeking the Sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist, Penance and Marriage, for them to understand better what they are seeking, also what the Lord is asking of them in return for the gifts he offers. *God doesn't want 'to break the crushed reed, nor quench the wavering flame'*, nor do we, recognising the struggles that some people have to maintain their faith, either as lone parents or as the only Catholic partner in a marriage. But, we have to be honest. Discipleship in following Jesus is challenging and not just a soft option.

Our weekly Island Catholic newsletter (pick it up in church or view it online) will keep you in touch with what's on offer in these coming months by way of an introduction for non-Catholics seeking a spiritual home with us or returning Catholics who want to have a renewal course. The Sycamore experience may also be given again. The Oasis of Peace also has a lot on offer.

The times and places for enrolling in the Sacraments are given below.

As I begin my 19th year as Catholic Dean and Parish Priest of Jersey, I wish you every blessing for the 12 months that lie ahead.

Father Nicholas



FIRST HOLY COMMUNION REGISTRATION DATES 2017/18 Parents and children in school year 4 and above are invited to come and meet the catechists and hear about the programmes on these dates:

ST THOMAS' CHURCH: Please remain after 9.15am Mass on one of the following dates Sunday 17 or 24 September 10.30am

POR FAVOR NOTE BEM: Primeira Comunhão 2017/18 Na Igreja de St Thomas Novo Programa de Inscrição. Não haverá fichas de inscrição na parte de trás da igreja. As inscrições terão lugar no Salão Paroquial de St Thomas (St Thomas' Hall) depois da Missa das 9.15 am nos seguintes dias: 17 ou 24 de Setembro. Idade mínima 8 anos, completados até 01 de Setembro 2017 e que se encontrem a frequentar o 4 ano escolar, ou mais velhas.

ST MARY & ST PETER'S CHURCH: You are invited to register on either Sunday 17 or Sunday 24 September after the 11.30am Mass.

OUR LADY, ST MARTIN & ST PATRICK: Have a joint programme with registration on Tuesday 26 September 6pm in the Berni Hall

ST MATTHIEU, ST BERNADETTE, SACRED HEART: have a joint programme with registration on Sunday 24 September after the 11.15am Mass at St Bernadette.

ISLAND CONFIRMATION REGISTRATION

Takes place on Tuesday 12 September at 7pm and on Sunday 17 September at 2pm in St Thomas' Hall.

Each candidate needs to attend one of these sessions with at least one parent. The confirmation programme will commence on 3 October.

www.catholicchurch.org.je