

Sunday 27th September 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

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TIMES OF HOLY MASS AND LITURGIES THIS WEEK

TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

Day	Date	Mass Time	Church	Liturgical Day	Mass Intention
Sat	26 th	6:00pm	St Anne's	Vigil	Margery Wharton RIP(1stAnn)
Sun	27 th	9:30am 11:15am	St Patrick's St Anne's	Twenty-Sixth Sunday of the Year	People of the Parish The Intentions of the Kendrick Family
Mon	28 th	9:30am	St Anne's	Feria	Gregory McKinlay (Birthday) & His Family
Tue	29 th	9:30am	St Patrick's	SS Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Archangels	Feast Franklin Hartle RIP & Linda Concannon
Wed	30 th	No Mass		St Jerome	Memoria
Thu	1 st	6:30pm	St Patrick's	St Therese of the Child Jesus	Memoria Bob & Damian
Fri	2 nd	6:30pm	St Anne's	The Guardian Angels	Memoria Paul Toner RIP
Sat	3 rd	1:00pm 6:30pm	St Patrick's St Anne's	Vigil Vigil	Peggy Toner RIP People of the Parish
Sun	4 th	8:00am 9:30am	St Patrick's St Anne's	Twenty-Seventh Sunday of the Year	Teresa Lennon RIP (Birthday Ann.) Eamon Gormley RIP

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM By Appointment

Prayers for the departed loved ones whose anniversaries occur at this time: *[St. Patrick's]* Vincenza Smith, Jack Burgess, David Ward, Elizabeth Shanley, Anne Clark, Harriet Begley, George Moorhouse, Agnes Spiers, Mary Bratt, Bernard Ryan, Charles O'Donnell, Fr William McGann, James Sedgley, Joyce Smith and Trevor Reeves. *[St. Anne's]* Sandra Maxwell, Thomas Clarke, Faye Goodwin, Tony Ilsley, Anthony Phillips, Herbert Wilkinson, Maria Piatek, Winifred Ashton, George Crowley, Anne Meldon, Albert Scriven, Charlotte Whitmore, Ernest Geoghegan, Angela Boycott, Elsie Brown, John Burns, Patricia Clayton, James Costello, Edward Grimes, William Hammond, Ethel Hotson, Fanny Rice, Alfred Turner, John Walsh and George Willmoth.

Prayers for the sick: **St Patrick's** Phylis Bowers, 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, Richard McMahon, Patsy Connelly Smith, Colin Wise.

Income 13 th Sept	Source	Gift Aid	Non-Gift Aid	Standing Order	Total	Attendance
St Anne's	Offertory	£127.55	£215.45	£283.84	£626.84	97
St. Patrick's	Offertory	£272.00	£195.00	£146.23	£613.23	57

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:

***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

Parish Tote 150 Club August Winners

Thank you for your support. We are now up to date with the draws. A lot of numbers are available at only £4 per number per month. Further details from Marie on 01785 661012.

*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. 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. Now that we have started public Masses once more, there will be large collection bins placed on entry and exit**

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. A significant amount of unavoidable remedial work is also planned shortly for St Anne's church roof, 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 to please help in any amount you can afford. Very many thanks

The obligation to attend Sunday Mass is still suspended and we can avail ourselves of weekday Masses to enable sensible spacing on weekends (some in the weekday evenings for those who work?) Now, because we are in a sort of 'fluid' time in terms of medium term commitment, the times of Masses will be published weekly due to possible occasional alterations. Below are the times and venues: (Looking two weeks ahead) including the schedule of Masses for St Austin's.

