

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.

Someone once said that 'prayer doesn't help our relationship with God, prayer IS our relationship with God!' So when we become more devoted to prayer, we are building up that Divine friendship. Being Pilgrims of Hope means that we should always be growing in our love of prayer on our journey of Faith. But the Year of Prayer also asks us to consider how we might help others to pray, so that they too can experience a personal encounter with the risen Jesus.

Sunday Afternoon Advent Prayer

All are welcome to take part in times of quiet prayer on the afternoons of the first 3 Sundays of Advent.

Come to the Benedict Room at 5.30pm where we will use one of the resources being promoted by the Diocese for use in the *Year of Prayer* groups to explore the themes of Forgiveness, Healing and Mission. This brief introduction will lead us into half an hour for *lectio* and personal reflection before the Blessed Sacrament in the church; followed by a coffee and chat and home-made mince-pies back in the Benedict Room. The whole thing should last about an hour...



READING MARK'S GOSPEL

On most Sunday's of this new Church year the Gospel readings we hear will come from the Gospel of Mark.

For a brief and helpful introduction to Saint Mark's Gospel go to: <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/mark/0>

ST NICHOLAS WORLD DEVELOPMENT GROUP

is offering Christmas Gift Vouchers and cards for sale after all masses today, December 9th and 10th.

They hope to raise enough money send to Feed My Lambs School to give each child a Christmas dinner.

The vouchers are priced at £5, £10 or £20.



Pope Francis: Teaching on Prayer

In addition to regular materials related to the Year of Prayer being provided in the newsletter or through House Groups, there will be a weekly post on the parish Blog (address on Page 1, and if you 'follow' the Blog the post will be sent directly to your email box)

This post is taken largely from Pope Francis recent weekly Catechesis on Prayer, and is also linked to readings at Mass on that particular Sunday. This resource has been prepared by Fr Rob Taylerson, Spiritual Director at Oscott College.

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

How to get the MOST from the Sacrament of Penance

A Sacrament that finds its ultimate meaning not in our confession our sins but in our fresh experience of the power of God's love and mercy, which sets us free from sin...

Why go to Confession?

Because we **need** to be loved better...

When should we go to Confession ?

The Church says Catholics **must** go to confession when we have committed sin that utterly contradicts the life we are called to: sins such as murder, adultery, and the like.

Thankfully these sins are rare, and indeed we may never commit them. But all of us will be responsible for things we are sorry about. They may be major things, or – as these things go – relatively minor, but about which we feel know shame or sorrow. We can try to ignore these things; tell ourselves they don't matter; that other people do worse things. But when we turn our heart and mind to the Lord – for example when preparing at Christmas and Easter to celebrate his saving love – we hear again the call to repent of our sins and come closer to him to benefit more fully from his love, not least through the Sacrament of Penance.

In preparing for the Sacrament we are encouraged to spend time with a passage of scripture that helps us wonder at and renew confidence in God's healing love - and his love for each one of us. And when we come to celebrate the Sacrament, it is truly celebration for it is a true meeting with him, and enjoying the gift of salvation that frees us from sin and sorts us up for our next steps on the journey of life.



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

DECEMBER 2023: PARISH MASSES

Sa	9	6pm		Thomas Quinlisk RIP (Gill)
Su	10	9am	Second Sunday of Advent	For the parish
		11am		Olivia Pratt-Korbel RIP (McD)
M	11	10am		Decsd members of the Burton family (W)
T	12	10am		Decsd family & friends of Eric and Graham Pitt
W	13	10am	St Lucy	Decsd members of McGrath and Hogan family
Th	14		St John of the Cross	
F	15	7pm		Jenifer Cummings RIP (Droz)
Sa	16	6pm	Third Sunday of Advent	Decsd members of the Marsland family (W)
Su	17	9am		Joseph and Anna Phan RIP (Nguyen)
		11am		For the parish

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

Please pray for those who are sick including Theresa Monteiro; Craig Brooks, Paul Craig, Fr Michael Ho, Brenda Davies; Stephen Burke; Lesley Devlin & Jean Lawlor. **Please pray** for John O'Sullivan, Clare Banks, Anthony McCorry, Joan Morris, Michael Hodgetts, Tom Hempenstall and all others whose anniversary at this time.

