





GIACOMO & ANGELICA'S FIRST HOLY COMMUNION





PARISH OF
ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY
SEVENOAKS

CHURCHES IN SEVENOAKS, OTFORD,
BOROUGH GREEN AND WEST KINGSDOWN



Parish Newsletter 16th July 2023



Today's Mass: FIFTEENTH SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME (Year A)

Isaiah 55: 10-11, Psalm 64, Romans 8: 18-23, Matthew 13: 1-23

First Reading: these words make sense in the context of today's **Gospel**. Just as the rain waters the earth to give life, so God's word gives growth. The **Psalm** continues the same idea.

Second Reading: if we compare Paul's famous words about creation's eager longing with *Genesis 3*, we can see that Paul is here talking about the restoration of paradise. The glory that awaits us in the next life makes our sufferings in this life bearable.

Gospel: the Parable of the Sower has two important lessons for us in our efforts to evangelize. First, we must enthusiastically try to sow the seed in spite of what may seem to be meagre results; our responsibility is to sow the seed, only God can give increase. Secondly, there is a difference between 'hearing' the word and 'understanding' it; we must try to enable people to understand the good news.

Fr David

ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY SEVENOAKS

Sunday Mass times:

Saturday
6:00pm

Sunday
8:00am (Latin)
9:15am (Children's Liturgy of Word)
11:15am
6:00pm

Adoration:

Monday 8:30am - 9:30am
Tuesday 6:00pm - 7:00pm

Weekday Mass times:

Monday 8:00am
Tuesday 9:30am
Wednesday 8:00am
Thursday 12:00noon
Friday 8:00am
Saturday 9:30am

Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Saturday
10:00am - 10:30am,
5:15pm - 5:45pm



Granville Road,
Sevenoaks TN13 1ER

Parish Office: Magdalena Wiacek
Monday - Friday
9:00am - 12:00noon
Tel: 01732 454177
sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk
www.sevrcparish.org.uk



High Street, Otford
TN14 5PH

MOST HOLY TRINITY OTFORD

Mass times: Sunday 9:30am
(with Children's Liturgy of the Word)
Wednesday 10:00am
Holy Days of Obligation 10:00am
Adoration: Thursday 7:30pm - 8:30pm
Friday 11:00am - 12:00noon

Church contact:
Barry Authers
Tel: 01959 524362
sevenoaksmht@rcaos.org.uk



Western Rd, Borough Green
TN15 8AG

ST JOSEPH'S BOROUGH GREEN

Mass times: Sunday 9:30am
(with Children's Liturgy of the Word)
Thursday 10:00am
Holy Days of Obligation 6:00pm

Church contact:
Antoni Offert
Tel: 07513 041075
sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk



Fawkham Rd, West Kingsdown
TN15 6JP

ST BERNADETTE'S WEST KINGSDOWN

Mass times: Sunday 11:00am
Friday 10:00am
Holy Days of Obligation 11:00am
Adoration: Wed 12:00noon- 1:00pm

Church contacts:
Jill & John Gobel
Tel: 01474 853676
sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk



ST THOMAS' CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

South Park,
Sevenoaks, TN13 1EH
www.saintthomas.co.uk

Executive Head:
Mrs Katherine Sexton
Academy Principal:
Ms Geraldine Leahy
Tel: 01732 453921

GOD LOVES HIS CHILDREN

MASS ACTIVITY FOR CHILDREN



Spot the difference

Can you spot five differences between these two sowers?



Jesus tells us a story about a man who sows some seed. Some seed did not do well but some seed landed on good soil. This seed grew big and strong. Jesus wants us to listen to his message of love. If we really listen with our hearts, we will grow strong in God's love.

Break the code

The disciples did not understand Jesus' story and had to ask him to explain. Decode the words and write what Jesus is saying on the lines.

| | | | |
|----|----|----|----|
| a= | b= | d= | |
| e= | G= | h= | |
| i= | l= | n= | |
| o= | P= | r= | s= |
| t= | u= | w= | y= |



God's word helps me grow

Jesus said we are like seeds.

Just like a seed needs good soil to grow, we need to listen to God to grow.



JESUS WANTS TO HELP

When we listen to God and do as he asks, we will be the very best we can be!

