

**A few weeks ago children preparing for First Communion and Confirmation were invited to share what they admire about Jesus and how they hope the Sacraments will help them.**

**Some of their thoughts are here. Others are displayed on parish noticeboards.**

**Thank you to all those who took part.**

I admire how special Jesus is because of the miracles he has done. I hope to become closer to Jesus so I can help people more too.  
**Vincent**

I admire Jesus being clever enough to see who needed his help and miracles. I would like to see who needs my help.  
**Max**

I admire how Jesus is kind and helpful. I would like to be more helpful and kinder to other people.  
**Joseph**

Jesus loved his followers who loved him. I hope Jesus will help me to love other people evermore.  
**Thomas**

I admire Jesus' loyalty to his religion and his forgiving nature. I would like to follow in Jesus' footsteps..  
**Alfie**

I admire how Jesus helps everyone who needs it - not only their friends. I hope the Holy Spirit can help guide me along the right path  
**Maria**

I admire how Jesus loved. I want to love like that.  
**Holly**

I most admire the way he always forgave people when they sin and do bad things. I hope to be inspired to be more like Jesus.  
**Thomas**

I admire how Jesus performed miracles to help people - and without asking for a reward. I hope preparing for Confirmation will help me understand all I say in Mass and in my prayers, so I can help spread the word about Jesus.  
**Adam**

I admire how Jesus rose from the dead to show that we will have eternal life in heaven. Confirmation will help me understand how I can show compassion to others like Jesus did.  
**Conor**

I admire how Jesus loved people and helped them. Sick people and children need us to do the same.  
**Alfie**

I admire how Jesus was very forgiving and kind to other people. I would like to be the same - as you can by just smiling at someone or opening the door for them  
**Aoife**

I most admire Jesus for his courage. He stood up for what he believed in though he knew he would be killed. By being confirmed I hope to have a close bond with the Catholic Church.  
**Ryan**

I admire how Jesus helped the poor and healed the sick. I would like Confirmation to help me follow Jesus in difficult times.  
**Anthony**

I admire how Jesus loved everyone - even his enemies! And how he forgives everyone  
**Juan**

I admire how Jesus helps me to be kind. I try to be like him as I serve as a school councillor  
**Lucy**

I admire how Jesus was willing to die on the cross for our sins. This must have been very difficult for him. I hope confirmation will help me grow in knowledge of Catholicism and to grow in faith  
**Oscar**

**Now, what about you?**

**What do you admire most about Jesus? How would you like to imitate Jesus in your daily life - and why?**

**See whether you can find an opportunity to talk about your answers this week - perhaps in your family, perhaps with a friend.**

**Take the opportunity also to ask them what they like about Jesus and whether perhaps they look for him to influence their lives too?**



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

**A focus for 2022...**

Recently we celebrated the feast of the Holy Family – THE Holy Family who we see in the crib – Jesus, Mary and Joseph. But the phrase might also be used to describe us – as we are called to be.

For example in our particular families: we are called to be holy families. The vocation of fathers and mothers and of spouses and partners is to form communities of love. The buzz word is to form a domestic church.

A domestic church is called to be a community of love, of formation in Christian virtue and prayer, a pace where mercy is ministered and where vocation is promoted.

Of course, not everyone in our families is Catholic, or indeed a believer in Jesus Christ or in God. So the domestic church is called to be a place of witness and evangelisation. Not for Catholic members to brow-beat the others or anything like that. But at the same time as respecting the beliefs of the others being ready to give, even again and again, simple account of our reason for our belief and what Jesus means to us.

We are called to be a Holy Family as parish too, and as Church. I want to focus in particular on how we are as parish. We acknowledge one Father in heaven and we know one another as brothers and sisters. So how do we live as family? How – together – do we take responsibility for our common life, for the work of the Church in our area, on our streets, in our families?

Early in the Pandemic there was a great example of us doing things together. All sorts of people stepped forward to keep the church open and safe, to help with cleaning and stewarding. People were generous with their time and energies. But now, although some of those same things need doing, very few people now are ready to commit even to help once a month.

I'm not saying this to complain – just to highlight the problem, the challenge.

There is a similar difficulty in finding parishioners ready to commit to take holy communion to the sick, or read at Mass, or help with music, or help clean the church or with catechesis, or children's liturgy, or help with tea and coffee after Mass. All of these things

people think are important and would like to see happening. But without our doing them they won't happen.

