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to our usual schedule. Admission to these masses is by ticket only. Links to book are on our parish website homepage.

Currently all tickets have been taken for the Masses on Christmas Eve (although keep an eye out for returns (made on-line). About half of the tickets have been taken for Christmas Day itself.

Of course, for the Church, Christmas Day lasts for 8 Days, ending on 1st January, the Octave Day of Christmas and Solemnity of Holy Mary, Mother of God. So there are plenty of opportunities to attend a Christmas Day Mass, even after December 25th.

An on-line Liturgy of the Word has been scheduled for 4pm on Christmas Eve for those who are unable to obtain tickets, or are not yet ready to return to Mass because their own vulnerability to infection, or the vulnerability of those in their 'bubble'. Details of how to access this on-line Liturgy of the Word will be confirmed nearer to the time.

CHRISTMAS SEASON

Mass will be offered on 26th Dec at 6pm; Dec 27th at 9am and 11am; Dec 28th, 29th and 30th at 10am 1st January at 10am; 2nd Jan at 6pm; and 3rd Jan at 9am and 11am. Mass will be offered at 10am and 7pm on 6th Jan (Solemnity of the Epiphany).

The season of Christmas ends the following Sunday. **Times for masses that Sunday, the Baptism of the Lord, will be announced once we know more about the availability of volunteers for stewarding and cleaning.**

Resources to help support your prayer during Advent and Christmas are on the homepage of the parish website

- The **Advent Wreath** and prayer; Blessing your **Christmas Tree**; Blessing your family **Crib**; **A table grace** for Christmas Day

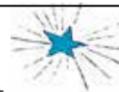
On-line Support for Prayer

- Morning Prayer of the Church at 8.30am.

- Weekly parish Zoom prayer meetings - Sun at 4pm for Lectio Divina and Mon at 7pm for Rosary.

Zoom links are posted on the parish website. Do join us - especially if you are not confident in returning to church for Mass.

- Reflections on the Readings and Prayers of the following Sunday's Mass are posted daily on the parish Blog (Weds to Sun). Spending time with the readings and prayers before Mass is a good way of helping Mass be more fruitful for us.



CONSULTATION ON CHANGES TO ADMISSIONS POLICIES FOR 2022/23 ACADEMIC YEAR

The Directors of the St John Paul II Multi Academy Company are consulting on proposed changes to admissions policies for 2022/23 at the following schools in our multi-academy:

- Holy Cross Catholic Primary School
- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
- St Nicholas Catholic Primary School

Copies of the proposed policies can be viewed on the schools' websites.

The change proposed by the Directors is to remove the Certificate of Catholic Practice from the over-subscription criteria for these schools. Evidence of baptism will still be required in order for children to qualify as Catholic in these proposed policies.

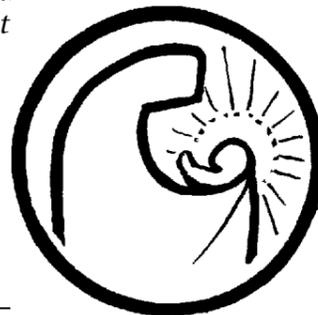
Responses to these proposals for any or all of these schools can be made in writing via email through enquiry@sjp2.net.

The consultation period ends on 15th January. Responses to the consultation will be considered by the Board of Directors before policies are finalised.

PS Don't forget the invitation to take part in Doorstep carols.

Organised by local Churches Together for Mon 21st Dec 8pm (DoorStepCarols.com)

You will need use of a PC or smartphone, and probably separate audio speakers, to fully benefit from this event. But give it a go!



Catholic Universe and Catholic Times

The Catholic papers are available to be delivered direct to your home every week, post free. Please go to www.thecatholicuniverse.com or call them on 0161 820 5722 and they will arrange for you. Special Offer:-£22.00 or 12 Months:- £80.00

Financial support for the Church: You will appreciate that parish income has been cut right back over the past months, but our bills have not reduced by anything like as much! If you are in a position to help, you might like to consider the following.

- **GIFT AID** allows the Church reclaim tax paid on your offering, to raise a further 25% for the church at no further cost to you.
- **STANDING ORDERS** are a helpful way of making your offering. Forms for GA and SO are available from Fr Allen or the parish website.
- **GIFT AID OFFERTORY ENVELOPES** Numbered envelopes are available or those in the Gift Aid scheme who still use the envelopes.



