

**Sunday 7th February 2021**

# Weekly Newsletter

## St. Anne's Catholic Church

Lynton Avenue Weeping Cross Stafford, ST17 0EA. Telephone: 01785 661012 - Website [www.st-annes-st.org.uk](http://www.st-annes-st.org.uk)

## St. Patrick's Catholic Church

48 Sandon Road, Stafford ST16 3HF. Telephone 01785 661012 - Website [www.stpatricksstafford.co.uk](http://www.stpatricksstafford.co.uk)

Email: [stannestpatrick.stafford@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:stannestpatrick.stafford@rcaob.org.uk)

**Parish Administrator: Father Robert Devaney - Parish Secretary: Marie Badger**

**Deacon: Rev. Michael Horsnall**

**The parishes are part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham. Registered Charity No.234216**



<b>ST. ANNE'S PRIMARY SCHOOL</b> Lynton Avenue, ST17 0EA Telephone: 01785 663128 Fax: 01785 662987 Email: <a href="mailto:office@st-annes-weepingcross.staffs.sch.uk">office@st-annes-weepingcross.staffs.sch.uk</a> Principal: Mr. M. Killeen	<b>ST. PATRICK'S PRIMARY SCHOOL</b> Marston Road, ST16 3BT Telephone: 01785 413275 Email: <a href="mailto:office@st-patricks-stafford.staffs.sch.uk">office@st-patricks-stafford.staffs.sch.uk</a> Principal: Mr. M. Brandon
--	--

### TIMES OF HOLY MASS AND LITURGIES THIS WEEK

#### FIFTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

Day	Date	Mass Time	Church	Liturgical Day	Mass Intention
Sat	6 <sup>th</sup>	4:00pm	St Patrick's	Vigil	Bob & Damian
		6:00pm	St Anne's	Vigil	People of the Parish
Sun	7 <sup>th</sup>	9:00am	St Patrick's	Fifth Sunday of the Year	Patty Tiernan RIP
		10:00am	St Anne's		Annual Mass for parishes (Johnson Association)
Mon	8 <sup>th</sup>	9:30am	St Anne's	Feria	Fr Giles Goward RIP
Tue	9 <sup>th</sup>	9:30am	St Patrick's	No congregation Feria	Fr Patrick Joyce RIP
Wed	10 <sup>th</sup>	No Mass		St Scholastica Memoria	
Thu	11 <sup>th</sup>	6:30pm	St Patrick's	No congregation Feria	Pupils & staff of our two schools
Fri	12 <sup>th</sup>	6:30pm	St Anne's	Feria	Celebrant's Intention
Sat	13 <sup>th</sup>	4:00pm	St Patrick's	Vigil	People of the Parish
		6:00pm	St Anne's	Vigil	John Mahoney RIP
Sun	14 <sup>th</sup>	9:00am	St Patrick's	Sixth Sunday of the Year	Thomas Flood RIP
		10:00am	St Anne's		John & Joseph Ard RIP

#### SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM By Appointment

**Prayers for the sick:** **St Patrick's:** Phylis Bowers, Susan Prince, Tim Tiernan, Gregory McKinlay, Linda Reavy, Martha Porter, Cecylia Kotara **St Anne's:** Michael Glover, Patricia Walters, Thomas McCormick, Mary Terry, Bernard Lundberg, Cath Miles, Walter Rogers, Richard McMahan, Patsy Connelly Smith, Colin Wise.

**Prayers for the departed loved ones whose anniversaries occur at this time:** *[St. Patrick's]* Aubrey Bowers, Mercy Simms, Violet Addison, Jack Smith, Peggy Toner, Brenda Targett, Rose Bushell, Olive McWhirter, Margaret Reeves, James Logan, Joseph Abayakoon, Kevin Meegan, Mary McKay, Patrick Lennon, Amy Hall, Leonard Morgan and Frank Smith. *[St Anne's]* Margaret Currall, Julian Dale, Edith Pentorrey, Bert Smith, John Savin, Ellen Savin, Sylvia Fitzakerley, Frederick Neal, Mary Quinien, Joseph Abayakoon, Lesley Bigna, Mary Claxton, James McHugh and Gay Colbeck.

Income 31/1/21	Source	Gift Aid	Non-Gift Aid	Standing Order	Total	Attendance
St Anne's	Offertory	£48.00	£127.03	£283.84	£458.87	Sat 34 Sun 31
St. Patrick's	Offertory	£159.00	£49.10	£146.23	£354.33	Sat 21 Sun 12

On the Archdiocese website there is a standing order and Gift Aid form for parishioners so they can continue to give at this time. Please direct any such enquiries to:

<https://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/pages/FAQS/category/finance-resources>

**\*This email is from the archdiocese:** Just to let you know, there is a donate **BUTTON (TOP RIGHT)** on the home page of the diocesan website – [www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk](http://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk)

### **Parish Tote 150 Club**

**January 2021 Winners.** £100 F Russell – 156, £50 A Heath – 138, £20 M Picking -105, £10 M Walker – 33, £10 G Thickett – 149, £10 C McHugh – 28.

