

Beginning a New Year by Fr. Joe Jones Bonnybrook Parish

(Light large candle on the Table)

As we begin a new year,
may this candle light our way to a brighter future.
May it be a symbol of
Healing of all sickness
Forgiveness of past hurts,
Gratitude for the present,
in knowing that God is still with us, and
Hope for our future,
that there will be health and peace in our homes
in our lives and in our world.

(Using Nature to guide us through the Year.)

Now we are going to light a candle for each month of the year and ask God to bless the year we have begun. Bonnybrook Parish is officially an 'Eco Aware Parish' so we are using the Flower designated to each month to remind us of the beauty of nature and to inspire us to work together as we care for our world and protect the future of our planet.

After each month, we will respond:

“Be with us Lord - give light to our path.”

In **JANUARY** the month of darkness, cold and frost. We welcome the snowdrops as they brighten our lives. The Snowdrop is a symbol of sympathy and caring for someone. This flower reminds us to be gentle and take care of the people we love. In this time of pandemic may it remind us of the need to be safe and keep each other safe at all times.

“Be with us Lord - give light to our path.”

In **FEBRUARY** the month of rain, wind and snow. We welcome the Violet Flowers. The Violet Flower also has roots in Christianity and represents the modesty of the Virgin Mary. It also represents spiritual wisdom, faithfulness and humility. May we be strengthened in our spiritual lives and be faithful to each other and to God.

“Be with us Lord - give light to our path.”

In **MARCH** the month of farmers, lambs and new life. We welcome the Daffodils. Daffodils are symbols of rebirth and new beginnings. They are some of the first flowers we see in Springtime and indicate that winter is over. May God’s love and healing be reborn in our world and in our lives.

“Be with us Lord - give light to our path.”

In **APRIL** the month of swallows, growth and green grass. We welcome the Daisies. Daisies symbolize innocence and purity. According to an old Celtic legend, whenever an infant died, God sprinkled daisies over the earth to cheer the parents up. Daisies consist of two flowers combined into one, the inner section, the disc floret and the outer petal, the ray floret. These blend together so well they also symbolise true love. May we experience true love in our lives.

“Be with us Lord - give light to our path.”

In **MAY** the month of the cuckoo, the flowers and Summer. We welcome the flower Lily of the Valley. This elegant bloom is frequently associated with traditional feminine values and symbolises motherhood, rebirth and humility. Give us humility in all that we say and do.

“Be with us Lord - give light to our path.”

In **JUNE** the month of examinations, the mid-summer and sun. We welcome the Rose. All roses symbolize God's love at work in the world, but different colours of roses also symbolize different spiritual concepts. White roses mean purity and holiness. Red roses mean passion and sacrifice. Yellow roses mean wisdom and joy. Pink roses mean gratitude and peace. We celebrate in gratitude all that nature and God brings to our world.

“Be with us Lord - give light to our path.”

In **JULY** the month of holidays, dry grass and summer's end. We welcome the water Lily which has many benefits for the environment they live in. They become a filter and purify the water where they float. They also have great medicinal value and have brought healing to many in our world. They also symbolise the Circle of Life. May we each work hard to secure the future of the circle of life in our world.

“Be with us Lord - give light to our path.”

In **AUGUST** the month of harvest, wheat and corn. We welcome the Gladioli flower which has many meanings. They symbolize being honest and faithful at all times. They also symbolize strong moral values, they are often seen as a symbol of integrity. They represent internal strength and the ability to overcome challenges in life. Whatever Challenges come our way this year may we have the strength to overcome them.

“Be with us Lord - give light to our path.”

In **SEPTEMBER** the month of fruits and the beginning of the school year. We welcome the Aster Flower. The word Aster comes from the Greek word for Star. This star flower represents loyalty and wisdom and also symbolises elegance, patience and love of new things. May we be patient in all things and have the wisdom to do right at all times.

“Be with us Lord - give light to our path.”

In **OCTOBER** the month of falling leaves, nuts and Halloween. We welcome the Marigold as they symbolise beauty, warmth and creativity. May we always see the beauty in nature and appreciate the creative energy that nature brings to us.

“Be with us Lord - give light to our path.”

In **NOVEMBER** the month of the dead, the souls and the saints. We welcome the Chrysanthemum which symbolises compassion, friendship and joy. According to Feng Shui, Chrysanthemums bring happiness and laughter into the house. May we bring joy and compassion to all the friendships we enjoy on our journey through this life.

“Be with us Lord - give light to our path.”

In **DECEMBER** the month of the gift, the light and Our Saviour Jesus. We welcome the Holly which is an important part of our Christmas tradition as we decorate our homes. Holly symbolizes defence and protection and also symbolizes domestic happiness. Throughout this year may we be defended from all harm. May God bring healing to our world and health to all people.

“Be with us Lord - give light to our path.”