

Readings for Mass today

Isaiah 8:23-9:3

In days past the Lord humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in days to come he will confer glory on the Way of the Sea on the far side of Jordan, province of the nations.

The people that walked in darkness has seen a great light; on those who live in a land of deep shadow a light has shone.

You have made their gladness greater, you have made their joy increase; they rejoice in your presence as men rejoice at harvest time, as men are happy when they are dividing the spoils.

For the yoke that was weighing on him, the bar across his shoulders, the rod of his oppressor – these you break as on the day of Midian.

Psalms 26:1,4,13-14

The Lord is my light and my help.

The Lord is my light and my help; whom shall I fear?

The Lord is the stronghold of my life; before whom shall I shrink?

There is one thing I ask of the Lord, for this I long, to live in the house of the Lord, all the days of my life, to savour the sweetness of the Lord, to behold his temple.

I am sure I shall see the Lord's goodness in the land of the living.

Hope in him, hold firm and take heart.

Hope in the Lord!

1 Corinthians 1:10-13,17

I appeal to you, brothers, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, to make up the differences between you, and instead of disagreeing among yourselves, to be united again in your belief and practice.

From what Chloe's people have been telling me, my dear brothers, it is clear that there are serious differences among you. What I mean are all these slogans that you have, like: 'I am for Paul', 'I am for Apollos', 'I am for Cephas', 'I am for Christ.' Has Christ been parcelled out? Was it Paul that was crucified for you? Were you baptised in the name of Paul?

For Christ did not send me to baptise, but to preach the Good News, and not to preach that in the terms of philosophy in which the crucifixion of Christ cannot be expressed.

Next Sunday is the 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

The readings are Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13 / Psalm 146:6-7, 8-9, 9-10 / 1 Corinthians 1:26-31 / Matthew 5:1-12a

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! Jesus proclaimed the Good News of the kingdom and cured all kinds of sickness among the people. *Alleluia!*

Matthew 4:12-23

Hearing that John had been arrested, Jesus went back to Galilee, and leaving Nazareth he went and settled in Capernaum, a lakeside town on the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali. In this way the prophecy of Isaiah was to be fulfilled:

'Land of Zebulun! Land of Naphtali! Way of the sea on the far side of Jordan, Galilee of the nations! The people that lived in darkness has seen a great light; on those who dwell in the land and shadow of death a light has dawned.'

From that moment Jesus began his preaching with the message, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.'

As he was walking by the Sea of Galilee he saw two brothers, Simon, who was called Peter, and his brother Andrew; they were making a cast in the lake with their net, for they were fishermen. And he said to them, 'Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.' And they left their nets at once and followed him. Going on from there he saw another pair of brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John; they were in their boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. At once, leaving the boat and their father, they followed him.

He went round the whole of Galilee teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the Good News of the kingdom and curing all kinds of diseases and sickness among the people.



The Ordinary of the Mass is found on p200 ff of Laudate.

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Our Parish is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham: Registered Charity No. 234216

Retreat in Daily Life.

Thank you to those who have signed up to express interest in joining the Lent retreat (or more details please email Fr Allen or see the parish website (under pastoral care).

There is a taster session at All Saints, Four Oaks today at 3:15pm for those who'd like to 'give it a go' before committing.

- This retreat will open with a meeting at All Saints church, Four Oaks, 3-5pm on Sunday Feb 26th. (If any of those taking part need help with transport to this meeting, please let Fr Allen know as soon as possible), at All Saints Church, Four Oaks
- The retreat ends with a closing meeting on the afternoon of Sunday April 9th from 3-5pm here at St Nicholas
- The weekly meetings between retreatant and prayer guide will be arranged for a day/time/place to suit the retreatant.

Application forms are available in the porch. If you have not already confirmed your preference to Manresa Link, or to Fr Allen please do so now to avoid disappointment.



Called to Communion

In the Gospel this Sunday the Lord calls certain people to follow him.. The same call has been made to us – though usually in different ways. At the heart of being Catholic is the call to closeness to the Lord, a call to holiness. The Lord helps us respond by opening himself up to us – the mystery of Revelation. The Lord reveals himself, and his love, as person to person, heart to heart.

Over the coming weeks we will look at some of the ways in which he makes himself known to us, so that we might be ever more ready to benefit from them so we can still better respond to him, and live close to him, in communion with him.

