



Societas Presbyterorum  
Sacratissimi Cordis Jesu  
BETHARRAM

## SACRED HEART & ST CATHERINE OF ALEXANDRIA

208 Worcester Road, Droitwich Spa,  
WR9 8AZ, Tel: 01905 773258  
Email: sacredheartdroitwich@hotmail.co.uk  
Web: www.sacredheartdroitwich.org.uk



### Today's Mass Readings

Isaiah 63: 16-17, 64: 1, 3-8

Psalm 79;

1 Corinthians 1: 3-9

Mark 13: 33-37

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



This Week 29th November - 6th December (Psalter Week 1)	Mass Intentions	Other Events
<b>Sunday 29th November</b> First Sunday of Advent Year B	9.00 am Mildred Paling RIP (MB)	10.00 am - 12 Noon: Private Prayer
<b>Monday 30th November</b> Feast of St. Andrew. Apostle	9.15 am Lucy & George Philips RIP (KA)	10.00 am - 11.00 am: Private Prayer
<b>Tuesday 1st December</b> Feast of St. Edmund Campion, Priest, Martyr	9.15 am Joan Graham (BB)	
<b>Wednesday 2nd December</b> Advent Feria	9.15 am Holy Mass	Public Worship resumes
<b>Thursday 3rd December</b> Advent Feria	9.15 am Betty Parry (EK)	
<b>Friday 4th December</b> Advent Feria	9.15 am Holy Mass	
<b>Saturday 5th December</b> Feast of St. Birinus, Bishop	11.00 am Holy Mass	
<b>Sunday 6th December</b> Second Sunday of Advent Year B	8.30 am Vincenza Eaton RIP (MF) 10.30 am Holy Mass 6.00 pm People of the Parish	Retiring Collection for the Poor Parishes of the Diocese

*“All too quickly, however, we forget the lessons of history...Once this health crisis passes, our worst response would be to plunge even more deeply into feverish consumerism and new forms of egotistic self-preservation. God willing, after all this, we will think no longer in terms of “them” and “those”, but only “us”. “*

Pope Francis, Fratelli Tutti (paragraph 35)

## **SACRED HEART COMMUNITY**

Fr. George Mathew SCJ  
(Parish Priest)  
georgemathewscj@  
hotmail.com

**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**

St. Joseph's,  
6 St Joseph's Close,  
Ombersley Way,  
Droitwich, WR9 0RY  
Tel: 01905 773572  
Email: office@st-josephs-  
droitwich.worcs.sch.uk

## **HEAD TEACHER**

Mrs. Cath Bryan

## **PARISH SECRETARY**

Kate Dalglish  
The Sacred Heart  
Presbytery  
Tel: 01905 773258  
Email:  
sacredheartdroitwich  
@hotmail.co.uk.

## **SAFEGUARDING REPRESENTATIVES**

Gerry Ceclich  
Kate Dalglish  
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, Colum MacCourt, Sheila Manion, Sally McCool, Andrew McDermott, Stella McDermott, Jackie McLean, Michael Sheridan, Jacky Smith, Paul Smith, Margaret Steward, Angela Wardle, Breda Wightman, Mark Wightman, Richard Wightman & Monsignor Graham Wilkinson.

**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 Dalglish. Please note that the newsletter is also placed on the parish website. Thank you for your understanding.**

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## **COVID-19**

Further to the new restrictions effective from Wednesday 2nd December, Mass will be open to the public from this date onwards. All previous rules and guidance for attending Mass safely will be still in place. Please note that taking details for track and trace purposes will also resume.

