

Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross 14TH SEPTEMBER 2025

Reading I: Numbers 21:4-9

Psalm: 77(78):1-2,34-38

Reading II: Philippians 2:6-11

Gospel: John 3:13-17

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.

John 3:16-17

If Jesus would never have given His life on a cross for the salvation of the world, then a cross would never have been seen in "exultation." A cross, in and of itself, is an instrument of death, a horrific and violent death. It's also an instrument of humiliation and torture. Yet, today, the Cross is seen as a holy and blessed object. We hang crosses in our homes, wear them around our neck, keep them in our pocket on the end of the rosary, and spend time in prayer before them. The Cross is now an exalted image by which we turn to God in prayer and surrender. But that is only the case because it was on a cross that we were saved and brought to eternal life.

If you step back and consider the amazing truth that one of the worst instruments of torture and death is now seen as one of the holiest of images on earth, it should be awe inspiring. Comprehending this fact should lead us to the realization that God can do anything and everything. God can use the worst and transform it into the best. He can use death to bring forth life.

Though our celebration today, the "Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross," is first and foremost a feast by which we give glory to the Father for what He did in the Person of His divine Son, it is also a feast by which we must humbly understand that God can "exalt" every cross we endure in life and bring forth much grace through them.

What is your heaviest cross?

What is the source of your greatest suffering?

Most likely, as you call this to mind, it is painful to you. Most often, our crosses and sufferings are things we seek to rid ourselves of. We easily point to crosses in life and blame them for a lack of happiness. We can easily think that if only this or that were to change or be removed, then our life would be better. So what is that cross in your life?

The truth is that whatever your heaviest cross is, there is extraordinary potential for that cross to become an actual source of grace in your life and in the world. But this is only possible if you embrace that cross in faith and hope so that our Lord can unite it to His and so that your crosses can also share in the exaltation of Christ's Cross. Though this is a profoundly deep mystery of faith, it is also a profoundly deep truth of our faith.

Reflect, today, upon your own crosses. As you do, try not to see them as a burden. Instead, realize the potential within those crosses. Prayerfully look at your crosses as invitations to share in Christ's Cross. Say "Yes" to your crosses. Choose them freely. Unite them to Christ's Cross. As you do, have hope that God's glory will come forth in your life and in the world through your free embrace of them. Know that these "burdens" will be transformed and become a source of exaltation in your life by the transforming power of God.

My exalted Lord, I turn to You in my need and with the utmost faith in Your divine power to save.

Please give me the grace I need to fully embrace every cross in my life with hope and faith in You. Please transform my crosses so that You will be exalted through them and so that they will become an instrument of Your glory and grace. Jesus, I trust in You.



Parish of Blessed Hugh Faringdon & Buckland Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross – 14TH SEPTEMBER 2025

North Downs Pastoral Area

Diocese of Portsmouth

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Parish of Blessed Hugh Faringdon & Buckland



Ministries

Bible Studies - Dr. Neill Taylor & Paul Padley & Team
Family & Youth Catechesis (Confirmation) - Mrs. Helena & Emmanuel Boakye & Team
Children Catechesis (Children's Liturgy & FHC) - Mrs. Kathleen Thomas & Team
Evangelization Catechesis (Adult Evening Studies) - Dr JP Crilly & Team
Administrator & Maintenance - Andrew Chell
Office Secretary - Nerisa Gomez
Finance - Lorraine Brabin,
PPC & Youth & Children - Kathleen Thomas,
Safeguarding - Ann O'Reilly

PRAYING THE READINGS AT HOME

1st Reading: Numbers 21:4-9

Psalm: 77(78):1-2,34-38

2nd Reading: Philippians 2:6-11

Gospel: John 3:13-17

Mass Setting: Creation Mass by Marty Haugen

Children: 804 - Isn't it good (first part)

Entrance: 517 O God, your people gather

Psalm: 77(78):1-2,34-38

*We have sinn'd Lord be merciful;
We have sinn'd Lord be merciful;*

Offertory: 637 Take and Bless our Gifts
Communion: 751 You are the Light
Recessional: 131 Amazing Grace

Sunday Mass is at 10am.

You can follow Fr. Claro's daily international Masses from his home on Facebook Live here:

<https://facebook.com/claro.conde>

His current schedule (subject to change) is:
 7 am Regular Daily Masses Monday to Sunday.
 6 pm Masses on Wednesdays and Sundays.
 On the first Wednesday of each month:
 6 pm Mass in the church (Our Mother of Perpetual Help).

Bible Study

We have a Bible Study, reflecting on the coming Sunday Mass Readings, with Fr Claro on Zoom on Mondays from 8 – 9 pm. To join please use the link on the Parish website home page.

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DATES

14th September 10am Sunday Mass on Feast of the Exultation of the Holy Cross & Baptism of GIANNA Jachimma Ndukwu pf Sylvanus & Favour Chiwendu (Nigeria & Faringdon)

21st September Sunday Mass & Baptism of Seiji Ezequiel Bernal of Gilberto Jose Bernal & Akemi Isabel Bernal of USA & Peru

18th September- evening talk "Strangely Warmed: the life and impact of John Wesley"

3rd October- CAFOD Family Fast Day

5th October- shared lunch after Mass

6th November- evening talk "Philip Pullman: accidental evangelist?"