St Nicholas Catholic Church, Boldmere

Address: 243 Jockey Rd., Boldmere, Sutton Coldfield, B73 5US
Telephone: 0121 354 1763 **Email:** stnicholas.boldmere@rcaob.org.uk
Website: www.stnicholasboldmere.co.uk
Parish Blog: www.stnicholasboldmere.wordpress.com

Parish Priest: Fr Allen Morris **E-mail:** stnicholas.boldmere@rcaob.org.uk
Parish Safeguarding: Ann Foulds (0121 355 7892); Mary Rose (0121 354 4730)
 Our Parish is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham: Registered Charity No. 234216



HAVE YOU BEEN SHIELDING SINCE MARCH?

Would you welcome the chance to come - with maximum safety - to Mass before Christmas? Or do you know someone else has been shielding, and like to come to Mass before Christmas?

A number of members of our parish have been kept from attending Mass since March because of the instruction to shield to protect themselves from the Covid virus. We have missed them, and want to make it as possible as we can for them to attend Mass as we come close to Christmas.

Some people are still advised to follow strict shielding guidance, and we would not wish to encourage them to anything that could have risk. But others are now able to leave their homes, though - understandably - they may well feel nervous about doing that.

We want to do all we can to help those who can come back to Mass before the end of the year, at least at a specially safe Mass.

We are offering such a Mass at 12noon on Weds 23rd Dec for those who have been isolating since March, but would like to come to Mass so long as things are as safe as they can be.

The Mass on the 23rd December is ONLY for those who have been self-isolating all this time, and - if they wish - for one further member of their bubble (who may well be needed to drive them to Mass and home again, and whose presence will, in any case, give additional assurance).

* Everyone attending will follow the current social distancing guidance and hygiene guidance - e.g. wearing a facemask, keeping at a distance from others in church, and using hand sanitiser on entering and exiting from the church. * Inside the church the social distancing requirement will be doubled from the current 1m rule to 2m. * We cannot entirely exclude all risk, but everything will be done to keep the setting as safe as it can be.

If you or someone you know would like to receive an invitation to this Mass - open ONLY to those who are invited, to ensure that they meet the strict safety conditions laid down above - please contact Fr Allen as soon as you can on 0121 354 1763 or by email at stnicholas.boldmere@rcaob.org.uk

CHRISTMAS MASSES. COVID restrictions greatly restrict the number of people who can attend any of our Christmas Masses.

CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY
 To help accommodate as many people as possible at Mass on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, additional Masses have been added
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MASS DURING THE HEALTH CRISIS

On days when there is no public Mass (because no volunteers for stewarding/cleaning) Fr Allen celebrates Mass 'privately' in the church usually at 0830.

Sa 12	4pm	3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT: Psalter Week 3	
	6pm		Thomas Quinlisk RIP (Gill)
Su 13	9am		Evelyn Coffey RIP (Drozd)
	11am		For the parish
M 14	10am	St John of the Cross	Dec'd family and Friends (Leese)
T 15	10am		Dec'd family and Friends (Lawlor)
W 16			Wilkinson/Woulfe decsd family
Th 17			
F 18	7pm		Dec'd family and friends (Drozd)
Sa 19	4pm	4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT: Psalter Week 4	
	6pm		For the parish
Su 20	9am		Dec'd of Macerola & Gillespie families
	11am		Mary Gavin RD (McDermott)

Confessions Current restrictions mean confessions cannot be heard in the church, or indoors. However, if you wish to celebrate Reconciliation please contact Fr Allen who will be happy to arrange a time and place (outdoors) to celebrate this sacrament of mercy with you.

Please pray for sick parishioners including Betty Barker, Lyn Hunt; Joan James; Thomas Stevenson; Lea Burke. Please pray for Joan Morris, Tom Hempenstall, Bernie Morton and Tess Lawrence and all whose anniversaries occur at this time. **Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, may they rest in peace.**

Present Arrangements for Mass

Offertory: There is no offertory collection at present, but there is a basket for your offerings on the table just inside the church.

Face coverings: Regulations require members of the congregation, aged 5 and over, to wear face-coverings over their nose and mouth throughout the time we are in church. *If you have an exemption certificate relieving you of this obligation please confirm in advance with Fr Allen. This will allow appropriate seating to be arranged for you and to safeguard others.*

Social distancing: If you are attending Mass with others, then the group you attend with should not exceed more than six people. This group of six can be made up of people from outside your household, but strict social distancing must be maintained between members of different households at all times. *If there is already someone in the bench you choose, please sit in the middle space, and leave any remaining space on the aisle for the next to arrive. Do not make people climb over you to get into the bench.*

Thank you for your cooperation

Mass of the 3rd Sunday of Advent

The Introductory Rites

The Introductory Rites help the faithful to come together as one, establish communion and prepare themselves properly to listen to the Word of God and to celebrate the Eucharist worthily.

