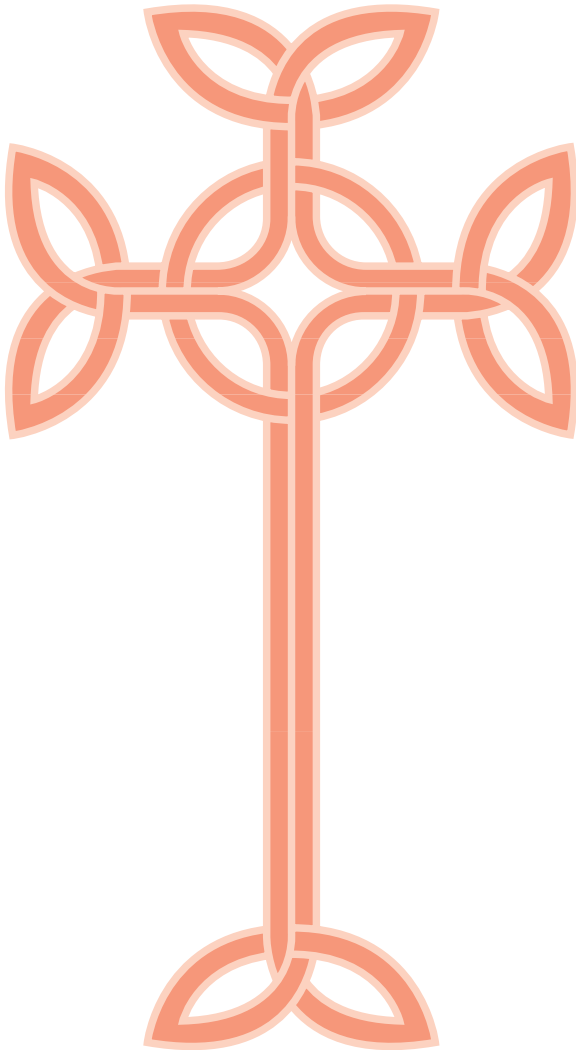


THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE
OF THE PARISH OF
HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING



St. Michael
AND ALL ANGELS

APRIL 2020

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THE PARISH CHURCH OF HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING

Ministry Team

Rector

Rev'd John Barron,
The Rectory, 5 Lingfield, Houghton-le-Spring,
Tyne & Wear, DH5 5QA.

Tel: (0191) 584 7657;

We enjoy and benefit from the ministry of a number of retired clergy at St Michael's.

Readers

Susan Elsey (Reader)
7, Briarfields, Hartlepool.
Tel 07557 125274

Mrs. Ros Pickersgill (Reader)
Tall Trees, The Grove, Houghton-le-Spring.
Tel: (0191) 584 5642

Mrs. Anne Clappison (Reader)
4 Dixon Road, Houghton-le-Spring.

Pastoral Assistants

Mrs. Evelyn Garbutt
Tel: (0191) 584 1702;
email: evelyn.garbutt1@btinternet.com

Elaine Harkness
Tel: (0191) 584 1163;
email: elaine.harkness1@btinternet.com

Mrs. Thelma Steel,
Tel: (0191) 584 3597;
email: thelma.steel@talktalk.net

Miss Jacqui Rodgerson,
Tel: (0191) 584 1141;
email: jacqui.rodgerson@durham.gov.uk

Mrs. Christine Britcliffe,
Tel: (0191) 584 9592

Church Wardens

Mrs. Rita Turnbull,
76 Longacre.
Tel: (0191) 584 1954

Mr. John Lambton
Dunure, Linden Grove, Houghton-le-Spring,
DH4 5DD.
Tel: (0191) 584 1591

Assistant Church Warden

Mrs. Thelma Steel,
Tel: (0191) 584 3597;
email: thelma.steel@talktalk.net

Officers of the Parochial Church Council

Angela Slater (Secretary)
Tel: (0191) 584 2036

Mr. Alastair Bradley (Treasurer)
8 Dixon Road, Houghton-le-Spring.
Tel: (0191) 584 1455

Organist & Director of Music

Mr. George Peebles
19 Sancroft Drive, Houghton-le-Spring.
Tel: (0191) 584 1628;
email: georgepeebles@talktalk.net

Verger

Mr. David Turnbull,
76 Longacre, Houghton-le-Spring.
Tel: (0191) 584 1954

Parish Office

The Parish Administrator, Philippa Elsey, will be in the office on Tuesdays, 9.00am – 3.00pm, and Thursdays, 9.00am – 2.00pm.
Tel: (0191) 512 1769
email: stmichaels.hls@gmail.com

Safeguarding

Mr. Kevin Bond (Safeguarding Officer)
Tel: 07931 937171
email: kevin.bond1511@googlemail.com
Mrs. Kathleen Close (DBS Officer)
38 Bradley Avenue, Houghton-le-Spring
Tel: (0191) 584 0353

Worship

Our main weekly services take place on Sundays at 8.30am, 10.00am and 6.00pm, Tuesdays at 7.00pm and on Thursdays at 10.00am.

Young Church (for 3 years and older) meets in church at 10.00am on Sundays. Accompanied children under 3 are welcome to join us.

Details of all our main services, including those for special occasions, are printed in The Month Ahead (Pages 8 & 9).

Space4

76 Newbottle Street
Next to Houghton Library
Twitter @space4
Facebook houghtonspace4
Tel: (0191) 512 0676
Mrs. Christine Britcliffe (Co-ordinator)
Tel: (0191) 512 0676

Ministry of Healing

We are committed to the Ministry of Healing and hold an Evening Healing Service 4 times a year, please see The Month Ahead for details (Pages 8 & 9).

For more information contact The Rector.

Church Website

Our website contains information on most aspects of church life.
www.stmichaels-hls.org.uk

The Friends of Houghton Parish Church Trust

Chairman - Mr. Alex Scullion
Contact: Mr. George Peebles, Membership Secretary on (0191) 584 1628 for information and application forms.

Contacting the Clergy

A member of the clergy can usually be consulted in church after any service or contacted at home on other occasions.