21st November- charity quiz for Aid to the Church in Need

23rd November- shared lunch after Mass

EVENTS

Warm Space Friday Lunch 11am 14th, 26th Sept, 10th, 24th Oct, 7th, 21st Nov, 12th Dec.

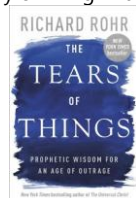
PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL (PPC) can be found in our parish website.

WE NEED MORE VOLUNTEERS for the WELCOMING and another for the SUNDAY TEA & COFFEE groups. Pls email cconde8254@aol.com

RECOMMENDED BOOKS TO READ

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER In his first major work since The Universal Christ, one of our most prominent spiritual voices offers a wholehearted and hope-filled model for living today, grounded in the timeless words of the Hebrew prophets. How do we live compassionately in a time of violence and despair? What can we do with our private disappointments and the anger we feel over an

unjust world? In his most personal book yet, Richard Rohr turns to the writings of the Jewish prophets, showing how some of the lesser-read books of the Bible offer us a path forward today. The prophets' writings echo the spectrum of human development. Beneath their initial fervor and their forceful words, there lies a profound lamentation about our shared human condition and the pain of the world. Yet, in their astute critiques of culture and institutions, and their movement from anger and lament to wholeness and hope, the prophets embody what Rohr calls holy disorder - a distinct approach to confronting malevolence and recognizing the wholeness of every living being. Drawing on a century of Biblical scholarship and written in the warm, pastoral voice that has endeared millions to Rohr, The Tears of Things breathes new life into ancient wisdom and paves a path of enlightenment for anyone seeking a wholehearted way of living in a hurting world.



**Our evening talks return this month with:
"Strangely Warmed: The life and impact of John Wesley"**

The Reverend Jason Cooke, the Methodist minister for Faringdon and Witney will be speaking on the life, faith and impact of John Wesley. Methodism is the third largest Christian denomination in England after Anglicanism and Catholicism, and it has been said that the Labour movement "owes more to Methodism than to Marx". It is important, then, to understand our Methodist brothers and sisters better, and what better place to start than their very admirable founder?

Talk begins at 7.45 p.m. in the hall.

Fish and chips beforehand at 7.00 p.m. (£13 per person)- please email pbhf.bucklandandfaringdon@gmail.com to book your food.

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Saint of the Week



**St Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179)
Feast day 17th September**

Hildegard was born in Bermersheim in Germany in 1098, and in 1115 she entered the Benedictine abbey at the Disibodenberg. Around 1150 she founded the monastery at Rupertsberg, near Bingen, which she ruled as abbess.

She was expert both in natural science and in music. She is one of the best-known composers of sacred monophony, as well as the most recorded in modern history. She has been considered by a number of scholars to be the founder of scientific natural history in Germany. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hildegard_of_Bingen In her contemplative prayer she received mystical revelations which she communicated in very many written works, directed at clergy and laity alike. She preached penitence and disproved doctrinal errors, so that even princes and Popes turned to her for advice. She died of an illness in 1179.

5th October- shared lunch after Mass

On Sunday 5th October we will have a parish shared lunch after Mass in the hall. As always, please bring along food to share (please, no nuts). As always, volunteers to help set up the hall before Mass (from 9.30 a.m.) and to clear up afterwards eagerly sought. Please feel free to invite your friends, family and neighbours to join us.

Newsletter announcement for Family Fast Day CAFOD Family Fast Day Appeal this Harvest

Please donate to our Family Fast Day parish collection to share God's abundant gifts with our global neighbours as they find lasting solutions to poverty and climate challenges. Your generosity offers "signs

of hope" in this Jubilee Year, helping build more water tanks in communities like Waré's in Ethiopia where women have to walk for hours to get water. Use the CAFOD envelope in church, donate online at cafod.org.uk/envelope or call 0303 303 3030. You can also text CAFOD to 70560 to donate £10.

CAFOD-Harvest Family Fast Day. Friday 3rd October

Waré is a mother to five children, living southern Ethiopia where she herds goats with her husband. Four years of severe drought has killed lots of their livestock and Waré had to get up at 5am every day and walk at least five hours to find water. If the nearest water sources had dried up, she had to keep looking – a much longer day, walking up to ten hours to find water even when she was pregnant. Waré spoke about feeling so weak, she was worried that her children would be left without a mother. "We have lost so much", Waré told us. But there is a happy ending. With your gifts at Family Fast Day, CAFOD worked together with Waré and her community to build an underground water storage tank, able to support 300 families. Now, Waré has water just a 10 minute walk from her home.

Your parish's support this Family Fast Day will mean that more of our neighbours can get safe water for their families.

<https://cafod.org.uk/fundraise/parishes/support-harvest-family-fast-day-in-your-parish>

Parish Questionnaire

Please see the new questionnaire page on the parish website: <https://blessedhugh.org.uk/questionnaire/> In order to better serve the parish and to better be a synodal and listening church, the parish pastoral council would be very grateful if you could complete the relevant questionnaire. There are also questionnaires for Catholics resident in the parish area who do not regularly attend Mass at Blessed Hugh and also for those who are not Catholic, but wish to learn more about the Catholic church, so if you know of people in those categories, please direct them to that webpage. Thank you.