Join the dots to see what is growing here.

Help the farmer with his crops

Help the sower find the best place to sow his seeds.

Answers: Plant God's word in your heart. Spot the difference: hat, basket, sandals, beard, height.

A PRAYER TO SAY

Dear Jesus, help me to grow strong in your love. Help me to listen to your message and do what I know is good and kind. Help me to bear good fruit. Amen.



CONTACTS & ORGANISATIONS

Parish of St Thomas of Canterbury, Sevenoaks

Presbytery and Parish Office: 12 Granville Road, Sevenoaks, TN13 1ER
Website: www.sevrcparish.org.uk **Tel:** 01732 454177

Parish Priest: Fr David Gibbons, KCHS davidgibbons@rcaos.org.uk

Assistant Priest: Fr Vipin James, SDV vipinjames@rcaos.org.uk

Parish Deacon: Rev'd Neil Philipson neilphilipson@rcaos.org.uk

Parish Secretary: Mrs Magdalena Wiacek sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk

Parish Office hours: Monday - Friday 9:00am - 12:00noon

Safeguarding Rep: Ken Baines sevenoakssgl@safeguardrcaos.org.uk

The Diocesan Safeguarding Coordinator can be contacted on 020 7261 1606; in an emergency dial 999

Adoration

Barry Authers: adoration@sevrcparish.org.uk

Altar Servers (St Thomas's)

Catherine Ingram: ingramfamily15@yahoo.com

Catenians

Social club for Catholic men

Aiden O'Mahony: aidan.omahony@btinternet.com

Children's Liturgy of the Word, Sunday Mass

Sevenoaks, 9:15am Mass:

Mark O'Prey: sevenoakslow@rcaos.org.uk

Oxford, 9:30am Mass:

Magdalena Wiacek: sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk

Borough Green, 9:30am Mass:

Fiona Newton: fionanewton321@btinternet.com

Choirs

Music Group:

Lonnie Christophers lonniechr@hotmail.com

Traditional Choir: Barbara Page 01732 454729

Borough Green: Chris Hurl chris.hurl@outlook.com

Church Cleaning (St Thomas's)

James McSharry: jamesmcsharry@hotmail.com

Church Flowers (St Thomas's)

Kate Travers: katetravers521@hotmail.com

Confirmation Programme

Gabrielle Ellis: sevenoaksconfirmation@rcaos.org.uk

Parish Finance Committee

Secretary: Mary Scott - 3maryscott@gmail.com

First Holy Communion & Reconciliation Programme

Jakub Siudyka & Catherine Tan

sevenoaksfhc@rcaos.org.uk

Gift Aid:

Sean Corrigan: sevenoaksgac@rcaos.org.uk

Holy Trinity Committee

Secretary: Barry Authers - sevenoaksmht@rcaos.org.uk

Lectio Divina

Kathie Gonzalez 01732 761253

Listening to you (Bereavement Support)

Third Monday, 10:30am in Parish Room

Ronnie Campbell 01732 452988, Sarah Harrison 01959

522357, Kate Travers katetravers521@hotmail.com

Loaves and Fishes Foodbank

Isabelle Mercer: h.imercer@btopenworld.com

Mothers' Prayers

Mondays, 11:30am at Star House, Star Hill Road
01959 532505

Parent & Toddlers Group

Tuesdays 10:00am - 12:00noon, Parish Centre
Mary Hunt 07890 229794

RACET (Rural Africa Children's Education Trust)

MaryAnn Perasso 01959 522337, www.racet.org

Readers, Ministers & Welcomers Rota (St Thomas's)

Andrew Pembroke: st.thomas.rota@gmail.com

Repository

Saturday 6:00pm, Sunday: 8:00 am, 11:15am

Sophie McBrien: sophiemcbrien@yahoo.co.uk

RCIA

For adults becoming Catholic

Andrew La Trobe: andrew.latrobe@gmail.com

Retreats

Catherine Roger: c.rodger@btinternet.com

St Bernadette's Committee

Secretary: Jill Gobel - jill.gobel@btinternet.com

St Joseph's Committee

Secretary: John Foley - johnandmariefoley@gmail.com

The Pilgrims

For retired parishioners

Jackie Pembroke 01732 450197

Scripture Fellowship

Reading a Gospel together

Andrew Wilkinson: andrewwilkos@gmail.com

St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP)

