

Sunday 19th April 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

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

Day	Date	Mass Time	Church	Liturgical Day	Mass Intention
Sat	18 th	pm	St Anne's	Vigil	<i>No Congregation</i> Fr D Standen
Sun	19 th	am	“ “	Second Sunday of Easter	<i>No Congregation</i> Dan Ryan RIP
Mon	20 th	am	“ “	Easter Feria	<i>No Congregation</i> Ray Brough RIP
Tue	21 st	am	“ “	Easter Feria	<i>No Congregation</i> Ken Fenton RIP
Wed	22 nd	am	“ “	Easter Feria	<i>No Congregation</i> Joan Roe RIP
Thu	23 rd	am	“ “	St George Solemnity	<i>No Congregation</i> Kay Kennelly RIP
Fri	24 th	am	“ “	Easter Feria	<i>No Congregation</i> Celebrant's Intention
Sat	25 th	pm	“ “	Vigil	<i>No Congregation</i> People of the Parish
Sun	26 th	am	“ “	Third Sunday of Easter	Keith Price RIP

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM By Appointment

Prayers for the departed loved ones whose anniversaries occur at this time: [St. Patrick's] Thomas Briody, James Murphy, Cecily Johnson, Waclaw Kiszkeal, Vincent O'Connor, Alfred Milward, Thomas Scott, John Broun, Frank Willitt, Ernest Ferrie, Ralph Lennon, Louise Adams, Margaret Smith, John Jackson [St. Anne's] James Byrne, Don Whitehall, Andrew Duffy, Bridget Truckel, Frances Rushton, Laura Rushton, Roy Bowyer, Ivor George, Caroline Langham, Ted Shelley, Rose Thomassor.

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

Parish Tote 150 Club. Thank you all for your support. Numbers are available at £4 per number per month. Further

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>

Hello Parishioners on this Second Sunday of Easter. A 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, like every

experience thrown to us in life, we take it as it comes. 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.

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, I received a request from Joe McCormack from St Austin's. He had returned from the charity BRUSHSTROKES and they are desperate for all supplies. If people wanted to drop donations off at St Anne's Joe can do a regular pick-up, but, since the church will be locked, just phone me first. Many thanks.

Last Sunday was Easter Sunday - our greatest cause for celebration in our calendar. As the year progresses we will reflect upon this extraordinary moment 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>

We are also working on an online giving option for parishes which don't already have this option on their parish website. This is proving challenging due to all parishes sharing one charity number but I hope to have an update for you next week.

*I have just received this email 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 plethora of websites you can access if you wish to follow Mass. A good start would be our own Archdiocese of Birmingham website. The Liturgy for the **Easter Week and Easter season** will be able to be accessed from there also (the beautiful focus of our whole liturgical year). 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 SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

One of the marks of a club or an association is that it has an element or degree of 'secrecy' to it to a certain extent. In other words, various meetings or elections or whatever, go on behind closed doors. It's just the nature of what they are. Even associations that are supposedly open to all applicants, with a wide membership, are never quite as open or transparent as they'd like to think they are, are they? So, what about our own Church as we all know it today? Does openness or secrecy have any bearing upon how we see the community of Jesus' followers – that group of people that Jesus intended to take His Gospel to the ends of the earth and to the end of time? Obviously, we know that the Church has been criticised (rightly in many instances) for dishonesty, for deciding things in secret and for treating its own members with contempt. But how does this compare with the secrecy of those very early disciples of Jesus, that John mentions? They could hardly be accused of contempt, could they? Rather, I'd say they were living scared. Their leader had gone, their hopes were turned upside down and they had no option but to keep themselves to themselves and hide behind locked doors.

We need to understand, here, that the doors were closed in the disciples' room for fear of the authorities. You could say this is just human prudence, but these closed doors pretty much describe the mental condition of the disciples also. As a group they had no direction and as individuals, each one cowered in a private little hell of lostness, guilt, sadness, fear or anxiety. What a state! The message of the empty tomb hadn't registered with them yet. But then the Risen Lord came and stood among them; and what an incredible transformation! The atmosphere changed immediately. These disciples were suddenly filled with peace and joy. Here was Jesus inviting them to come out of their 'caves of darkness' and to discover NEW life. And this is what they were being prepared to do.

And the more we look at this scene in the room with closed doors, the more beautiful it is – and I'm using that word 'beautiful' in the sense that it shows up our true humanity in the light of God in Jesus – And how those followers – and, by implication, US as well – are given everything they need to go and do what they have to go and do. Imagine, these cowed men are charged with forgiving and retaining sins, for going out to the whole world and for bringing the Risen Lord Jesus to the ends of the earth. But, this is precisely where the BEAUTY hits us – Do we really think that any of those disciples felt 'up to the job'? – Especially after what they had experienced? Hardly! If anyone imagined they were ready and willing to take on the task that Jesus asked them, then they'd need some strong lessons in humility. BUT, Jesus thinks the disciples can do it. In fact, He's not asking them if they'd like to. Jesus is giving them a command – they are to go and do it.

Now, if we think the disciples are unworthy and we are unworthy, we'd be absolutely right. None of us are. But, what does Jesus do when He sees His followers? He breathes on them and says: "Receive the Holy Spirit." So if we ever thought we were acting on our own and through our own power we'd be mistaken. Jesus says "As the Father has sent me so, I'm sending you." When we're baptised into Christ we're an extension of Him. We act as His body – His power, His Spirit.

That early community we hear about in the Acts of the Apostles has received the Holy Spirit and four things have come together: *the teaching of the Apostles / the common life of the believers / the breaking of bread / and the prayers.*

This community can no longer be some small private group of scared followers. It has to be there for the world. The miracles and the common life are not private – they are the hands and body and mind of Jesus – a community ever open, ever dynamic – ever striving out towards an infinite tomorrow.