

Sunday 17th January 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

St. Patrick's Catholic Church

48 Sandon Road, Stafford ST16 3HF. Telephone 01785 661012 - Website www.stpatricksstafford.co.uk

Email: 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

ST. ANNE'S PRIMARY SCHOOL Lynton Avenue, ST17 0EA Telephone: 01785 663128 Fax: 01785 662987 Email: office@st-annes-weepingcross.staffs.sch.uk Head Teacher: Mr. M. Killeen	ST. PATRICK'S PRIMARY SCHOOL Marston Road, ST16 3BT Telephone: 01785 413275 Email: office@st-patricks-stafford.staffs.sch.uk Principal: Mr. M. Brandon
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TIMES OF HOLY MASS AND LITURGIES THIS WEEK

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

Day	Date	Mass Time	Church	Liturgical Day	Mass Intention
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		6:30pm	St Anne's	Vigil	The health of Fr David Catterall
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		9:30am	St Anne's		Eamon Gormley RIP
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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 McMahon, Patsy Connelly Smith, Colin Wise.

Prayers for the departed loved ones whose anniversaries occur at this time: *[St. Patrick's]* Peter Denkin, Stanislaw Halberda, Lily Lee, Robert Lewis, William Blackburn, Max Burgess, Irene Higgins, Ethel Lake, Joyce Walker, Peter Walsh, Patrick Campbell, Charles Craig, Jessie Pearse, Patrick O'Brien, Gladys Lake, Denis Clarke, Michael Masterson, Patrick McKenna, Catherine Palphreyman, Cecilia Coghlan, Alice Mahon, William Bragg, Andrew Mountford, Pattie Sykes and Margaret Stanley. *[St Anne's]* Kathleen McMahon, James Barbenson, Anne Gaffney, William Hall, Damien McMahon, Phyllis Stott, Richard Meldon, Arthur Veale, Delia Higgins, Hilda Carmedy, Leonard Pearce, Winifred Hodiernie, Raymond Kaine, Phil Poultney, Henry Sandy, Ruth Skeen, John Gray, Jack McMahon and Kathleen McMahon.

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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

Our Recently Deceased: Please remember in your prayers **Thelma Taylor, St Patrick's**, who died on 30th December and **Deirdre Wilkinson, St Anne's** who died on 29th. We pray also for their families. May they rest in peace and rise in glory

** 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.

Now, as we reach the conclusion of Christmastide on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, let us find time to reflect and take in the mystery we have celebrated.

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Let us all seek the intercession of St Anne, St Patrick and St Austin our parish patrons, and the intercession of Our Blessed Lady and St Roch at this time.

HOMILY FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

There was a word I came across recently, that I'd never heard of before. It was 'mondegreen'. Apparently, a mondegreen happens when we mishear a word or phrase, giving it a completely new meaning. It can be in many contexts and situations and the lyrics to songs can be particularly susceptible to mondegreens. Bob Dylan's, "The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind", becomes: "The ants are my friends, they're blowing in the wind." The famous "Two Ronnies" comedy sketch is another example, where a man walks into a hardware shop and asks for what sounds like four candles, until the frustrated storekeeper realises the man is actually asking for "fork 'andles – handles for forks". But all of us at some time or other are liable to mishear and misunderstand.

Both of our readings today (Samuel and John's Gospel) are about the importance of hearing properly; about really listening with the heart. In the first reading, the boy Samuel three times mishears as he's lying on his bed, and it's only after the third time that his guardian, Eli finally understands that Samuel is really hearing the call of God. And, once Samuel realises this, he takes the attitude of the perfect disciple when he responds: "speak Lord, your servant is listening". This attitude of Samuel's is one we should all be taking because it is a true commitment to listening to the voice of God and carrying it out. And we're also told in this passage that, not only was the Lord with Samuel, but that the Lord didn't let any of Samuel's words "fall to the ground". This means that Samuel was so 'at one' with God and the Lord's mind and intentions that everything Samuel spoke rang true and came to pass. In other words, authentic hearing results in authentic speaking and acting. (If only it were that simple). But the lesson for us is that any communication with God is a dialogue so we need to put ourselves in the right attitude for receiving. Samuel obviously did as he waited on the Lord's voice and responded. For us to 'wait' on the Lord we have to search and want to listen.

The two disciples of John the Baptist are also in 'listening mode'. They've committed to following John in response to an inner call from God, but now they are being urged to listen to another deeper 'voice'; none other than the "Lamb of God" Himself. It's not that these disciples were mishearing the Lord's message, but they were actively seeking the ultimate and in seeking the ultimate, they would

be drawn by Jesus, the Word made flesh. They go home with Jesus and spend the rest of the day with Him, listening to Him. And Jesus' words, like Samuel's, are effective. This is because in those few hours these words transform Andrew so dramatically that he can say to his brother Simon: "We have found the Messiah". These two disciples have found what their 'inner voice' had called them to look for.

For us and for all followers of Jesus, in any age, we have to ask ourselves how to become good listeners to the Lord. How do we allow ourselves to be transformed by God's Word – by Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh? Well, perhaps it's no surprise to know that what is required isn't complicated. But it's more difficult than it sounds – we are all aware of this through experience: we need to spend time with the Lord like those two disciples. And far from being a complex skill, it's a discipline, a commitment; and these two words can dismay us. Just like many situations in life, we know what we have to do, but we put it off, don't we? Communication with God is all about relationship, trust, openness, quality time and listening with our hearts – listening to His Word – the person of Jesus Christ. And when we allow ourselves to "hear" God's love, God's life, God's mercy communicated to us, then we won't mishear any messages for us. Instead, they will change our lives.

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