Can help financially, practically, and through visits to the isolated or housebound. Contact Paul Boyle 07796564018 or Kathie Gonzalez sevenoakssvp@gmail.com

Union of Catholic Mothers (UCM) (West Kingsdown)

Monica Biggs: mmdbbiggs@outlook.com

Webmaster

Barry Authers: sevenoakswebmaster@rcaos.org.uk

PARISH NOTICES

THIS WEEK

Monday: St Thomas' School

Year 6 Leavers Mass at 6:00pm in St Thomas's, followed by the customary party.

Monday: First Holy Communion Programme Parents' meeting

For all parents with children registered for the next First Holy Communion programme. The initial parents' meeting is on Monday at 7:30pm, in the Parish Centre. It is very important that at least one parent attends. There will be information about the new structure of the preparation, an opportunity to ask questions, and key dates for the diary. If parents haven't yet done you should register online at <http://www.sevrcparish.org.uk/>.

Wednesday: St Thomas' School Mass

The End of Term Mass, for the whole school, is on Wednesday in St Thomas's Church at 9:30am. Parents and family members very welcome; please sit at the back or in the gallery.

Robert Hafford RIP

Funeral Service at the Bluebell Crematorium, Halstead on Thursday.

PARISH NOTICES

Home Faith Cells Registration

Following a very successful first year of Faith Cells running in the Parish, we are very pleased to advise that registration/re-registration is now open for the coming year. Please find the link on the Parish web site or use the link provided here <https://forms.office.com/e/CRV4CyGNnU>. More information will be provided in due course.

Parish St Vincent de Paul Society

The St Vincent de Paul Society makes regular visits to those who are housebound, ill, or in need of a friend. We have a small but active group in St Thomas of Canterbury Parish in Sevenoaks. If you or someone you know would benefit from a regular visit or phone call, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us. We tailor our support to each individual. We are also able to offer some financial assistance on a case-by-case basis. You can contact our group's president Paul Boyle on 07796 564018 or alternatively email sevenoakssvp@gmail.com.

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PARISH GARDEN PARTY

Today (Sunday)

12:00 noon – 3:00pm

in the Presbytery Garden

Free entry; free food and drink

BBQ, salads, cakes, bar

children's games and entertainment

St Thomas' School Choir

Wells family String Players

Bottle Stall

Toy Stall

Gift Stall

Plant Stall

Raffle, with some very good prizes
(tickets £2 each)

TODAY

11:15am Mass

The Traditional Choir provides the music at this Mass today.

PARISH AND OTHER NOTICES

Men's and Women's Retreats

The next Parish Men's Retreat is 29th September to 1st October 2023. The next Women's Retreat is 17th to 19th May 2024. The theme is *Hope: Living Differently*, based on some words in Pope Benedict XVI's *Spe Salvi*. Both Retreats will be facilitated by Sr Gemma Simmonds, CJ, who spoke in Lent in our parish. Each Retreat is at The Friars, Aylesford; the cost for full board, lodging and the Retreat facilitator is £240. You can download a form from the Parish website (click on the News and Masses tab) or obtain one from the Parish Office. Lift shares to Aylesford will be organised.

Queries to Catherine Rodger (c.rodger@btinternet.com or 01732 458852). The registration form and non refundable deposit of £20 (cheques payable to RCAS Sevenoaks) should be returned to the Parish Office by Sunday 6th August for the men's Retreat.

St Bernadette's Committee

The Committee met recently, and these are main points:

- the total funds stand at £174,613.52; this includes the legacy sums held in a restricted account;
- the new fence and gate are in place;
- works to the car park and the grounds to the rear are in hand, as is the repair of Our Lady's (external) statue;
- a new central aisle carpet will be obtained;
- the fire alarm is now working;
- St Bernadette's is providing the tea and coffee stall at the Parish Garden Party;
- the proposed Meeting Room has been put 'on the back burner' for the time being.

The next meeting is in October. We thank the members for their work.

