



## Parish of St. Gerard, Castle Vale

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

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### Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

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Keep your family safe, O Lord, with unflinching care, that, relying solely on the hope of heavenly grace, they may be defended always by your protection.

#### Reflection

*Lord, I thank you for this new day. I know that you love me, You look at me at this moment and want this day to be a brand new beginning with "a future full of hope". Whatever I have to face today, one thing I know is that you will be there with me as my best friend, helping, consoling, strengthening, healing and guiding me.*

*Lord Jesus, I give you my hands to do your work. I give you my feet to go your way. I give you my eyes to see as you do. I give you my tongue to speak your words. I give you my mind that you may think in me. I give you my spirit that you may pray in me. Above all, I give you my heart that you may love in me your Father and all humankind. I give you my whole self that you may grow in me, so that it is you, Lord Jesus, who live and work and pray in me this day. Amen*

#### A message from Fr Mathew

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I hope that you and your families are all keeping well and staying safe during these difficult times. By now I am praying that most of you will have received the vaccine and that you will feel a little more secure in your everyday life whilst still keeping safe. As we know, life has been very hard for many, many, people. Those who work in our hospitals, teachers, frontline workers, who keep our lives ticking over every day. They put their lives at risk for all of us on a daily basis. Not forgetting our parents who are home schooling. Hopefully my dear Brothers and Sisters, and we must keep our hopes alive, there is a 'chink' of light at the end of the tunnel with more of us being vaccinated every day. Our Parish community is very important to me not just during this pandemic but always. I pray for you all every day that soon we shall be reunited in church at Mass celebrating a better future for us all. I thank you all for your support. I very much enjoy hearing from you. Your emails, telephone calls and letters are most uplifting. Keep your news coming please. I am like a shepherd without a flock. And I ask you to pray for me, our fellow priests, deacons and each other.

I am very pleased that we are fortunate and able to celebrate Mass each week and I hope it brings you comfort. Last Thursday was the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, the Mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ. She knew only too well what suffering was. I feel sure my Brothers and Sisters she understands our suffering. Pray to her, go to her and rest in her loving arms the Mother of our Saviour Jesus Christ. God Bless you all and I look forward to seeing more of you very soon. Until then stay safe and keep well.

**ASH WEDNESDAY** :Wednesday is Ash Wednesday, a day of fasting and abstinence, and the beginning of the holy season of Lent. During Lent our Lord gives us three guides: *Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving.*

**WALK WITH ME** : booklets are available to assist us in our prayers during this important season. *Note: the Parish has paid £1.50 for the booklets.*

#### **Homily 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

On this fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time, we reflect on these three persons - Job, St. Paul and Jesus.

In the first reading we find a man of broken-hearted. That man is Job. He has no more hope in his life. He spends his nights in grief. He concludes that his eyes will never again see joy. But the Psalm today gives us hope. It invites us to praise the Lord who heals the broken-hearted. The Lord binds up all our wounds.

In the second reading we find a man who made himself the slave of everyone so as to win as many as he could. This man is called St. Paul. He does not insist on the rights he has, but he is more conscious of his responsibilities which God has been put into his hands.

In the Gospel we find Jesus who is very busy with his ministry. Even in the late evening after sunset, he continues healing the sick. In the morning, long before dawn, he gets up to pray.

Job, the servant of God, is well-known to us for his many unfortunate sufferings, lamented his fate and his misery. But we know, all that he had suffered in his life, is due to the test and attacks of the devil. The devil wanted to show God that he could trap this faithful man of God, through the many trials and sufferings that he had to endure, all the losses he had received, the humiliation he got.

Yet in the darkest of moments, Job remained faithful to God, and he did not blame God for all of his misfortunes. Instead, he blamed himself and the circumstances for having placed him in such a dilemma, lamenting and wondering why he had to live on and persevere through amidst those difficult moments. But he still kept the faith and held fast to the assurance in God, and he did not fall completely into despair.

## Mass Times

**Sunday 14th February**

**Mass 10.00am**

*For Catherine Tipper RIP*

**Wed 17th February**

**Ash Wednesday Mass**

**10.00am and 7.00pm**

**Sunday 21st February**

**Mass 10.00am**

*For RIP*

## Confession on request.

Please continue to consider sponsoring the flowers each week in memory of a loved one.