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

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

PARISH CAR PARK Free parking for one hour is available for anyone at anytime in our carpark. Automatic free parking permits are issued to cover all parking on **Saturdays** from 5.30pm to 7.30pm; on **Sundays** from 8am to 2pm; on **Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays** from 9.30am to 11.30am and **Fridays** 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 Archdioceses policies & procedures at all times. Our Parish Safeguarding Representative is Mary Rose. She can be contacted at: sg.st-nicholas.boldmere@rcaob.org.uk or alternatively the Diocesan Safeguarding team can be contacted on 0121 230 6240 or safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk if you have any concern.

Times of Christmas Services

Masses of the 4th Sunday of Advent will be 6pm on 23rd Dec and 10am on 24th Dec.

Christmas Eve/Day Masses are 3pm, 6pm and 9pm on 24th Dec & 9am and 11am on 25th Dec.

BRING JESUS TO CHURCH FOR A BLESSING!! Do bring the figure of the Baby Jesus from your family crib to Mass next Sunday for blessing ahead of putting him in your family crib on Christmas Night.



Our Christmas Masses ...

Our 3pm and 6pm Masses on 24th December are prepared with our youngest children in mind.

Thank you to youngsters from the parish who will be telling the Christmas story at these Masses.

To help make these Masses even more memorable – and fun! – all children are invited to come to Mass dressed as their favourite characters from the Nativity story (Indeed everyone coming is invited to do the same. Make it a family thing!) Some simple guides to help prepare these costumes are available on our parish blog.

www.stnicholasboldmere.wordpress.com

ADVENT CELEBRATIONS OF THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

Advent Penitential Liturgy for Sutton Coldfield. *Tuesday 19th December, 7pm here at St Nicholas. (nb parking restrictions lifted between 6 and 10pm). Homily by Fr Michael Dolman - Rector of Oscott College, and participation of priests from all Catholic Sutton Coldfield parishes.*

Opportunities for individual confession (in addition to regular parish provision) are offered at **Holy Cross:** Advent Mondays 2-2.30pm; **Holy Trinity:** Tuesdays of Advent 10.30-11 am; **St Nicholas:** Wednesdays of Advent 9.15 to 9.50am

The Introductory Rites

Opening Song

Word of justice, Alleluia,
Come to dwell here, Maranatha!
Word of mercy, Alleluia,
Live among us. Maranatha!
Word of power, Alleluia,
Live within us. Maranatha!
Word of freedom, Alleluia,
Save your people. Maranatha!
Word of healing, Alleluia,
Heal our sorrow. Maranatha!
Word of comfort, Alleluia,
Bring us hope now. Maranatha!
Word of gladness, Alleluia,
Fill our hearts now. Maranatha!
Word of wisdom, Alleluia,
Come renew us. Maranatha!

The Liturgy of the Word

Isaiah 40:1-5,9-11

‘Console my people, console them’ says your God.
‘Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her that
her time of service is ended, that her sin is atoned for,
that she has received from the hand of the Lord dou-
ble punishment for all her crimes.’

A voice cries, ‘Prepare in the wilderness a way for the
Lord. Make a straight highway for our God across the
desert. Let every valley be filled in, every mountain
and hill be laid low. Let every cliff become a plain, and
the ridges a valley; then the glory of the Lord shall be
revealed and all mankind shall see it; for the mouth of
the Lord has spoken.’

Go up on a high mountain, joyful messenger to Zion.
Shout with a loud voice, joyful messenger to Jerusa-
lem. Shout without fear, say to the towns of Judah,
‘Here is your God.’ Here is the Lord coming with pow-
er, his arm subduing all things to him. The prize of his
victory is with him his trophies all go before him.

He is like a shepherd feeding his flock, gathering lambs
in his arms, holding them against his breast and lead-
ing to their rest the mother ewes.

Psalm 84(85):9-14(Advent)



I will hear what the Lord God has to say,
a voice that speaks of peace,
peace for his people.
His help is near for those who fear him
and his glory will dwell in our land.
Mercy and faithfulness have met;
justice and peace have embraced.
Faithfulness shall spring from the earth
and justice look down from heaven.

The Lord will make us prosper
and our earth shall yield its fruit.
Justice shall march before him
and peace shall follow his steps.

2 Peter 3:8-14

There is one thing, my friends, that you must never
forget: that with the Lord, ‘a day’ can mean a thou-
sand years, and a thousand years is like a day. The Lord
is not being slow to carry out his promises, as anybody
else might be called slow; but he is being patient with
you all, wanting nobody to be lost and everybody to
be brought to change his ways. The Day of the Lord
will come like a thief, and then with a roar the sky will
vanish, the elements will catch fire and fall apart, the
earth and all that it contains will be burnt up.

