

THE CATHOLIC PASTORAL PARTNERSHIP OF
BIDDULPH, GOLDENHILL, KIDSGROVE & PACKMOOR
UNDER THE PATRONAGE AND PROTECTION OF OUR LADY OF GRACE

SUNDAY BULLETIN

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

SUNDAY 19TH FEBRUARY 2023

A WORD FROM THE PARISH PRIEST

This Wednesday, we begin our annual season of renewal, the season of Lent. We immediately think of Lent as a time of penance. And that is certainly part of it. But it is

also a time of positive change for our lives. It is a time to strip away the unnecessary things that we latch on to—distractions, entertainments, luxuries—and to replace them with things which will give our spiritual life a real boost—prayer, silence, reading the Word of God and works of charity.

The most important thing we can do as we prepare for Ash Wednesday is make a plan of action for Lent. If we leave it to chance, then it is likely that we won't do much. So yes,



maybe give up something as you normally do, but also consider turning off the TV, the laptop or tablet, the constant noise that we often surround ourselves with, and use the space and silence for the Word of God and prayer. Consider what you spend your disposable money on—alcohol, smoking, gambling, pastimes—and give that money to Lenten alms to help those who live in need. If Lent is going to be more than a merely symbolic thing we should take on a Lenten discipline which really clears the

ground for our growth in the Spirit of God.

The other essential element to a good Lent is the Sacrament of Reconciliation or Confession.

Every Catholic should go to confession once a year as a minimum. There are the normal times of confession available, and nearer Easter there will be an opportunity for a collective penitential service.

I am not putting on a large programme of extras for Lent. There will be Stations of the Cross, but Lent is a time when we can make a commitment to go to a weekday Mass, or Heart to Heart holy hour. It would be great to see more parishioners at these. In any case I wish you a very holy Lent.

SAINT OF THE WEEK



Bl Álvaro of Córdoba 1360-1430

Alvaro was born in Zamora, Spain. He became a Dominican friar in Córdoba. He became a famous and sought-after preacher, and helped reform his Order. He had a mystical experience during a pilgrimage to the Holy Land where the Via Dolorosa, the Way of the Cross trod-

den by Jesus, changed his heart. Desiring a life devoted to greater prayer, with the help of King John II of Castile, he founded the strict convent called the 'Stairway to Heaven', where he built chapels to copy the Way of the Cross from Jerusalem. This was the origin of the Stations of the Cross devotion. He had the gift of prophecy.

CHURCHES

Biddulph English Martyrs' Church, Church Road, Biddulph, ST8 6NE

Goldenhill St Joseph's Church, High Street, Stoke-on-Trent, ST6 5RD

Kidsgrove St John the Evangelist's Church, The Avenue, Kidsgrove, ST7 1AE

Packmoor St Patrick's Church, Mellor Street, Packmoor, Stoke-on-Trent, ST7 4SN

PARISH PRIEST

Rev Fr Julian C Green
St Joseph's Presbytery
715 High Street
Stoke-on-Trent ST6 5RD
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Parish Secretary

Teresa Harding
Tel: (01782) 782121
Email:
OLG.parishes@rcaob.org.uk
Office Hours: Mon, Tues, Fri
9am to 3.30pm. Weds, Thurs
9am to 1pm.

Safeguarding

Our safeguarding reps are:
Biddulph/Packmoor: Julie Shufflebotham & Lorraine Connell
Goldenhill: Suzanne Meakin
Kidsgrove: Denise Hewitt
They can be contacted through the Parish Office, or call the Diocesan Team on 0121 230 6240 or safeguarding@rc-birmingham.org

Website

www.partnershipparishes.org

Diocesan Website

birminghamdiocese.org.uk

The Parishes are part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham: Registered Charity no. 234216