Thank you



## FINANCE

### Gift Aid envelopes, Standing Orders and Legacy donations

We have obtained a quote for repair of the church roof where water has been leaking. Please consider what you may be able to contribute towards this necessary cost.

If you would like to take a box of envelopes for regular use by yourself or members of your family then please enquire with one of the stewards. Please complete a Gift Aid declaration if you are a taxpayer. A standing order form is available on our website if you wished to set this up.

Unsurprisingly our collections have substantially reduced during these last nine months and with no financial support from the Government for churches, we still have to cover our bills. Please remember your church through these times.

## SOCIAL

Unfortunately we await COVID restrictions being lifted before we are able to come together socially. The new Parish Area is coming along. We continue to transform this area into a Café style room for our social gatherings/ meetings and maybe open it to the public as a Café a couple of mornings a week for additional income. Please keep our intentions, and the needs of our community in your prayers. Please check out our **Facebook page and Website for updates.**

*We are also operating a WhatsApp group to share daily prayers, blessings, prayers and intentions. If you would like to join that group please see Sue who will add you to that group. You do need a mobile phone to do so.*

## PASTORAL

**Baptisms;** A parent of the child to be baptised must be baptised, attend Sunday Mass regularly and undertake 2 preparation meetings. If you require your child to be baptised then please speak to Father for details of forthcoming preparation meetings.

**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.

**Communion to the Sick and the Housebound:** Please speak to Fr if you know of anyone who is unable to come to Mass and would like to receive Communion.

## Parish Mission Statement

*We, the members of St Gerard's R.C. Church, are baptised in Jesus Christ, empowered by the spirit, nurtured in community and nourished by prayer, word and sacrament. Therefore, for the greater glory of God, we proclaim for all people the saving message of the Gospel, and joyfully share our time, talent and resources, in works of mercy and justice, both within and beyond our parish community.*

## PREMISES and HEALTH AND SAFETY

We are pleased to announce that the rental agreement on our Church Hall has been renewed for a further 12 months to Upcycle. Although things have not been easy for Upcycle with the lockdowns disrupting business they have settled in well and have been very well received on Castle Vale. Please pop in and see them when they are re-opened and see what they have to offer. This rental income is very important to our parish sustainability as is being able to work closely with Upcycle, extending the services that we can offer to the residents of Castle Vale. *Please keep the success of this partnership in your prayers.*

## SAFEGUARDING

**As we have entered Lockdown 3 it is ever important that we adhere to the stringent restrictions in place in our church to ensure the safety of our parishioners, visitors, volunteers and clergy. Please continue to follow the guidance of our stewards in respect of hygiene, remaining in your seats for the duration of Mass and following one way systems around the church when entering and exiting. It is very easy to become complacent but the same risks exist as they did in March and if we are to keep our church open we must ensure that it remains a safe place to be. Please help us to do our bit to reduce the spread of this virus.** It continues to be in everyone's safety for only Fr to be present on the Alter during public Mass. Reading Lists, Eucharistic Ministers Lists and Altar Servers and Choir will be resumed once social distancing measures are withdrawn. Thankyou to everyone who has helped us to be exemplary in our approach to safeguarding our Priest in his service and our parishioners in their ability to visit our church safely. We pray that we soon start to see the lifting of some restrictions and a move back to more normal services where we get to follow mass books and hymn books and engage in a bit of congregational singing!

## PARISH ADMINISTRATION

### Church Gardens

Its that time of year again! We could do with planning a "gardening day" to prepare for the forthcoming spring season. **Any volunteers?** This is allowed during lockdown provided social distancing is maintained?

### Church Cleaning

As you are aware our church has to be cleaned before and after any service. If anyone is able to help after Mass please let one of the stewards know.

**For both of the above please only volunteer if you are well and not shielding. Social distancing measures will apply.**

## Please remember in your prayers:

**Recently died:** Sue Close, Fr Patrick Joyce, Fr Giles Goward, Arline Millard and Georgina Hand: Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.

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

**And all those whose anniversaries occur at this time, may they rest in peace. Amen**



**St Gerard's Catholic Primary School**

*'We Live, Love and Learn Together  
with Jesus'*

**Twitter:** @StGerardsBham

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