Since everything is coming to an end like this, you
should be living holy and saintly lives while you wait
and long for the Day of God to come, when the sky
will dissolve in flames and the elements melt in the
heat. What we are waiting for is what he promised: the
new heavens and new earth, the place where right-
eousness will be at home. So then, my friends, while
you are waiting, do your best to live lives without spot
or stain so that he will find you at peace.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! Prepare a way for the Lord, make his
paths straight, and all mankind shall see the salvation
of God. Alleluia!

Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the
Son of God. It is written in the book of the prophet Isai-
ah: ‘Look, I am going to send my messenger before you;
he will prepare your way. A voice cries in the wilderness:
Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight.’

And so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the wil-
derness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the
forgiveness of sins. All Judaea and all the people of Je-
rusalem made their way to him, and as they were bap-
tised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins.
John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on lo-
custs and wild honey. In the course of his preaching he
said, ‘Someone is following me, someone who is more
powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and
undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with
water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.’

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

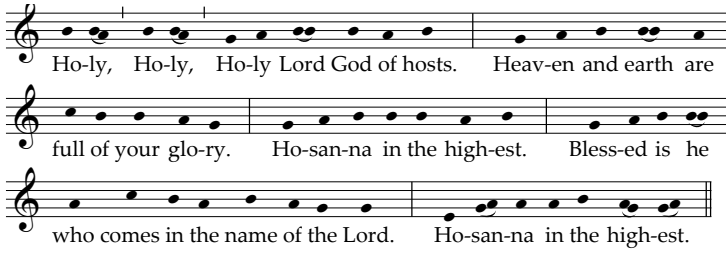
Priest: We pray to the Lord.
All: Through our lives and by our prayers,
your kingdom come.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

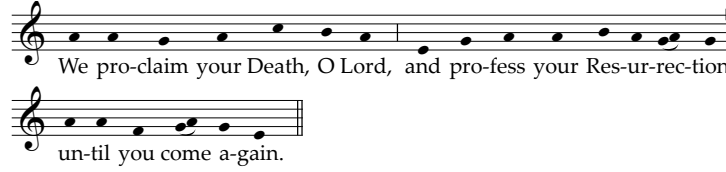
The Offertory NB Our next collections for the Bethany
Food Bank are 17th December and 7th January.

Bless the Lord, my soul
and bless God’s holy name.
Bless the Lord, my soul
who leads me into life.

The Eucharistic Prayer
Sanctus



Mystery of faith



The Communion Rite

The Lord’s Prayer

Communion thanksgiving

Creator of the stars of night
the people’s everlasting light,
Redeemer, Saviour of us all
O hear your servants when they call.

As once through Mary’s flesh you came
to save us from our sin and shame,
so now, Redeemer, by your grace,
come heal again our fallen race.

And when on that last judgement day
we rise to glory from decay,
then come again, O saviour blest,
and bring us to eternal rest.

To God the Father, God the Son,
and God the Spirit, three in one,
Praise, honour, might and glory be
from age to age eternally.

Prayer after Communion

Concluding Rites

KEEPING
ADVENT
AT HOME



In its pres-
ent form the
custom of
displaying
figures de-
picting the
birth of Jesus
Christ owes
its origin to
Saint Francis of Assisi who made the Christmas
crèche or manger for Christmas eve of 1223.

Fasmily cribs can be put up at any time in ADvent,
of course. But it is traditional to wait until after at-
tending Christmas Mass befoe placing the figure
of Jesus in the scene.

As in our parish church, many people like to pop-
ulate their crib scene gradually during Advent. It
can help focus us on Advent as a time of prepara-
tion, and also add a little fun to the whole thing.
The last figures to be added are the wise men, ar-
riving on January 6th, the feast of Epiphany.

The prayer of blessing offered here may be used at
any time. Before saying the prayer you or another
member of the family could read the story of the
birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. Luke 2:1-8

God of every nation and people,
from the very beginning of creation
you have made manifest your love:
when our need for a Saviour was great
you sent your Son to be born of the Virgin Mary.
To our lives he brings joy and peace,
justice, mercy, and love.

Lord, bless all who look upon this manger;
may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus,
and raise up our thought to him,
who is God-with-us and Saviour of all,
and who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

Make a note in your diary
to bring your figure of the Baby Jesus
to Mass on Sunday 16th/17th December
so it can receive a special blessing be-
fore you place it in your family crib on
Christmas Night.

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