Finance

The Second Collection for Catholic Communications was £354.22, and for the Day for Life £291.22. If you are wondering why there is always a delay in reporting the collection totals, it is because the income is received from multiple sources (cash on the day, cheques, bank transfers, the card reading machine, donations via the website, Charities Aid Foundation donations, and others), and sometimes

the collections from the 'outstations' are not transferred immediately. It thus takes our Accountant – whom we only pay to work one day a week – several weeks to calculate the final totals.

Gift Aid review

The Gift Aid refund for 2022/2023 was £41,785, a welcome increase on previous years.

Cash collections are now back to normal, and although we didn't reach the £32k maximum (4 'Mass centres' x £8k) we were not far off. The collection limit under the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme of £8k is reached by the end of May at St Thomas's, and we don't benefit further for almost 10 months.

The card machine in the Entrance to St Thomas's continues to grow in importance. If we can shift some of the cash offerings to the card machine it would enhance our Gift Aid claim. I think migrating people from cash in the plate to the card machine over the next few years will be a new priority which will incrementally increase our Gift Aid take.

The offertory collection is now largely Standing Orders with some lump sums. Envelopes now account for only a small proportion of the money and will continue to decline. The Standing Orders give us a resilience financially. The number of Standing Orders continues to slowly increase and remains a priority.

Sean Corrigan

OTHER NOTICES

Diocesan Summer Workshop Music Day

A day with the colourful and charismatic Christopher Walker on Saturday 19th August, at the Amigo Hall next to the Cathedral. Coffee from 10:30am, and the workshop will start at 11:00am. Please bring a packed Lunch. Fee: £10 per person, payable on the day. Email nicholas.pointer@btinternet.com to register.

Wedding anniversary Mass

If you are celebrating a round figure (10, 20 etc) wedding anniversary this year, you are invited to the special Mass on Saturday 23rd September at 3:00pm in St George's Cathedral. To receive an invitation from the Archbishop email mflkent@rcaos.org.uk putting Sevenoaks in the title of your email, by the end of July.



From the Desk of the Parish Priest

All Change

I think this will be my last *From the desk* article, before I move to be Parish Priest of Sacred Heart, Wimbledon. It means upheaval for me - as I take my things to my new parish, notify everyone of my change of address, and get used to the place and parishioners - and adjustment for you - as you get used to a new Parish Priest, who may do things differently.

Why can't we stay as we are, avoiding all change and the difficulties it presents? Quite apart from the Archbishop's need to properly staff the whole diocese, change is not something to fear and avoid, but is to be welcomed as necessary to our growth as Christian disciples. We all need to be open to change because it is the only way that we can grow towards the fullness of life and love which God desires for us all. As St John Henry Cardinal Newman famously said, "*in this imperfect world, to live is to change, to be perfect is to have changed often*".

Examples in Scripture

Let us look at some examples from Scripture. Abram was an old man when God called him to leave his homeland for a new land. How much easier and more comfortable to decline, but Abram believed and trusted God, and did what he asked. For this act of faith he is known as 'our Father in faith'.

Moses was a simple shepherd, so he must have experienced a great shock when God appeared in the burning bush and asked him to lead his people. David, a young shepherd, was also asked by God to be the greatest king of Israel, ancestor of Jesus Himself. Ruth is another example: she decided to leave her own country, everything and everyone familiar, to go with her mother-in-law to a strange land.

Peter was an uneducated fisherman - cowardly, impetuous - whom Jesus called to be the rock on which He would build his church. St Paul's conversion is perhaps the most striking example of a dramatic change in someone's life. And of course God chose Mary, an unknown country girl, to be the mother of his Son.

For all these people the change in their lives would have been unimaginable. Yet they all accepted the challenge and the change because of their deep faith and love.

Reacting to change

Different people react to change in different ways. Are you more of a 'stick-in-the-mud' or do you welcome change? Change can be disconcerting, even upsetting. It will take a while for you to get to know Fr Piotr and for him to get to know all of you. No two priests ever do things in quite the same way, and inevitably there will be various changes, some minor, some more substantial.

But Fr Piotr will have skills and insights I don't have, and we trust that the Holy Spirit has prompted the Archbishop to identify the right person to take this parish forward, so that both the parish generally and the individual parishioners can continue to grow in holiness and discipleship.