	Biddulph	Goldenhill	Kidsgrove	Packmoor	The Sacrament of Forgiveness (Confessions) St Joseph's Sun 10.30am English Martyrs' Sun 8.30am St John's Sat 6pm St Patrick's On request before or after Mass	
Saturday 18th		6.30pm			Holy Mass of Sunday	Winifred Maughan
Sunday 19th Seventh Sunday of Ordinary Time	9.00am	11.00am		6.30pm	Holy Mass Holy Mass Holy Mass	Mary Child Michael & Maureen Meaney People of the Parishes
Monday 20th Feria		6.00pm			Holy Mass	Peter Minshull
Tuesday 21st Feria	9.15am			2.15pm	Holy Mass Holy Rosary	EJ Flatley & family
Wednesday 22nd ASH WEDNESDAY	9.15am	6.30pm			Holy Mass & Ashes Holy Mass & Ashes	Mary Nixon People of the Parishes
Thursday 23rd Feria of Lent (<i>St Polycarp</i>)	11.30am 12noon	6.00pm			Stations of the Cross Holy Mass Heart to Heart	Mary Child
Friday 24th Feria of Lent		6.00pm 6.30pm			Holy Mass Stations of the Cross	Special Intention
Saturday 25th Feria of Lent		6.30pm			Holy Mass of Sunday	John Martin
Sunday 26th First Sunday of Lent	9.00am 5.30pm	11.00am		6.30pm	Holy Mass Holy Mass Reception into church Holy Mass	Sean McCarron Irene Aylward Annina Marraffino RIP Dorothy Ridge
Monday 27th Feria of Lent	2.00pm	6.00pm			Requiem Mass Holy Mass	Annina Marraffino RIP Holy Souls
Tuesday 28th Feria of Lent	9.15am			2.15pm	Holy Mass Stations of the Cross	BJ & P Cronin
Wednesday 1st St David						
Thursday 2nd St Chad	11.30am 12noon	6.00pm			Stations of the Cross Holy Mass Heart to Heart	Dec of Child family
Friday 3rd Feria of Lent <i>First Friday</i>	12.45pm	6.00pm 6.30pm			Funeral Service Holy Mass Stations of the Cross	Gerry Booth RIP Holy Souls
Saturday 4th Feria of Lent		6.30pm			Holy Mass of Sunday	Bob Watts
Sunday 5th Second Sunday of Lent	9.00am	11.00am		6.30pm	Holy Mass Holy Mass Holy Mass	Baby Owen Paul Betty Smithson Veronica Williams

Ash Wednesday This Wednesday is Ash Wednesday and is a Day of Fasting (for healthy people aged 18 to 59) and Abstinence (for everyone over 18). Fasting means eating only one full meal—and only two small snacks—as a maximum. Abstinence means eating no meat. You are invited to come and receive the blessed ashes at Mass—see the schedule opposite for the Mass times.

Lenten Alms Charities We will have a second collection for a different cause each week:

26th Feb St Chad's Cathedral

5th Mar CAFOD

12th Mar Compassion Kitchen

19th Mar Aid to the Church in Need

26th Mar Number 11

2nd Apr Holy Places

Confirmation This is a final call for all who wish to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in March. If you or a child in your family wishes to be confirmed please see Fr Julian straight-way.

Saturday Morning Mass Due to lack of support, the Mass at English Martyrs' on Saturday mornings will no longer take place.

Deanery Vocations Mass This year's Mass to pray for Vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life will be at St Giles', Cheadle on Thursday 2nd March at 7pm. The celebrant will be Fr Eric Kemball, the parish priest, with the participation of Painsley Catholic College. Everyone welcome.

Sick and elderly If you know someone who is sick or elderly and unable to come to Mass, please let Fr

Julian or Teresa in the Parish Office know. It is often difficult to know people's personal situation. So, if you know someone needs a visit or Holy Communion, please let us know.

Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage Booking is now open for the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes which takes place from Saturday 27th May to Friday 2nd June. There are various travel and hotel options. For more information and booking, please visit the Diocesan website or contact Kath in the pilgrimage office on 0121 230 6288/ admin.lourdes@rcaob.org.uk



PRAYER AND LIFE WORKSHOPS

A New Evangelization

Prayer & Life Workshops return to our parishes this spring! PLW is a 15 week programme, introducing various ways of praying, as well as helping participants towards a closer relationship with God.

