

An invitation from your priests and deacons to the Catholic faithful of the parishes of Holy Cross and St Francis; Holy Trinity; Sacred Heart; and St Nicholas.

When we look into the future we can never know for sure what is to come and what we should begin to prepare for. However — unless things change — we know that whereas there are currently 201 diocesan priests in active service in the Archdiocese there are likely to be less than 90 in 10 years time. It may be that priests from elsewhere will be made available to serve here but on the other hand it may be more likely that priests from overseas dioceses or religious orders will be withdrawn from Birmingham to serve elsewhere.

Challenges and Opportunities

Already we see some of the effects of having fewer priests in the Archdiocese. More and more parishes lack a resident parish priest, and share a parish priest with one or more other local parishes. And this is only the most visible sign of change: school, hospital, prison chaplaincies too rely on this same decreasing (and aging!) group of priests.

We’ve seen something of this locally. Holy Trinity and Sacred Heart parishes have for some while functioned with one parish priest. It’s been made easier because a retired priest has so far been available to ‘help out’. But recently the parish priest was out of action, and now the parish’s assistant priest is preparing for retirement. A new priest assistant has been appointed to keep things going, but this arrangement is temporary. The parish priest in Holy Cross is due to retire in 5 years time and it is likely that responsibility for that parish will have to be taken on by other priests from the parishes of Catholic Sutton Coldfield.

At the same time as the number of priests has been declining, the administrative burden of managing parishes (for health and safety; safeguarding, finance, catechesis etc) has grown significantly. Often priests find themselves shouldering much of these additional responsibilities, leaving still less time and energy for their core responsibilities of ministering to the spiritual well-being of their communities.

It is expected that within the next four or five years, and maybe sooner, there will be only two or three priests available to serve our four parishes, and their hospitals, care-homes, and schools — as well as attending to whatever other responsibilities are entrusted to them by the Archbishop (for teaching, liturgy and catechesis, vocations and so on.) We cannot expect those two or three to do everything that six have been doing.

Moving forward together and better

The future will not be all gloom and doom: but it will present the faithful of the Lord with challenges!

Our future does not depend only on our priests, of course. Already our parishes benefit from the ministry of three deacons and the service of very many lay people. These assist in a multitude of different ways.

If in the past there has been a tendency, on the part of priests and people, to think that it is the job of priests to keep the show on the road, we need to learn to think more realistically about how responsibility for getting things done is exercised in our communities. Helping Church to be Church is not a work on for priests, or for ordained ministers alone. All the baptised have a responsibility for this: and it will become more and more necessary that we help each other to share in that responsibility.

How we might help each other? What are the opportunities and challenges we face? How might we best identify them and resource ourselves to deal with them. Experience elsewhere suggests we will do this best not as individual parishes but as a group of parishes – thus our present relatively informal grouping of the parishes of Holy Cross and St Francis; Holy Trinity; Sacred Heart and St Nicholas as Catholic Sutton Coldfield.

It is time for us to have conversation together, clergy and laity, to see what needs to be considered, and how we might best organise and resource ourselves for our future together. Should we invite others with more experience to help us identify training needs? Maybe encourage parish groups — catechists; liturgical ministers; pastoral ministers; administrators; and clergy to work together, more than in the past, make better use of our resources, and to build up a deeper sense of Church beyond narrow parish boundaries. Maybe establish a combined Pastoral Council for our parishes? Maybe look to become one parish, but keeping our present four churches? The possibilities are endless! But we need to start somewhere.

Come and take part

YOU are warmly invited to a meeting at Sacred Heart church, Lichfield Road, B74 4EH at 3pm on 11th February where there will be a chance to ask questions and share thoughts to help us, together, begin to take things a little further forward.

At the meeting we will also have a chance to hear Paul Northam of the Archdiocesan Office for Mission speak about the Church’s Year of Prayer and the forthcoming Jubilee Year (and how we might best keep these together.)

Parish Children’s Liturgy Group

meets at the 9am Mass twice monthly for children in their first years of school (Reception, and Years 1 and 2) to celebrate with them that Sunday’s Liturgy of the Word. Once a month the Mass is followed by Cookies and Chat in the Benedict Room for the youngsters and their parents.

February	Sunday, 11	Mass 9:00		Half Term
	Sunday, 25	Mass 9:00	Cookies & Chat After Mass 9:00	
March	Sunday, 10	Mass 9:00		
	Sunday, 24	Mass 9:00	Cookies & Chat After Mass 9:00	
April	Sunday, 14	Mass 9:00		Half Term
	Sunday, 28	Mass 9:00	Cookies & Chat After Mass 9:00	
May	Sunday, 5	Mass 9:00		Preceding Bank Holiday
	Sunday, 19	Mass 9:00	Cookies & Chat After Mass 9:00	Pentecost
June	Sunday, 2	Mass 11:00	Corpus Christi w/Parish	
	Sunday, 23	Mass 9:00	DayTogether	



