



**Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> November 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**

48 Sandon Road, Stafford ST16 3HF. Telephone 01785 661012 - Website [www.stpatricksstafford.co.uk](http://www.stpatricksstafford.co.uk)

Email: [stannestpatrick.stafford@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:stannestpatrick.stafford@rcaob.org.uk)

**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**

#### **ST. ANNE'S PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Lynton Avenue, ST17 0EA

Telephone: 01785 663128 Fax: 01785 662987

Email: [office@st-annes-weepingcross.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:office@st-annes-weepingcross.staffs.sch.uk)

Head Teacher: Mr. M. Killeen

#### **ST. PATRICK'S PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Marston Road, ST16 3BT

Telephone: 01785 413275

Email: [office@st-patricks-stafford.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:office@st-patricks-stafford.staffs.sch.uk)

Principal: Mr. M. Brandon

### **TIMES OF HOLY MASS AND LITURGIES THIS WEEK**

#### **FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

Day	Date	Mass Time	Church	Liturgical Day	Mass Intention
Sat	28 <sup>th</sup>	pm		Vigil	No Congregation People of the Parish
Sun	29 <sup>th</sup>	am		First Sunday of Advent	“ “ “ Peter Smith RIP
Mon	30 <sup>th</sup>	am		<b>St Andrew</b>	Feast “ “ “ June Arran RIP
Tue	1 <sup>st</sup>	am		<b>St Edmund Campion</b>	Feast “ “ “ Tony Parsons (well being)
Wed	2 <sup>nd</sup>	am		Advent Feria	“ “ “ The Lloyd Family
Thu	3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>6:00pm</b>	<b>St Patrick's</b>	<b>St Francis Xavier</b>	Memoria Fr. Jim McGloin RIP
Fri	4 <sup>th</sup>	<b>6:00pm</b>	<b>St Anne's</b>	Advent Feria	Celebrant's Intention
Sat	5 <sup>th</sup>	<b>1:00pm</b> <b>6:30pm</b>	<b>St Patrick's</b> <b>St Anne's</b>	Vigil	Bob & Damian People of the Parish
Sun	6 <sup>th</sup>	<b>8:00am</b> <b>9:30am</b>	<b>St Patrick's</b> <b>St Anne's</b>	Second Sunday of Advent	Tony Ruttledge (1 <sup>st</sup> Ann.) John Devaney 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]* Stephen Godwin, Margaret Emery, Lilian Crewe, Ivan Horsnall, Frederick Smith, Clare Brown, Frances Broad, Ann Batkin, John Pinder, Joanna Curry, James McConnell, Frederick Eley, Betty Allman and Frances Pinnington. *[St Anne's]* Desmond Connelly, Patrick Healy, Eva Parsons, Susan Sharp, Ivan Horsnall, Winifred Baynham, Roy Mitchell, Anne McPaul, George Neilson, Linda Pooler, Monica Thomas and Marie Usher.

Income	Nov	Source	Gift Aid	Non-Gift Aid	Standing Order	Total	Attendance
St Anne's		Offertory	<b>£303.00</b>	<b>£63.00</b>	<b>£283.84</b>	<b>£649.84</b>	Sat Sun
St. Patrick's		Offertory	<b>£83.00</b>	<b>£90.00</b>	<b>£146.23</b>	<b>£319.23</b>	Sat Sun

*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>

Blessings Fr. Bob

**\*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](http://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk)

**Parish Tote 150 Club October 2020 Winners.** Thank you for your support. There are a lot of numbers 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. (Once we come out of this present 'lockdown').***

### **St Anne's Roof Appeal (Update)**



***The remedial work has now been completed.** We are appealing for any donations St Anne's community can donate to this work; my humble appreciation to those who have already given so generously; we are gradually on our way - looking at a sum approaching £10,000. (We are well over a third 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*

### **NOVEMBER (Month of Remembering our Dead)**

This is the last weekend of the month. At the back of St Anne's and St Patrick's churches you will find brown envelopes into which you may place the names of those you wish to be remembered during the month of November. These can then be put in the basket. If you wish to make a donation then please place donations in the smaller 'Mass intention' envelopes, found nearby, and also place in the basket. Before each Mass the basket will be placed before the altar.

