

**The ‘Year of Prayer’
and special times of Advent 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.

The ‘Year’ offers an opportunity to revive the House Groups project that began just before COVID. I’d be grateful if those who were hosts of a group would contact their previous members. They might meet in the next week or so to consider reviving their group. Or maybe better yet, consider whether to dissolve the ‘old’ group so as to help set up new groups to offer the experience and benefits to others too, to help build up and maybe even extend the Church in Boldmere.

During Advent, there will be special Sunday Evening Prayer times. The invitation is to meet in 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; and then have 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...

The experience of prayer, community and such refreshments will help us prepare, and get into good shape for Christmas (if also a little rounder!). And it can help us put in a little work to help our parish - and maybe Catholic Sutton Coldfield - get the very best of the opportunities presented by the Year of Prayer

**ADVENT OPPORTUNITIES
TO CELEBRATE THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE**

1. A Penitential Liturgy for Advent with the opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance (Confession). *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.*
2. Opportunities for individual confession (in addition to regular parish provision.)
 - Holy Cross: Mondays of Advent 2-2.30pm
 - Holy Trinity: Tuesdays of Advent 10.30-11 am
 - St Nicholas: Wednesdays of Advent 9.15 to 9.50am

Catholic Sutton Coldfield

Expect to become very familiar with this ‘title’ of *Catholic Sutton Coldfield* over coming months. It has been adopted as a tag to describe a variety of projects being undertaken by the clergy of Sutton Coldfield parishes as we work more closely together as urged by the Diocesan process: *Unfolding God’s Plan*.

The first such joint project is an Advent Penitential Service for all parishes which takes place here at St Nicholas on Tuesday 19th December - more details on the noticeboards.

But *Catholic Sutton Coldfield* is about more than how priests work together. It is also about how our various parishes work together, supporting each other and each helping the others bear witness together to Jesus Christ and the Gospel.

There are already thoughts on some of the ways we might work together, for example in providing couples support as they prepare for marriage; joint events for the forthcoming Year of Prayer and having joint pilgrimages. There is lots of room for these sorts of things - which will be to the benefit of all our parishes. Other people will surely have other ideas too - and it is important we all get the chance to share thoughts and move things forward. Early in the New Year there will be opportunities for us all to come together to consider what more we might do. The future is looking brighter!

WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CATHOLIC FAITH?

Why might you want to do that? Perhaps because you are Catholic and wonder why? Or a Christian of another tradition and wondering what more Catholic faith has to offer? Or maybe you have little in the way of Christian background but you have children preparing for first sacraments and would like to know better how to support and encourage them in the way of faith? Or 101 other reasons.

But in these sessions designed for the returning or enquiring Catholic and anyone who is questioning or searching, hopefully there is something for everyone. Interested? You are warmly invited to come and join in the 1 hour meetings in the parish house on Mondays at 7pm.

We will look at the first of the gospels, the Gospel of Mark, and part of each meeting will also be reserved for asking and exploring those questions you may have always wanted to ask, but been afraid to ask....

Preparation for Baptism of Infants

Our next series of Baptism preparation meetings begins, at 12noon on Saturday 2nd December. To register, please see Fr Allen.

BLESSING OF GRAVES:

Rectory Road Cemetery: 26 Nov, 2pm



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

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2023: PARISH MASSES

Sa	25	6pm	Christ the King	Michelle Higgins-Reddington Ints (K)
Su	26	9am 11am		James and Ann McGrath RIP For the parish
M	27	10am		Pauline and Michael Venables RIP (V)
T	28	10am		Norman Brookes RIP (Makepeace)
W	29	10am		Tony Roolson RIP
Th	30		St Andrew	
F	1	7pm	St Ed. Champion	D’d of Rhodes, O’Mara & Payton families
Sa	2	6pm	First Sunday of Advent	Tommy Quinlisk RIP (Gill)
Su	3	9am 11am		Elizabeth McGrath RIP 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 Craig Brooks, Paul Craig, Chrissie Newstead, Fr Michael Ho, Brenda Davies; Rita Rhodes, Stephen Burke; Lesley Devlin & Jean Lawlor. **Please pray** for Sarah Broom whose funeral is here at 10am on Dec 4; and Jenifer Cummings whose funeral is here at 12noon on Dec 7 and for Susan Hutchinson, Pauline Venables, Catherine Wakeham, Kay Cooper, Frank Kemp 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.stnicholas.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 Xmas Services

Masses of the 4th Sunday of Advent. Sunday 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.

Keeping Advent

Do please take a copy of the *Walk with Me* booklet (they are free!)

Also please take a copy of the *Advent/Christmas calendars* to give to your children/ grandchildren/ godchildren or the children who live next door!

The ‘Year of Prayer’ begins next Sunday - details of an introduction in special times of Advent Prayer on page 4!

KEEPING ADVENT AT HOME

Keeping Christmas *before* Christmas might seem to matter little. But it works against the spiritual discipline of keeping Advent. Try telling a Muslim that not keeping the fast during Ramadan doesn’t really matter! It is easy to squander the chance to keep Advent as a time of preparation, of quiet reflection and prayer, of fasting and Reconciliation - and reap its benefits. Also, if we have been celebrating Christmas all the way through Advent what more is there when Christmas comes. How many people now chuck out the Christmas trees on Boxing Day: for them Christmas is over, whereas for the Church Christmas has just begun!