Thank you for your support, numbers are available at £4 per month.

Thank you for your support during 2020. Hopefully we can count on your support again in 2021. Those who pay yearly please can you put your monies in a sealed envelope with your name on the outside marked for 150 Club and put into the collection bins. Cheques should be made payable to St Patrick's. Further details from Marie on 01785 661012.

### **Gift Aid**

*At this critical time, if anyone wishes to make a commitment; whether weekly, fortnightly, monthly or annually, it would make such a difference. You remain in control for as long as you want. Those who use gift aid envelopes will find new ones for this financial year, labelled and numbered at the back of each church. Some parishioners might like to know that the parish office (St Anne's ) can always be used as a 'drop-off' for envelopes. There are large collection bins placed on entry and exit\**

*Without such donations, our ability to meet the ever mounting expenses (of maintenance, consumables, utilities and fabric upkeep, not to mention health and safety) will diminish. Also, for St Anne's, the regular income from Hall Hire has understandably been reduced. A significant amount of unavoidable work is also planned shortly for both parishes, so the outgoings remain significant. We continue to pay Council Tax; Water; Electricity; Gas. We are all in uncharted territory, an uncertain future, but if you are able please help in any way. Very many thanks*

### **St Anne's Roof Appeal (Update)**

*The remedial work to the lower roof has now been completed.* We are appealing for any donations St Anne's community can donate to this work; my thanks and appreciation to those who have already given so generously; we are gradually on our way - looking at a sum approaching £10,000. (We are nearly half of the way there). This year we hope to remedy ongoing problems to the upper roof. Please accept my sincere and grateful thanks for any donations that you may be able to make. F.Bob

\*\* St Anne's parish is now live-streaming Masses, so please go to the front web page and click on Mass Live at the top and you should be able to follow the Mass.

**St Patricks:** In consideration of the attendance numbers and in discussion with our team of stewards and helpers, it has been decided to suspend the public nature of the two weekday Masses in St Patrick's. Please refer to the first newsletter page. Please be assured that I shall continue to say a private Mass on those days, including the accompanying intentions.

**St Anne's:** At present all Masses celebrated at St Anne's are web streamed. (Our grateful thanks to Peter) Fr. Bob

**Places of Worship are still able to remain open**, but we were reminded of the need and importance for us all to be extra careful and diligent with social distancing and hygiene. All our parishes have been grateful for the help and dedication of our stewards/ cleaners. They have ensured, and continue to ensure, that all guidelines are followed and that the church is thoroughly cleaned after each service.

**Please remember that the obligation to attend Holy Mass is still suspended.** All our Masses from St Anne's will continue to be live streamed through YouTube, details of which can be found on our website.

Please pray for **Canon Giles Goward** who died on 28th January 2021 at St Mary's College, Oscott following a short illness. Canon Giles was ordained at St Chad's Cathedral on the 14th July 1995. He served as Assistant Priest at Holy Trinity, Newcastle under Lyme from 1995 to 1996. He was then appointed as Archbishop's Secretary from 1996 to 2000; Parish Priest at Our Lady Queen of Peace in Worcester from 2000-2005; Parish Priest Our Lady and St Anne Caversham 2005-2013; Pastoral Director, Formation Tutor and Director for the Permanent Deacon Programme at St Mary's College from 2013 to 2020. He was appointed as Rector of St Mary's on 28th June last year. **In his early ministry as an Anglican, Canon Giles served as curate under Fr Brian Whatmore in Tipton.** Canon Giles' Requiem will be at Oscott College at 12 Noon Monday 8<sup>th</sup>.



**REVISION OF MASS TIMES**



Back in October 2020 we introduced a new schedule of Mass times with the understanding that these would be reviewed at the end of that year. In the meantime, Stafford was placed into Tier 4 and Public Worship was once again suspended at the end of October. In early December we were able to reopen, but numbers attending Mass have been considerably lower than before. This is understandable owing to the uncertain times in which we are living and the need for people to continue isolating for various personal and medical reasons.

The new and current schedule of Masses was met with both positive and negative feedback, all of which has been taken into consideration. Owing to the ongoing implications of the pandemic and the uncertainty of these current times, it has been difficult to make a realistic assessment.

Recently all parishes of the Archdiocese were encouraged to consider, and if needs be to review their Mass time provision and seating capacity in all churches. It is certainly a time of change and challenge for us all. Pope Francis in his book *Let us dream* says 'to come out of this crisis better, we have to see clearly, choose well and act right.' Some parishes have decided to postpone their Sunday Masses and even weekday Masses, due to numbers attending being so low.

Taking into consideration the feedback given, the suggestion from the Diocese and having spoken to our stewards and cleaners, we propose from this weekend 6/7<sup>th</sup> February to offer the following schedule of Masses. On Saturday's there will be 4.00pm at St Patrick's; 5.00pm at St Austin's and 6.00pm at St Anne's, then on Sunday's there will be 9.00am at St Patrick's; 10.00am at St Anne's and 11.00am at St Austin's. As things evolve and circumstances change, we will review the Mass times again, as and when is necessary.