Marriage Enquiries

For initial enquiry please come to the vestry door down the side of church on the 1st Monday of the month between 6 & 6.45pm.

Alternatively contact Rev'd J. Barron or the Parish Office.

Baptism Enquiries

Please come to the vestry door down the side of church on Mondays between 6 & 6.45pm.

Please note, the vestry is closed on Bank Holidays.

Prayer Requests

If you would like us to pray for you or for someone known to you who is in any kind of need, please contact a member of the Ministry Team.

Home Communion, Lifts & Visiting

If you need a lift to church, or if you are house-bound and wish to receive Holy Communion at home, or if you would appreciate a visit, please contact the Rector.

CHILDREN & YOUTH GROUPS**Toddler Group**

Times: Tuesday morning,
9.30am - 11.15am
Tuesday afternoon,
1.30pm - 3.15pm
Friday morning, 9.30am - 11.15am
Venue: Kepier, St. Michael's Hall
Contact: Sheila Partridge,
Tel: (0191) 584 7308

Mini Michaels

For 0 to 5 years old

Times: 11.30pm, first Sunday of the month
Venue: Church

Young Church (Sunday School)

Times: Sundays, 10.00am - 11.15am
Venue: Church
Contact: Claire Taylor, Tel: (07956) 518306

UNIFORMED ORGANISATIONS**Rainbows (girls, 5 - 7 years)**

Times: Mondays, 5.00pm - 6.15pm
Venue: Kepier, St. Michael's Hall
Contact: Sheila Wynne, Tel: (0191) 512 1331
sheila.m.wynne@gmail.com

Brownies (girls, 7 - 10 years)

Times: Fridays, 5.30pm - 7.00pm
Venue: Kepier, St. Michael's Hall
Contact: Sheila Wynne, Tel: (0191) 512 1331
sheila.m.wynne@gmail.com

Guides (girls, 10 - 16 years)

Times: Mondays, 6.30pm - 8.00pm
Venue: Kepier, St. Michael's Hall
Contact: Sheila Wynne, Tel: (0191) 512 1331
sheila.m.wynne@gmail.com

Rangers (girls, 14 - 18 years)

Times: Mondays, 6.30pm - 8.00pm
Venue: Kepier, St. Michael's Hall
Contact: Sheila Wynne, Tel: (0191) 512 1331
sheila.m.wynne@gmail.com

Beaver Scouts (6 - 8 years)

Times: Tuesdays, 5.30pm - 7.00pm
Venue: Scout Headquarters, Quarry Row
Contact: Steven Gibson, Tel: 07507 161366

Cub Scouts (8 - 10 years)

Times: Mondays, 6.30pm - 8.00pm
Venue: Scout Headquarters, Quarry Row
Contact: Sandra Shale, Tel: 07751 544394

Scouts (10 - 15 years)

Times: Fridays, 7.00pm - 9.00pm
Venue: Scout Headquarters, Quarry Row
Contact: Andrew Brown, Tel: 07756 449651

General Scout Group Inquiries

Contact: Paul Sutherland, Tel: 07825 657846
E-mail: 1sthoughton@durhamscouts.org.uk
Website: www.1sthoughtonscouts.org.uk

GROUPS FOR ADULTS

Space 4 Women

Times: Mondays, 1.30pm
Venue: Space 4
Contact: Betty Brown, Tel: (0191) 584 4756
 & Anne Goodman,
 Tel: (0191) 584 2657

“Last Orders” for Men (monthly)

Times: First Monday of the month,
 8.00pm - 11.00pm
Venue: Houghton Rugby Club, Dairy Lane
Contact: Alastair Bradley,
 Tel: (0191) 584 1455

Mother’s Union (last of each month)

Times: Mondays, 2.00pm - 3.30pm
Venue: Kepier, St. Michael's Hall
Contact: Sue Elsey, Tel: 07557 125274

“Time Out” for Women (monthly)

Times: First Tuesday of the month,
 8.00pm - 11.00pm
Venue: The Mill Inn
Contact: Sheila Foster, Tel: (0191) 584 2486

Friends of Houghton Hillside Cemetery

Contact: Mrs. Janice L. Short (secretary),
 Tel: 07940 588119

MUSIC & ARTISTIC GROUPS

Liturgical Choir

Times: Thursdays, 6pm - 7.30pm
Venue: Choir vestry
Contact: George Peebles,
 Tel: (0191) 584 1628
 georgepeebles@talktalk.net

Contemporary Music Group

Times: No set time
Venue: Church or Kepier, St. Michael’s Hall
Contact: Stuart Clappison,
 Tel: (0191) 584 7533

Bell-ringing

Times: Thursdays, 7.00pm - 9.00pm
Venue: Church Bell Tower
Contact: Janet Rooks, Tel: (0191) 584 3482

Hand-bells

Times: Mondays, 6.00pm - 7.00pm
Venue: Church Vestry

Flower Arranging

Times: Fridays, 10.00am - 12noon (not in
 Advent or Lent)
Venue: Church
Contact: Pauline Coulson,
 Tel: (0191) 584 3472

ABOUT SIGNPOST

Sign-Post is the magazine of the Parish Church of St. Michael & All Angels Houghton-le-Spring. In addition to providing information about the life of the church, it also aims to reflect the interests of the broader community and to provide a source of local news and a forum in which matters of common concern can be raised. The Editors welcome comments and suggestions, and invite contributions. Items to be included in Sign-Post should be submitted to the Editors by 10th of the month (end of 1st week of the month for memorials) to ensure inclusion in the next issue. It should be noted, however, that the Editors cannot guarantee to publish material and wish to point out that items included do not necessarily reflect their views nor those of the Parochial Church Council. Editors: Malcolm Foster, Tel: (0191) 584 2486. Distribution: Joan Bond, Tel: (0191) 584 1031. Treasurer: Mrs. Lynn Scott, Tel: (0191) 526 8536.