## **MASSES FOR CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY 2020**

There will be three Masses this year; Christmas Eve 5.00 pm (family Mass) and 8.00 pm and Christmas Day 9.00 am. As COVID-19 restrictions will still be in place the maximum capacity of the Church is only 80 worshippers at each Mass. Normally at Christmas, each Mass would be at least double this number. In order to alleviate any potential capacity problems, entry to all the above Masses will be by ticket only. Please can you contact Fr George (by telephone or by email) or Kate, parish secretary (by email only: sacredheartdroitwich@hotmail.co.uk since she is working from home) if you would like to attend Mass over this period. Alternatively, you can let one of the Stewards know at the Sunday or weekday Masses you attend when public services resume after 2nd December. To help us to organise the liturgy in advance, the last day for the booking will be Friday 18th December. The information required will be your name, contact telephone number, the number of people that will be in your group and the Mass you would like to attend. This information will be put on a ticket that you can collect either from the Stewards at your regular Mass or from Fr George. The ticket can be posted to you as long as you have given a mailing address. Please be aware that if demand is high enough there will be 80 worshippers in Church for each Mass and it is important for the safety of all that you sit in the seat allocated on your ticket and do not move to a different seat. An additional Mass will be added if these three Masses are oversubscribed. Further information will be in the Newsletter once the numbers wishing to attend Christmas Masses are known. Currently there are still over 50 places left at all three Masses.

## **THE SOWER MAGAZINE**

The Diocesan Magazine, *The Sower*, is now available from church and also online at <https://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/diocesan-magazine>. If you would like a copy from church, please speak to Fr. George as copies will not be left at the back of church due to Covid-19 safety measures.

## CHRISTMAS RAFFLE - PLEASE NOTE CHANGES

The prize draw for the long awaited raffle will now take place on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December after 10.30 am Mass. Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December is your last chance to buy raffle tickets. No tickets will be sold after this date. All ticket stubs together with the money must be returned by Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December. Those who have indicated that they would donate a raffle prize, could you please hand them in by Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December. Please note the change of the date and timing. This, of course, is subject to any changes the government may make. Please do not leave it late by bringing raffle prizes on the day of the draw.

## CHRISTMAS: READERS, EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS & STEWARDS

If anyone would like to volunteer as a Reader or Eucharistic Minister for the Christmas Masses. Please could you contact Fr. George SCJ. Two readers and two Eucharistic Ministers will be needed for each Mass over Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. If possible, please could Readers could use their own lectionary if they have one, if not printed copies will be provided. Three stewards will also be needed for each Mass. If any stewards are able to help, please could you contact Kate Dalgleish or Fr. George SCJ. Thank you to those who have already volunteered.

## PARISH SECRETARY

The Parish Secretary is currently working from home full time, and will be available via phone during the following hours: Monday 10.45 am until 12 noon, Tuesday 10.00 am until 1.00 pm, Wednesday 9.00 am until 12 Noon and Friday 8.45 am until 12.45 pm. To contact the Parish Secretary via phone, please use 07927 145040. Outside of these times, this mobile phone will be switched off, please leave messages via email.

## SVP DROITWICH - GIVING TREE APPEAL 2020

Father Hudson's Homes have said that they will not be able to accept gifts from the Giving Tree this year. They do however still have a need to support families that need gifts for their families. There will be a second collection in lieu of gifts after each Mass on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December. Cash donations can also be given via a box by the Giving Tree. This is at the back of church in the Baptistry on the right hand side as you leave the church. The funds collected will go to Father Hudson's Homes so that they can order gifts to be delivered direct to the families in need. We have always had wonderful support from our parish for this worthwhile cause so please be as generous as possible in these difficult times. If you are unable to attend church for whatever reason then donations can be left at the presbytery with Father George clearly marked Giving Tree Gifts. Cheques should be made to Father Hudson's Homes. In addition, Father Hudson's Homes have set up a JustGiving page at <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/FHCchristmas20> where online donations can be made. Thank you all for your support.

## CHRISTMAS CARDS TO PRISONERS

"Tell prisoners that they are prisoners no more". If there was ever a special time when prisoners needed help, this year would be the one. With the agreement of the Chaplain, we have worked out a way in which we can get cards to Long Lartin Maximum Security Prison this year. Clearly it's a bit different from usual but we have done this for 20 years now, it's not the time to give up. Cards will be available from 29<sup>th</sup> November for you to take home and write in. Please for security reasons, **do not sign with your name**, after your message put from Sacred Heart, Droitwich, and **do not seal the envelope**. Please bring your completed cards to church by Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December at the latest, with 30p donation, and leave card and cash in the box at the back of church. They will then be taken to Long Lartin.



