



Parish of St. Gerard, Castle Vale

part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham—Registered Charity No. 234216

Parish Priest: **Father Mathew Pinakkattu** : 07788790928 Email: stgerardscv.rc@gmail.com

Presbytery: 2 Renfrew Square, Castle Vale, Birmingham B35 6JT T: 0121 747 7390

W:www.stgerardschurch.co.uk



Fifth Sunday of Easter

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Almighty ever-living God, constantly accomplish the Paschal Mystery within us, that those you were pleased to make new in Holy Baptism may, under your protective care, bear much fruit and come to the joys of life eternal.

HAPPY EASTER!

Although we are all facing a difficult and hard time as we are fighting against this dangerous global pandemic; the joy and the happiness and healing of Easter is with us all. May the Risen Lord bless, heal and protect you and your loved ones always. Fr continues to say a private Mass each day at 9.30am which he asks us to join him with from our homes. **Please visit the Archdiocese of Birmingham website for links to live streaming of daily masses from various churches in Birmingham.** <https://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/>

Recently died and those whose anniversaries occur at this time:

Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.

The sick: Janice Pidgeon, Kath Taylor, Stan Oliver, Frances Irwin, George Irwin, Jean Chambers, Linda Conroy, Debbie Johnson, Perry Desmond, Philip Fox, Kevin Hollis, Bernie Bergin, Kathy Beatie, Tina Parkes, Father Gabby Maguire & all the sick priests of the diocese. May the Lord grant them the healing they require.

Mass Intentions: If you would like to have a Mass celebrated for a particular intention: on behalf of a family member, a friend or a deceased loved one, to remember a birthday or anniversary, envelopes are available at the back of church or email Fr Mathew.

Flower Intentions: If you would like to have flowers placed on the Altar for a particular intention envelopes available at the back of church or email Fr Mathew.

Notice— Gift Aid envelopes and Gift Aid donations

Offertory collection boxes for this year are now available from the Presbytery for those parishioners that have already registered for them. If any parishioners would like to take a box of envelopes for use whilst we cannot attend weekly Mass then visit Fr Matthew at the Presbytery and he will be able to arrange for you. Please consider and complete a Gift Aid declaration if you are a tax payer so we can claim the tax back on any contributions that you make using these envelopes.

Our Parish relies heavily on the weekly offertory collection especially as we are currently receiving no rental income from the Church Centre. It has been eight weeks now since we were able to attend weekly Mass in church. Hopefully this situation will change soon but we need to ensure that financially we are able to re-open. Thank you to those parishioners who pay their offerings by way of Standing Order as these continue to be received. Thank you to those that have set up Standing Orders recently to provide for their weekly offerings. For those that use envelopes or contribute through the offertory collection, please remember your church in the absence of weekly masses and continue to provide for those offerings which can be posted through the Presbytery door or collected when our Church reopens. A standing order form is available on our website if you wished to set this up or alternatively there is an online giving option on the Archdiocese website. <https://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/>

WHAT TO DO WHEN WE CANNOT ATTEND MASS?

To follow the Mass celebrated by Pope Francis: <https://www.vaticannews.va/en> . Masses and Services elsewhere: <https://www.churchservices.tv/whats-on-now/>. We are encouraged to make a 'spiritual communion' as it will strengthen our "desire for the sacrament of the Eucharist" (St John Paul II). Saint Teresa of Jesus wrote: 'When you do not receive communion and you do not attend Mass, you can make a "spiritual communion", which is a most beneficial practice; by it the love of God will be greatly impressed on you.'

How Do I Make a "Spiritual Communion"? Alone or together with others in your household, make the sign of the cross. You could read the Gospel of the day. Then share prayer intentions quietly or aloud. Say the Lord's Prayer, then make an act of spiritual communion.

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

St Gerard's Catholic Primary School

'We Live, Love and Learn Together with Jesus'



Twitter: @StGerardsBham

School website: www.stgerard.bham.sch.uk

Parish Notice Board



Pope Francis's Prayer to Mary during Coronavirus Pandemic:

O Mary, you always shine on our path as a sign of salvation and of hope. We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick, who at the cross took part in Jesus' pain, keeping your faith firm. You, Salvation of Your People, know what we need, and we are sure you will provide so that, as in Cana of Galilee, we may return to joy and to feasting after this time of trial. Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform to the will of the Father and to do as we are told by Jesus, who has taken upon himself our sufferings and carried our sorrows to lead us, through the cross, to the joy of the resurrection. Amen. Under your protection, we seek refuge, Holy Mother of God. Do not disdain the entreaties of we who are in trial, but deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin. Amen.