The world might exploit Christmas early for commercial gain. But try to keep Advent - perhaps especially by having special times of prayer with the family, such as the following

- **Blessing your Christmas Tree**
- **Blessing your Family Crib**

Find these prayers at
<https://bit.ly/47IvQrj>

And bring your figure of the Baby Jesus to Mass on Sunday 16/17 December for blessing ready for placing it in your family crib on Christmas Night.

The Introductory Rites

Lord, the light of your love is shining,
In the midst of the darkness, shining;
Jesus, Light of the World, shine upon us,
Set us free by the truth you now bring us,
Shine on me, shine on me.

Shine, Jesus, shine,
fill this land with the Father’s glory;
Blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire.
Flow river flow,
flood the nations with grace and mercy;
send forth your word, Lord, and let there be light.

Lord, I come to your awesome presence
From the shadows into your radiance;
By the blood I may enter your brightness,
Search me, try me, consume all my darkness.
Shine on me, shine on me.

As we gaze on your kingly brightness,
So our faces display your likeness.
Ever changing from glory to glory
Mirrored here may our lives tell your story.
Shine on me, shine on me.

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,
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.

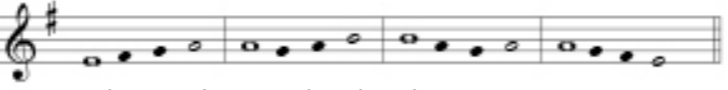
The Liturgy of the Word

Ezekiel 34:11-12,15-17

The Lord says this: I am going to look after my flock myself and keep all of it in view. As a shepherd keeps all his flock in view when he stands up in the middle of his scattered sheep, so shall I keep my sheep in view. I shall rescue them from wherever they have been scattered during the mist and darkness. I myself will pasture my sheep, I myself will show them where to rest – it is the Lord who speaks. I shall look for the lost one, bring back the stray, bandage the wounded and make the weak strong. I shall watch over the fat and

healthy. I shall be a true shepherd to them.
As for you, my sheep, the Lord says this: I will judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and he-goats.

Psalm 22(23):1-3a,5-6



The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures
where he gives me repose.
Near restful waters he leads me,
to revive my drooping spirit.
He guides me along the right path;
he is true to his name.
You have prepared a banquet for me
in the sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing.
Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me
all the days of my life.
In the Lord’s own house shall I dwell
for ever and ever.

1 Corinthians 15:20-26,28

Christ has been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of all who have fallen asleep. Death came through one man and in the same way the resurrection of the dead has come through one man. Just as all men die in Adam, so all men will be brought to life in Christ; but all of them in their proper order: Christ as the first-fruits and then, after the coming of Christ, those who belong to him. After that will come the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, having done away with every sovereignty, authority and power. For he must be king until he has put all his enemies under his feet and the last of the enemies to be destroyed is death, for everything is to be put under his feet. And when everything is subjected to him, then the Son himself will be subject in his turn to the One who subjected all things to him, so that God may be all in all.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessings on the coming kingdom of our father David! Alleluia!

Matthew 25:31-46

Jesus said to his disciples: ‘When the Son of Man comes in his glory, escorted by all the angels, then he will take his seat on his throne of glory. All the nations will be assembled before him and he will separate men one from another as the shepherd separates sheep from goats. He will place the sheep on his right hand and the goats on his left.
‘Then the King will say to those on his right hand, “Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you

gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome; naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me.” Then the virtuous will say to him in reply, “Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you; or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and make you welcome; naked and clothe you; sick or in prison and go to see you?” And the King will answer, “I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me.”
‘Next he will say to those on his left hand, “Go away from me, with your curse upon you, to the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you never gave me food; I was thirsty and you never gave me anything to drink; I was a stranger and you never made me welcome, naked and you never clothed me, sick and in prison and you never visited me.” Then it will be their turn to ask, “Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty, a stranger or naked, sick or in prison, and did not come to your help?” Then he will answer, “I tell you solemnly, in so far as you neglected to do this to one of the least of these, you neglected to do it to me.”
‘And they will go away to eternal punishment, and the virtuous to eternal life.’

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 3rd and 17th December.

O King of might and splendour,
creator most adored,
this sacrifice we render to thee as sovereign Lord.
May these our gifts be pleasing unto thy majesty,
from sin, O Lord, release us,
who have offended thee.

Thy body thou hast given,
thy blood thou hast outpoured,
that sin might be forgiven, O Jesus, living Lord.
As now with love most tender, thy death we celebrate,
our lives in self-surrender
to thee we consecrate.

The Eucharistic Prayer



Mystery of faith



The Communion Rite

The Lord’s Prayer

Communion thanksgiving

Hail Redeemer, King divine!
Priest and Lamb, the throne is thine;
King, whose reign shall never cease,
Prince of everlasting peace.
Angels, saints and nations sing:
“Praised be Jesus Christ our King;
Lord of life, earth, sky and sea,
King of love on Calvary!”

King, whose name creation thrills,
rule our hearts, our minds, our wills;
till in peace, each nation rings
with thy praises, King of kings.

Prayer after Communion

Concluding Rites

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