St Nicholas Catholic Church, Boldmere

Address: 243 Jockey Rd., Boldmere, Sutton Coldfield, B73 5US
Website: www.stnicholasboldmere.co.uk
E-mail: stnicholas.boldmere@rcaob.org.uk Telephone: 0121 354 1763
Parish Blog: www.stnicholasboldmere.wordpress.com
Parish Priest: Fr Allen Morris Deacon: Rev John Garvey
Our Parish is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham: Registered Charity No. 234216

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2024: PARISH MASSES

Sa	27	6pm	4th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	For the parish
Su	28	9am		Elizabeth Middleton RIP (Harrington)
		11am		Frank and Nora Smith RIP (McGrath)
M	29	10am		Jenifer Cummings RIP (McCallan)
T	30	10am		Elizabeth Sawbridge RIP
W	31	10am	St John Bosco	Becca Emery RD (Platt)
Th	1			
F	2	7pm	Presentation of the Lord	Janina Mikula Ints
Sa	3	6pm	4th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	Becca Emery RD (Devlin)
Su	4	9am		For the parish
		11am		Mary Ward RIP (Ward)

Anointing of the Sick: Next celebration is 26th January at 11am

Sacrament of Confession: Friday 18.30-18.55; 19.30 (after Mass), until 20.00; and Sat 5.30-5.45 — and by appointment

RESOURCES FOR PRAYER.

- 1. Parish prayer on Zoom (links on parish website homepage)
Morning Prayer: Mon to Sat at 8.30am; Rosary Mon at 7pm.
- 2. Readings of the day and much more at Universalis.com
- 3. Resources for the Year of Prayer: https://bit.ly/47kMBYS

Please pray for those who are sick including Betty O’Connor; Theresa Monteiro; Craig Brooks, Brenda Davies; Stephen Burke; Lesley Devlin & Jean Lawlor. Please pray for Paul Craig who died recently, Mary O’Hara, Gerard McGrath, Michael Venables, Kizah Johnson, Bridget Kelly, Rosemary Robinson, Raymond Jones, Lucca Atzori, Linda Briadly, and all others whose anniversary at this time.

WEEKDAY SOCIAL. Tuesdays after 10am Mass. All are welcome.

PARISH CAR PARK Free parking for 1 hour is available for anyone at anytime in our carpark. Automatic free parking permits are issued to cover all parking on Sat from 5.30pm to 7.30pm; on Sunday from 8am to 2pm; on Mon, Tues, Weds from 9.30am to 11.30am and Fri from 6.30pm to 8.30pm. At other times, if on site for parish meetings and the like - to park for more than 1 hour, please scan the QR poster in the church or Benedict Room to extend your ‘free’ parking time.

The Parish operates in accordance with Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and the National and Archdiocesan policies & procedures at all times. Our Parish Safeguarding Representative is Mary Rose. She can be contacted at: sg.stnicholas.boldmere@rcaob.org.uk Alternatively the Diocesan Safeguarding team can be contacted on 0121 230 6240 or safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk

Retrouvaille – Do you need help in your marriage?

Retrouvaille has helped many couples find new hope, nourishment and growth in their marriages. If you want to uncover or reawaken the love, trust and commitment that brought you together and work through difficult times in your marriage contact Retrouvaille confidential for more information about our 2024 programmes. There is no group therapy or group work. Their next programme commences with a Virtual weekend on 8 - 11 February 2024 or there is a Face to Face weekend in Welwyn Garden City on 14-16 June 2024. Call or text 07887 296983 or 07973 380443, email retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com - or visit www.retrouvaille.org.uk

The ‘Year of Prayer’

2023-24 has been designated the Year of Prayer by Pope Francis, with a particular emphasis on the Our Father. It will help us prepare for the Jubilee Year “Pilgrims of Hope”. It presents our Church with a significant opportunity to revisit the basics of prayer, and for us to become even more a people of prayer.

Each week during this year a teaching about prayer related to the readings of that Sunday is posted on our parish blog (address above) This resource has been prepared by Fr Rob Taylerson, Spiritual Director at Oscott College.

Parish Parking Permits

Parishioners who need to use the carpark for parish purposes outside of the regular ‘free’ times can apply for a parking permit to cover them for parking at other times. Those already issued are now up for renewal.

If you wish your permit to be renewed, please see Fr Allen before 1st February.

St Nicholas World Development Group AGM is to be held at 70 Station Rd: 29th Jan at 7.30 p.m. All Welcome.

The Introductory Rites

Opening Song

Be still for the presence of the Lord
the Holy One is here.
Come, bow before him now, with reverence and fear.
In Him no sin is found, we stand on holy ground.
Be still for the presence of the Lord,
the Holy one is here.

Be still for the glory of the Lord
is shining all around;
He burns with holy fire, with splendour He is crowned.
How awesome is the sight, our radiant King of Light!
Be still, for the glory of the Lord
is shining all around.

Be still for the power of the Lord
is moving in this place.
He comes to cleanse and heal, to minister His grace.
No work too hard for Him, in faith receive from Him;
Be still for the power of the Lord
is moving in this place.

