

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

SUNDAY BULLETIN

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

SUNDAY 17TH SEPTEMBER 2023

A WORD FROM THE PARISH PRIEST

Today we keep *Evangelii Gaudium Sunday*. “What Sunday?” you might well ask! In the past, this Sunday was called Home Mission Sunday, and it used to support the work of the Catholic Missionary Society, which was made up of priests who went from parish to parish giving parish missions. Today, we recognise that this ‘home mission’ is actually the task of each and every faithful Catholic. It is now called *Evangelii Gaudium Sunday* because that is the name of the letter which Pope Francis sent to the Church about evangelisation and our ‘home mission’ ten years ago. This was the latest in the succession of documents from the Popes calling the Church, particularly in the West, which at one time had the Faith in abundance but where it is

now failing to be handed on, to Mission. In 1975, Pope St Paul VI gave the first of these letters, and Pope St John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI wrote similar letters. With almost 50 years of call to Mission in our parishes, we need to wake up and ask what it means to us!

We are now preparing for the next great year of Jubilee, which will be in 2025. As a preparation, Pope Francis is asking us to do that thing which is most necessary to Mission, and that is to begin with prayer. It is prayer which puts us in a direct relationship to God, in Christ, and which changes us—converts us! That is why this year of prayer, which begins on Advent Sunday and continues through 2024, is so important to

us. We will be coming forward with initiative to help everyone to engage in prayer more earnestly during this year. These may be prayer workshops, retreat days, and simple things like making the most of the opportunities when we already gather to extend the experience of prayer. You’ll be hearing more about this in advance of the beginning of the ‘Year’.

Today, I am beginning the official period of consultation on the future of our parishes as one united parish. This is a separate matter to the proposed closure of churches, and the matters need to be dealt with separately. I would be grateful to receive any concerns about the proposed merger. Please see the notice on page 3 of the bulletin for details.

SAINT OF THE WEEK



St Robert Bellarmine 1542-1621

The great Italian Jesuit priest, Robert Bellarmine was a well known theologian. He taught theology in at the Jesuit School of Rome, and went on to become a Cardinal. He opposed the anti-clerical regime in Venice, and opposed King James I of England’s political tenets. He

took on the prevailing heresies of the day in his theological works. In political doctrine, he was in favour of democracy, saying that God is the origin of authority, who invests it in people, who in turn entrust it to fit rulers. He was known for his writings, not only theological and political, but also devotional works.

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
Tel: (01782) 782121
fr.julian.green@rcaob.org.uk

Parish Secretary

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

Safeguarding

PThe Partnership of Parishes operates in accordance with Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and the National and Archdioceses policies & procedures at all times. Our Parish Safeguarding Representatives are:

Biddulph & Packmoor: Julie Shufflebotham & Lorraine Connell (sg.englishmartyrs.biddulph@rcaob.org.uk) **Goldenhill:** Jo Kirkham (sg.stjoseph.goldenhill@rcaob.org.uk) **Kidsgrove:** Denise Hewitt (sg.stjite.kidsgrove@rcaob.org.uk) Alternatively the Diocesan Safeguarding team can be contacted on 0121 230 6240 or safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk if you have any concern.

Parish Website

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

MASSES & SERVICES THIS WEEK

	Biddulph	Goldenhill	Kidsgrove	Packmoor	Sacrament of Forgiveness (Confessions) St Joseph's Sun 10.30am English Martyrs' Sun 8.30am St John's Sat 6pm St Patrick's Sun before Mass on request	
Saturday 16th			6.30pm		Holy Mass of Sunday	Kath & Brian Wakefield
Sunday 17th Twenty-Fourth Sunday of Ordinary Time <i>Evangelium Gaudii Sunday</i>	9.00am	11.00am		6.30pm	Holy Mass Holy Mass Holy Mass	Fr George Grynowski Mary Hewitt People of the Parishes
Monday 18th Feria		6.00pm			Holy Mass	Dec of Bailey & Plant families
Tuesday 19th Feria	9.15am			2.15pm	Holy Mass Holy Rosary	Special Intention
Wednesday 20th The Martyrs of Korea		6.00pm			Holy Mass	Bernard Cunningham
Thursday 21st St Matthew	11.00am	6.00pm	9.30am		Holy Mass (in school) Requiem Mass Heart to Heart	Special Intention Margaret Whalley RIP
Friday 22nd Feria		6.00pm			Holy Mass	Those affected by addiction
Saturday 23rd St Pio of Pietrelcina			6.30pm		Holy Mass of Sunday	John Martin
Sunday 24th Twenty-Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time	9.00am	11.00am		6.30pm	Holy Mass Holy Mass Holy Mass	Bill Adams Julius Kaminskis People of the Parishes
Monday 25th Feria						
Tuesday 26th Feria			11.00am	2.15pm	Mass for the Blessing of the new school Holy Rosary	
Wednesday 27th St Vincent de Paul						
Thursday 28th St Lawrence Ruiz & Companions	12noon	9.30am 6.00pm			Holy Mass (in school) Holy Mass Heart to Heart	M E Connelly Dec of Child family
Friday 29th Ss Michael, Gabriel & Raphael				6.00pm	Holy Mass	Holy Souls
Saturday 30th St Jerome			6.30pm		Holy Mass of Sunday	Thanksgiving (Clergy & religious)
Sunday 1st Twenty-Sixth Sunday of Ordinary Time	9.00am	11.00am		6.30pm	Holy Mass Holy Mass Holy Mass	Int Suzanne & Frank Meakin (50th Wedding) People of the Parishes