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HOUGHTON RUGBY CLUB

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Contact **Kaye Louise Robson** (after 6.00pm)
Mobile: 07791 223 910 email: klrob7@aol.co.uk
Club: 0191 584 1460

Two Castles Housing Association



Two Castles Housing Association provides affordable homes for people over the age of 55. We have a range of sheltered accommodation across the North East including Ryhope, Shiney Row, Hetton-le-Hole, Houghton-le-Spring and Sunderland offering a safe and secure environment to live whilst maintaining their independence. Our schemes offer:

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Fax: 0191 261 9692
Email: mailbox@twocastles.org.uk
www.twocastles.org.uk

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Rector's Letter

St Michael's has not shut up shop!

I write this to offer encouragement and reassurance of prayer at this very difficult time for the whole of our country and the wider world. In the coming months as the nation faces the challenge of coronavirus, we have been encouraged by our Archbishops to be a 'different sort of church', less characterised by attendance at church on Sunday, more a 'radically different kind of church that is rooted in prayer and service to others'. At St Michael's, following in the footsteps of Gilpin's ministry based on faith, generosity & service and continuing to serve our community in the present, I think we are well placed to become this radically different church the Archbishops describe. While there are a number of changes in the pattern of church life (which I outline below) this does not mean that we have shut up shop - far from it!

Worship and services over the coming week

While we are not able to hold public worship that all can physically attend, I will be holding services in St Michael's on behalf of all of the people of God worshipping and praying for our community, nation and the wider world. These will take place at set times during the week and we have attached in the magazine a **Service of the Word** for you to be a part of this: we want to encourage all to follow the service knowing that others are doing so at the same time but in different locations. For those with access to Facebook, we will live-stream the services at our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/stmichaels/>.

This will be our pattern for the coming weeks:

Sun 10am Sunday Service

Tue 7pm Service with reflection

Thu 2pm Afternoon Prayer particularly focussed on prayers received on-line.
(This will be streamed on <https://www.facebook.com/HoughtonSpace4/>)

A set of Bible readings for these services is provided later in the magazine. Please also watch on-line for special services and reflections being planned for Holy Week.

A Pattern for our days:

I want to encourage us (particularly at this time) to have prayer at the centre of lives. Perhaps you will join me (in spirit if not physically) in saying prayer at 9am, 12 noon and 9pm each day knowing that others in our community are praying at the same time. We have made available later in the magazine a **simple Form of Daily Prayer** (which can be used in the morning or at any time of day) and a **simple form of Night Prayer** which you could follow at the end of the day. I want to encourage us to use these or any other form of prayer that suits us at knowing that with others in the church family we are praying together even though we are not able to be physically together. Please do this praying for others and knowing that we ourselves are being prayed for. Please do continue with the practice I invited us to share in at

the beginning of Lent to pause in our day to pray the Lord's Prayer at noon each day: I will be doing this in church (and ringing the bell) each day.

Office working

From this week we will be operating a 'remote' office during our usual office hours and contactable between **10-2 Tuesday and Thursday** (accessible by telephone or email but not physically based in church!) Our aim is to continue to keep the office number (**0191 5121769**) but in case we can't set this up in time, in the short term, please also try us on **07707 043395**. Our office email is **stmichaels.hls@gmail.com**.

Our Space4 Project

While the 'drop-in' and projects part of Space4 have been suspended, we are providing ways of offering contact on-line and by telephone to try to reach out to people who may need support. In addition, we are developing ways of keeping our foodbank operating, including on the 'supply' side as well as safe ways of allowing people to access food if they are struggling with food poverty.

Staying in touch

We will continue to send out our weekly newsletter on email, if you're not on our distribution list at present please drop us an email to **stmichaels.hls@gmail.com**. We will be seeking to stay in touch through our St Michael's facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/stmichaelshls> and our Space4 page which will also have details of our foodbank <https://www.facebook.com/HoughtonSpace4/>.

Pastoral care

We aim to continue to provide pastoral care over this time, much of this may be by telephone in the first instance - please email us, call us in the office (email and number above) if you would like us to keep in touch with you or if you feel anyone would benefit from a call. At any point, please don't hesitate to contact me at the Rectory on **0191 584 7657** and leave him a message if I'm not in.

You'll find a number of prayer resources in these pages which you may find helpful at this time. I end this note, as I began, with my reassurance of prayers and with this prayer for this week in our church calendar which feels very appropriate for us at this time:

*God of love,
passionate and strong,
tender and careful:
watch over us and hold us
all the days of our life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

With my prayers and very best wishes.



Space4

On St Patricks day 2020, Space4 was blessed to have the Bishop of Durham, Paul Butler pay a visit. Bishop Paul spent an hour talking with the service users and the staff. He saw who Space4 serves and how it serves them, from combating social isolation to use of the food bank. He seemed to thoroughly enjoy himself talking to a wide variety of people of various ages.



Everyone engaged with Bishop Paul and had a good laugh with him. It was lovely to see Bishop Paul and to know we have his support & backing in the job that Space4 does for the Parish of Houghton-le-Spring and the Coalfields area. It was especially affirming that the Bishop kept this appointment to be with us in the current challenging circumstances and we were grateful for his presence and his prayers for us.

Colin Nicholl

FROM THE REGISTERS

Baptisms

- 8 Mar Theo George Chapman
 15 Mar Jaxon Thomas Britton
 Amelia Lily Bainbridge
 Jarrod Junior Stokes
 Presley Robert Job Stokes

Funerals

- 4 Mar Ronald Garthwaite Aged 90
 Hetton-le-Hole
 17 Mar Denis Stephenson Aged 77
 Hadley Court



Mothers' Union Events and Meetings

ALL MEETINGS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE DUE TO THE CURRENT SITUATION REGARDING THE CORONAVIRUS. PLEASE RING AHEAD BEFORE ATTENDING.

The Mothers' Union will meet on Monday 27th April in the Kepier Hall with a speaker from Wearside Women in Need from 2.00 pm.

If you have any queries please contact Sheila Wynne (0191 512 1331) or Joan Beattie (0191 512 6032)

HOPE Group

Houghton Older People's Enterprise Group meets weekly at Houghton Methodist Church on Thursday afternoons at 1.00 pm.