The Penitential Act

The Collect

The Liturgy of the Word

By hearing the word proclaimed in worship, the faithful again enter into the unending dialogue between God and the people of the covenant shared in Christ, a dialogue sealed as we share the Eucharistic food and drink. The proclamation of the word is essential to the Mass

A brief time of quiet after the readings allows those present to take the word of God to heart and begin to prepare a prayerful response to what we have heard.

Isaiah 61:1-2,10-11

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for the Lord has anointed me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to bind up hearts that are broken;

to proclaim liberty to captives, freedom to those in prison; to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord.

‘I exult for joy in the Lord, my soul rejoices in my God, for he has clothed me in the garments of salvation, he has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity, like a bridegroom wearing his wreath, like a bride adorned in her jewels.

‘For as the earth makes fresh things grow, as a garden makes seeds spring up, so will the Lord make both integrity and praise spring up in the sight of the nations.’

Luke 1:46-50,53-54

My soul glorifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour. He looks on his servant in her nothingness; henceforth all ages will call me blessed.

The Almighty works marvels for me. Holy his name!

His mercy is from age to age, on those who fear him.

He fills the starving with good things, sends the rich away empty. He protects Israel, his servant, remembering his mercy.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Be happy at all times; pray constantly; and for all things give thanks to God, because this is what God expects you to do in Christ Jesus.

Never try to suppress the Spirit or treat the gift of prophecy with contempt; think before you do anything – hold on to what is good and avoid every form of evil.

May the God of peace make you perfect and holy; and may you all be kept safe and blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has called you and he will not fail you.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! The spirit of the Lord has been given to me. He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor. *Alleluia!*

John 1:6-8,19-28

A man came, sent by God.

His name was John.

He came as a witness, as a witness to speak for the light, so that everyone might believe through him.

He was not the light, only a witness to speak for the light.

This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, ‘Who are you?’ he not only declared, but he declared quite openly, ‘I am not the Christ.’ ‘Well then,’ they asked ‘are you Elijah?’ ‘I am not’ he said. ‘Are you the Prophet?’ He answered, ‘No.’ So they said to him, ‘Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?’

So John said, ‘I am, as Isaiah prophesied:

a voice that cries in the wilderness: Make a straight way for the Lord.’

Now these men had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put this further question to him, ‘Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and

not the prophet?’ John replied, ‘I baptise with water; but there stands among you – unknown to you – the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal-strap.’ This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptising.

Homily

Prayer of the Faithful (*omitted at the Bishop’s request*)

Apostles Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,

At the words that follow, up to and including the Virgin Mary, all bow.

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.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Eucharist is the source and summit of the whole Christian life. It is the vital centre of all that the Church is and does, because at its heart is the real presence of the crucified, risen and glorified Lord, continuing and making available his saving work among us.

The Offertory

There is no offertory collection at this time. Instead, you are invited to place your offerings in the basket at the entrance to the church as you arrive, or as you leave.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Eucharistic Prayer, the centre and summit of the entire celebration is a memorial proclamation of praise and thanksgiving for God’s work of salvation, a proclamation in which the Body and Blood of Christ are made present by the power of the Holy Spirit and the people are joined to Christ in offering his Sacrifice to the Father

The Preface Dialogue

Priest: The Lord be with you.

People: **And with your spirit.**

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right and just.

Sanctus

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

The mystery of faith.

Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.

THE COMMUNION RITE

Eating and drinking together of the Lord’s Body and Blood in a Paschal meal is the culmination of the Eucharist. The themes underlying these rites are the mutual love and reconciliation that are both the condition and the fruit of worthy communion and the unity of the many in the One.

The Lord’s Prayer

Invitation to Communion

Please wait in your pew until it is time to move forward to the priest for Holy Communion, always aware of the regulations on social distancing in the orderly queue.

As you approach the priest, please do so with arms at “full stretch” to keep a good distance between you and the priest.

Communion will be given silently, and in the hand only. (Your hands - palms upwards, one of top of the other - should be extended as flatly as possible.)

Prayer after Communion

The Concluding Rites

The brief Concluding Rite sends the people forth to put into effect in their daily lives the Mystery of Christ’s Death and Resurrection and the unity in Christ which they have celebrated. Their mission is to witness to Christ in the world and to bring the Gospel to the poor.

Blessing

Dismissal

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Getting more out of Mass

1. Why I need to be at Mass

Call to mind three things that during Mass you want to speak with God about

- One thing you **are** thankful for
- One things you are sorry about
- One thing you want to ask God’s help with

2. What will I take from Mass?

After Holy Communion look again at the readings of the Day. What has struck you? What word, phrase or sentence will you take away with you as food for your journey? You might commit it to memory - or feel free to take this newsletter with you. And return to the word, phrase or sentence when you next come to Gpod in your private prayer. Speak with him about why it matters to you.