**THANK YOU! By Fr Rodney Middleton Assistant Chaplain (and scouser born and bred)**

‘Don’t forget to say Thank You’. How many of us remember our mums saying this to us when we went off to a birthday party when we were kids? Saying ‘Thank You’ is one of the most important things we can say to someone – and also one of the most important things we can hear.

When we learn a foreign language one of the first words or phrases we learn is the word or phrase for ‘Thank You’. Of course, here in Spain it’s ‘Gracias’ or ‘Muchas gracias’.

One of my favourite films is ***Shirley Valentine***. I have some issues with the accents and the locations - which are all supposed to be in and around Liverpool, and none of which are! Being a Scouser born and bred I think gives me a sort of authority to judge what is ‘authentic’ and what is not! But apart from these few misgivings I still think it’s a great film.

One of my favourite scenes is when Shirley is seen coming out of the bookshop clutching her newly-bought Greek phrase book which she plans to take on holiday to the Greek island of Mykonos; a holiday won in a raffle by her friend Jane. And as she’s walking out of the shop she keeps repeating the same word: ‘Efharisto; efharisto; efharisto’. (I’m sorry I can’t type in the Greek alphabet on my lap-top!) Of course, what Shirley is repeating is the Greek word for ‘Thank You’. The reason I would like to be able to type in Greek is because the word for ‘Thank You’ in Greek hasn’t change in over two thousand years. The pronunciation may have changed a bit, but the word itself still appears exactly the same as when Jesus and his disciples would have used it two thousand years ago. And you can bet that Jesus and his disciples – like virtually everyone of his time – would have spoken Aramaic, Hebrew, and certainly enough Greek and Latin to get by. As far as scholars can work out, the Greek word for ‘Thank You’ in the time of Jesus (and in the time when the Scriptures were written in Greek) would have been pronounced, ‘Eu-charisto’. Does that look familiar to some of you? It should – because it’s exactly the same word we use to describe our worship each Sunday: **Eucharist.**

The Eucharist is the supreme act of worship - and also the supreme act of thanksgiving - that we can offer to God, through his Son, in the power of the Holy Spirit. When we gather each Sunday to celebrate the Eucharist, we are saying ‘Thank You’ for so many things; for the Word of God; for the opportunities to read and learn from it; for our fellowship within the Church of God, the Body of Christ in the world; but chiefly – as the ‘old Prayer Book’ says in the General Thanksgiving – for the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ.

So every time we gather to celebrate the Eucharist we are saying one big ‘Thank You’ to God.

One day on which we say a special ‘Thank You’ is when we celebrate our Harvest Thanksgiving.

This we will be doing in all our Churches on **OCTOBER 1st.**

Come and join us as we sing the familiar hymns, and say ‘Thank You’ to our loving Creator God,

for all the good gifts around us.

Like Shirley Valentine, come and say, **‘EFHARISTO’!**