Key to the Lord's revelation, his self-disclosure, is the principle of sacramentality. We do not see God directly. Even when the disciples were with Jesus they did not see him in his divinity directly, but only through the sacrament of his humanity. We human beings have a spiritual dimension, but we relate to reality most directly through our senses.

God revealed himself to the disciples in Jesus Continued on Page 3.

Masses Third week in Ordinary Time

S	21	1800	Third Sunday in Ordinary Time	Kathleen Corrigan (O'Gorman)
Su	22	0900 1100	Wk III Psalter	Thomas O'Gorman RIP (O'Gorman) Tam Van Dinh RD (Nguyen)
M	23	1000		Special Intention (Middleton)
T	24	1000	St Francis de Sales	John Barr (Sick) (Brennan)
W	25	1900	Conv'n of St Paul	Maurice Whitmore RIP (Redmond)
Th	26			
F	27	1200 1900		Funeral Mass of Audrey Waterson Marie-Therese Harrison RD (O'Brien)
S	28	1800	Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time	William Hempenstall (Health) (Hempenstall)
Su	29	0900 1100	Wk IV Psalter	William and Alice Williams RIP (Sawbridge) Thomas Smith RIP

Morning/Evening Prayer 15 mins before weekday Mass.

Exposition & Vespers 2nd & 4th Suns, 6-7pm

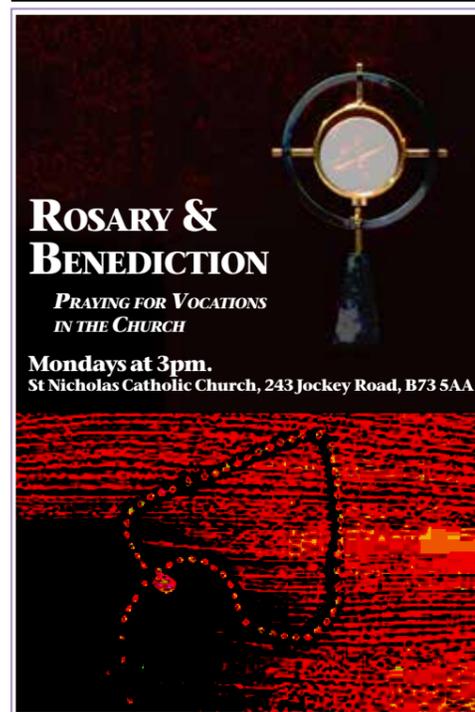
Rosary and Benediction Mondays at 3pm

Reconciliation Sat. 1700-1730 (Exposition until 1740) and by arrangement.

Baptism, Matrimony, Anointing of the Sick: by arrangement

Nourishing prayer at home: livingeucharist.wordpress.com/

Please pray for sick parishioners including Ray Finn, Viv Everitt, Diane Jukes, David Freeman, Peggy Gallagher, Margaret Knowles, Brenda Davies; Tony Lawlor, Leah Burke, Kathleen Cecil, Tess Carnero, Joan James, Sarah Johnston, Bridie Moffatt, Bernie Morton, Danuta Evans, Michael McDermott - and also for Fr Gabriel Maguire, our Dean, who is not well. **Please pray for all who have died**, including Audrey Waterson, whose funeral is here at noon on Fri 27 Jan, Gwen Lavelle, whose funeral is here at 1pm on Tues 14 Feb, and Noel Moffatt who died recently and for Roger Prior, Bridget Kelly and Rosemary Robinson and all whose anniversaries are at this time. **Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, may they rest in peace. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace.**



Parish

Retiring Collection. There is a retiring collection today for the poorer parishes of the diocese, to help sustain the presence of the Church in places where the Catholic populations declined, or is less well off. Next week we will have a retiring collection for the Homeless Shelter which we are running in the Carpenter's Arms during Lent.

Welcoming Team and those who help with the Collection each week. You are invited to meet with Fr Allen next weekend - for just 15 minutes after the end of Mass you usually attend.

First Communion Thank you to all parents who have so promptly returned their forms confirming preferences for First Communion Masses. Details of Masses allocated are on the website.

First Communion Saturday Group. Pilgrimage to St Chad's Birmingham on 4th Feb. Meet outside St Chad's at 12noon. Details on website.