Repentance and prayer

Jesus first message was 'repent and believe the Gospel'. By definition, repentance means a turning around, turning away from sin and towards God; in other words, a significant change. If we conduct an honest Examination of Conscience we shall soon see the need for change in our lives. I have seen Christian discipleship defined as 'the refining process by which a Christian becomes more like Christ'.

Underpinning all this is the need to grow - and therefore to change - in prayer. Whether you find the change of Parish Priest disturbing or welcome, it is a time for prayer, supplicating God for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in grasping the new challenges and growing in faith through them.

As Reinhold Niebuhr wrote:

God grant me the serenity to accept the things

I cannot change

the courage to change the things I can

and the wisdom to distinguish the one from the other.

Fr David

SYNOD OF BISHOPS ON SYNODALITY

Pope Francis has nominated Bishop Nicholas Hudson, an Auxiliary Bishop for the Diocese of Westminster, as a member of the 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops that will convene from 4th - 29th October in Rome.

Bishop Hudson led a team of four 'in-person' delegates at the Synod's European Continental Assembly meeting in Prague in February 2023.

"I feel very honoured to have been nominated by the Holy Father to be a member of the October Synod; and to have been asked to play a part in the contribution of England and Wales to this vital work of the Universal Church," said Bishop Hudson. "I trust that all of us who take part in this Synod will experience something of the same 'transformative power of listening' which characterised the European Continental Assembly.

"I hope we will know in Rome the deep sense gained in Prague of standing alongside one another with our gaze fixed on Christ – sometimes even a sense of His walking among us, contemplating with us the mystery of the Church."

He joins Archbishop John Wilson and Bishop Marcus Stock, Bishop of Leeds, as episcopal members of the Synod from England and Wales.

The Revd Dr Jan Nowotnik, Director of Mission for the Bishops' Conference and its National Ecumenical Officer, has been appointed a non-bishop member of the Synod. Fr Nowotnik is one of ten non-bishop members – five women, five men – representing the European continental region. They will enjoy voting rights at the Assembly, which will consist of around 370 voting members out of more than 400 total participants.

This is the first of two Synodal gatherings – the second will take place in 2024. The overall theme is *For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission*.

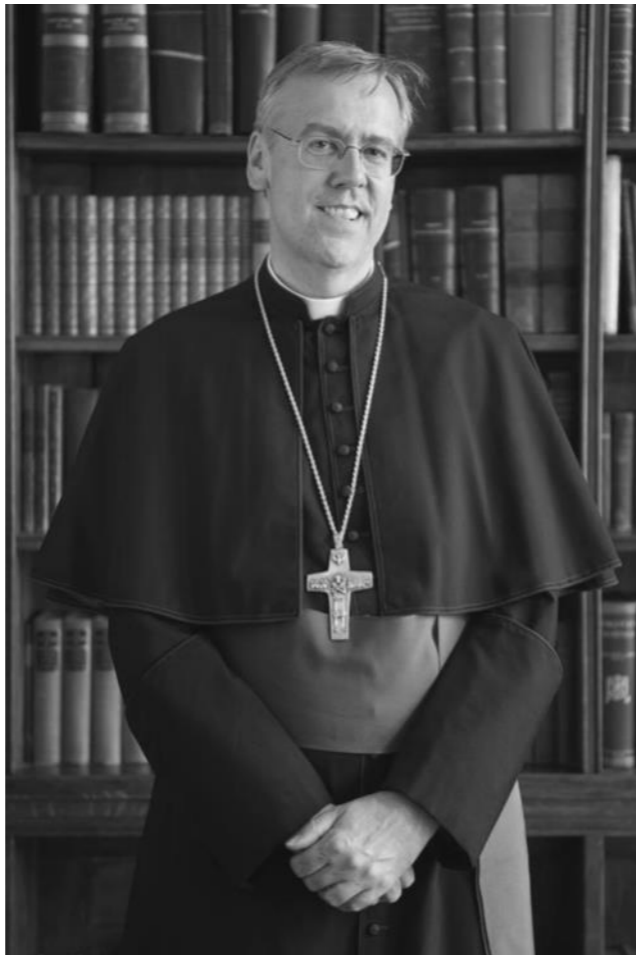
Dominican friar Fr Timothy Radcliffe OP will lead a synod retreat for participants and has been nominated a Spiritual Assistant. The participants will attend a three-day Retreat together beforehand.