Why not come to the Introductory session on Saturday 4th March, 10am to 12noon in the meeting room at English Martyrs'? The weekly sessions take place at the same time each week.

LENTEN STATIONS



During Lent, you are invited to come to Stations of the Cross. Each week, there will be three opportunities to join in with this traditional Lenten devotion:

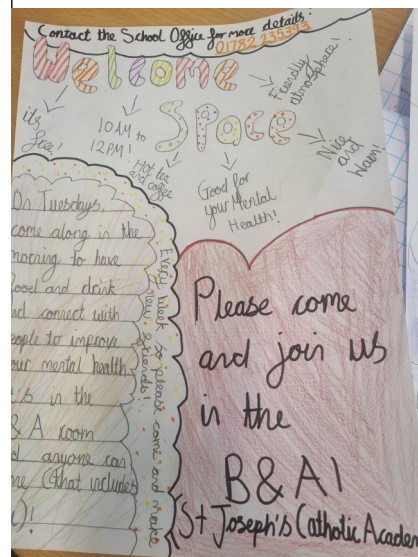
Tuesday 2.15pm St Patrick's

Thursday 11.30am English Martyrs'

Friday 6.30pm St Joseph's

HOSPITALITY

Warm Places Biddulph Each Thursday the meeting room at English Martyrs' becomes a warm place of welcome to everyone. We offer tea and coffee all day, and a hot simple lunch at 12.30pm. Why not drop in? We are open every Thursday during winter. Everyone is welcome.



Welcoming Places Goldenhill Each Tuesday from 10am to 1pm, parishioners are offering a place of welcome at St Joseph's Academy, Mobberley Road. There will be tea, coffee and light refreshments available, and a warm place and a chance for a chat. Everyone is welcome.

If you want to volunteer for either of our welcoming schemes, please turn up to either place at the times when they are open. Alternatively, contact the parish office to be put in contact with the other volunteers.

Sanctuary Lamp Dedications

Week beginning 19th February:

St Joseph's: Winifred Maughan & family

St John's: Crotty, Davenport & Howles families

Week beginning 26th February:

St Joseph's: John Goulding

St John's: Crotty, Davenport & Howles families

If you wish to dedicate a sanctuary lamp in any of our churches, please place min donation of £5 in an envelope with preferred church and intention on the front.

Parish Office & Parish Priest's Open House

The Parish Office is open at the normal times which are on the front of the bulletin. Please call first if you wish to visit.

Open House is changing day and time. There will be no Open House this week. From 27th Feb it will return to its pre-COVID time of 6.30pm to 7pm on Monday evenings at the Presbytery.

PARISH REGISTERS

Baptisms

Welcome to the family of the Church to Tristan Christopher Pio Doherty who was baptised at St John's on Sunday 12th February.

And to Isabella Mannion-Shaw who is being baptised at St Joseph's on Sunday 19th February.

Deaths

Of your charity please pray for the soul of Annina Teresa Marraffino.

Requiem Mass will be offered at English Martyrs' on Monday 27th February at 2pm. Reception into church on Sunday 26th February at 5.30pm.

Also for the soul of James Thompson. Funeral service and committal at Bradwell Crematorium on Monday 27th February at 11.20am.

Also for the soul of George Gerald (Gerry) Booth. Funeral service at English Martyrs' on Friday 3rd March at 12.45pm followed by committal at Bradwell Crematorium.

Also for the soul of Lynn Marie Fellows. Funeral service and committal at Bradwell Crematorium on Friday 17th March at 11.20am.

Requiescant in Pace

Hospital If you or someone you know needs a priest in hospital, you need to contact the chaplaincy yourself. For Royal Stoke call 01782 676400. It is important to specify that it is the Catholic chaplain you want. If you have any problems, please contact the parish office.