ALL MEETINGS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE DUE TO THE CURRENT SITUATION REGARDING THE CORONAVIRUS. PLEASE RING AHEAD BEFORE ATTENDING.

The timetable for March is:

- 2nd **Speaker: David Hastings talk about the Tall Ships, donations appreciated**
- 9th **Holy week. No H.O.P.E Group meeting**
- 16th **Entertainer Jim with The Happy Daze Band, Eagles, Elvis, Shadows**
- 23rd **Sandra Atherton with mixed songs from musicals**
- 30th **Entertainer Kayley with mixed songs from musicals**

If you require any further details please contact Noemi Cobb on 0191 711 3581.



Find us on
Facebook

'Like' our page to keep up to date with what is happening at St Michael and All Angels and in the community.

Search for

"St Michael and All Angels, Houghton-le-Spring"

or go direct to:

[facebook.com/stmichaelslshs](https://www.facebook.com/stmichaelslshs)

DONATIONS TO GENERAL FUNDS

Thanksgiving for Baptism

Jaxon Thomas Britton

Theo George Chapman

Our Bonus Ball Scheme is continuing!

For the duration of the current situation of our not gathering in church Brian will not be collecting any subscriptions for the Bonus Ball scheme. Each week the winning number will be recorded and once things return to normal, arrears will be collected and prize money distributed to the winners who are paid up to date.

Why not put your subs into an envelope over the course of the scheme? If you want to withdraw from the scheme at any point just drop Brian a line on (email) or (phone).

Thanks for your cooperation.

Gilpin Women's Institute

ALL MEETINGS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE DUE TO THE CURRENT SITUATION REGARDING THE CORONAVIRUS. PLEASE RING AHEAD BEFORE ATTENDING.

Gilpin WI meets in The Kepier Hall on the first Thursday of each month at 1.30 pm. All visitors are most welcome. The next Gilpin WI meeting will be on 2nd April with entertainment from Ron Spence for a Birthday Party.

For further information please contact The President, Win Warren (0191 584 7122) or Secretary, Marian Ferguson (0191 584 2368)

Bishop Alan's Coronavirus Golden Rules

While we've spent quite a while focussing on what we need to do in our practices over the last few weeks to deal with the Coronavirus outbreak, Bishop Alan of St Alban's offered some suggestions to help us think about our Christian attitudes at this time.

While where are not official advice (which we must continue to follow) they are offered as food-for-thought as we seek to navigate these times.

Golden Rule One.

Each one of us can think about how we can protect and support our neighbours. So much of the public rhetoric is sowing fear about the danger of other people. So, taking all the official precautions, and offering helpful or reassuring words to others – and crucially not demonising anyone or any group.

Golden Rule Two.

Think about who may be suffering as well as or more than me. Is there someone we can reach out to at this time, perhaps giving them a call on the phone? There's nothing like a friendly voice to offer solace when someone is worried. A smile can bring cheer, even when it's done as part of a telephone conversation.

Golden Rule Three.

Don't give into panic and start hoarding food. There is plenty to go around, so practise the Christian discipline of sharing. Ask your neighbours what they need and do you best to help them get it. If you are self-isolating you will of course need some supplies.

Golden Rule Four.

Live today as fully as you can whatever your circumstances. None of us ever know what the future holds. In the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6. 25 – 34), Jesus challenged his followers to live each day fully and not be afraid. While we need to follow proper guidance, we should seek, as best we can not to give into fear. We remain a people of hope and not hopelessness even in challenging times. Ultimately we set all of our hope in Jesus Christ, knowing that often we and others are his hands and his feet and his head and his heart in the world. And so as Bishop Alan ends his rules by telling us not to forget to pray, we offer these prayer resources that we may find helpful at this time.

A Prayer Resource

we may find useful at this time

Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy in this time of uncertainty and distress. Sustain and support the anxious and fearful, and lift up all who are brought low; that we may rejoice in your comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

Lord Jesus Christ, you taught us to love our neighbour, and to care for those in need as if we were caring for you. In this time of anxiety, give us strength to comfort the fearful, to tend the sick, and to assure the isolated of our love, and your love, for your name's sake. **Amen.**

God of compassion, be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation. In their loneliness, be their consolation; in their anxiety, be their hope; in their darkness, be their light; through him who suffered alone on the cross, but reigns with you in glory, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

For those who are ill

Merciful God, we entrust to your tender care those who are ill or in pain, knowing that whenever danger threatens your everlasting arms are there to hold them safe. Comfort and heal them, and restore them to health and strength; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

For hospital staff and medical researchers

Gracious God, give skill, sympathy and resilience to all who are caring for the sick, and your wisdom to those searching for a cure. Strengthen them with your Spirit, that through their work many will be restored to health; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

From one who is ill or isolated

O God, help me to trust you, help me to know that you are with me, help me to believe that nothing can separate me from your love revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

For the Christian community

We are not people of fear: we are people of courage. We are not people who protect our own safety: we are people who protect our neighbours' safety.

We are not people of greed: we are people of generosity.

We are your people God, giving and loving, wherever we are, whatever it costs
For as long as it takes wherever you call us. **Amen.**



Word from The Lemon Grove

In comparison with the UK the crime rate in Cyprus is low. Standing at the crossroads of Europe, Africa and the Middle East it is however attractive to people of many nationalities, among them Russians, Bulgarians, Romanians and Egyptians. Inevitably some (not all) of those are criminals and they will come into conflict with Cypriot organised crime gangs.

As crime knows no boundaries some of those conflicts occasionally erupt into the Sovereign Base Areas. People trafficking and the supply of drugs are lucrative businesses so the stakes can be high. Twice in recent weeks I have been asked to issue search warrants which were to be executed by firearms officers conducting joint operations with Cypol (the Cyprus police) in the expectation that the search would result in the seizure of handguns and rifles as well as drugs.

One warrant was in connection with the fatal shooting in Limassol of a Syrian asylum seeker, the suspect living in one of the Greek Cypriot villages within the Akrotiri Sovereign Base Area.