CONSULTATION ON PARISH MERGER

As you will have seen in the report on the Visitation of the North Staffs Deanery, it has been proposed that our three parishes of English Martyrs', St Joseph's and St John's should merge to become one single parish. This would mean that the present 'Our Lady of Grace Partnership of Parishes' would become 'Our Lady of Grace Parish'. This process in Canon Law requires that the people of the parishes be consulted.

The parishes have a common origin, in that English Martyrs' and St John's were both founded from St Joseph's in 1952 and 1892 respectively. Additionally, St Patrick's was originally founded as a Chapel of Ease of St Joseph's, and is now part of English Martyrs' parish.

It is important to note that this process of merging the parishes is a discreet process from that of closing any of the churches.

What are the advantages of merging the parishes? Firstly, the long-term prospect is that none of the three parishes will have its own priest in the future. Merging the parishes is, therefore, making the canonical status the same as the actual arrangement of pastoral provision under one priest. It means the unification of the bank accounts in one (though money given specifically for any particular church will still be allocated to that church in the parish accounts). It also means being able to cut down on administrative work, which presently requires everything to be done three times over (accounts, Gift Aid, Diocesan returns). It will therefore reduce the burden of work on the parish office.

If you have any comments on the proposed merger, please let Fr Julian have these before Friday 6th October 2023. You can write by email to fr.julian.green@rcaob.org.uk or write a letter and send it to the presbytery, or hand it directly to Fr Julian after Mass. It is hoped the merger will happen before Christmas.

St Patrick's Church There will be a meeting with Fr Julian for all parishioners interested in the future of St Patrick's Church on Friday 29th September at 6.30pm. There will be a Mass at 6pm prior to the meeting.

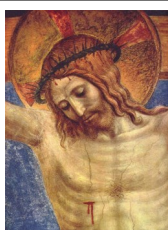
Adult Enquirers We will soon be beginning, once again, our preparation sessions for adults wishing to explore becoming Catholics. If you are interested please contact Fr Julian or send an email to the parish office to register your interest.

We need more catechists! Our parishes need people who are willing to be catechists. These are people who hand on and teach the faith, either to children (eg First Communion preparation) or adults, or doing baptism or marriage preparation. If you are willing to do some initial online training to see if this is your calling please contact Fr Julian.

Red Mission Boxes Would all parishioners with a box from St Joseph's please bring their box in to be counted during September please?

Welcoming Space Our Welcoming Space, where you can just drop in for tea, coffee and a chat, is running on Tuesdays from 10am to 12noon. It is at St Joseph's Academy, Mobberley Road. Everyone is welcome to come and drop in!

Walsingham Association The Mass for the Feast of Our Lady of



HEART TO HEART

Heart to Heart is back! You are invited for a time of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, Heart to Heart. We will have an hour of directed prayer, Scripture reading and quiet devotion to the Heart of Jesus, present in the Blessed Sacrament. This is the place to come and learn the Saviour's love for you! Heart to Heart is on Thursday evenings at St Joseph's Church beginning at 6pm.

Come, let us adore Him!



Walsingham will be celebrated at St Gregory's Church, Longton Monday 25th September at 7pm. Celebrant: Fr Julian Green, Chaplain to the Association. All welcome.

Care Home Outreach Parishioners are invited to come and join in a prayer service which we are organising at Lawton Rise Care Home, Goldenhill on Wednesday 20th September at 11am. Everyone is welcome to come along and join in!

Talk on St Teresa of Calcutta Fr Michael Miners continues his series on the spirituality of great women saints and mystics with a talk on St Teresa of Calcutta on Tuesday 3rd October at 7pm in St Wulstan's School, Wolstanton.

