



Societas Presbyterorum
Sacratissimi Cordis Jesu
BETHARRAM

SACRED HEART & ST CATHERINE OF ALEXANDRIA

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Today's Mass Readings
Leviticus 19: 1 - 2, 17-18;
Psalm 102;
1 Corinthians 3: 16-23;
Matthew 5: 38-48

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

| This Week 19th February – 26th February (Psalter Week 3) | Holy Mass & Services | Other Events |
|--|--|--|
| Sunday 19th February Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A Retiring Collection for Life Charity | 8.30 am Caroline Healy (MM) 10.30 am Susan Stevens RIP (M O'R) 6.00 pm People of the Parish | After 8.30 am Mass: Tea and Coffee in the Hall Day for the Unemployed |
| Monday 20th February Feria in Ordinary Time | 8.55 am Morning Prayer 9.15 am Chris Finnerty | |
| Tuesday 21st February Feria in Ordinary Time | 8.55 am Morning Prayer 9.15 am Holy Communion Service | |
| Wednesday 22nd February Ash Wednesday | 8.55 am Morning Prayer 9.15 am Eileen Halloran (MG) 7.00 pm Holy Mass | 10.00 am until 6.00 pm: Adoration |
| Thursday 23rd February Thursday after Ash Wednesday | 8.55 am Morning Prayer 9.15 am Private Intention (Fr. G) 5.00 pm Reception of the Body | |
| Friday 24th February Friday after Ash Wednesday | 9.00 am Stations of the Cross followed by Holy Mass (Private Intention C & GP) 11.30 am Requiem Mass | |
| Saturday 25th February Saturday after Ash Wednesday | 11.00 am Canon Garry Byrne RIP | 10.15 am -10.45 am: Confessions |
| Sunday 26th February First Sunday of Lent Year A | 8.30 am Frank & Joan Patterson RIP (M.J) 10.30 am Alan Rossiter RIP (MG) 6.00 pm People of the Parish | After 8.30 am Mass: Tea and Coffee in the Hall 5.15 pm Stations of the Cross |

“God does not reason with calculations and tables; he loves us as one who is enamoured: not to the minimum, but to the maximum! He does not say, “I love you up to a certain point”. No, true love is never up to a certain point, and is never satisfied; love always goes beyond, one cannot do without...And he entrusted to us the commandment most dear to him: that we love each other like he loved us (cf. Jn 15:12).”

(Pope Francis, 12th February 2023)

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

8.30 am & 10.30 am: The Lord is compassion and love.

6.00 pm: My soul give thanks to the Lord, all my being bless his holy name. AK 31.

SACRED HEART COMMUNITY

Fr. George Mathew SCJ
(Parish Priest)

fr.george.mathew@
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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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PRAY FOR OUR SICK PARISHIONERS

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

Barbara Conway, Finbarr Cronin, Eileen Dalton, Frank Fawcett, Joan Graham, Bev Griffiths, Beryl Hill, Alan Hurst, John Jennings, Sally McCool, Andrew McDermott, Jackie McLean, Michael Sheridan, Jacky Smith, Paul Smith, Margaret Steward, Breda Wightman, Mark Wightman, Richard Wightman & Msgr. 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 Dalgleish. Please note that the newsletter is also placed on the parish website. Thank you for your understanding.

RECENTLY DECEASED

Your prayers are asked for **Delores Delaney, Patricia Mary Fahy & Margaret Jarman** who died recently. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. The Requiem Mass for Patricia Fahy will be on Friday 24th February at 11.30 am, with the Reception of the Body on Thursday 23rd February at 5.00 pm. Please keep their families and friends in your kind thoughts and prayers.

