

Sunday 28th February 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

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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

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

Day	Date	Mass Time	Church	Liturgical Day	Mass Intention
Sat	27 th	4:00pm	St Patrick's	Vigil	Bob M cKinlay RIP(2ndAnn)
		6:00pm	St Anne's	Vigil	Teresa Walsh RIP
Sun	28 th	9:00am	St Patrick's	Second Sunday of Lent	People of the Parish
		10:00am	St Anne's		Anne Wilks RIP
Mon	1 st	9:30am	St Anne's	St David	Feast Jane Rose RIP
Tue	2 nd	9:30am	St Patrick's	St Chad	Feast Joe Abayakoon RIP
Wed	3 rd	No Mass			
Thu	4 th	6:30pm	St Patrick's	Lent Feria	Thelma Taylor RIP
Fri	5 th	6:30pm	St Anne's	Lent Feria	Peggy Toner RIP
Sat	6 th	4:00pm	St Patrick's	Vigil	People of the Parish
		6:00pm	St Anne's	Vigil	Dick Jarvis RIP
Sun	7 th	9:00am	St Patrick's	Third Sunday of Lent	The Middleton & McHugh Family
		10:am	St Anne's		Anne Wilks RIP

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]* Brigid Crilly, Walter Hagun, Sarah Godwin, Alexander Kawinski, Agnes Tunnicliffe, Elizabeth Walsh, Arthur Wood, Clare Malpass, Lucy Dillon, Philip Bates, Agnes Paish, Reginald Gould, Catherine Wood, Joanna Cooke, Kathleen Edwards, Mary Allport and Leslie Palmer. *[St Anne's]* Bert Duckworth, John Hogan, Reginald Makin, Jack Burr, Anne Davies, Jane Shackle, Monica Willmoth, Arthur Clarke, Gwenda Fenton, Ada Harrison, Lorraine Nicholls, Maurice Kelly, Lilian Morrisroe and Mary Orton.

Income 21/2/21	Source	Gift Aid	Non-Gift Aid	Standing Order	Total	Attendance
St Anne's	Offertory	£164.80	£174.00	£283.84	£622.64	Sat 35
						Sun 44
St. Patrick's	Offertory	£35.00	£32.95	£146.23	£214.18	Sat 22
						Sun 23

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:

<https://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/pages/FAQS/category/finance-resources>

***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

February 2021 Winners. £100 K Johnson – 70, £50 M Ross– 146, £20 K Bermingham -71, £10 J Peck – 153, £10 N Shammass – 134, £10 A Smith – 94, £10 P Turner – 75, £10 M J Murphy – 63, £10 E Compton – 101, £10 W Meehan – 54, 310 L Garnett – 120.

Thank you for your continued support for 2021. Numbers are still available at £4 per number per month. Further details from Marie on 01785 661012.

Gift Aid

*At this critical time, if anyone wishes to make a commitment; 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. There are large collection bins placed on entry and exit**

Without such donations, 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 been reduced. A significant amount of unavoidable work is also planned shortly for both parishes, 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 please help in any way. Very many thanks

Second Collection: This weekend we have our Lenten collection for **CAFOD (the Friday Fast day offering)**. Please use the envelopes at the back of church if you wish to Gift Aid your donation.

Next weekend there is a second collection for **Cathedral Maintenance**.

St Anne's Roof Appeal Update

The remedial work to the lower roof has now been completed. 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 any 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

** St Anne's parish is 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.

St Patricks: [Lent] In discussion with our team of stewards and helpers, it has been decided to return to the two public weekday Masses in St Patrick's during the period of Lent. Please refer to the first newsletter page.

St Anne's: At present all Masses celebrated at St Anne's are web streamed. (Our grateful thanks to Peter) Fr. Bob

LENT: May we all enjoy a Blessed period of spiritual enlightenment, deeper self-knowledge and the beautiful reality of salvation filled hope. Light through our darkness heralds the coming of Spring.

Places of Worship are still able to remain open, but we were reminded of the need and importance for us all to be extra careful and diligent with social distancing and hygiene. All our parishes have been grateful for the help and dedication of our stewards/ cleaners. They have ensured, and continue to ensure, that all guidelines are followed and that the church is thoroughly cleaned after each service.

Please remember that the obligation to attend Holy Mass is still suspended. All our Masses from St Anne's will continue to be live streamed through YouTube, details of which can be found on our website.