Day Pilgrimage The Area Pastoral Council are organising a Day Pilgrimage to the Church of St Anne and Bl Dominic Barberi in Sutton St Helens, together with a visit to Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral on Saturday 14th October. The coach leaves Holy Trinity, Newcastle at 8.45am and the cost is £15. Please bring a packed lunch. Bookings by 4th October. To book a place please contact the Parish Office.

Organ Recital St Wulstan's Wolstanton invite you to an Organ Recital at St Wulstan's to be given by David Saint, the Director of Music at St Chad's Cathedral. The Recital is on Tuesday 31st October at 7pm.

PRAYER & LIFE WORKSHOPS PRAYER GUIDE SCHOOL

Last Saturday, 9th September, Fr Julian, Fiona Keane and Sara Belaradj from our Partnership of Parishes were commissioned, or 'sent forth' as Prayer Guides of Prayer & Life Workshops in a Mass at Our Lady & St Dominic's Stone. Here Fiona and Sara write about their experience of the 'school' of preparation for Prayer Guides.

When Fr Julian first mentioned the first Prayer Life Workshop at St Teresa's in Trent Vale I could not attend, even though I knew this was something I wanted to do. When the opportunity came to do it at St Joseph's I jumped at the chance. I ended up attending every session, learning different prayer methods, listening to God through reading the Bible. Through the workshops, I learned about the sacred half hour, spending time with God reading the Bible and practising the prayer methods every day giving me a personal relationship with God that has changed my life. Because of that, there was no way I could say no to being a Guide so that other people in the Stoke-on-Trent area could also get to know God personally.

The School for guides consisted of a full day every two weeks for 8 weeks, learning about the history of the Prayer Life Workshops, the way it runs, as well as going further into a way of life lived with God, answering the question "What would Jesus do in my place?"

One symbol of the PLW is a tree whose hidden roots represent humility, the trunk is love and the branches full of green leaves are the fruit of the PLW in peoples' lives. This is the reason for me wanting to be a guide so people can learn of God's love for them and know of God's glory.

Last Saturday we had the most wonderful Mass and celebration where we shared our experience of the PLW at The Immaculate Heart of Mary and St Dominic's in Stone where the West Midlands PLW was launched. We ask you to pray for us and all the participants of the PLW.

Fiona Keane



The PLW has been a life-changing experience for me, it has been like St John the Baptist, a voice that shouts in the desert opening the way to the Lord. It took me face to face



with God and really opened my eyes, my ears and my heart, and the Holy Trinity entered into my life with such a force that it was impossible to go back. The workshop was such a revelation about how to read and understand the Bible and about how to pray and what praying really is. These were the instruments to find the real God, the discovery of a loving conversation with the Father. Only by putting everything to one side and silencing our minds can God's voice be heard, says Fr Ignacio, the founder of the PLW. It was only then that I was able to have a real encounter with the living God.

As Father Ignacio also says, to know God we need to experience God, not the idea of God, but the real God, a God that is alive. PLW showed me that God is waiting to reveal Himself to each and everyone of us through this intimate encounter with Him that is true prayer. This holy encounter with God is what praying really is. I was so inspired by the workshops and I heard God's call so clearly that I decided to start the school of guides to be able to take the workshop that changed my life to other people. Last Saturday, I received my 'new guide' certificate in a Sending Forth Mass alongside Fr Julian and Fiona.

I really encourage everybody to experience the workshops as they will learn to look at the Sacred Scriptures with new eyes, as an instrument through which God is talking to each one of us personally and individually, where all the Biblical figures blend into two, God and I, and it becomes the living story of me with God, a story of compassion, mercy and immense love.

Sara Belaradj

PARISH REGISTERS

Deaths

Of your charity, please pray for the soul of Margaret Whalley. Requiem Mass will be at English Martyrs' on Thursday 21st September at 11am, followed by committal at Woodhouse burial ground.

Please also pray for Fr Paul Chavasse, Cong Orat, Parish Priest of Swynner-ton, who died this week.

Requiescant in Pace

Parish Office & Parish Priest's Open House

The Parish Office is open at the times advertised on the front of the bulletin. It is always advisable to phone in advance of visiting.

Open House is when Fr Julian is available to be seen for consultations about baptisms, weddings, or for any other reason. Open House is on Monday evenings beginning Monday 3rd September starting at 6.30pm.

Sanctuary Lamp Dedications

Week beginning 17th Sept:

St John's: Welsh family; Denise Hewitt & family (BC)

St Joseph's: Paul McGough

Week beginning 24th Sept:

St John's: John Martin; Paul McGough

English Martyrs': Helena & Cyril

To dedicate a lamp, please place min donation of £5 in an envelope with preferred church and intention written on the front, and put into the collection.

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.