## FAITH ENGAGEMENT REVIEW

Following his appointment as Faith Engagement Adviser at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Colin Bloom has been asked to lead a review into how best the government should engage with faith groups in England. Catholic Voices are hosting a webinar on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December at 7.00 pm.

The event will be to explain the purpose of the review and there will be the opportunity to put questions to Colin Bloom. Details and further information on how to register can be found at <https://www.catholicvoices.org.uk/events/independent-faith-review>.



## **JOB VACANCY**

The Archdiocese of Birmingham is recruiting for a Chief Operating Officer. For full details about this new role please see the poster on the parish website. If you would like to receive an Information Pack for this role with details on how to apply, please send an expression of interest and (optional but appreciated) a CV or professional profile in confidence to our consultant, Jenny Hills at executive@harrishill.co.uk



## **Next Sunday's Mass**

### **Readings**

*Isaiah 40: 1-5,  
9-11*

*Psalm 84;*

*2 Peter 3: 8-14*

*Mark 1: 1-8*

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

## ***To Stay Awake:***

Today we begin the new liturgical season, the advent. It calls for action and is a symbol of the Christian lifestyle, not just a mood we experience at a certain time of year. "Stay awake!" is the rallying call of the Gospel text of today and sets the theme for the whole season of Advent. To stay awake - what does it mean for us today? What does it mean to stay awake when churches and other places of worship are being closed and people are desperate to worship God in those places of worship? What does it mean to wake up when people are living in fear, loneliness and desolation? What does it mean to stay awake when human beings are mistreated, dehumanised? What does it mean when our words and motives are being misunderstood? It means very clearly that disciples of Jesus need not concern themselves with apocalyptic speculation or predictions of the future. They must remember that doing God's will has no relationship to the timing of divine judgment. Neither should the disciples concern themselves with the fate of those who persecute them or who reject the message of unconditional love. The only question the master will ask is whether the servants have been faithful to their call as disciples, whether despite all odds they have been instruments of that love which he showed when he hung from the cross.

Being a disciple of Jesus does not just happen suddenly. It is a commitment that must be made constantly and a decision that must be renewed at every moment of every day. The root supposition of Jesus' message is: we can aim higher. Holiness is possible. We are not obliged to merely accept the forces of cruelty, selfishness and oppression, within ourselves or in the world around us. We have to keep fighting against them and show them up for what they really are and once we have done all that is required of us, we must turn to God and open ourselves to his transforming grace and love.

This is also the message of the other two readings this Sunday. The prophet Isaiah is under no illusions about the selfishness and malice human nature is capable of. "Our sins blew us away like the wind", he says. And yet, he goes on, "Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down". If only the skies would open up and someone, something would come from outside of our troubled world and focus our attention on something other than ourselves and our narrow parochial interests! Something or someone from beyond ourselves to get our attention, move our gaze from our navels, and challenge us to work together rather than against one another. In the Psalm, too, we hear the anguished voice of Israel, imploring God to look down from His heavenly throne - to save and shepherd His people. The psalmist, like Isaiah, is confident that Israel will indeed experience the protection of God who will come as he has always done in the past.

In this season of Advent, we declare that the Isaiah's cry has been answered. In response to the Psalmist's plea, God has indeed looked down on his people and saved them in a way that they never imagined possible. This salvation is achieved not through violence or retaliating by throwing rock for thrown rock. The cry is not answered by retaining anger and resentment against those who seem to us to willfully and wantonly destroy places of worship and the homes of the innocent. It is not answered by taking up arms and indulging in the same vile acts that others have engaged in. It is answered as God comes in the flesh to be among us, full of grace and truth.

The symbolism of advent is the symbolism of preparing ourselves for imminent arrival of God in our life and in the case of many of us, reawakened our desire for God which we have managed to bury under a pile of preoccupations. As Jesus says in the Gospel, when He comes, He must not find us asleep.

Have a blessed Advent. Fr. George Mathew SCJ