

Coming Back to Mass

The Mass is the very heart and centre of our life as Catholics. Taking part in the Mass is the hallmark of being a Catholic.

Why?

Because the Risen Lord himself invites each of us calling us by name, to spend time with him, to listen to him speaking to us in the Scripture readings, to profess our faith together, to unite our lives with his sacrifice, and to have our inner self, our soul, nourished by the gift of his own life.

It is Jesus himself who says to us about the Mass: 'Do this in memory of me.'

Jesus calls us his friends. We are his family.

The Mass is the Lord's most precious gift, because there he gathers us together and shares his life with us. There he fills us with his life and his love, and gives us a peace no one else can give.

It is the Risen Jesus himself who stands in your church, with his arms open to welcome, inviting you to join his group of friends who gather close to him.

No matter how long you have been away, you will be very warmly welcome – by the Lord and his Church.

Jesus says 'Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest'

Your Diocesan Family

Our Diocese of Arundel & Brighton covers the counties of Surrey and East & West Sussex. With our Bishop Richard, we are invited to play a full part in the life and work of diocesan family and your local parish.

Together we can become a beacon of God's love to everyone in the South of England and beyond and we cannot do that fully without you. Please join us by contributing your time and your talents. By coming to Mass we come close to Christ, so that we can bring him to others.

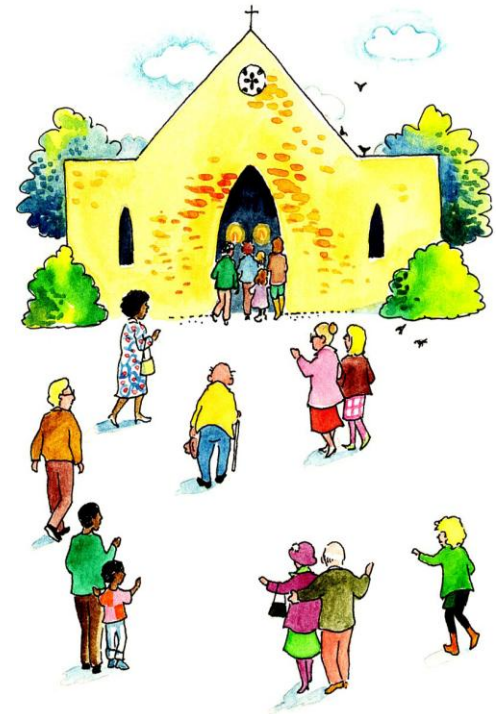
Our Diocesan Website

You can find information about the diocese and your local parish on our diocesan website. Go to: www.dabnet.org and click on 'Parishes'.

Your Parish Family

The parish is the main place where we live our Catholic life together. At St Anne's Chertsey you can find out more by calling into the church, reading the weekly newsletter and the notice boards in the church porch, or by going to our parish website: www.stanneschertsey.org.uk

COMING HOME



thinking about coming back to church ?

People stop coming to Mass for all sorts of reasons.

Some never really started. Perhaps you were baptised as a Catholic, even made your First Communion, but were never much part of the family of the Church. Your parents rarely came to Mass, so you didn't either.

Perhaps you stopped coming as a teenager, even after being confirmed. You found it boring. It wasn't 'cool' to come to church. It was so easy just to drift away quietly.

Perhaps you were hurt by something said or done by someone at church. You may still feel rather angry about it. We are very sorry.

Or perhaps you felt unworthy because of something you did. You felt uncomfortable being there because you knew deep in your heart that you were doing wrong or at least that the Church disapproved.

Perhaps your marriage broke down. You are now in a new relationship, even married again.

Perhaps you cannot receive Communion, so you don't see the point of coming.

If you have been away for a long time, you may find the Church today is very different. Have a fresh look and give it another go.

Whatever the reason you left, please come back to church, and join your parish community. You are a vital part of God's family, and you will be warmly welcome.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY



The Church is not just a building. It's a community, a family. Together, we are God's royal family. We are the community of God's beloved sons and daughters. There is no greater dignity than that!

You may not always have seen the Church like that. Perhaps you have had bad experiences in the past.

The Church always needs renewal. It's made up of ordinary people, fragile human beings who fail and fall. Our diocese of Arundel & Brighton and your local parish community of St Anne's are not perfect, but we are trying hard to be a true family where everyone is warmly welcome...



But....

But I don't know anyone....

Perhaps not, though you may be surprised. Don't worry that everyone will look at you! And there are lots of ways of meeting others and feeling you belong.

But I'm afraid of Confession....

Don't worry about that for the moment. Just come along to Mass and get used to what goes on. Get the feel of the church and its worship. Come forward for a 'blessing' at Communion if you like (just bow your head or cross your arms to show you are not receiving Communion). When you are ready, come to the great Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession). It may be rather daunting, but God gives his freedom and peace as he lifts all past burdens of sin and gives you a new beginning.

But I can't receive Communion....

You may have heard you cannot receive Communion, and perhaps you can't do much to change how things are. Come and talk it through with your priest to clarify the situation. But even if you cannot receive Communion, coming to mass is still a wonderful thing to do. There are lots of people at Mass every Sunday who can't receive Communion, but also non-Catholic husbands and wives, and perhaps people in the same position as you. You are still part of our family, and you will receive many blessings by coming to church. There's a deep pain in not being able to receive Communion, but an even greater loss in not being part of the Mass and the Church at all. Try to be as fully involved as you can in our life and worship. Some may be able to move forward through the Diocesan Marriage Tribunal and the annulment process.

For confidential information email:

tribunal@dabnet.org