Readers The new rota is available on the website and at the back of the church. Please sign up if you are available to help on Palm Sunday and during the Triduum, please sign up as soon as possible for any service you can read at, so the most helpful rota can be prepared.

Teas and Coffees Rota Thank you very much to the teams who make teas and coffees after the Sunday morning Masses. It is proving a great success - and giving people a chance to meet up and get to know one another. All are welcome. The new 'Spring' rota for tea-makers is available - in the porch and on the website.

Baptism Preparation. The next preparation programme begins on Saturday 25th February from 1130 to 1230, in the Benedict Room. Parents are

Pilgrimage Holy Land: The Essentials

Fr Allen in leading a pilgrimage to the Holy Land just before Lent this year. The pilgrimage is a short 'retreat' pilgrimage focussed on the principal sites. 19-23 February, £799.

Applications close this week!



Pray with Pope Francis

The Pope's prayer intention this month is:

That all Christians may be faithful to the Lord's teaching by striving with prayer and fraternal charity to restore ecclesial communion and by collaborating to meet the challenges facing humanity.

To find the Pope's other current prayer intentions please visit <http://www.apostleshipofprayer.org/>



Preparing a funeral

One certain fact is that one day we all will die. But as Christians our faith is that for the Lord's faithful, in death life is changed not ended. Our great hope is that we will be redeemed from death by Christ's great victory and that as we are united with Christ by sharing in a death like his so we may also be one with him in his Resurrection.

Catholics will want to ensure that their funeral service reflects this their hope, and the faith of the Church.

There are two helpful resources on our parish website. The first is for those who are wishing to indicate their preferences for their own, funeral, and the second is for those who are preparing the funeral of another person.

'Preparing for MY funeral'

It may be difficult for our next of kin to make detailed arrangements for our funeral at the same time as they deal with the grief and loss they will experience at our passing. They will be especially hard-pressed to prepare the funeral as we would wish if they do not share our Faith.

It can therefore be a real help to others when we ourselves give thought to our funeral arrangements ahead of time, and let them know what our preferences are, so that when the time comes they can be taken account of to the fullest degree practicable.

Making such preparations can give us peace of mind too, and be an occasion for finding a new assurance of faith by reflecting on, in particular, the various passages from scripture and the songs which the Church provides for funerals. These offer comfort and support at any time, but they are perhaps especially important for us as we enter old(er) age, consider more directly our own mortality, and experience bereavement more regularly.

This sheet, 'Preparing for my funeral' has been prepared to guide you through a consideration of your preferences with regard to the Funeral Liturgy, and highlights additional things you might also like to consider.

Mostly the things to think about in making our funeral arrangements are straightforward ones. However you may find it helpful to meet with your parish priest in order to discuss some of the arrangements for the Funeral Liturgy. Should you wish to meet with him, he will be able to help you consider what is best and practical for your particular circumstances. He will ensure the services are true to the tradition of the Church, as well as appropriate to yourself and those who will gather to pray for you.

'Preparing a funeral'

This other leaflet addresses the slightly different needs of someone who is preparing the funeral not of themselves but of a family member or friend. It will ensure you are familiar with the Church's expectations as you begin to prepare, and before you meet with the priest.

Other resources are available on the website, eg full details of readings, guidance with regard to cremation and burial of ashes, which will help you consider options etc.

asked to complete an application form and see Fr Allen before hand.

Journey in Faith group. The group is for those who wish to learn more about our faith. More details from Fr Allen



Crossing Barriers: Week of Prayer for Christian Unity takes place Weds 18th - Weds 25th January 2017. Please pray for the unity of the Church.

Bigger Picture Group; Coming to next meeting of the parish scripture group? Weds 22nd Feb, 7.30pm in the parish house - please note change of date... Please read 1 & 2 Maccabees to prepare.

Alpha in a Catholic Context 18th February in the Grimshaw Rooms at St Chad's Cathedral, B4 6EU. 10.30-3.30pm.

World Development Group A huge 'Thank You' to everyone who attended or supported the recent World Development Group dinner, you raised an fantastic £2,218! Also, a special thanks to all the parishioners who have donated via our collection box at the back of church. When it was opened recently it contained an amazing £494.21 - the group is very grateful for your continued support.

Society of St Vincent de Paul Information meeting for all interested in sharing in the work of the SVP. 7th Feb at 7.30pm in the Benedict Room.

