

Weekly Message from Fr William for Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time 2022

Dear People of St Mary's

On Pentecost Sunday this year, 5th June 2022, a little over three months ago, we celebrated the Platinum Jubilee of our queen. Many members of our parish came together in St John's Church, with other Christians from around the town, to celebrate her and honour her in a special ecumenical service. And many more of us took part in celebrations across the town during that Platinum Jubilee holiday. As a parish, as a nation, and as a family of nations we now mourn our loss of her.

It is part of our Christian faith that we pray for those who have died, even those whose exemplary life seems to put them already beyond the need of our prayers. So this Sunday each of our three masses will be a mass for the dead. The readings will be the readings for the 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C, as expected. But the Collect (Opening Prayer), the Prayer over the Offerings, and the Prayer after Communion will all be of the Mass for the Dead. We will pray for her also in our Bidding Prayers, and some of the hymns have been chosen very much with Queen Elizabeth in our hearts and minds.

At the same time as we thank God for the life of Queen Elizabeth and the gift she has been to us, we thank him also for her son, heir and successor, King Charles, and pledge our loyalty to him, as he has pledged his loyalty to us. As Christians of every denomination it is our Christian duty to live out the teaching of Christ and to render unto the legitimately appointed head of state the loyalty that is due, believing that their authority has been entrusted to them by God himself.

So, as a parish, we'll take the opportunity this Sunday to pray also for King Charles, our king, in the bidding prayers, and at the end of Mass to sing the prayer that is our current national anthem, God Save Our Gracious King.

William