

Sunday 10th May 2020

Weekly Newsletter

St. Anne's Catholic Church

Lynton Avenue Weeping Cross Stafford, ST17 0EA. Telephone: 01785 661012 - Website www.st-annes-st.org.uk

St. Patrick's Catholic Church

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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

TIMES OF HOLY MASS AND LITURGIES THIS WEEK

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Day	Date	Mass Time	Church	Liturgical Day		Mass Intention
Sat	9 th	pm	St Anne's	Vigil	<i>No Congregation</i>	John & Eleanor McKinlay RIP
Sun	10 th	am	“ “	Fifth Sunday of Easter	<i>No Congregation</i>	People of the Parish
Mon	11 th	am	“ “	Easter Feria	<i>No Congregation</i>	Margaret & Roy Kiberd RIP
Tue	12 th	am	“ “	Easter Feria	<i>No Congregation</i>	Peter Cummins RIP
Wed	13 th	am	“ “	Easter Feria	<i>No Congregation</i>	Peggy Toner RIP
Thu	14 th	am	“ “	St Matthias	Feast	<i>No Congregation</i> John & Edith Connor
Fri	15 th	am	“ “	Easter Feria	<i>No Congregation</i>	John & Elizabeth Galvin
Sat	16 th	pm	“ “	Vigil	<i>No Congregation</i>	Patrick Bayliffe RIP
Sun	17 th	am	“ “	Sixth Sunday of Easter		Alex & Catherine Duncan & Veronica RIP

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM By Appointment

Prayers for the departed loved ones whose anniversaries occur at this time: [St. Patrick's] William Blackburn, William Paish, John Greer, Mary Horsley, Norah Cooper, William Hardy, Raymond O'Rourke, Mary Clarke, Barry Johnston, Amelia Narcisi, Gerard McCann, Julia Jones, Mary Ward, Maria Nicholls [St. Anne's] Evelyn Gundersen, Henry James, Annie Kay, Hilda Scandrett, Terry Smith, John Carter, Eric Parsons, David Scriven, John Ferguson, Mary Hatfield, Anthony Nealon, Sian Stacey, Colin Walmsley.

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

Income 29 th March	Source	Gift Aid	Non-Gift Aid	Standing Order	Total	Attendance
St Anne's	Offertory		£	£	£	
St. Patrick's	Offertory	£	£	£	£	

St Patricks: We have received the figures from **Missio** for the Red Box collections and other donations from St. Patrick's Parish in 2019. We raised £390.16. **Missio** would like to thank everyone for their donations in the past year.

ST. ANNE'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

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ST. PATRICK'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Parishes Social (Fundraising Events) DATES UP TO SUMMER: Due to our present emergency situation all such events

Our Parish Deceased: Please remember in your prayers **Kathleen Boulton** and **Lawrence Clifford** of St Patrick's, and **Barbara Curran** and **John Taylor**, of St Anne's, who died very recently. We pray also for their families at this time.

Divine Renovation have produced a Parish Response Kit to the current 'coronavirus' situation that we are all in. It can be downloaded for free here: <https://divinerenovation.org>

Parish Tote 150 Club: In order to catch up with the months missed, once we return, each of the missing months will be drawn separately. In this way, there will be no gaps. Many thanks for your support.

Hello Parishioners on this Fifth Sunday of Easter. A continued Blessed, Happy and Holy Eastertide to you all as we know that the Easter period takes us through to the Gift of the Holy Spirit Himself (Pentecost).

I hope and pray that we have become aware of our new mode of living lives as Eucharistic faithful. For all of us, such a significant change in how we worship as Catholics is unprecedented. But, as our faith keeps telling us, and as we keep reminding ourselves, God's creation, God's universe, God's world and God's people fit in with His 'blueprint' for the kingdom He has prepared for us, no matter what turmoil or disaster afflicts our precarious lives. If we keep steadfast and, most importantly, take advantage of the prayer time we will be offered, our Church will come through this 'crisis' humbled and with greater awareness of our utter dependency on God. Meanwhile, during our time of 'waiting' upon the Lord, we offer our prayers for all who have been, are, and will be affected by this pandemic.

To parish practical matters:

The bulletin will appear on the websites of both parishes weekly and this space will give me a chance to share with you all sorts of concerns, from how we might keep in touch with the housebound, to how we might continue to provide food etc. for those in great need. All church buildings remain locked. This is mainly to discourage folk from venturing out and potentially coming into proximity with others unnecessarily. But, the parish presbytery will be open and I shall, **in so far as I am able**, be a source of information for any who wish to know what is happening in regard to our two parishes. Marie, as you will understand, like many of you, no doubt, is furloughed; I am available in the presbytery for point of phone contact. The bulletin will continue to be uploaded to the parish websites and a few hard copies printed and left under the Hall porch at St Anne's.

As you notice above, the Mass intentions are inserted and will be honoured as I celebrate Mass each day; but sometimes I will need to combine intentions from both parishes because I am only saying one Mass a day.

Regarding the **Drop-in** at St Anne's, some may need help now that it is closed. If any need help on Wednesday morning, for example shopping or collecting medication, please contact Liz Harrison between 10:30am and 12 Noon on 07802694580. Many thanks, Liz.

I know that all three Stafford parishes will work as closely as we can, and on that point, there is a request from St Austin's, in regard to the charity BRUSHSTROKES. They are desperate for all supplies. If people wanted to drop off donations at St Anne's a regular pick-up can be arranged, but, since the church will be locked, just phone me first. Many thanks.

As Eastertide continues and the year progresses we will reflect upon this extraordinary mystery of faith and realise that the Lord Jesus Christ's resurrected glorified reality reaches across obstacles, walls, buildings, 'situations', difficulties, anxieties and pain to take us with Him back to our origins and beyond our imagination.