THE DIOCESAN VISION: UNFOLDING GOD'S PLAN FOR THE PARISH

The Diocesan Vision, published at Pentecost 2021, laid out the Archbishop's vision and dream for the future of our Diocese. In continuation of this a series of six sessions has been designed to help parishioners, parish leaders and small groups engage with the Vision, and think about how we can take practical steps to renew the mission and ministries within the parish. We plan to begin these sessions during Lent and continue during the Easter season. We invite the parishioners and parish groups to come along in a friendly manner to reflect and discuss about our parish life in line with the Diocesan Vision. The first session will begin on Tuesday 14th March at 7.00 pm in the Parish Hall. The remaining 5 sessions will follow every Tuesday. Each session will start with an opening prayer, excerpt from the Diocesan Vision document, short reflection, questions/activities and conclusion. The sessions will be 90 minutes each.

TURKEY & SYRIA EARTHQUAKES

On Monday 6th February, two earthquakes – registering 7.8 and 7.5 magnitude – hit Syria and Turkey in the space of just 12 hours, killing more than 40,000 people and causing widespread devastation. Please keep those who have lost their lives, as well as the injured, family members, and rescuers in your kind thoughts and prayers. Mary's Meals, the Disasters Emergency Committee and CAFOD have all launched appeals to support the emergency response to those in need. The links to these appeals are:

Mary's Meals: <https://www.marysmeals.org.uk/campaigns>

CAFOD: <https://cafod.org.uk/?form=syriaturkeyearthquake>

DEC: <https://donation.dec.org.uk/turkey-syria-earthquake-appeal>

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME 2023

The last date to give names for the First Holy Communion preparation is Tuesday 28th February. The first meeting for parents will take place on Saturday 4th March at 9.30 am in the Parish Hall. The First Holy Communion Mass will be on Saturday 17th June at 11.00 am with the Commitment Mass on Sunday 21st May at 10.30 am.

SUSAN 'SUE' STEVENS RIP

Your prayers are asked for Sue Stevens who died recently, may her soul and the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. Please keep family & friends in your thoughts and prayers. A Mass will be said in Sue's memory today at 10.30 am.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY: FASHION SHOW & SUPPORTING PRISONERS AT LONG LARTIN PRISON

SVP are holding a fundraising fashion show on Saturday 22nd April at 4.00 pm. Tickets are now on sale after each Sunday mass priced £6.00 to include a glass of alcohol-free bubbly. We need to have final numbers of those intending to attend by the end of March. For more information please see the poster at the back of church or contact DroitwichReferrals@svp.org.uk or 0777 292 7535.

The chaplaincy at Long Lartin Prison has asked if we can collect puzzle books, word searches, colouring books and colouring pencils/crayons for the prisoners to use in their own rooms. If you are able to donate any of these items they would be very much appreciated. Please leave in the SVP donations box at the back of church. Thank you for your support.

Thank you to everyone who has donated hats, scarves and gloves. Your support is much appreciated.

LENT 2023 ONLINE RETREAT

There will be an online Lent Retreat (produced by the Jesuits) starting on Ash Wednesday (22nd February) and running until Easter Sunday (9th April). Each day, the website/daily emails provide a piece of Scripture, a thought for the day, a picture to ponder on and a piece of music. The idea is to pray by oneself for around 15 minutes using these prayer materials. There is also a little bit on 40 different saints, one for each day of Lent. If you want, you can join in weekly online meetings in small groups to see how our prayer has been going. These meetings are really encouraging and helpful, but are voluntary. These will be on Mondays at 7.30 pm starting on 27th February. If you are interested or for more details, please contact Max and Cecilia Jourdir on 01886 812259 or mandcjourdir@gmail.com or go direct to the Retreat website <https://www.iscglasgow.co.uk/lent23.html>

REFUGEE COLLECTION

Thank you so much for the various preloved and new items recently collected. A particular thank you to those who continue to knit such beautiful items and those who pack them so thoughtfully. A special thank you to the parishioners who collected the vast quantity of preloved gloves and the men's and children's clothing. Please continue to provide warm winter items, as they are still so desperately needed. I will collect again on Monday 6th March. Wool, patterns, needles and buttons are available in the cupboard at the church entrance to help defray your costs and donations of the same will be so appreciated. Thank you all once again for your continual support, which is so vital and appreciated

HOUSE MASSES DURING LENT

On Thursdays during Lent there will be house Masses celebrated in your own homes. If you would like to host a House Mass in your home, please let Fr. George know. The house Masses will start from Thursday the 2nd of March at 7.00 pm.