In his book, *Let us dream* Pope Francis says that, 'our greatest power is not in the respect that others have for us, but the service we can offer others.' This revised schedule of Masses still enables Canon Michael, Fr Bob and Fr Simon to work together, and if and when the time arises, to be available to help further afield in the Deanery. More importantly perhaps, it continues to allow us to seek the opportunities for us all to work together within in three parishes of St Anne, St Austin and St Patrick, drawing on and pulling together the various skills, resources and talents which are available to us.

One thing which has been clear during this time is people's desire to come together as a community and the comfort the receiving of the Eucharist brings in challenging times. St John Henry Newman once wrote, 'to live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often.' We are all certainly living in unique times and are all finding that our lives are changing and having to adjust in so many ways. We thank you for all your understanding, co-operation and support at this time, and encourage you all to seek the intercession of our parish patrons as we look forward in hope. To strengthen that sense of hope, let us consider some final words of Pope Francis. When asked 'what is the greatest fruit of a personal crisis', he replied: 'I'd say patience, sprinkled with a healthy sense of humour, which allows us to endure and make space for change to happen.'

### **HOMILY FOR THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR**

We all know that there are many sources of stress and disappointment in our lives; we wouldn't be human if we didn't experience any. But perhaps the primary and most common origins of our unhappiness can be poor or non-existent communication and misunderstanding – especially when they're on a big scale. "I thought you were going to do this." "We thought these were your intentions." "What have we got wrong?" We know the score, don't we? Our best laid plans evaporated because we got the wrong end of the stick. It was ever thus, and was certainly no different from the time Jesus was starting out on His Mission. The unimaginable challenges of Jesus' Messianic role and His work and purpose would have been stark and laid before Him very early on. He did know that His work was nothing other than the will of His Father.

**This was absolutely and without question what Jesus was here for; to be the human ‘bridge’ across which people could climb to safety, and back into the arms of our heavenly Father. And we are painfully aware that at the end of Mark’s story, on the Cross, Jesus became a human bridge with outstretched arms, carrying us from death to life; a task that would carry Him to His own death.**

**We know, from our liturgy of Palm Sunday, the cruel and fickle adulation of baying crowds, don’t we? And, in a kind of ‘foretaste’ of that treacherous praise, our Gospel reading today is enlightening. Here is Jesus, the ‘man’ with power, the one who can heal us of all our problems – the one who can satisfy us and fill our needs. We can almost hear the way the crowds are thinking here. No wonder they don’t want to let Jesus go; no wonder they are searching for Him high and low. His disciples make no secret of the fact that “everybody is looking for you.” But what is important is that Jesus well knows the truth of why these locals are after Him – remember the miracle of the loaves – the feeding of the multitude. After that incredible sign of Jesus’ power the crowds won’t leave Him alone, but He almost rebukes them, doesn’t He, when He implies that they are only seeking Him because He has given them all the food they need. Sadly, they’ve totally missed the point because all Jesus’ miracles and signs have one end only; and that is to make God the Father present to His followers and listeners. Jesus’ mission is to bring true life and everlasting bread to those who are hungry for the Spirit. Jesus’ healing power and gift is misunderstood by too many, who can only see the coming of the ‘Good Life’ in this world and the satisfaction of their immediate needs. They miss seeing Jesus as that ‘bridge’ to God the Father.**

**The one important inescapable fact about Jesus and the whole of His ministry is the time he spends in prayer to His Father. “Very early in the middle of the night, Jesus went out, off to a lonely place, and prayed” as the passage states. So often in the Gospel accounts He goes off to immerse Himself in the Father’s presence. And we should be able to see why this is so necessary, shouldn’t we? All the miraculous healings and casting out of demons; the healing care shown to His brothers and sisters, came through the power of His heavenly father. Allowing the Father to work in and through Him was His vocation on earth. But, the follow-on from this, and which Jesus is very aware of, is that He knows the truth that “everybody” is more than this local population – it is the whole of humanity for all time. He has to move on, His mission for the salvation of the world is just beginning. Just like us today, although those people in Capernaum were looking for an immediate relief of their very real problems, whether it was being able to walk, hear, see, or be mentally healed, they were really longing for that deep inner peace and healing of their whole being. Don’t we, as well? Like Job, we puzzle over the difficulties of life; why do some people have an easier life than others? If there’s a God, why doesn’t He care about what is happening to us and the world?**

**As Christians, we believe, like St John, that “God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him...may have eternal life.” And so, just like those who were following Jesus two thousand years ago in Capernaum, we’re also among those today 2021 who are “looking for Him.” But do we also make the same mistake of misunderstanding what Jesus is really offering us? We need to hear His voice, to know that He is close to us, and to feel the power of His healing touch.**