St Anne's Roof Appeal (Update)



The remedial work has now been completed so we wait in heightened anticipation for a downpour that will test it out! I am appealing for any donations St Anne's community can donate to this work; my humble appreciation to those who have already given so generously over the last few weeks; we are gradually on our way - looking at a sum approaching £10,000. (We are over a quarter of the way there). Two special baskets are at the entrance and exit of the church dedicated to this special fund. Please accept my sincere and grateful thanks for any donations that you may be able to make. I am very conscious of the straitened times we are living through at present. F. Bob

Letter [AND FOLLOW-UP] to All Catholic Stafford Parishioners: Please make sure you pick up, take away and read through carefully, the letter from Fr Michael and Fr. Bob. It was put out last weekend. This weekend we have included [on the reverse side] 'part two' which explains the current situation and future direction more clearly. It is hoped to address certain concerns.

**** Important Appeal:** *Because the Mass Times are changing from next weekend 3rd/4th October, it is important that we have some stewards and cleaners for the new times. Some of our existing ones may well wish to continue whilst attending a new Mass time. But the revised timed Masses, including the 1:00pm Saturday Vigil Mass will need helpers. If you can help please let Fr. Bob and Fr Michael Know the Mass time you would be available.* Very many thanks.

MASSES

SATURDAY 26th September 6:00pm St Anne's

**SUNDAY 27th September 9:30am St Patrick's
11:15am St Anne's**

MONDAY 28th September 9:30am St Anne's

TUESDAY 29th September 9:30am St Patrick's

THURSDAY 1st October 6:30pm St Patrick's

FRIDAY 2nd October 6:30pm St Anne's

FOLLOWING WEEK:

**SATURDAY 3rd October 1:00pm St Patrick's
6:30pm St Anne's**

**SUNDAY 4th October 8:00am St Patrick's
9:30am St Anne's**

MONDAY 5th October 9:30am St Anne's

TUESDAY 6th October 9:30am St Patrick's

THURSDAY 8th October 6:30pm St Patrick's

FRIDAY 9th October 6:30pm St Anne's

The most important requirement is that each parish has plenty of volunteers, as part of teams, for helping to 'steward' and to clean pews and various touch points after each Mass. The sensible (distancing) capacity of each church is 50, but Remember, a family group may sit together on one bench or in neighbouring chairs. Between the two parishes there should be 8 Masses during one week. I am asking for your help in making this happen as smoothly as possible by assuming that any parishioner who is 'able' may offer their assistance in cleaning a bench or chairs after Mass. (Many hands make light work). We as a church venue need to have a safe cleaning regime.

Many Thanks for your patience and understanding. Regarding safety and distancing, we have been told to operate the 1m+ guideline so all those coming to Mass must wear a face covering, but it means we don't have to be 2m apart. Holy Communion will be distributed as parishioners leave church. There will be stewards to guide people to seats and to help with communion arrangements. If you have not set up a standing order/direct debit for parish offerings please do so if you are able. (I can supply you with all the details you need). There will also be large offertory 'bins' for folk who give their envelopes and cash placed at the entrance and exit points of church. From the outset, I offer my humblest apology for potential situations that may arise.. Once our maximum capacity has entered either church, a notice will be placed outside the door to that effect. There will be a Mass on another day of the week that will be able to accommodate.

HOMILY FOR THE TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

If you come to Mass on Sundays with not much idea about what the sermon or homily will be about, you could be excused. It might very well go through your mind: "What's he going to preach about today?" And who could blame anyone for thinking that way. But, actually, 'preaching' is not what we're about. After all, who are we to preach to anyone? Our common baptism into Christ is the foundational sacrament that grounds us as one community; one body and, as Christians of course, one Body of Christ. This is very important for us to keep in mind because as priests we are only ordained for a particular function or ministry – yes, it's a sacramental one – but one that has its limitations. Our real task is to celebrate the sacraments and especially the Eucharist. And, in the setting of the Mass, proclaim the Gospel. If we listen carefully enough to it with an honest and open mind the Gospel will speak to us in our hearts. At least, that's the theory. All priests can do is to offer some reflection on this Gospel passage, but with no guarantee that it will provide any more insight than meditating on it yourself.