There are all sorts of reasons people fail to volunteer. And it has been a problem for a very long time in the parish. It was drawn to my attention as soon as I arrived.

Some of the explanations are particular to us, and on other occasions we can talk about those.

Some are features of our culture – we see ourselves more easily as consumers rather than co-operative providers; we are often time-poor; our free time/social time is more easily catered for at home now, or elsewhere in society for Catholics are more integrated into society than formerly, when parish organisations were there as much for self protection as anything else. So many reasons – and none of them to be too easily dismissed as 'excuses'.

These things have massively impacted on how we think about our relationship with Church and our work and responsibility as parish.

Pope Francis calls us to look at this, as part of the Walking Together initiative. We do walk together but how we journey now is very different to how we

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**PARISH MASSES DURING THE COMING WEEK**

|           |           |      |                                    |                           |
|-----------|-----------|------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Sa</b> | <b>8</b>  | 6pm  | <b>Baptism of the Lord</b>         | Fr Joyce RIP (Margaret)   |
| <b>Su</b> | <b>9</b>  | 9am  |                                    | Elizabeth Sawbridge RIP   |
|           |           | 11am |                                    | For the parish            |
| <b>M</b>  | <b>10</b> | 10am |                                    |                           |
| <b>T</b>  | <b>11</b> | 10am |                                    | Pat Bligh RD (Ord)        |
| <b>W</b>  | <b>12</b> | 10am |                                    | Ints Jean Lawlor (Lawlor) |
| <b>Th</b> | <b>13</b> |      |                                    |                           |
| <b>Fr</b> | <b>14</b> | 7pm  |                                    | Mal Caston RIP            |
| <b>Sa</b> | <b>15</b> | 6pm  |                                    | Luke Gill RIP (Gill)      |
| <b>Su</b> | <b>16</b> | 9am  | <b>2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time</b> | Birthday intentions (CD)  |
|           |           | 11am |                                    | For the parish            |

**Morning Prayer:** Zoom meeting Monday to Fridays at 8.30am

**Lectio:** Zoom, Sunday at 4pm; **Rosary:** Zoom, Monday at 7pm

**Sacrament of Confession:** Friday evenings after 7pm Mass until 8pm; and 5-5.30pm on Saturday. (Also by appointment)

**Anointing of the Sick:** Last Friday of month at 11am

**Please pray for parishioners who are sick** including Christina Drozd, Jean Lawlor, Stephen Burke, Brenda Davies, Elizabeth Barker, Lyn Hunt; Joan James; Thomas Stevenson. Please pray for Pat Bligh who has died recently and whose funeral is here on Tuesday 21 Dec at 1230, for Cath Wakeham who has also died recently, and for Tom Hempenstall, Bernie Morton, Tess Lawrence, Teresa Keane, Christine O'Reilly, and all those whose anniversaries occur at this time. **Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, may they rest in peace.**

## The Introductory Rites

### Opening Song

*Water of Life, cleanse and refresh us;  
raise us to life in Christ Jesus.*

All you who thirst, come to the waters, and you will never be thirsty again.

As rain from heav'n, so is God's word; it waters the earth and brings forth life.

Dying with Christ, so we shall rise with him; death shall have no more pow'r over us.

Turn to the Lord, cast off your wickedness, you will find peace in his fatherly love.

### The Gloria

Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to people of good will.

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.

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.

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. Amen.

### The Collect

### The Liturgy of the Word

#### Isaiah 42:1-4,6-7

Thus says the Lord: Here is my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom my soul delights. I have endowed him with my spirit that he may ring true justice to the nations.

He does not cry out or shout aloud, or make his voice heard in the streets. He does not break the crushed reed, nor quench the wavering flame.

Faithfully he brings true justice; he will neither waver, nor be crushed until true justice is established on earth, for the islands are awaiting his law.

I, the Lord, have called you to serve the cause of right; I have taken you by the hand and formed you; I have appointed you as covenant of the people and light of the nations, to open the eyes of the blind, to free captives from prison, and those who live in darkness from the dungeon.

#### Psalms 103(104):1-4,24-25,27-30

Lord God, how great you are,  
clothed in majesty and glory,  
wrapped in light as in a robe!

You stretch out the heavens like a tent.

Above the rains you build your dwelling.  
You make the clouds your chariot,  
you walk on the wings of the wind,  
you make the winds your messengers  
and flashing fire your servant.

How many are your works, O Lord!  
In wisdom you have made them all.  
The earth is full of your riches.

