

CHRISTMAS MASSES *continued*

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.**

ADVENT PENITENTIAL SERVICE *continued*

songs, psalms, or periods of silence inserted between them.

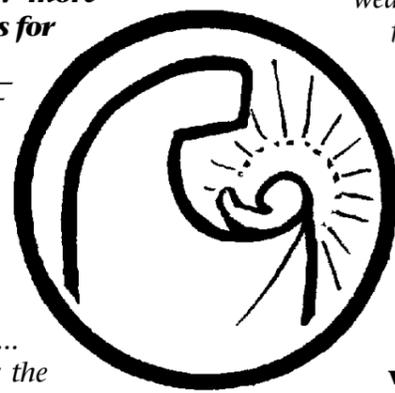
At the end the Lord's Prayer is said, asking God our Father 'to forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us... and deliver us from evil'. The priest or the minister who presides concludes with a prayer and the dismissal of the people.

The one addition for our parish Advent Penitential celebration is that it will include Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and conclude, after the Lord's Prayer, with Benediction.

As noted above the service begins at 7pm and will conclude at 8pm. The doors of the church will be open from 6.45pm, and will close at 7.05pm. Those attending are free to leave at any time, but admittance to the church will not be possible after 7.05pm.

COVID vaccination roll-out programme. Can you help?

One of our parishioners is a GP in Walsall who has asked for help with the roll-out of the COVID vaccination programme in Walsall. Volunteers are needed to help at the sites as stewards and Marshalls. The role will involve assisting patients and helping to direct them around the site. Many of the patients will be elderly and may require limited mobility assistance. Full training will be given and Protective Equipment such as face masks will be provided. Should you wish to volunteer please contact Dr Ryan Hobson at ryanhobson@doctors.org.uk.



HAVE YOU BEEN SHIELDING? *continued*

ably – 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

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

CHRISTMAS MASSES

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

CHRISTMAS EVE AND DAY

To help accommodate as many people as possible at Mass on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, additional Masses have been added 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). A number of tickets are still available for Christmas Day .

Of course, for the Church, Christmas Day lasts for 8 Days, ending on 1st January, the Octave
continued on p4



HAVE YOU BEEN SHIELDING?

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 – understand *continued on p4*

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 19	4pm	4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT: <i>Psalter Week 4</i>	For the parish
	6pm		Dec'd of Macerola & Gillespie families
Su 20	9am		Mary Gavin RD (McDermott)
	11am		
M 21	10am		Dec'd of Cleary and Sterling families
T 22	10am		Dec'd of Paym and Staunton families
W 23	12noon Mass - BY INVITATION ONLY: Mass for those who have been shielding (John McCauliff RIP)		
Th 24	Mass at 3pm; 6pm (Ann Byrne - health); 9pm (for the parish) All Masses today are ticket only		
F 25	Mass at 8am (Roddy and James Devlin RIP); 9.30 (for the parish); 11am (private intention) All Masses today are ticket only		
Sa 26	6pm		For the parish
Su 27	9am	HOLY FAMILY	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 Bernie Morton, Tess Lawrence, Teresa Keane, Chrstine O'Reilly, Eileen Lynch, Anne Byrne, Sean Finnegan, Mary Woods, Frank Bates and all whose anniversaries occur at this time. **Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, may they rest in peace.**

ADVENT PENITENTIAL SERVICE

As you may have expected, and for various practical reasons, we are not having our usual Advent parish celebration of the Sacrament of Penance this year.

However many of us do find the rhythm of penitential services in Advent and Lent helpful ways of keeping check of how we are living in Christ.

So there will be a parish Advent Penitential service on Tuesday 22nd December from 7 to 8pm. **This will not be a celebration of the sacrament of penance**, but one of the Penitential celebrations promoted by the church in her Rite of Penance: celebrations that help promote conversion of life and purification of heart.

The structure of these services is the same as that usually followed in celebrations of the word of God.

After the introductory rites (song, greeting, and prayer) one or more biblical readings are proclaimed with *continued on p4*

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 4th 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.

2 Samuel 7:1-5,8-12,14,16

Once David had settled into his house and the Lord had given him rest from all the enemies surrounding him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, 'Look, I am living in a house of cedar while the ark of God dwells in a tent.' Nathan said to the king, 'Go and do all that is in your mind, for the Lord is with you.'

But that very night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: 'Go and tell my servant David, "Thus the Lord speaks: Are you the man to build me a house to dwell in? I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be leader of my people Israel; I have been with you on all your expeditions; I have cut off all your enemies before you. I will give you fame as great as the fame of the greatest on earth. I will provide a place for my

people Israel; I will plant them there and they shall dwell in that place and never be disturbed again; nor shall the wicked continue to oppress them as they did, in the days when I appointed judges over my people Israel; I will give them rest from all their enemies. The Lord will make you great; the Lord will make you a House. And when your days are ended and you are laid to rest with your ancestors, I will preserve the offspring of your body after you and make his sovereignty secure. I will be a father to him and he a son to me; if he does evil, I will punish him with the rod such as men use, with strokes such as mankind gives. Your House and your sovereignty will always stand secure before me and your throne be established for ever."

Psalm 88(89):2-5,27,29

I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord;
through all ages my mouth will proclaim your truth.
Of this I am sure, that your love lasts for ever,
that your truth is firmly established as the heavens.

'I have made a covenant with my chosen one;
I have sworn to David my servant:
I will establish your dynasty for ever
and set up your throne through all ages.

'He will say to me: "You are my father,
my God, the rock who saves me."

I will keep my love for him always;
with him my covenant shall last.'

Romans 16:25-27

Glory to him who is able to give you the strength to live according to the Good News I preach, and in which I proclaim Jesus Christ, the revelation of a mystery kept secret for endless ages, but now so clear that it must be broadcast to pagans everywhere to bring them to the obedience of faith. This is only what scripture has predicted, and it is all part of the way the eternal God wants things to be. He alone is wisdom; give glory therefore to him through Jesus Christ for ever and ever. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! I am the handmaid of the Lord: let what you have said be done to me. *Alleluia!*

Luke 1:26-38

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.'

She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.'

Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?' 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you' the angel answered 'and the power of the Most High will

cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.' 'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary 'let what you have said be done to me.' And the angel left her.

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.

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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 thing 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 God in your private prayer.