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Sunday 28th June 2020

Weekly Newsletter

St. Anne's Catholic Church

Lynton Avenue Weeping Cross Stafford, ST17 0EA. Telephone: 01785 661012 - Website www.st-anne-st.org.uk

St. Patrick's Catholic Church

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Email: stannestpatrick.stafford@gmail.com

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

SOLEMNITY OF SS PETER AND PAUL

Day	Date	Mass Time	Church	Liturgical Day	Mass Intention	
Sat	27 th	pm	St Anne's	Vigil	<i>No Congregation</i>	
Sun	28 th	am	" "	SS Peter & Paul	Solemnity	<i>No Congregation</i>
Mon	29 th	am	" "		Feria	<i>No Congregation</i>
Tue	30 th	am	" "		Feria	<i>No Congregation</i>
Wed	1 st	am	" "		Feria	<i>No Congregation</i>
Thu	2 nd	am	" "		Feria	<i>No Congregation</i>
Fri	3 rd	am	" "	St Thomas, Apostle	Feast	<i>No Congregation</i>
Sat	4 th	pm	" "	Vigil	<i>No Congregation</i>	
Sun	5 th	am	" "	Fourteenth Sunday of Year	<i>No Congregation</i>	

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM By Appointment

Prayers for the departed loved ones whose anniversaries occur at this time: *[St. Patrick's] Kath Sanford, Ella Nolan, Kenneth Ward, John O'Donnell, Francis Targett, Louise Gibbons, Ellen O'Donnell, Mary O'Hagan, John Connor, Peter Williams, Joan Johnston, [St. Anne's] Joseph Fleming, Robert Hogan, Alice Williams, Vera Bradshaw, Annie Lidick, Frances Williams, Tony McNulty, John Hulme.*

Prayers for the sick: St Patrick's Phylis Bowers, Kath Read, Susan Prince, Tim Tiernan, Gregory McKinlay, Linda Reavy, Martha Porter and Cecilia 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.

Income 29 th March	Source	Gift Aid	Non-Gift Aid	Standing Order	Total	Attendance
St Anne's	Offertory		£	£	£	
St. Patrick's	Offertory	£	£	£	£	

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.

ST. ANNE'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

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******* Important message: please go to paragraph just before the homily*******

*Please note that those who would like to pay their subscriptions to the 150 Club by STANDING ORDER can let Fr Bob know and he will pass on the name to Mary Owen. It would help immensely during this time. Many thanks

Our Recently Deceased: Please pray for **Shaun Gilbride** of St Anne's and **Kevin Godwin** formerly of St Anne's, who have died recently. May they rest in peace and rise in glory. We also remember their families at this time.

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>

*This email is 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

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

LATEST: The Archdiocese of Birmingham have already allowed parishes to open for 'Private Prayer'. We have received, over the last couple of weeks, a plethora of guidance information underpinning the strict conditions for opening the churches. The guidance includes issues such as volunteer 'stewards', cleaning materials / routines, signage, one-way systems, safety contingencies, 2m distancing, how many 'hours per day' opening etc. We are opening for 'private prayer' from the week beginning 29th June. To see how we go, the three Stafford parishes will open as follows:

ST PATRICK'S: Tuesday 11am till 1pm and Thursday 5pm till 7pm.

ST ANNE'S: Wednesday 11am till 1pm and Friday 5:30pm till 7pm.

ST AUSTIN'S: Monday 5pm till 7pm and Saturday 11am till 1pm.

For us to enable this it must be stressed that we shall need a healthy cohort of "volunteers". So, please EMAIL ME (PARISH EMAIL ADDRESS) or phone if you feel you would like to help. Or contact LYN OR GERALDINE (ST PATRICK'S). PETER (ST ANNE'S).

Opening for 'private prayer' really does wholly depend upon the offers of help we receive (more people who are able to steward or clean after visits) and how we can follow our own risk assessments for each parish. The archdiocese does stress that they do not expect all or even most parishes to open for 'private prayer' because of the logistics involved, but, opening for Masses might be beneficial for us to get used to going into the churches and following guidelines of safety and care [in advance of Sunday and weekday Masses].