Luckily, as the crime was committed in the Republic the role of my court was limited to remanding the suspect in custody and ordering his transfer to the Limassol court. The transfer is often opposed by the Defence, ostensibly on the grounds that the delays in cases reaching trials in the Republic amounts to a breach of the defendant's human right.

At a Bar Mess I organised for the lawyers who practice in the SBAs, however, one of the defence advocates told me the real reason was that the conditions in our prison – which is currently holding 6 prisoners – are far superior to the overcrowded prisons in Cyprus. “One client told me the food was better than the meals his mother cooked” he told me.

One defendant I hope will sometime soon be experiencing that food was a man who had absconded through the Turkish-occupied area and failed to turn up for his trial on 28 counts of assaults on his wife and causing mental harm to his children by his violence toward their mother. A psychiatric report showed that he suffered from chronic persecutory delusions and psychotic episodes.

As is almost inevitable with serious domestic violence cases, he was a long-term user of cannabis. He will have an opportunity to wean himself off that noxious substance while eating wholesome food when the warrant for his arrest is executed. The file is marked that sentence is reserved to me in case he appears before a Deputy Judge when I am off the island.

Dealing with such cases makes the short time we had in Rome – which I mentioned in last month’s Word – seem an oasis of civilisation and tranquility. Luckily our visit took place before the travel restrictions intended to curb the spread of coronavirus took effect.

The colonnades surrounding St. Peter’s Square could be seen some 200 metres from the front door of the apartment we had booked and we spent a morning exploring the interior. I was struck by the incredible impact of Michaelangelo’s Pieta, depicting the sorrowing Mary cradling her son after he was taken off his Cross.

The artist famously said that the sculpture was always contained within the marble – all he had done was to release it. It did however take a genius to discern the possibility. Standing in awe in front of such transcendent beauty I was struck by the thought that if we are to relinquish what is sacred, all we will be left with will be things which are profane.

I was however even more moved when we went down to the tombs of the Popes and stood at the tomb of St. Peter. To go from the rococo colour and splendour of the nave to the spot where the first tentative preaching of the Gospel in Rome had occurred – to see how it had become the seat of such a powerful institution – and to realise it started with the passionate faith of a simple fisherman – was literally an inspiration.

As I write hotels on the island are closed, flights from the UK are being suspended and the prospect of spending Easter at home with my family is starting to look remote. Not having seen two of my daughters and all five granddaughters for six months it is difficult, especially as my eldest Jennifer is moving with her two girls to Singapore and I will not see them until Susan and I travel there for Christmas 2021. But to complain about that, when Peter, and Paul, and Barnabas has so little and endured so much worse, that I know what I should do is to count my blessings.

Roger Elsey

Thankyou for your continued giving!

Although we're physically not able to come together at this time we remain very much the Body of Christ and we continue to be very active in new and different ways of being church.

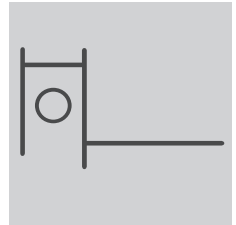
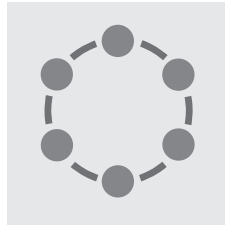
Your continued financial giving is hugely important to us, it is highly valued and very necessary with ongoing bills to pay in church.

If you are part of our envelope scheme, perhaps you'll be able to put your regular giving into the envelope each week and when we're all able to come back to church to worship to bring those envelopes with you.

It may be at this time you consider being a part of our **Parish Giving Scheme (PGS)**. This is an easy and convenient way of giving through Direct Debit to the church so we can continue with our work at this time and into the future.

Donations can be made on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis by Direct Debit to PGS and these are administered and passed back to our parish along with any Gift Aid they can claim back from your giving. We think the scheme is simple and convenient to use for people and it has many benefits for our church.

If you'd like to join the scheme or want to find out more then please contact Sue Bradley on **Tel: 0191 584 1455** or **Email: sbgemini@aol.com**.



PARISH GIVING SCHEME

A SERVICE OF THE WORD

for all God's People

Gathering (wherever we are) to worship God

Greeting

Let us worship God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Amen.

This is the day that the Lord has made.

We will rejoice and be glad in it.

Opening Prayer

Lord, direct our thoughts, and teach us to pray.

**Lift up our hearts to worship you in spirit and in truth,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

Amen.

The Collect may be said or a time of quiet prayer kept

After which we say:

Amen.

Saying sorry to God

God our Father,

we come to you in sorrow for our sins.

For turning away from you,

and ignoring your will for our lives;

Father, forgive us:

save us and help us.

For behaving just as we wish,
without thinking of you;
Father, forgive us:
save us and help us.

For failing you by what we do
and think and say;
Father, forgive us:
save us and help us.

For letting ourselves be drawn away from you
by temptations in the world about us;
Father, forgive us:
save us and help us.

For living as if we were ashamed to belong to your Son;
Father, forgive us:
save us and help us.

We receive God's forgiveness.

May the God of love and power
forgive *us* and free *us* from our sins,
heal and strengthen *us* by his Spirit,
and raise *us* to new life in Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Praise

Blessed is the Lord
for he has heard the voice of our prayer;
therefore shall our hearts dance for joy
and in our song we will praise our God.

Hearing and responding to the Word of God

Reading(s)

After which we may say:

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

A time of reflection is kept or a short talk given.

A hymn may be sung or music played.

Affirmation of Faith

With Christians across the nations and down the centuries,
We declare our common faith in God.

**We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family in heaven and earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us with power from on high.**

We believe in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

The prayers include one of these responses

Lord, in your mercy (or)
hear our prayer.

Lord, hear your people
and answer our prayers.

The prayers may end with

**Merciful Father, accept these prayers, for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

Ending

This prayer may be said or a blessing given:

**Blessing, honour and glory be yours,
here and everywhere,
now and for ever.
Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord:
**Thanks be to God.
Amen.**

*A service from New Patterns for Worship.
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Suggested Bible readings for April

We've been encouraged by Rector John to establish a pattern of prayer as part of our daily routine.