***During this second long period of 'Lockdown' during which Mass cannot be celebrated in public***

**Return to Public Masses:** As we have heard, public Masses can resume from Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December so you will notice the return of Mass times from next Thursday (the first being at St Patrick's). From then on our Mass schedule will return to what it was before Nov 5<sup>th</sup> so do follow the times of Masses in the newsletters from now on.

We all know that the Christmas celebration family context [three households] but our



period will seem very strange this year in its parishes intend to provide **Christmas**

**Masses for Catholic Stafford.** We are planning to offer Christmas vigil Masses in each parish church

(one early, one later) and Christmas Morning Masses in each parish. We have finalising the exact times of the Masses. **They are here. LOOK BELOW:** I have added the details and times etc. The great news is that no matter what tier our town is in, Masses can still go ahead just as they did before Nov 5<sup>th</sup>. One important question I must ask our present volunteers of cleaners and stewards at St Anne's and St Patrick's is whether you will be available over the Christmas Eve or morning, or both. But, any parishioner who is 'able' may offer their assistance in cleaning a bench or chairs after Mass they attend. (Many hands make light work).

**CHRISTMAS MASSES:**

**Catholic Stafford**

		<u>St Anne's</u>	<u>St Patrick's</u>	<u>St Austin's</u>
24 <sup>th</sup>	EVE	5:00pm	4:00pm	6:00pm
24 <sup>th</sup>	EVE	9:00pm	7:00pm	8:00pm
25 <sup>th</sup>	MORNING	9:00am	10:00am	11:00am

Unfortunately, due to the workable 'maximum' capacity of each church and the impossibility of trying to estimate the numbers for each Mass, we are having a booking system. We have one dedicated mobile number specifically for our Christmas Masses **(07856918465)** Please either call or text, leaving your name, contact no., the Mass you wish to book and the total number in your group (including yourself). This sort of arrangement goes against our way of doing things, doesn't it, but sadly, to keep within lawful guidelines, we have to watch numbers. Be assured that if, during the coming weeks, the incoming booking numbers warrant it, extra Masses may be put on Christmas Morning. Very Many thanks for your understanding. (Very important end note: we three parishes are appealing for as many stewards and cleaners as possible over these two days of Masses, so please, please indicate, by phone, email, or text, what Masses you might attend, and also if you could help in a neighbouring parish). Many thanks to all who do so much, but we do need extra hands for Christmas.

**Poor Mission Fund:** Next Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> Dec, The Second in Advent, is our scheduled second collection for the poor parishes of the diocese. Archbishop Bernard has asked if we could make a special effort in donating to this urgent cause. It is hoped that the collection can proceed because public Masses will have been allowed from 2<sup>nd</sup> December. Many Thanks.

**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.**

**MISSIO:** (St Patrick's) At the back of St Patrick's parishioners will find the latest Autumn edition of Missio's magazine. Please help yourself to a copy. There are many interesting articles included. Many thanks to Graham for his help in liaising with the charity. If parishioners who have RED BOXES could continue to donate their boxes using either the online donations page at [www.missio.org.uk](http://www.missio.org.uk), by phone, cheque or text that would be great. If you use your postcode as requested, you will be able to be matched to Missio's database and the totals will be attributed to the parish totals. [There are also 2021 MISSIO Calendars available at the back of church]. Many thanks.

**Friends of the Holy Land:** We have now entered the season of Advent during which we usually have Crib Donations for Friends of the Holy Land. This year has been particularly 'ruthless' for them in terms of lack of pilgrims (especially during this coming Christmas period when Bethlehem would normally be packed) and lack of sales for their wonderful artefacts etc. We will be arranging for this year's Crib donations from the First Sunday of Advent, through to the Christmas period, but of course our lockdown may interfere with this. Just drop off at the presbytery if you wish. However, you can donate through their website (where our Christian brothers and sisters' desperate situation is made evident). It is: <https://www.friendsoftheholylan.org.uk> . Any amount of assistance would be very welcome. Many thanks

