



Societas Presbyterorum
Sacratissimi Cordis Jesu
BETHARRAM

**SACRED HEART &
ST CATHERINE OF
ALEXANDRIA**

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**Welcome to this House
of God:
Talk to God before Mass
Listen to God during Mass
Talk to others after Mass**

This Week 24th May - 31st May (Psalter Week 3)	Mass Intentions (Mass will be said privately by the Parish Priest)	Other Events
Sunday 24th May Seventh Sunday of Easter Year A	Bert Parry RIP (BP)	World Communications Day Global Day of Prayer for Laudato Si' week
Monday 25th May Memorial of St. Bede the Venerable, Priest, Doctor of the Church	Milly & Ralph Arnold RIP (MC)	
Tuesday 26th May Memorial of St. Philip Neri, Priest, Doctor of the Church	Gladys Remedios RIP (KA)	
Wednesday 27th May Feast of St. Augustine of Canterbury, Bishop	David Veale RIP (AM)	
Thursday 28th May Easter Feria	John McAndrew RIP (D O'H)	
Friday 29th May Easter Feria	Relatives and Friends of the Sherrard and Gelanos Family (JS)	
Saturday 30th May Easter Feria		
Sunday 31st May Solemnity of Pentecost Year A	Vincenza Eaton RIP (MF)	

*“Because all creatures are connected, each must be
cherished with love and respect, for all of us as living
creatures are dependent on one another.”*

Pope Francis, Laudato Si' (paragraph 42)

SACRED HEART COMMUNITY

Fr. George Mathew SCJ
(Priest-in-Charge)
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**In an emergency, please
contact:**

07448 042484

Fr. Brian Boyle SCJ
(Retired Priest)

Fr. Tom Kelly SCJ
(Retired Priest)

Bro. Patrick Leighton SCJ

PARISH SCHOOL

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SAFEGUARDING REPRESENTATIVES

Gerry Ceclich
Kate Dalgleish
Clare Tomlinson

PRAY FOR OUR SICK PARISHIONERS

Please pray for all our parishioners, and/or their friends and relatives, who are unwell:

Mary Arulandhu, Barbara Conway, Eileen Dalton, Delores Delaney, Frank Fawcett, Sheila Ferriter, Alan Francis, Joan Graham, Beryl Hill, Alan Hurst, John Jennings, Andrew McDermott, Stella McDermott, Jackie McLean, Michael Sheridan, Aidan Skinner, Jacky Smith, Paul Smith, Margaret Steward, Angela Wardle, Breda Wightman, Mark Wightman, Richard Wightman & Monsignor Graham Wilkinson.

Please keep all parishioners and their families in your thoughts and prayers at this time.

Due to the new data regulations (GDPR), the Archdiocese have requested that we do not list names unless we have the consent of the individual. If you would like your name to be included in this list please contact Fr. George SCJ or Kate Dalgleish. Please note that the newsletter is also placed on the parish website. Thank you for your understanding.

CORONAVIRUS COVID-19

Following the Prime Ministers address on Monday 23rd March the Sacred Heart Church is now **closed** to the public. Celebration of Mass, Sunday by Sunday and day by day, will take place without a public congregation. The Parish Secretary will now be working from home until lockdown restrictions are lifted. If you wish to contact the Parish Secretary, the best way is via email to sacredheartdroitwich@hotmail.co.uk. Messages can be left on the Presbytery phone on 01905 773258 and Fr. George will forward them on.

WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY: SUNDAY 24TH MAY

Today we are celebrating World Communications Day for the 54th time. Every year the Holy Father sends a message about it, and this year's is all about the power of stories. Pope Francis also asks us to be discerning, and to avoid harmful stories in favour of good ones – stories that are wholesome and have a life-giving message. This message and a poster have been distributed with this newsletter. Please visit <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/wcd20/> for further information and resources.