Our Deceased: Please remember in your prayers **Dilys Holmes**, of St Anne's, who died last Wednesday. We pray for her family at this time. **Dilys'** Requiem will be held at St Anne's at **12 Noon on Tuesday 16th March**. Please also remember **Fr. Oliver Kemp**, a priest of our archdiocese who was resident in Aston Hall, who died last week. Fr Oliver looked after St Patrick's for a short time in 2009. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

Tony & Clare Whitehall, on behalf of their family, would like to express their sincere thanks for all the cards, condolences and good wishes they have received from our parish community on the recent death of Tony's mother, **Anne Wilks**. Such support was greatly appreciated. Many thanks.

Mill Hill Missionaries (novena): As you may be aware, this year is 'The Year of St Joseph' and the Mill Hill Missionaries are holding a national novena to St Joseph from 10th until 18th March. There is a poster in the porch of each church with details and you can find further information on the Mill Hill website at: www.millhillmissionaries.com/novena It will provide information as to which parishes are holding novena Masses.

HOMILY SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

Once again we hear, this Sunday, probably the most shocking and incomprehensible stories in the Bible. We learn about God's testing of Abraham during our Lenten journey and perhaps wonder to ourselves just how the loving creator God of Jesus' Gospel message can demand the slaughter of a child. I do come across committed Christians who won't have much to do with the Old Testament because of the many accounts of how God deals with His chosen People; whether it's allowing Job to be tortured, or commanding the Israelites to kill all the inhabitants of cities they conquer. In a sense, maybe the reading of the Old Testament should come with a 'health' warning! At least it should if we continue to try to understand that ancient testament through our contemporary 'enlightenment eyes'. It just won't work in the end, and we will ultimately find ourselves dismissing a whole library of intensely rich literature. Let's face it, we're a part of Jesus, aren't we? And Jesus would have known every last 'jot' of the Torah. If the Torah, or Pentateuch was ever thought to be intolerable writing surely Jesus would have made this clear, wouldn't He? Just as the story of Job can distress us, so can many others, especially the one we've just heard today.

The world and mindset of the age of Abraham and that epoch, we can't even begin to understand unless we start by seeing God as the absolute, total centre and focus of our being. Anything less than that won't give us any insight into the unfathomable mystery we are caught up in. Remember, the testing of Abraham was the 'axis' point for the formation of Israel; which was the ultimate intention of God. Abraham, as the founding father of Israel, must entrust his entire life and future to God and that's why Abraham replies: "here I am" a statement of complete availability before the 'Lord of all existence'. Notice that in this story Abraham is leaving everything up to God because he recognised that everything he has been given was pure gift from God. And even when his son Isaac asks him where the animal is for the sacrifice, Abraham replies that 'God will provide'. But from where we're coming from, we would protest against the command to kill his son, wouldn't we. When we try to put ourselves in the place of Abraham we might think that this can't be the voice of God! It can't possibly be; especially when that voice commands us to do something that is opposed to the moral law. From our modern Western perception Abraham surely must see this 'voice' of God as a deception? But this is exactly our problem, isn't it? We are now a rational, clinical, sanitized society and what our 'judgement' is doing is to reduce that awesome, climactic encounter between God and Abraham to an extrinsic moral demand. What we miss here is that Abraham, the father's very life and being is bound up with the life of his son and heir. In other words, Abraham sees beyond his son Isaac through to his very creator. The remarkable and unique faith of Abraham powerfully rests in the 'giver' of the gift of Isaac his son. He entrusts his life and his future unconditionally to the God who calls him. So what this means is that, far from hating or wishing harm to Isaac, Abraham raises his love to a different higher level; by returning Isaac to God Abraham returns the blessing. Moriah, in fact, is the mountain of Jerusalem where Solomon built the Temple, so Abraham is the first to worship there. This emphasises, as all mountains do in scripture, the sheer power and majesty of God.

The Gospel reading, which again is so familiar to us, talks of another mountain (Tabor) which is the scene of a transfiguration that will be forever impressed in the consciousness of the three disciples who witnessed it. Whilst we might sympathise with Peter, who quite 'rationally' suggests making Elijah and Moses welcome in a homely way and stay awhile, the point is powerfully missed. Peter wanted that wonderful experience to last but the awesome overshadowing cloud expresses the presence and action of God's power. And although Peter and the other two disciples would have been terrified, it was a moment of great blessing in their lives; if you like, a 'turbo-charging' assistance to their often-fragile faith.

Because we know, don't we, that they are going to need this powerful majestic mountain experience to sustain them through Jesus' Passion and Resurrection. Like Abraham in Genesis, Peter would come to know that the consequences of being given the best gift God could give, faith, would be nothing other than offering his whole life back to his creator. And for Abraham his life would have included Isaac his son.

So, if the Old Testament challenges our modern day perceptions of right and wrong, maybe we need to realise that ultimately the mystery of God leaves us speechless and on our knees.