Who's Who?

Parish Safeguarding and Health and Safety Officer is Hayley Macilwraith : contact on **07840 866201**

Parish Administrator is Sue Perkins: contact on **07971 076835** or stgerardscv.rc@gmail.com

Young Persons Officer is Eleanor Perkins: contact on **07852 404992** or emp010697@googlemail.com

Parish Finance Committee is made up of Fr, Sue Perkins, Sue Byrne, Therese and Frank.

Pastoral Committee is currently being led by Shirley Harris

Social Committee is made up of Beulah, Sarita, Bernie, Rosaline and Sue.

Premises Committee is still to be established. Interested in joining this committee? Speak to Sue Perkins.

Baptisms; A parent of the child to be baptised must be baptised, attend Sunday Mass regularly and undertake 3 preparation meetings. If you require your child to be baptised then please speak to Father for details of forthcoming preparation meetings.

Communion to the Sick and Housebound: Anyone who is unable to go to Mass and would like Communion or would like to receive sacrament of the sick before going into hospital? Let Fr Mathew know and he will endeavour to arrange.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The radiance of the risen Lord shines upon us. At a time when so many shadows are cast into our lives, and upon our world, the light of the resurrection shines forever to renew and restore our hope. In the words of our Holy Father, Pope Francis: 'In the midst of isolation when we are suffering from a lack of tenderness and chances to meet up, and we experience the loss of so many things, let us once again listen to the proclamation that saves us: he is risen and is living by our side.' (27 March 2020).

The impact of Covid-19, both nationally and internationally, has been immense. So much of what we take for granted has changed. Our health and physical interaction, our capacity to travel and gather, have all been affected. There is uncertainty in our future, especially with work and the country's economy. As we know, very sadly, large numbers of people have died because of the coronavirus, and others have been or remain seriously ill. Keyworkers, not least in the National Health Service and care sectors, are serving selflessly to sustain the life of our nation. Our hearts and prayers go out to everyone who is suffering because of Covid-19, and to all those battling to overcome its effects. May those who have died rest in peace and those who are bereaved find comfort. When the Prime Minister announced the lockdown, this included places of worship. These measures were put in place to stem the general transmission of the virus. It is right that the Catholic community fulfils its role in contributing to the preservation of life and the common good of society. This must continue until the restrictions applied by the Government are lifted. None of us would want to be in the situation in which we find ourselves. While the live-streaming of the Mass and other devotions is playing an important part in maintaining the life of faith, there is no substitute for Catholics being able to physically attend and participate in the celebration of the Mass and the other sacraments. Our faith is expressed powerfully and beautifully though 'seeing, touching, and tasting.' We know that every bishop and every priest recognises the pain of Catholics who, at present, cannot pray in church or receive the sacraments. This weighs heavily on our hearts. We are deeply moved by the Eucharistic yearning expressed by so many members of the faithful. We thank you sincerely for your love for the Lord Jesus, present in the Sacraments and supremely so in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The bishops and priests of every diocese are remembering you and your loved ones at Mass each day in our churches as we pray 'in hope of health and wellbeing.' We thank our priests for this faithfulness to their calling.

As the Government's restrictions are relaxed step by step, we look forward to opening our churches and resuming our liturgical, spiritual, catechetical and pastoral life step by step. This will also be of service to those beyond the Catholic Church who depend on our outreach. None of us knows, as yet, how or when the lockdown will end. There is likely to be a phased return to travelling and gathering. As a church, we are now planning for this time and our discussions with the statutory public health agencies and Government representatives are ongoing. Together with Catholics across England and Wales we desire the opening of our churches and access to the sacraments. Until then, we are continuing to pray and prepare. We want to acknowledge with gratitude the service of our fellow bishops and priests, our deacons and religious, our families and lay faithful, together with all our parish and school. On that first Easter day, the disciples were in lockdown and the doors were closed. In their isolation the Lord Jesus came among them and said 'Peace be with you.' May the peace of the risen Lord reign in our hearts and homes as we look forward to the day we can enter church again and gather around the altar to offer together the Sacrifice of Praise. We unite in asking the intercession of Our Blessed Lady and assure you of our prayers and blessing.

Yours devotedly in Christ,

Archbishop Bernard Longley.