POPE FRANCIS' MESSAGE FOR LENT 2023 (EXCERPTS)

Dear brothers and sisters! The Gospels recount the episode of the Transfiguration of Jesus. There we see the Lord's response to the failure of his disciples to understand him. Shortly before, there had been a real clash between the Master and Simon Peter, who, after professing his faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, rejected his prediction of the passion and the cross. Jesus had firmly rebuked him: "Get behind me, Satan! You are a scandal to me, because you do not think according to God, but according to men!" Following this, "six days later, Jesus took with him Peter, James and John his brother and led them away to a high mountain". The Gospel of the Transfiguration is proclaimed every year on the Second Sunday of Lent. During this liturgical season, the Lord takes us with him to a place apart. While our ordinary commitments compel us to remain in our usual places and our often repetitive and sometimes boring routines, during Lent we are invited to ascend "a high mountain" in the company of Jesus and to live a particular experience of spiritual discipline as God's holy people.

Lenten penance is a commitment, sustained by grace, to overcoming our lack of faith and our resistance to following Jesus on the way of the cross. This is precisely what Peter and the other disciples needed to do. To deepen our knowledge of the Master, to fully understand and embrace the mystery of his salvation, accomplished in total self-giving inspired by love, we must allow ourselves to be taken aside by him and to detach ourselves from mediocrity and vanity. We need to set out on the journey, an uphill path that, like a mountain trek, requires effort, sacrifice and concentration... In his "retreat" on Mount Tabor, Jesus takes with him three disciples, chosen to be witnesses of a unique event. He wants that experience of grace to be shared, not solitary, just as our whole life of faith is an experience that is shared. For it is in togetherness that we follow Jesus. Together too, as a pilgrim Church in time, we experience the liturgical year and Lent within it, walking alongside those whom the Lord has placed among us as fellow travellers...

The Gospel relates that Jesus "was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light". This is the "summit", the goal of the journey. At the end of their ascent, as they stand on the mountain heights with Jesus, the three disciples are given the grace of seeing him in his glory, resplendent in supernatural light. That light did not come from without, but radiated from the Lord himself. The divine beauty of this vision was incomparably greater than all the efforts the disciples had made in the ascent of Tabor. During any strenuous mountain trek, we must keep our eyes firmly fixed on the path; yet the panorama that opens up at the end amazes us and rewards us by its grandeur...

The Lenten journey of penance has as its goal a transfiguration... A transformation that has its model in the Transfiguration of Jesus and is achieved by the grace of his paschal mystery. So that this transfiguration may become a reality in us this year, I would like to propose two "paths" to follow in order to ascend the mountain together with Jesus and, with him, to attain the goal. The first path has to do with the command that God the Father addresses to the disciples on Mount Tabor as they contemplate Jesus transfigured. The voice from the cloud says: "Listen to him". The first proposal, then, is very clear: we need to listen to Jesus. Lent is a time of grace to the extent that we listen to him as he speaks to us. And how does he speak to us? First, in the word of God, which the Church offers us in the liturgy. May that word not fall on deaf ears; if we cannot always attend Mass, let us study its daily biblical readings, even with the help of the internet...

On hearing the Father's voice, the disciples "fell prostrate and were very much afraid. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, 'Rise, and do not be afraid.' And when the disciples raised their eyes, they saw no one else but Jesus alone". Here is the second proposal for this Lent: do not take refuge in a religiosity made up of extraordinary events and dramatic experiences, out of fear of facing reality and its daily struggles, its hardships and contradictions. The light that Jesus shows the disciples is an anticipation of Easter glory, and that must be the goal of our own journey, as we follow "him alone". Lent leads to Easter: the "retreat" is not an end in itself, but a means of preparing us to experience the Lord's passion and cross with faith, hope and love, and thus to arrive at the resurrection.

Dear brothers and sisters, may the Holy Spirit inspire and sustain us this Lent in our ascent with Jesus, so that we may experience his divine splendour and thus, confirmed in faith, persevere in our journey together with him, glory of his people and light of the nations.

FRANCIS PP