

Parish of St Winefride, Lymm

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Hello again. Whether you better remember Tom and Diana in 1990 ‘Waiting for God’ in the retirement home, or Samuel Becket’s play ‘Waiting for Godot’, we have all got used to waiting *in joyful hope* for the coming of our Saviour, who was taken up into heaven, promising to return, and to be with us ‘always, yes, to the end of time’. Most of us are waiting, with varying degrees of patience, for the freedom to go about our business without fear of spreading or contracting coronavirus. There are still no clear instructions about changes to the use of churches. In some ways getting back to the way things were before the pandemic will be more difficult than when we had to shut down completely. It would have been appropriate if our new beginning could have been at Pentecost (which is next weekend), but we have to wait a bit longer. Again, though, we have three Masses fully booked for this celebration of the Ascension.

The Catholic Church and Climate Change. As usual Pope Francis is leading the way in drawing our attention for the need for all of us to care for the environment. Our much maligned bishops in England and Wales announce a step in the right direction. Nearly all purchasing of gas and electricity has been centralised through an organisation called IFM, Inter-Diocesan Fuel Management, pioneered by our own Diocese of Shrewsbury, and we now get three-quarters of the gas from green energy sources – would you believe from a gin-brewing distillery in Scotland! All of the electricity purchased is also now ‘green’.

We are celebrating the feast of Our Lord’s Ascension into heaven this weekend. St Bede’s hymn says:

*“New praises be given to Christ newly crowned
Who back to his heaven a new way has found.
God’s blessedness sharing before us he goes.
What mansions preparing. What endless repose.”*

The Preface to the Eucharistic Prayer says:

“The Lord Jesus, the King of Glory, conqueror of sin and death, ascended today to the highest heavens, as the angels gazed in wonder. Mediator between God and Man, judge of the world and Lord of Hosts, he ascended; not to distance himself from our lowly state, but that we, his members, might be confident of following where he, our Head and Founder, has gone before.”

Jesus himself said:

“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and then you will be my witnesses”. Please keep on praying the Rosary with Pope Francis during May for release from the global pandemic, and plead for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit anew at Pentecost – you might find the prayers printed overleaf again useful.

I have offered Mass for David Jones, John Dodd, Peggy Young, Stan Beardwood, and for special intentions Slattery and Breen. Those of you who attend daily Mass online might like to tune in to Shrewsbury Cathedral on Friday, the feast of the Dedication of the Cathedral, when prayers are offered in thanksgiving and for God’s continuing blessing.

Fr Tony Elder