St Austin's Parish [Masses]

SUNDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER 10:30am

WEDNESDAY 30TH SEPTEMBER 7:00pm

FRIDAY 2ND OCTOBER 7:00pm

SATURDAY 3RD OCTOBER 5:00pm

(FOLLOWING WEEK)

SUNDAY 4TH OCTOBER 11:00am

WEDNESDAY 7TH OCTOBER 7:00pm

FRIDAY 9TH OCTOBER 7:00pm

SATURDAY 10TH OCTOBER 5:00pm

[Fr. Michael will be streaming his Masses]

Most of us will have noticed that we're working through Matthew's Gospel this year and that each Sunday carries on where the previous one left off. Last week we learnt something about the 'fairness' and 'justice' of God, didn't we, and how we can find it difficult. But in a way, it can only make sense if we have the attitude of thankfulness and gratitude – not really about what we HAVE, because that can soon disappear – but about what we are and what we'll all become in time. But, isn't this hard? So hard for us? The attitude that can help us here is HONESTY, because honesty actually allows us to see ourselves for what we are – helpless and needy. The Lord especially loves the needy because He's the only one who can fill the need. When we sin it practically means saying NO to God, and when we think about the two sons in the parable of Jesus both of them disobeyed the Father. But the first son said 'NO', but later decided to obey his father. Whereas the second son said 'YES' but didn't do what his father told him to do. In effect it was also a 'NO'. Maybe we can see ourselves in this parable – we're both the sons actually; recognising that we often offer our good intentions, don't we? But then later realise that we've forgotten or neglected to go through with them. On the other hand, we're not completely bad, since there have been those times when we've been tough on anyone asking us for particular favours at the wrong time, but we've softened enough later to help out. The lesson here for *already*."

This parable of Jesus today speaks to the religious leaders of Israel in His time, particularly the Pharisees, because they believed they were assured of entrance into Heaven. But, as Jesus tells them, "Amen, I say to you, tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God before you". I suppose we can look on them as those who have said their YES to God, but because of their attitude, hypocrisy and pride and lack of concern for others, they've actually disobeyed God's will and commands. It's when we've discovered that we've strayed from the truth and ended up in the moral gutter through many years of wandering on our own, that the beauty and gentle touch of Jesus can turn us back to Him. And rather than be shocked at seeing the 'low-life' saved, we'll actually rejoice because we will see them as ourselves. 'There but for the grace of God go I!'

all of us is that it isn't the words that really matter but the deed. Actions speak louder

than words, as they say, and isn't it so true? It's so often the case that our words find us out because they can be full of empty promises. *A story about an elderly man, having a serious hearing problem for years relates him finding a very competent doctor who gave him an amazing set of hearing aids that fully restored his hearing faculty. After a month he went back to his doctor and the doctor was pleased: "Your hearing is perfect! Your family must be really pleased that you can hear again." The man replied, "Oh, I haven't told them yet. I just sit around and listen to their conversations. I've revised my last will three times*

This weekend, 26-27 September, the second collection bin will be for Father Hudson's Care to support their mission of supporting vulnerable people across the Archdiocese of Birmingham. Father Hudson's reaches out to people of all ages who need support at times of adversity. Please Call 01675 434000 if you would like to donate outside of Mass this year. Please give generously to this worthy cause.

Next Weekend, 3-4 October, we have our annual Harvest Time Collection for CAFOD. Envelopes for this are in the church porches. Please be generous as we have always contributed a worthy donation to this core Catholic charity. Most of us are aware of the world-wide projects CAFOD are involved with.

Oh, by the way, St Patrick's and St Anne's each have a QR CODE displayed for church goers to scan if you have downloaded the NHS Covid-19 APP. It might help 'speed things up' as queues can develop on entry through the porches as you provide contact details. We will make sure there are sufficient codes on the doors and walls. Many thanks.

St. Anne's, St. Austin's & St. Patrick's Parishes, Stafford

12th / 13th September 2020

Dear Parishioners of our Three Parishes,

Firstly, we want to thank you for the wonderful support you have given us during these most unusual times. We write now to reflect with you on the present weekend Mass times provision for our three Parishes. It is six years since the present schedule was introduced, and we feel now is a good and appropriate time to revisit and reflect on them. We would also like to suggest ways to improve them.