There is the sea, vast and wide,  
with its moving swarms past counting,  
living things great and small.

All of these look to you  
to give them their food in due season.  
You give it, they gather it up:  
you open your hand, they have their fill.

You hide your face, they are dismayed;  
you take back your spirit, they die.  
You send forth your spirit, they are created;  
and you renew the face of the earth.

#### Titus 2:11-14,3:4-7

God's grace has been revealed, and it has made salvation possible for the whole human race and taught us that what we have to do is to give up everything that does not lead to God, and all our worldly ambitions; we must be self-restrained and live good and religious lives here in this present world, while we are waiting in hope for the blessing which will come with the Appearing of the glory of our great God and saviour Christ Jesus. He sacrificed himself for us in order to set us free from all wickedness and to purify a people so that it could be his very own and would have no ambition except to do good.

But when the kindness and love of God our saviour for mankind were revealed, it was not because he was concerned with any righteous actions we might have done ourselves; it was for no reason except his own compassion that he saved us, by means of the cleansing water of rebirth and by renewing us with the Holy Spirit which he has so generously poured over us through Jesus Christ our saviour. He did this so that we should be justified by his grace, to become heirs looking forward to inheriting eternal life.

#### Gospel Acclamation

*Alleluia, alleluia!* Someone is coming, said John, someone greater than I. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. *Alleluia!*

#### Luke 3:15-16,21-22

A feeling of expectancy had grown among the people, who were beginning to think that John might be the Christ, so John declared before them all, 'I baptise you with water, but someone is coming, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. Now when all the people had been baptised and while Jesus after his own baptism was at prayer, heaven opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily shape, like a dove. And a voice came

from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you.'

### 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.

### The Prayer of the Faithful

### The Liturgy of the Eucharist

#### The Offertory

*Our monthly collection for the Bethany Food Bank is usually on the first Sunday of the month. This January the collection is today. Offerings can be brought to the church up to 6pm on Sunday night.*

All that I am, all that I do,  
all that I'll ever have, I offer now to you.  
Take and sanctify these gifts for your honour, Lord.  
Knowing that I love and serve you is enough reward.  
All that I am, all that I do,  
all that I'll ever have I offer now to you.

All that I dream, all that I pray,  
all that I'll ever make, I give to you today.  
Take and sanctify these gifts for your honour, Lord.  
Knowing that I love and serve you is enough reward.  
All that I am, all that I do,  
all that I'll ever have I offer now to you.

#### The Eucharistic Prayer

##### Sanctus

Ho-ly, Ho-ly, Ho-ly Lord God of hosts. Heav-en and earth are  
full of your glo-ry. Ho-san-na in the high-est. Bless-ed is he  
who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high-est.

##### Memorial Acclamation

We pro-claim your Death, O Lord, and pro-fess your Res-ur-rec-tion  
un-til you come a-gain.

### THE COMMUNION RITE

#### The Lord's Prayer

## The Concluding Rites

### Blessing and Dismissal

#### Final song

Joy to the world - the Lord has come!  
let earth receive her king,  
let every heart prepare him room  
and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing!

Joy to the earth - the saviour reigns!  
let all their songs employ  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains  
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace,  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness,  
the wonders of his love, the wonders of his love,  
the wonders, wonders of his love.

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**A focus for 2022...** *continued from page 1*  
journeyed some years, some generations back. We need to look at that – not to play the blame game or anything like that, and not to press ourselves into doing things in the way that things were done, but to see how best we might do things going forward. And in a way everything needs to be reconsidered. Do we want to be a parish – or would you be content to see our church as a chapel of ease? Are we able to take up the responsibility of continuing to be a parish in our own right? If so, how do we exercise responsibility together for the administration and upkeep of the buildings and the community? If we do not have a resident priest in the coming months, and cannot always have one on call from elsewhere, how do we help people prepare for sacraments, how do we provide times for prayer, how do we help families with funerals. Though my putting it that makes it sound like 'we' are doing things for 'others', whereas a better way of putting it might be 'how do we do this for each other?'

I think 2022 is a year we need to focus on our faith and our parish, what they mean to us and how we can support each other in what is necessary for faith and parish to flourish.

I hope we can all take a part in this — see it as something we need to think about and pray about and help each other to think about. how we are and can be family; and how we are and can be Church in a way that enriches each of us, and will help us hand on our faith, and the gift of the Good News to those who follow us...

*Fr. Allen*