MARRIAGE & FAMILY LIFE: SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS - SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER: THE ASCENSION (ACTS 1: 1-11, EPHESIANS 1: 17-23, MATTHEW 28: 16-20)

Filled with hope. Today's readings tell us of the end and the beginning of something new and exciting in the life of the young Church. When we married, we were filled with both excitement and trepidation for our future together. But like the disciples, the Spirit of the risen Lord has been with us since we became a "Little Church" on our wedding day.

GIFT AID DONATIONS

Prior to lockdown collection, Gift Aid envelopes were made available for collection at the back of church. As the church is now closed, it has not been possible for these to be collected. If you would like your envelopes delivered directly to you via post please email sacredheartdroitwich@hotmail.co.uk. Please also contact this email address if you would like information on making donations via standing order. Thank you all for your continuing generosity to the Sacred Heart parish.

LAUDATO SI'

On the Feast of Pentecost five years ago Pope Francis unveiled his encyclical letter on the environment *Laudato Si'* (Praise Be). Sunday 24th May will be a global day of prayer. A prayer card has been distributed with this newsletter. Further information and resources can be found at:

- <https://cafod.org.uk/Pray/Laudato-Si-encyclical>
- <https://www.birminghamjandp.org.uk/link-6>
- <https://laudatosiweek.org/>
- <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/laudato-si-week/>

An animation for young people can be found at <https://cafod.org.uk/Education/Secondary-and-youth-resources/Care-for-our-common-home>.

BDES: CATHOLIC EDUCATION

The BDES website has new pages *Prayer and Learning Resources* and *Shared Resources*. These can be found at <https://www.bdes.org.uk/resources-for-prayer-and-learning.html> and <https://www.bdes.org.uk/shared-resources-from-diocesan-schools.html>. They have some useful resources so please do visit them.

CAFOD

CAFOD have provided many resources, including online liturgy for children and adults, blogs and prayer resources. To access these resources, please visit www.cafod.org.uk.

LOURDES AT HOME

You are invited to an online Lourdes pilgrimage, starting on Sunday 24th May with Archbishop Bernard's opening Mass at 3.00 pm streamed live from St Chad's Cathedral. The week features daily Mass, liturgy and Rosary 'processions'. Visit www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/lourdes-pilgrimage for the full programme.

CTS BOOKS

Please visit www.ctsbooks.org for some useful articles, blogs and videos to help support parishioners whilst the church is closed. These articles are updated regularly and are free to view. There is currently a blog entitled *How God Makes Us Co-Creators of his Beauty*. There are also some other useful articles on this website under Spiritual Support in Isolation.

VATICAN WEBSITE

The English language version of the Vatican website can be found at <http://w2.vatican.va/content/vatican/en.html>. There are many useful resources on this website, particularly in the news section at <https://www.vaticannews.va/en.html>.

ALIVE PUBLISHING

The publishers of Bible Alive, Alive Publishing, have a page on their website dedicated to the COVID-19 outbreak. To view these free resources, please visit <https://www.alivepublishing.co.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/>.

MENTAL HEALTH

The Pathways to God website has articles, prayers and audio exercises to help and support readers and listeners struggling with their mental health. Please visit <https://www.pathwaystogod.org/resources/mental-health-awareness-week> to view these.

PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council met on Wednesday 13th May. They will meet again on Wednesday 10th June and the AGM is postponed until Wednesday 23rd September. Anyone who would like to be sent a copy of the minutes by email please contact Jenny Leonard on 01905 775596 or Kate Dalglish at the parish email address.

"I am the Lord your God, who holds your right hand, and I tell you, 'Don't be afraid. I will help you.'"

Isaiah 41: 13

MARY'S MEALS

Please visit www.marysmeals.org.uk for a message from their founder and an activity pack for children.

CATHOLIC SATELLITE TV (EWTN)

Catholic Satellite TV(EWTN) on Sky TV channel 588, broadcasts daily Mass at 1.00 pm, 6.00 pm and 11.00 pm and it has 24 hours of different programs which will be helpful for us all in this time. EWTN is also available on other digital platforms.

DROITWICH SVP

Sacred Heart SVP can be contacted on 0777 292 7535 or at droitwichsvp@googlemail.com.