Guild of St Stephen's Mass of Thanksgiving on Saturday 25th March 2017 taking place at St Chad's Cathedral at 12 noon.

Diocese

Ministering to young people? See the *Holy Daring* item on the next page.

Job Vacancies: Bishop Ullathorne Secondary School and St Gerard's Nursery and Primary School are each looking for a new headteacher. www.bishopullathorne.co.uk and www.stgerard.bhman.sch.uk for more details; Father Hudson's Care is looking for a **Deputy Community Projects Manager** (Coleshill, 37 hrs pw; Salary, £28-31K) www.fatherhudsons.org.uk

Other

Part Time shop assistant at St Paul's Bookshop in C. Birmingham. 2-3 days pw. Details from Lorenzo at 0121 236 6336.

Catholic People's Weeks (CPW) has been around for 70 years, providing 'holidays that make a difference'. CPW weeks are a chance to become part of a small community, learning and having fun together. The Weeks are themed, with talks, activities and workshops. Some Weeks are 18+, others are all-age events

Tea and Coffee after Mass



in Carpenter's Arms (access from right side of church), after 9 and 11am Masses.

Holy Daring

If you work with young people, Archbishop Bernard Longley warmly invites you to attend a conference exploring a vision for youth ministry in the Archdiocese of Birmingham at Alton Castle from 10am - 6.30pm on Saturday March 25th .

• Key speaker David Wells will explore the theme of discipleship.

It would be great to have at least two or three people who are involved in this work, in the parish, local schools or elsewhere taking part in the Holy Daring event. If you are interested please let Fr Allen know as soon as possible so a ticket can be reserved for you.

Continued from page 1.

through the sacrament of his humanity.

For us the same Jesus is equally, really, present. But he is present to us not in his visible humanity, still less in his visible divinity. He is present to us, in , through, as other realities. He is present to us through, as, for example, the seven liturgical sacraments, including Baptism, Anointing of the Sick, Reconciliation and, of course, the Eucharist; and through the Scriptures; and through the Church.

We experience most evidently these 'things' - bread, wine, water, words, the community of believers... But in these, as these, it is Jesus himself who is really, truly, present. He makes himself present to us and for us in, with , as these other things.

Our engagement with *him* is shaped by the particular way he is present to us in each way of being present to us. Our eating and drinking of his Body and Blood at Mass speaks more evidently of his sacrificial love; the washing of water in Baptism of his cleansing us of sin. We enter into the richness of the 'who and how' of Jesus by being attentive to the particular mode of his presence - and often we are urged to do this by the prayers and hymns and scriptures associated with each rite. In the Sacraments Christ is present.

To engage with his presence more deeply it can help to ask how is he present here, and to ask ourselves how does that presence speak of who and how Jesus is. This reflective pondering on the symbolism of the rites is known as Mystagogy (from the Greek and meaning being 'led into the mystery'). It is one of the richest forms of Christian theology. Based as it is on our own experience of Christ in the sacraments it is also one of the most immediately accessible.

SOME REFLECTION QUESTIONS for during the week to help us think more about how we engage with Jesus through the Sacraments.

- What did I experience, for example, at Mass on Sunday? Through the actions of the Mass, through the words, images, people, feelings - through all the experiences that were part of 'my' Mass?
- What did they 'say' about Jesus? What does that 'say' to *me*?
- How do I respond to Christ's being present to me in these ways?

with a parallel children's programme. There is plenty of free time, inc an evening social programme. Liturgies are lively and inclusive. They take place in locations that offer lots of local interest. For more information see brochure in the porch; ring 0161 773 2410; or go to www.catholicpeoplesweeks.org.

A Lifeline for Marriages for marriages that are stressed, unloving, cold. Do you want to improve your communication? Have you separated, divorced, or are you thinking of doing so? Do you want to try again? If so, the Retrouvaille programme may be just what you need! Contact Frances and Michael. Tel or Text 0788 7296983 website : www.retrouvaille.org.uk



Bethany Food Bank

Orphanage Road, Erdington, B24 9HX

Opening Times:

- Tuesday 1130am to 1pm
- Wednesday 1100am to 12noon
- Thursday 1130am to 1pm

Thank you to everyone who regularly supports the Food Bank through our monthly collections.

Donations are welcome at any time, and may be left in the porch.

Next collection is on Sunday 5th February