Gloria



We praise you, we bless you,
we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.
Glory to God...
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer;
You are seated at the right hand,
of the Father, have mercy on us.
Glory to God...
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father.
Glory to God... Amen. Amen. Amen.

The Collect

The Liturgy of the Word

Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Moses said to the people: ‘The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like myself, from among yourselves, from your own brothers; to him you must listen. This is what you yourselves asked of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the Assembly. “Do not let me hear again” you said “the voice of the Lord my God, nor look any longer on this great fire, or I shall die”; and the Lord said to me, “All they have spoken is well said. I will raise up a prophet like yourself for them from their own brothers; I will put my words into his mouth and he shall tell them all I command him. The man who does not listen to my words that he speaks

in my name, shall be held answerable to me for it. But the prophet who presumes to say in my name a thing I have not commanded him to say, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.”’

Psalm 94(95):1-2,6-9



Come, ring out our joy to the Lord;
hail the rock who saves us.
Let us come before him, giving thanks,
with songs let us hail the Lord.
Come in; let us bow and bend low;
let us kneel before the God who made us:
for he is our God and we /
the people who belong to his pasture,
the flock that is led by his hand.
O that today you would listen to his voice!
‘Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,
as on that day at Massah in the desert /
when your fathers put me to the test;
when they tried me, though they saw my work.’

1 Corinthians 7:32-35

I would like to see you free from all worry. An unmarried man can devote himself to the Lord’s affairs, all he need worry about is pleasing the Lord; but a married man has to bother about the world’s affairs and devote himself to pleasing his wife: he is torn two ways. In the same way an unmarried woman, like a young girl, can devote herself to the Lord’s affairs; all she need worry about is being holy in body and spirit. The married woman, on the other hand, has to worry about the world’s affairs and devote herself to pleasing her husband. I say this only to help you, not to put a halter round your necks, but simply to make sure that everything is as it should be, and that you give your undivided attention to the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for revealing the mysteries of the kingdom to mere children. *Alleluia!*

Mark 1:21-28

Jesus and his disciples went as far as Capernaum, and as soon as the sabbath came he went to the synagogue and began to teach. And his teaching made a deep impression on them because, unlike the scribes, he taught them with authority.

In their synagogue just then there was a man possessed by an unclean spirit and it shouted, ‘What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are: the Holy One of God.’ But Jesus said sharply, ‘Be quiet! Come out of him!’ And the unclean spirit threw the man into convulsions and with a loud cry went out of him. The people were so astonished that they started asking each other what it all meant. ‘Here is a teaching that is new’ they said ‘and with authority behind it: he gives orders

even to unclean spirits and they obey him.’ And his reputation rapidly spread everywhere, through all the surrounding Galilean countryside.

Homily

The Apostles’ Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right
hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

Prayer of the Faithful

All: Through our lives and by our prayers,
your kingdom come.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Offertory

NB Our next collections for the Bethany Food Bank are 4th and 18th February.

Praise to the Lord, the almighty, the king of creation!
O my soul, praise him,
for he is your health and salvation!
Come, all who hear; now to his altar draw near,
praise him in glad adoration!
Praise to the Lord, let us offer our gifts at his altar;
let not our sins and transgressions
now cause us to falter.
Christ the High Priest, bids us all join in his feast.
Gathered with him at the altar.
Praise to the Lord - O let all that is in us adore him!
All that has life and breath,
come now with praises before him!
Let the “Amen!” sound from his people again;
gladly with praise we adore him!

Sanctus



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The mystery of faith



The Communion Rite

Communion thanksgiving

Lay your hands gently upon us,
let their touch render your peace;
let them bring your forgiveness and healing:
lay your hands, gently lay your hands
You were sent to free the broken hearted.
You were sent to give sight to the blind.
You desire to heal all our illness:
lay your hands gently lay your hands.

Lord, we come to you through one another.
Lord, we come to you in all our need.
Lord, we come to you seeking wholeness:
lay your hands, gently lay your hands

Prayer after Communion

Concluding Rites

Called to Serve

Altar Servers Retreat: 8 - 10 March.

Kennelm Youth Team and the Diocesan Vocations Office are offering a weekend retreat especially for altar servers at Alton Castle. ‘Called to Serve’ is for those in school years 5-13. During the retreat, there will be reflection, fellowship, fun and outdoor activities. His Grace, the Archbishop will be celebrating mass. We are also looking forward to a special candlelight procession.
Contact Deacon Owen to find out more or book a place: deacon.owen@vocations.org.uk

SUNDAY FRIENDS Our parish ‘Sunday Friends’ group welcomes all to join in activities to mark the beginning of Lent on Sunday 18th February from 2-4pm in the Newman Centre. At the heart of the group are people with learning disabilities and autistic people of all ages, faiths or none and their families/carers - but all are welcome. And it’s free!

Community events to be held at Newman Community Centre

On Saturdays throughout March, between 3pm and 5pm, there are a variety of community events focussing on culture, food, and wellbeing, culminating in a Grand Finale on Saturday 23rd March. All are welcome to join. Full details on the noticeboard in the porch