In addition, he is holding services in St Michael's - at 10am on Sunday, 7pm on Tuesday and 2pm on Thursday – physically in church representing us all worshipping God and praying for church, wider community, nation and the wider world!

We are all encouraged to follow the 'Service of the Word' at these times in the week as a way of spiritually being a part of that worship wherever we may be located.

The following Bible readings could be used as part of either the Simple Daily Prayer service or during a Service of the Word or at both.

Please use these or other passages of Scripture as you wish.

Please use your favourite version of the Bible that you have at home.

If you're struggling to get hold of a Bible then please contact us in the (remote) office between 10 and 2 on a Tuesday or Thursday (the office telephone number remains as 0191 512 1769 in the short term as we setup new arrangements for the office please also try us on 0770 704 3395.

(I'm sure that many of us know the convention for referring to Bible passages as book, chapter, verses – in other words LUKE 2.33-35 is Luke's Gospel, Chapter 2, verses 33 to 35.)

...continued overleaf

| | | | | | |
|-----------|----|-------|------------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Sunday | 22 | March | Mothering Sunday | JOHN 19:25-27 | |
| Monday | 23 | March | | JOHN 4.43-54 | |
| Tuesday | 24 | March | | JOHN 5.1-9 | JOHN 19:25-27 |
| Wednesday | 25 | March | | LUKE 1.26-38 | |
| Thursday | 26 | March | | JOHN 5. 31-47 | JOHN 11.17-27 |
| Friday | 27 | March | | JOHN 7:1-2,25-30 | |
| Saturday | 28 | March | | JOHN 7. 40-52 | |
| Sunday | 29 | March | Passion Sunday | JOHN 11.1-45 | |
| Monday | 30 | March | | JOHN 8.1-11 | |
| Tuesday | 31 | March | | JOHN 8. 21-30 | JOHN 11.33-45 |
| Wednesday | 1 | April | | JOHN 8.31-42 | |
| Thursday | 2 | April | | JOHN 8. 51-59 | MAT 21:1-11 |
| Friday | 3 | April | | JOHN 10.31-42 | |
| Saturday | 4 | April | | JOHN 11.45-57 | |
| Sunday | 5 | April | Palm Sunday | MAT 21. 1-11 | |
| Monday | 6 | April | Monday of Holy Week | JOHN12.1-11 | JOHN12.1-11 |
| Tuesday | 7 | April | Tuesday of Holy Week | JOHN 12.20-36 | JOHN 12.20-36 |
| Wednesday | 8 | April | Wednesday of Holy Week | JOHN 13.21-32 | JOHN 13.21-32 |
| Thursday | 9 | April | Maundy Thursday | JOHN 13. 1-17 | JOHN 13. 1-17 |
| Friday | 10 | April | Good Friday | JOHN 19.38-42 | JOHN 19.38-42 |
| Saturday | 11 | April | Holy Saturday | JOHN 18, 19 | |
| Sunday | 12 | April | Easter Sunday | JOHN 20.1-18 | |
| Monday | 13 | April | | MAT 28.8-15 | |
| Tuesday | 14 | April | | JOHN 20.11-18 | JOHN 20.1-18 |
| Wednesday | 15 | April | | JOHN 24.13-35 | |
| Thursday | 16 | April | | LUKE 24.35-48 | JOHN 20.9-31 |
| Friday | 17 | April | | JOHN 21. 1-14 | |
| Saturday | 18 | April | | MK 16.9-15 | |
| Sunday | 19 | April | Easter 2 | JOHN 20.19-end | |
| Monday | 20 | April | | JOHN 3.1-8 | |
| Tuesday | 21 | April | | JOHN 3.7-15 | JOHN 20.19-31 |
| Wednesday | 22 | April | | JOHN 3.16-21 | |
| Thursday | 23 | April | | JOHN 15.18-21 | LUKE 24.13-35 |
| Friday | 24 | April | | JOHN 6.1-15 | |
| Saturday | 25 | April | | MK 13.5-13 | |
| Sunday | 26 | April | Easter 3 | LUKE 24.13-35 | |
| Monday | 27 | April | | JOHN 6.22-29 | |
| Tuesday | 28 | April | | JOHN 6.30-35 | |
| Wednesday | 29 | April | | JOHN 6.35-40 | |
| Thursday | 30 | April | | JOHN 6.44-51 | |

A Simple Form of Daily Prayer

could be used in the morning or any time in the day

You may wish to safely light a candle and have reflective music playing in the background.

God is love, since God loves us we should love one another
Lord, direct our thoughts, and teach us to pray.
Lift up our hearts to worship you in spirit and in truth,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Opening Prayer

Father, we thank you for bringing us to another day. Help us through your Holy Spirit, that we may do everything that pleases you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

We ask for God's forgiveness

God of mercy, we are sorry that we have not always done what you wanted us to do. We have not loved you with all our heart, and we have not cared enough for other people. Forgive us, for Jesus' sake. **Amen.**

Collect

In darkness and in light, in trouble and in joy, help us, heavenly Father, to trust your love, to serve your purpose, and to praise your name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Bible reading

Ahead of which we say:

Jesus said, 'Ask, and you will receive; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened.' *Matthew 7:7*

Please select the reading for today from the attached sheet or another passage.

You might keep a time of quiet for reflection.

Afterwards we say:

For the word of the Lord: thanks be to God.

Prayers of Intercession

These or other prayers could be used. Each bidding is followed by a time of quiet for your own prayer & ends with: your kingdom come, your will be done.

God of peace, quieten our hearts, and help us to be still in your presence.

We bring to God a person or situation we have on our hearts today, for whom we want to pray....

We bring to God a troubled situation in our world.....

We bring to God someone who is hurting and who needs our prayer.....

We bring to God those who are seeking to care and bring relief.....

We bring to God silently, someone or a something we find difficult.....