So, in summary, do please offer if you feel able, and rest assured that myself, together with Peter, Lyn and Geraldine, will happily go through preliminary guidance with you. It should also prepare us for the organising of 'teams' that we will definitely need when the Government allow Masses to go ahead.

Many Thanks in advance.

Fr. Bob

But, (Stop Press!!) There is more: churches are now allowed to hold Masses, [technically, from the 4th July] according to our archdiocese. However, the strictures, conditions and preparations are mind-blowing and will need very very careful reading through of the guidance for each parish. So, please bear with me for now and during the coming week I shall be discussing possible plans with our health & safety reps. What I can let you know, in terms of looking ahead, is that Masses will be celebrated within the (1metre + guidelines) This will entail the wearing of some form of face covering within the church.

This detail aside, the most important and pressing and absolutely vital requirement is that each parish has 'lots' of volunteers, as part of teams, for helping to steward and clean pews and various touch points after each Mass. I can't emphasise enough how the church needs you! I am uploading a letter to our parish websites from the four Metropolitans of England and Wales addressed to all of us. This same letter can also be found on our archdiocese website. An important and interesting point it alludes to is that the obligation to attend Sunday Mass is still suspended and a possibility might be to avail ourselves of weekday Masses to enable sensible spacing on weekends (some in the weekday evenings for those who work?) I only put these out for your consideration at the moment. There would be no point in rushing in to Mass re-introduction until we are ready and feel we have safe procedures in place – and, please, sufficient volunteers to be able to cover Masses. Many Thanks for your patience and understanding. It's unchartered territory.

HOMILY FOR THE SOLEMNITY OF SS PETER & PAUL

Today, our celebration of the double feast of Peter and Paul, two of our best known saints, is one of the few solemnities that's kept as one of obligation. And the reason for this is that these two men were absolutely foundational for establishing Christ's Church. If we needed any convincing about our need for saints, then these two men would provide the proof. How else was Jesus going to establish His community spreading out to the four corners of the world, and last for all ages in time until the end of the world? Jesus had to commission people to carry His message (and His LIFE) to everyone everywhere. Only human beings could do that. Peter and Paul were very flawed and very imperfect men. Peter was impetuous and unreliable whilst Paul showed dangerous signs of megalomania and ruthless ambition. Yet Christ chose both of them for building the foundations of the Church.

Notice that statues of St. Peter are nearly always shown with cross keys; they indicate Peter as being the 'keeper' of the keys to heaven. Because he's supported by the Holy Spirit, Peter acts as Jesus Christ's authority on Earth. He acts as the guarantor of truth and it's the truth which is the key to the Promised Land. And Paul is usually shown holding a sword and yet, he was no soldier. The sword symbolises Holy Scripture (the written word of God). Through his letters and his journeys, we recognise St. Paul as the one who 'spread' the Risen Christ to the furthest edges of the known world in the 1st century. But, have you also noticed that the sword is double-edged. We're told that the Word of God cuts more finely than a double-edged sword. If we lay ourselves open to God's word then we're going to be penetrated to the very depths of our being. We're not just reading a history book – the Word of God is alive and active and St. Paul has traditionally wielded this word (this eternal message) like a weapon. That's why he's pictured holding this 'sword' of God's Word.

O.K. you might say, Peter and Paul were two thousand years ago. The world knows about the Church of Christ. It's there for anyone who desires it! But that's not the point, is it? We've got the leaders of the Church; the Pope, bishops and so on. And we know the Pope is Peter's successor so the truth is guaranteed. So, why do we still need saints?

Well we still have to have examples within the Church we can identify with. We need the broken and flawed human beings around us to give us hope. In a way these saints are our passage to perfection. They're men and women who have allowed God to work through their weakness and fragility so that we can grow strong. Today, we think of Peter and Paul (the rock and the missionary).