We start with the following observations:

- 1) Awareness of the large number of housing developments in Stafford.
- 2) Recognising that Sunday work is a reality and necessity for many people.
- 3) Acknowledging the very good interaction between the three parishes.
- 4) There is need for priests to support and cover for each other within the Deanery along with their various chaplaincy and pastoral commitments.
- 5) The need to think creatively post Covid-19.
- 6) The need for weekend Mass times to be well spread out to suit people's various work and family commitments at weekends.
- 7) The recent appointment of Fr. Simon Baker to St. Austin's to work in the Deanery.

With these in mind we propose that from the weekend beginning 3rd / 4th October 2020 we have **TWO MASSES** in each Church over the weekend, well spread out over a variety of times. We suggest the following:

Saturday1.00 p.m. at St. Patrick's

Saturday5.00 p.m. at St. Austin's

Saturday6.30 p.m. at St. Anne's

Sunday.....8.00 a.m. at St. Patrick's

Sunday.....9.30 a.m. at St. Anne's

Sunday.....11.00 a.m. at St. Austin's

We understand that any change to Mass times may cause some of you additional problems. However, this schedule gives us greater opportunities to work together. It will mean the priests from St. Austin's helping at St. Anne's & St. Patrick's every weekend, and will also enable us to help in other parishes of the Deanery if and when needed. In extreme situations, one priest will be able to cover all the weekend Masses in Stafford.

This letter is being distributed at all Masses this weekend and is also being published in both Parish Websites. We will review the situation with you at the end of the year.

We thank you in anticipation.

St. Anne's, St. Austin's & St. Patrick's Parishes, Stafford
19th / 20th September 2020

FOLLOW-UP LETTER:

Dear Parishioners of our Three Parishes,

We thank you for the many responses to our joint letter last weekend. The majority were very positive and understandably a few had some reservations. That is understandable. Change is not always easy. **We hope the following notes will help us all to see the bigger picture and look beyond our present individual concerns.**

We do not see change to weekend Mass times as an end in itself. We see it as part of our mission to promote and develop Catholic Stafford. It is also part of Archbishop Bernard's wish for all people of the Archdiocese to reflect on our baptismal calling to be Missionary Disciples of the Lord. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 and Lockdown it has not been possible to arrange meetings to discuss these matters, but the process is ongoing.

As part of that process it is proposed to reduce the number of Deaneries in the Archdiocese. This means Deaneries having more Parishes. It is proposed to make the present Parishes of Great Haywood, Stone, Eccleshall, Swynnerton, Uttoxeter and the three Stafford Parishes part of an enlarged North Staffs Deanery.

According to present available details this Proposed Deanery has:

36 Churches formed into **21** Parishes / Clusters

19 Diocesan Priests and **7** Priests belonging to Religious Orders

59 Weekend Masses of which **19** are Saturday Lunchtime / Vigil Masses, **36** are Sunday a.m. Masses and **5** are Sunday p.m. Masses.

As our three parishes form a natural unit and we are proposing to place them under the patronage of a saint or some spiritual theme, e.g. Blessed Robert Sutton, Blessed William Howard, The Holy Family, Holy Spirit etc. This will take some time to discuss and reflect on with you. It will enable each Parish to maintain its individual identity while working closely together and supporting one another. This is already happening in places like Leamington and Wolverhampton. In the meantime we can work towards producing a joint weekly newsletter and common website.

Another consideration to bear in mind is the **Priest Profile of the Archdiocese:**

34 Priests are under the age of **50**

44 are aged **between 50 and 60 years**

54 are aged between **60 and 70 years**

16 are aged between **70 and 75 years**

7 are active over **75 years**

As we share these facts with you, we commit our proposals to your prayers and the guidance of the Holy Spirit and as promised last weekend to review them with you at the end of the year.

Fr. Bob Devaney

Fr. Michael Neylon