

**Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> 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](http://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**

### **THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER**

Day	Date	Mass Time	Church	Liturgical Day		Mass Intention
Sat	25 <sup>th</sup>	pm	St Anne's	Vigil	<i>No Congregation</i>	People of the Parish
Sun	26 <sup>th</sup>	am	“ “	Third Sunday of Easter	<i>No Congregation</i>	Keith Price RIP
Mon	27 <sup>th</sup>	am	“ “	Easter Feria	<i>No Congregation</i>	Jim Fletcher
Tue	28 <sup>th</sup>	am	“ “	Easter Feria	<i>No Congregation</i>	Peggy Ogram RIP
Wed	29 <sup>th</sup>	am	“ “	St Catherine of Sienna	Feast <i>No Congregation</i>	The Deceased members of the Geadah family
Thu	30 <sup>th</sup>	am	“ “	Easter Feria	<i>No Congregation</i>	Fr. Andrew Kenny RIP
Fri	1 <sup>st</sup>	am	“ “	Easter Feria	<i>No Congregation</i>	For Cheryl & Family
Sat	2 <sup>nd</sup>	pm	“ “	Vigil	<i>No Congregation</i>	Peggy Toner RIP
Sun	3 <sup>rd</sup>	am	“ “	Fourth Sunday of Easter		Kathleen "Patty" Tiernan

### **SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM** By Appointment

**Prayers for the departed loved ones whose anniversaries occur at this time:** [St. Patrick's] Mary Heslin, Louise Adams, Eva Devlin, Honora Eley, May Carroll, Mary Hardy, Anthony Finn, Vincent Brigham, Ronald Skelton, Michael Bell, Patrick Lee, [St. Anne's] Thomas Brough, Jim Fletcher, Andrew Martin, Gabriel Geadah, Joan Batkin, John Wilson, Ada George, Beryl Scott, Jean Higgins.

**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 <sup>th</sup> 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>

**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 Third 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, 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/FAOS/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](http://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*

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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 THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER**

**When things happen to us in life, that are traumatic or devastating or 'life-changing' the only way we can often survive is to be convinced, or importantly, convince ourselves that a new 'chapter' has opened for us. This is most acute, I think, when a loved one dies because there's now a hole in your life which is existential; it can't be described in words or concepts really – it's been likened to a form of evisceration. And somehow over time it passes. Like severe clinical depression, one night is left behind and another day rises before us. To be brutal, it's nothing more or less than our human life on earth. As they say, 'life goes on'. So, what exactly is this life? And how does it go on precisely? Well, our lives have always been seen as a journey, (both historical and metaphorical) and if we begin to live out our change of direction after such dramatic events, we might find it begins to unfold in terms of change of career, change of home, friendship groups, holiday choices and previous habits and so on. There are problems here, though. Or can be! In a sense, living out a different 'chapter' in our lives, or routine, can feel like escapism; a way of closing off a section of the past and the painful memories. We're all different and changes of direction suit a variety of people.**

Today we're learning about the coping strategies of the disciples of Jesus as they try to come to terms with the loss of the one who walked with them, performed miracles for them and gave them hope. All gone! And as they tried to make sense of it all, the followers got on with their lives just like after a bereavement. The Gospel from Luke relates that famous story of the two despondent disciples of Jesus leaving Jerusalem for another town. They were clearly trying to piece their lives back together again like others who followed the one promising them salvation. The problem was, what was their idea of salvation? As we know now, these disciples misunderstood; so easy in retrospect. But along comes Jesus to join the Emmaus travellers and He gradually re-directs them to the starting point of the true journey and new 'chapter' they should be embarking on. And the wonderful thing about this is that they don't have to actually travel anywhere, because the journey learnt in the Risen Jesus' presence is a journey of self-discovery within themselves. The same applies to all of us as well, doesn't it? After all, we're drawn into thinking that if we do start on a new chapter in life then it's going to involve the obvious; the external living out of our change of direction – home, job, relationships, even country maybe. But, notice what Jesus does with these two travellers to Emmaus. They, like everybody else in Israel, had been reading the Bible through the wrong end of the telescope. They had been seeing it as the long story of how God would redeem Israel FROM suffering, rather than understanding it as the story of how God would redeem them THROUGH suffering. In showing them the pointers in scripture that point to the Messiah they begin to realise the real starting point; the FALL, the PATRIARCHS, DELIVERANCE from SLAVERY and the PROPHETS. And once they understood this, the ancient story made sense. We are asked to do the same because only the Risen Lord Jesus can insert us individually and as community, into that same story. And so, we journey on until we pass through death, just as Jesus passed through death and on into glory. This account of the meal at Emmaus seems to put the first meal in the Bible into its true light. In that first meal, Adam and Eve ate the fruit and their eyes were opened, but all they saw was death and decay. At Emmaus we see the first meal of the new creation: 'He took the bread, blessed it, broke it and gave it to them; then the eyes of them both were opened, and they recognised Him. Rather than death, they saw life and glorified life at that. The couple at Emmaus discover the long curse had been broken. Death itself had been defeated. And God's new creation, full of life and joy and new possibility has burst in upon a world of decay and sorrow.