We bring ourselves to God,
That we might grow in generosity of spirit,
clarity of mind, and warmth of affection.

Eternal God, shed your light on us who watch for you, that our lips may praise you, our hearts bless you, and our lives glorify you, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Conclusion

God of work and rest and pleasure, grant that what we do this day may be for us an offering to you. **Amen.**

A Simple Form of Night Prayer

You may wish to safely light a candle and have reflective music playing in the background.

The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.

Deut. 33.27

Opening Sentences

The Lord almighty grant us a quiet night and a perfect end. **Amen.**
Our help is in the name of the Lord: **who made heaven and earth.**

Pause and reflect on the day that is past.

Save us, O Lord, while waking, and guard us while sleeping, that awake we may watch with Christ and asleep may rest in peace.

Bible Reading

You may wish to use one of the following readings or choose another passage.

Sunday

You, O Lord, are in the midst of us, and we are called by your name; leave us not, O Lord our God.

Jeremiah 14.9

Monday

Thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel: In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.

Isaiah 30.15

Tuesday

Jesus said, 'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Matthew 11.28-end

Wednesday

Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. *1 Peter 5.6,7*

Thursday

Jesus said, 'I have said this to you, so that in me you may have peace. In the world you face persecution. But take courage; I have conquered the world!'

John 16.33

Friday

God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him.

1 Thessalonians 5.9,10

Saturday

Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.'

John 8.12

You might keep a time of quiet for reflection.

Afterwards we say:

For the word of the Lord: thanks be to God.

Prayers

Merciful God, we entrust to your unfailing and tender care this night those who are ill or in pain, knowing that whenever danger threatens your everlasting arms are there to hold us safe. Comfort and heal them, and restore them to health and strength; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Be present, O merciful God, and protect us through the silent hours of this night, so that we who are wearied by the changes and chances of this fleeting world, may rest upon your eternal changelessness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Visit this place, O Lord, we pray, and drive far from it the snares of the enemy; may your holy angels dwell with us in peace, and may your blessing be always upon us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

The Conclusion

In peace we will lie down and sleep;
for you alone, Lord, make us dwell in safety.

The Lord bless us and watch over us;

The Lord make his face to shine upon us and be gracious to us;

The Lord look kindly upon us and give us peace.

Amen.

Materials are drawn from Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England, Common Worship: Pastoral Services, and Common Worship: Daily Prayer, all of which are copyright © The Archbishops' Council of the Church of England

Passion Week

The events of Easter took place over a week, traditionally called Passion Week.

It began on Palm Sunday. After all his teaching and healing, Jesus had built a following. On the Sunday before he was to die, Jesus and his followers arrived at Jerusalem. The city was crowded. Jewish people were arriving from to celebrate Passover. This commemorates how they had escaped from slavery in Egypt nearly 1,500 year earlier.

Jesus rode into the city on a young donkey. He was greeted like a conquering hero. Cheering crowds waved palm branches in tribute. He was hailed as the Messiah who had come to re-establish a Jewish kingdom.

The next day they returned to Jerusalem. Jesus went to the temple, the epicentre of the Jewish faith, and confronted money-changers and merchants who were ripping off the people. He overturned their tables and accused them of being thieves. The religious authorities were alarmed and feared how he was stirring up the crowds.

On the Tuesday, they challenged Jesus, questioning his authority. He answered by challenging and condemning their hypocrisy. Later that day Jesus

spoke to his disciples about future times. He warned them about fake religious leaders; the coming destruction of Jerusalem; wars, earthquakes and famines; and how his followers would face persecution.

By midweek the Jewish religious leaders and elders were so angry with Jesus that they began plotting to arrest and kill him. One of Jesus' disciples, Judas, went to the chief priests and agreed to betray him to them.

Jesus and the 12 disciples gathered on the Thursday evening to celebrate the Passover meal. This is known as the Last Supper. During the evening, Jesus initiated a ritual still marked by Christians – Holy Communion – which commemorates his death. Jesus broke bread and shared it and a cup of wine with his disciples.

Judas then left to meet the other plotters. Jesus continued to teach the others and then went outside into an olive grove to pray. He even prayed for all future believers. He agonised over what was to come but chose the way of obedience. The Bible book, Luke, records him praying, 'Father if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will but yours be done'. Minutes later Judas arrived with soldiers and the chief priests and Jesus was arrested.

The Hubble Space Telescope

The Hubble Space Telescope was launched 30 years ago, on 24th April 1990. It was named after Edwin Hubble, an outstanding expert on extragalactic astronomy in the 1920s and 1930s.

The launch, originally scheduled for 1983, had been delayed by technical and budget problems and by the Challenger disaster. Ironically the NASA error that caused the Challenger tragedy was similar to the one that led to the Hubble telescope being launched with a defective mirror – unwillingness to accept technical warnings when there was great pressure from above to go ahead.

In the case of the Hubble telescope, also built by NASA with help from the European Space Agency, a more basic machine revealed the problem with the mirror, but those in charge did not believe it because a newer, more complex machine had given the go-ahead.

The problem was put right by astronauts in 1993 – the telescope was always designed to be serviced in orbit – and since then its position outside the Earth's atmosphere has enabled it to record many detailed visible light images that have enabled scientists a deep view into space, leading to new theories in astrophysics.

The telescope is estimated to remain in working order until 2030-2040.

Sunderland *Echoes*

Snippets from the Sunderland Echo which you may have missed.

X-ray services set to close at Washington and Houghton primary care centres

NHS chiefs are preparing to scrap out of hours x-ray services at two health centres in Wearside.

Imaging provision for patients with suspected broken bones and other injuries had been kept at Washington and Houghton primary care centres following an overhaul of urgent care in the city.

But, seven months after the changes were introduced, health bosses say the numbers using the service are too low to justify keeping it going.

“We have provided radiography [at Houghton and Washington] but it is only being used one or two times a week,” said Dr Tracey Lucas, a GP and clinical lead at Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

“There is pressure on the availability of radiographers and we have decided we’re not going to retain x-ray capacity any longer.

“Someone sitting there for one or two x-rays a week is not a good use of their time.

