

ST. FRANCIS CATHOLIC PARISH NEWSLETTER

25th October 2020 – Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)

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Parish Priest: Fr. Liam Gallagher

Assistant Priests: Fr. Damian Esene, Fr. Simon Peter Lubuulwa

Deacon: Rev. Ian Black

Parish Office hours: 10.00am – 12.00pm Monday and Friday

Catholic Schools

St Francis Primary School: Queen's Road, Maidstone, ME16 0LB

01622 771540

St Simon Stock Secondary School: Oakwood Park, Maidstone, ME16 0JP

01622 754551



ST JOHN'S SEMINARY

We announced last week that our Seminary, St. John's in Wonersh, Surrey is to close. You may remember, of course, that this is where Canon Luke Smith had been appointed from Maidstone three years ago to become a member of staff as Spiritual Director. It is also the Seminary where Canon Luke, Canon John Clarke, Fr. Liam Gallagher to name but a few of so many priests who have served here at St. Francis, attended. It is a huge building that opened 1891 where the initial intake would have been certainly over one hundred students. Currently they have 17. The students that are currently in formation shall now be moved to Allen Hall Seminary, Chelsea in September 2021. You may remember that the Seminary has put out a number of appeals recently to deal with much overdue maintenance work but as the official statement notes, ...'the Trustees have regretfully come to the decision that St John's Seminary cannot continue in its present form. The current and projected number of seminarians is too small to sustain a healthy formation community, and the building and staffing costs have simply become prohibitive.'

The word Seminary means Seedbed. The motto for St Johns Seminary is 'Spes messis in semine' (The hope of the harvest is in the seed). Our parish communities, schools and homes are the seedbeds. Let us sow these seeds with hope, allow them to be cultivated by encouraging our children to listen and respond to God's calling. This is how the harvest can be rich again.