**Women's Refuge (gifts for the Christmas Tree):** As usual, we will focus our gifts for the refuge but this year we will offer donations in form of cash or vouchers (supermarket). I have ordered two trees (smaller ones) for both churches and, rather than present bulky gifts [such as bedding, towels etc.] the Refuge would really appreciate vouchers because it eliminates the need for storage, which becomes more problematic in these times. We are now back in church from 3<sup>rd</sup> December and will include the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent. Vouchers or cash in envelopes can always be left at the presbytery and I shall place them under the trees. Mark them either St Anne or St Patrick. Many Thanks

The **SOWER**: The latest edition of this well produced archdiocesan periodical is available at the back of each church. Please help yourselves; many interesting articles concerning our archdiocese are to be found.

### **HOMILY FOR FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

**“Awake, awake, fling off the night..” Doesn’t this well-known Advent hymn perfectly complement the advice for us given in Jesus’ parable from Mark. A new liturgical year and a new evangelist (Mark taking over from Matthew) and a new Advent season are all here together. They’re here to give us a “shake”; a jolt out of our routine and our ‘resignation’. As a nation, as a world, we’ve travelled through and experienced a time like no other; totally unexpected and unforeseen. Whether or not the threat was exaggerated or ‘overblown’ only historians will deduce, but for many, lives were suddenly ‘shaken’ and the comfort of worldly security was painfully ‘blown away’. For all of us Christians this annual time of Advent is meant draw us out of our slumber. We’re creatures of habit, aren’t we? And in a strange way we can almost look at this habit of ours as a form of ‘self-defence’ mechanism. In other words, we are born into a dangerous and unpredictable world; cosmically, socially, economically, and politically. Unless we had some form of built in resistance we’d never survive; we would just end it all. But, by developing coping mechanisms and habits even, and perhaps especially, within traumatic threatening times, we carry on.**

**However, Jesus does not want us to just ‘carry on’. He wills us to come to Him and be part of Him within God’s life. This is staggering, isn’t it, and mostly ‘staggering realities’ get pushed to the back of our minds to a later date because the demands of everyday life take over and fill our days. The parable once again pictures a homeowner who goes abroad and leaves his servants to get on with their respective jobs, but it is the doorkeeper that he has told to ‘stay awake’. So, how do we read this? We might see ourselves as an individual servant in the house which might make us wonder who the doorkeeper is. Maybe we can see ourself as the house itself and each servant representing the various tasks we have to be responsible for, but our task as doorkeeper takes priority over everything else. We have to be on ‘lookout’ for our master’s return. If we see the house as our soul, one task of the doorkeeper is to keep out unwanted visitors and intruders, and it’s here that the parable is a moral warning not to open up our door to the ways of sin. Each day we need to watch with vigilance for the approach of temptations, as we know all too well how they can enter past our threshold. If we never examine our lives we are like a city with no sentries on its walls, but if we are serious about living a spiritual life then daily reflection is a strongly advised because it makes us honest about what really motivates us.**

**Another task of the doorkeeper is to be ready to open up the door to all those who have a right to enter. And the one who we should always be ready to welcome in is the Spirit of Christ. Sadly, we can often be overtaken by fear when we sense His approach, yet fear is the one emotion that Jesus so powerfully tells His listeners to quash. This is the Jesus who said “Be brave, I have conquered the world”. And just listening to Isaiah in the first reading reassures us, doesn’t it? Isaiah uses three very appealing names for God: .. our Father, our Redeemer and the potter. We’re created, redeemed and our lives are being crafted anew. To us, the present ‘clay’ may be messy, without meaningful form or beauty, but the divine craftsman will mould and fashion an amazing masterpiece. The God who is coming back the road to meet us wants to liberate us and fashion us anew. The message for us is not to think of the Second Coming as so distant and unknown as to be irrelevant to the busyness of our everyday living, but to see it as drawing us forward towards God. And this is happening to us every day – we need to watch in prayer, vigilant and alert to the daily visitations of the Spirit into our souls. Let us pray for wisdom in our door keeping.**