“But we continue to see minor injury patients, there’s no reduction in the service which is there and people with the correct level of skills and expertise continue to staff it.”

Dr Lucas was speaking at a meeting of Sunderland City Council’s Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.

According to figures from the Sunderland Extended Access Service (SEAS) it saw ‘low levels of minor injury activity’ at its sites at Washington Primary Care Centre and Houghton Primary Care Centre.

It added between October and January there had been just three x-rays performed a week across both sites.

This equated to an 80% underutilisation of ‘radiology capacity’ at Houghton and 89% at Washington.

The findings were treated with scepticism by some members of the panel however, such as Houghton councillor Juliana Heron, who claimed the numbers were low due to ‘post code confusion’ at the NHS 111 service, which is supposed to direct patients to the primary care centres.

She added: “If you get the x-ray taken away from the Houghton area people will be waiting two hours for an x-ray.”

According to a report for councillors, SEAS will continue to treat ‘minor injury and illness patients’, but those needing x-rays will be sent to an urgent treatment centre, such as Pallion, emergency department or fracture clinic, ‘depending on the type of injury’.

Sunderland man who ‘enjoys finding lost things’ discovers ancient Roman coin while metal detecting

A Sunderland man found a Roman coin dated to be almost 2,000 years old while he was metal detecting at an old farm.

The discovery was made by Stephen Smith, 33, who says his love for “searching for lost things” helped launch his hobby of metal detecting.

The coin, which was inspected by Andrew Agate from the Hancock Museum in Newcastle and found on Follingsby Lane, said the coin is from the Vespasian era and was minted around 69 AD.

It’s almost 2,000 years old. Stephen told the Echo: “I met Andrew while I was at work, I told him what I found and he said he could authenticate it for me.

“It turns out that the coin is a good example and because of that, it has been logged with the Portable Antiquities Scheme.”

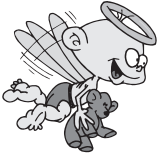
Latin markings can be made out on the coin and the outline of Emperor Vespasian himself is still intact.

Stephen continued: “I usually tend to find Victorian coins, old belt buckles and the odd gold ring that someone may have lost but never anything like this.

“I really enjoy Roman history so it was nice to find something so old relating to the area.

The coin may have been the oldest thing that Stephen has found, but it’s certainly not the most surprising.

He added: “I once found an old gun and some lead bullets, that’s definitely the strangest thing that I have found.”



Michael's Angels

1 Kings 17

Food for Elijah

Black out the letters X, Y, Z to fill in the missing words in the paragraph below. Read 1 Kings 17:2-5 to check your work.



| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Z | R | X | I | Y | V | Z | E | Y | R | X |
| Y | B | Z | R | Y | E | X | A | Y | D | Z |
| | | Z | M | X | E | Y | A | Z | T | X |
| | | X | B | Y | R | Z | O | Y | O | X |

God told Elijah to hide east of the Jordan _____.

The ravens brought Elijah _____ and

_____ in the morning and in the evening.

And he drank from the _____.

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MEMORIALS

We hope this system will help us to meet requests for memorials more efficiently. Should you wish for a loved one to be remembered on their anniversary in the weekly prayers read during the Sunday services, please complete the slip opposite.

Cut out the slip and place it in the intercessions box at least one week prior to the Sunday for remembrance. If you are unable to get to church, please post the slip to the Church Administrator: Mrs Philippa Elsey, Parish Church of St Michael and All Angels, The Broadway, Houghton-le-Spring.

MEMORIAL REQUEST

Name of person to be remembered:

.....

Request made by:

.....

.....

.....

Date for memorial:

Sunday,

Andrew Grey

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Rotary

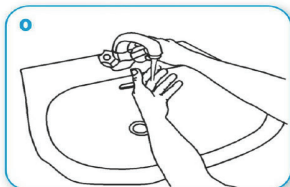


Club of Houghton-le-Spring

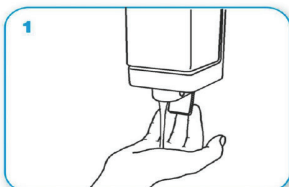
Wash your hands the St Michael's Way!



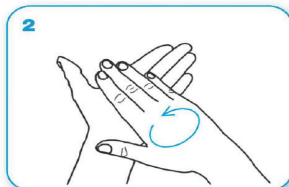
30-45 second wash time



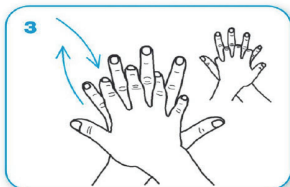
Our Father, Who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy Name.



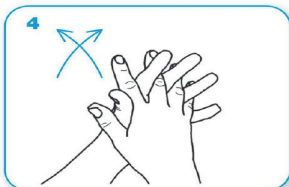
Thy Kingdom come.
Thy Will be done,
on earth as it is in Heaven.



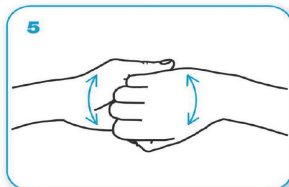
Give us this day our daily bread.



And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass
against us.



And lead us not into
temptation, but deliver us
from evil. Amen.



Hail Mary, Full of Grace,
The Lord is with thee.



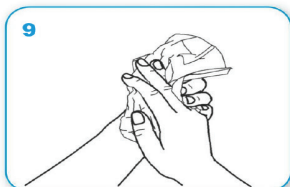
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit
of thy womb, Jesus.



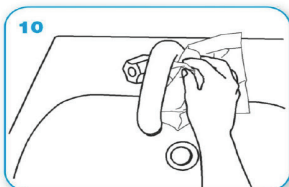
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners



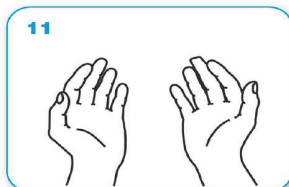
now, and at the hour of
our death. Amen.



Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit.



As it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end.



Amen.

*Clean hands are life savers
... and prayers save souls!*