FRIENDS OF THE HOLY LAND

Friends of the Holy Land have launched a Pentecost Challenge to help support those across the region.

Please visit www.friendsoftheholylan.org.uk/pentecost-challenge for further information and keep the FHL staff and volunteers and those in the Holy Land in your prayers.

FOODBANK

Foodbank would be very grateful for any donations. Whilst the church is closed there are collection points in Droitwich at Waitrose and Morrisons.

ONLINE DONATIONS

Online donations can be made at <https://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/support-our-work> and would be gratefully received. Please select Droitwich if you wish to donate to the Parish. Thank you for your generosity.

*Registered as a Charity,
Birmingham Roman Catholic
Diocesan Trustees:
Registered Charity
Number 234216.*

The Mission Command

Last Thursday we celebrated the Ascension of the Lord. So I thought it would be right that we reflect on this Sunday the Gospel of Matthew 28:16-20 though the reading of this Sunday is from the Gospel of John. Matthew's text is made up of two parts. The first of these is the encounter of the disciples with the Risen Lord on the mountain in Galilee and the second is the commission which the Risen Lord gives to His disciples. The encounter with the disciples is described as a matter of fact, as an event which takes place ordinarily. The response of the disciples to the appearance of Jesus is worship mixed with doubt. This is to indicate that the Risen Jesus comes to a Church that worships but also wavers, while it believes also hesitates, while it has faith also doubts. This is the Church to which the commission is given. The text focuses on the words of the Risen Jesus. The universalizing "all" before the revelation which Jesus makes about his authority, before the commission that he gives the disciples, and before assuring them of his abiding presence, makes the whole scene universal in scope. Three years of Jesus' local mission has become now universal and entrusted to each one of us. Thus, we become an extension of Christ's mission on earth.

This we can clearly see in the Acts of the Apostles, a tone for the Universal mission which the disciples are given. Here they are commissioned to be witnesses not only in Jerusalem but to the ends of the earth. However, even as they are commissioned, they are cautioned about two things. The first is patience. They must wait for the gift of the Spirit with openness and receptivity. The second is that it is not for them to know too many details about time, place and the like. Their job is only to be witnesses. To use the words of St Francis of Assisi, they are called to "proclaim the Gospel at all times. When necessary, use words." They were meant to be those who could give evidence for what they have seen and heard. They could not be witnesses unless they had met the Risen Christ - unless their lives have been transformed by him. Their testimony was about him, not just about what happened long ago and far away. They were to give evidence about what they themselves have heard, seen and experienced. That's why Jesus appeared neither to the High Priest nor to Pilate but only to His disciples.

The evidence that they were to give and the message that they were to proclaim, was good news. The message was hope and light and love. It was a message which Jesus himself had taught them and this is what they were to teach. This was why even before Jesus sent them out, he made explicit that the authority was His and not theirs. Their job was not to usurp this authority, but simply to welcome all peoples to make the same discovery that they had made in their faith journey, the discovery of the God of light and of goodness, of mercy and of compassion, of justice and of reconciliation - and not impose their own cultural values or traditions in the process. It was allowing others to make that discovery freely and joyfully. Authority has been given to Christ. This was remembered by Christians in the first century as is evident in the community living which resulted from the witness to the words and deeds of Jesus. They also realized that the Church was but the body of the Risen Christ and so had to continue to be an extension of him who was raised. The missionary movement of the Church stemming from the mission command of Jesus continued and does so even today. There are moments in the Church's history when we see truly gracious, noble, altruistic and selfless acts of dedication and service. A lot of good has been done in every continent and corner of the earth, because the Church continued to take seriously the command of Jesus.

However, it is also true that sometimes we, as Church, seemed to have forgotten the real message and concentrated on getting converts to the faith at any cost. This has left in some places a memory of hurt, pain, loss and even suffering. We have sometimes missed the point. The mistake that we sometimes make is to forget that the authority rests with Jesus and not with us. Our role continues to be only that of proclaimers who will "disciple" peoples everywhere by teaching them through our lives what Jesus has commanded us and done in us. God bless you.

Fr. George Mathew SCJ