Professor Anna Rowlands, of the University of Durham, and Dr Austen Ivereigh will serve as experts/facilitators.

The *Instrumentum Laboris*, the Synod's working document, can be found on the website of the Synod: <https://www.synod.va/en/synodal-process/the-universal-phase/documents.html>.

Cardinal Mario Grech is the Secretary General of the Secretariat for the Synod. Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich is the Synod's General Relator.

Information on the synodal process, resources, news and more can be found on the official website for the Synod Office: <https://www.synod.va/en.html>.



MASS INTENTIONS

ALL MASSES ARE AT ST THOMAS'S CHURCH UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| SUNDAY 16th July | FIFTEENTH SUNDAY |
| 6:00pm (Sat) | Mike Mills RIP (anniversary) |
| 8:00am (Latin) | Thomas Mernock RIP (birthday) |
| 9:15am | Dec'd family members of Tony and Jill Cooper |
| 11:15am | Phillis Claydon RIP (birthday) |
| 6:00pm | People of the Parish |
| 9:30am <i>Oxford</i> | Angela Brunning RIP |
| 9:30am <i>Borough Green</i> | Martin & Vivienne Andrews RIP |
| 11:00am <i>West Kingsdown</i> | Tony Goldsmith RIP |
| Monday 17th | Feria |
| 8:00am | Brendah Meegan RIP (birthday) |
| 6:00pm | <i>Year 6 Leavers Mass</i> |
| Tuesday 18th | Feria |
| 9:30am | Peggy Murphy RIP (anniversary) |
| Wednesday 19th | Feria |
| 8:00am | In thanksgiving (L.R.L. Edwards RIP) |
| 9:30am | <i>The End of Term Mass</i> |
| 10:00am <i>Oxford</i> | Maria Kowalczyk RIP (9 th anniversary) |
| Thursday 20th | Feria |
| 10:00am <i>Borough Green</i> | Mollie Barnacle RIP |
| 12:00noon | Eileen Moynahan RIP |
| Friday 21st | Feria |
| 8:00am | James & Carmela Gibson RIP |
| 10:00am <i>West Kingsdown</i> | Patrick Bunton RIP |
| Saturday 22nd | S MARY MAGDALENE |
| 9:30am | Joseph & Josephine Brown RIP |
| SUNDAY 23rd July | SIXTEENTH SUNDAY |
| 6:00pm (Sat) | Eileen Moynahan RIP |
| 8:00am (Latin) | Margaret Menday RIP |
| 9:15am | Marcus Wray RIP |
| 11:15am | People of the Parish |
| 6:00pm | Mary O'Dwyer RIP |
| 9:30am <i>Oxford</i> | Mary Kelly RIP & Iris Kemp RIP |
| 9:30am <i>Borough Green</i> | Dec'd members of the Wardle family |
| 11:00am <i>West Kingsdown</i> | Johanna Gambrill RIP |

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

The sick

Paulina Andrea Zamora Hernandez, Mavis Mitchell Lambert, Tony Barrett, Frank Easterbrook, Lynne Stanley, Veronica Williams, Yvonne Bollen, Peter Ringham, Ann Steven, Lilian Spragg, Ken Holmes, Mary & Chris Scott, Sean Cloke, Ann Farren and all in care and nursing homes in the Parish.

Departed anniversaries

John Smith, Florence Bishop, Sheila Marsh, Joseph Eyre, Marjorie Hennessey, Carole Edwards, Margherita Tondina, Winifred George, Ruth Genth, Johanna Gambrill, Paul Duke, John Douglas, Mary Eyre, Martha Turland, Brenda Wraight, Beatrice White, Jack Banbrook, Peter James, Kate Atwell, Lucy Day.

Eternal rest grant unto them....



LATIN ANTIPHONS

Entrance

Ego autem cum iustitia apparebo in conspectu tuo; satiabor dum manifestabitur gloria tua.

Communion

Qui manducet meam carnem et bibit meum sanguinem, in me manet et ego in eo, dicit Dominus.