Finally, I am very aware that our usual routine, as parish communities, will undergo a considerable change, and we do not know for how long, but nevertheless our parishes will still need supporting as best we can for the foreseeable future. The sustaining and maintenance of the buildings and parish administration has to continue. For those of you who use gift aid envelopes, the new ones for the coming financial year have arrived and Mark (St Anne's) and Margaret St Patrick's are labelling them and for those who contribute this way. There are a number who regularly use standing order (this is the most efficient way of giving) and if 'gift-aiders' could set up standing orders it would be a great help. Such a crisis as the present one shows the advantage of this method. However parishioners wish to donate, be assured of our grateful thanks and know that the parish office (St Anne's) can always be used as a 'drop-off' for envelopes. * I have received this communication from the head of Finance form Cathedral House:

You may like to know that we've made available on the Archdiocese website 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 diocese (Steve Roche):** Dear Fathers, Just to let you know, there is a donate **BUTTON (TOP RIGHT)** on the home page of the diocesan website – www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk From there donations which can also be gift aided can be made to any parish via credit or debit card. Funds will initially be passed to the diocese but we will have reports available to allow us to pass them on to each parish, we will work the process out over the next week or 2 and much will depend on how much it is used. There are transaction charges levied by the card processing company which amount to 20p + 1.9% of the value of the donation – so for a £10 donation this will amount to £0.39 which will be deducted from the amount we receive. Please do note therefore that standing order remains the most cost effective way for our parishioners to donate.

A big thank you to those parishioners who have filled out new Standing Orders to help support the churches at this critical time. I am grateful to those who have continued to support their respective churches in this way for many years. If you can join them and make such a commitment for our offertory support; whether weekly, fortnightly, monthly or annually, it would make such a difference. You remain in control for as long as you want. At this time though it makes a 'sink or swim' difference to your church. Without that money coming in, 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 dried up and this will make a massive difference. 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 to please help in any amount you can afford. Very many thanks

I shall be remembering you all in my prayers during this most unprecedented of times and have faith that the Lord will be looking after us in a way only He can offer.

Blessings Fr Bob

PS: Don't forget the many websites you can access if you wish to follow Mass. A good start would be our own Archdiocese of Birmingham website. I, like so many other priests, will be continuing to celebrate Mass on my own. I know you will be with me in Spirit, celebrating the ONE sacrifice made by Christ for all time; a truly universal and real remembrance, uniting our sisters and brothers across the face of the earth.

HOMILY FOR FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

What would Jesus and His group of followers have been like if Jesus had reached sixty? I recently read something a bit odd from a famous Bible scholar. This scholar is a very well read and interesting writer who's explained a lot of difficult passages in the Gospel and New Testament. He was a former bishop of Durham. His insights are often amazing and He was once asked by his publisher if he could write a book called: 'Jesus at Sixty'. The publisher's idea was that if Jesus had not been killed and lived a further few decades He would have to have got into 'administration' as His movement grew: you know, delegation, regulations, organization and so on. This Bible scholar refused because, as he pointed out, it wouldn't have taken another thirty years before serious questions of organization came up. Because, already in these early days, Jesus' followers faced problems about how to run things. We do notice very early in Acts a sort of ideal about how the community lived but it wasn't a form of early communism or the result of thinking the world was about to end soon. It was actually the 'living out' of family. Converts would have been very much a part of natural families anyway, but when they converted to the Way of Christ the only way they could survive was to share like all families. No, this early life was

a sign that they knew they were called to live as a single family. The trouble is, how is that going to work when the ‘family’ doubles and triples in size?

The pressure in the early movement came to a head and, unfortunately, as we know from our own fallen nature, the problems are going to fall along fault lines of ethnicity and language; Jewish or Hellenistic, Aramaic or Greek. Nothing really changes, does it? And the thing is, nobody had planned for a complex and intricate welfare system; it had to be invented ‘on the hoof’. And in Jerusalem it was a complex society which was both a deeply traditional culture, very conscious of its historic and religious importance and a cosmopolitan mixture of Jews from all over the world. So, in a way, it’s not really surprising that they were ‘eyeing’ each other up to check if any were taking advantage. The awkward question of bringing Jews and non-Jews together in the same family would arise soon enough. But in this situation, the Apostles were very clear about what their priority was, and it was definitely concentrating on the Word of God and preaching it constantly. It might seem that this would have been obvious, but actually, it would have been a temptation for any of the leaders of the early Church to maybe get involved with the ‘admin’, because even though it may prove frustrating at times, it’s not nearly as hard as the spiritually and mentally demanding task of preaching and teaching, of explaining scripture, of opening up its great mysteries and tiny details. Does this surprise you?

Actually, Jesus gives us tremendous encouragement in John’s Gospel passage. Because here He tells the disciples He’s going away and speaks of His father’s house. And the only other time Jesus mentioned His Father’s house is in terms of the Temple, and the Temple was where heaven met earth for the people of Israel. Now, Jesus hints at a new city, a new world, a new HOUSE. And the wonderful thing about this passage is that, not only does Jesus promise there will be room for everyone; no shortage of ‘places’ for us all, but that it’s not just a promise for the future. For John, it’s here now. And there’s also another sense to the phrase Jesus uses; because it expresses room for a great diversity of people with various talents and ministries. We’re urged to become living stones making a spiritual house. The new presence of God’s Temple on earth isn’t a temple of lifeless stones but a living breathing working community – as it always has been in fact – and we are it! Yes, you and me and everyone else who makes up Church. The admin, the organisation, the structure, the delegation, the committees and so on might very well depress us, but in the end, there’s a flow of divine energy coming through these stones and we can look forward to a time when all structures will be annihilated in the absolute presence of God.