COMMUNITY MEAL

The next Community Meal is on Monday 13th March at 12.30 pm in the Parish Hall.



FOODBANK

There is a new wish list of items that is on the noticeboard and the parish website. If you would like to support the Foodbank then items can be left in the box at the back of church and would be gratefully received.

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

Main Collection:
£210.62
Gift Aid: £170.00
Thank you for
supporting your
Parish.

Mass attendance
last Sunday: 221

Additional donation
for Racial Justice
Gift Aid: £2.00
Thank you for your
generosity.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

If you would like some company, a drink, chat and cake then please come and join us on Sunday 12th March from 2.30 pm to 4.30 pm in the Parish Hall. Please see the notice at the back of church for more information. You can contact us at DroitwichReferrals @svp.org.uk or on 07772 927535 or on Facebook, SVP Sacred Heart Droitwich.



Next Sunday's Mass **Readings**

Genesis 2: 7-9,
3: 1-7;

Psalms 50;

Romans 5: 12-19;

Matthew 4: 1-11

Welcome to everyone at Mass today, especially if you are new to our church or haven't been to Mass for some time. If you are of another Christian denomination or non-Christian you are warmly invited to approach the priest or minister and ask or signify your wish for a blessing.

Dear Friends in Christ Jesus. The theme of today's liturgy is to focus on living personal holiness by loving God and forgiving our brothers and sisters. In the book of Leviticus, the Lord instructs Moses to relate to the people of Israel his message of love, anchored on holiness. He notes that this call to holiness has the appeal of loving kindness which shuns hatred for one's brother or sister from the heart. The Lord goes ahead to prescribe fraternal correction, taking revenge, holding grudge against anyone and loving a neighbour as oneself as prerequisite for holiness. The second reading (1st Cor. 3:16-23), St. Paul insists that we are God's temple and his Holy Spirit lives amongst us.

Jesus reinforces the message of the first reading in the gospel wherein he upturns the thinking of society. In an unparalleled way, he entrenches a New World Order which goes against the normal eye for an eye, tooth for tooth. He insists that we should offer no resistance to the one who is evil, turn the other cheek to one who strikes us, offer our cloak to anyone who intends to go to law with us over our tunic, go two miles with a person who invites us for one, give to those who ask and never turn our backs on those who intend to borrow. When I think about 'turn the other cheek to one who strikes us' the person comes to my mind is Mahatma Gandhi who is known for his nonviolence and in fact he was taken up by this part of the sermon on the mountain. He considered this as the greatest writing on nonviolence in the human history. While he was in South Africa, he was taking a walk with a clergyman; two young men came against them with stones in their hands to throw at them. The clergy man suggested that that they would turn back and go another way. But Gandhi hesitated, quoting the scripture he said, "we must show the other cheek to one who strikes us". The clergy replied, these words are not to be interpreted literally but rather Jesus said metaphorically. But Gandhi strongly refuted the clergy man and said, "He suspected that Jesus meant that one must show courage and willing to take one blow or several blows to show that you will not strike back nor turn aside. That calls something in the enemy that make his hatred for you decrease and his respect for you increase." By these words he shows how Jesus' words should be lived in our lives. It is easy to react to violence, but the most courageous thing is to respond peacefully. Gandhi never suggested that you passively put up with injustice. He said, injustice must be fought, but not with violence. In the Gospel today, Jesus is not teaching us to suffer from anyone, but rather respect even the ones who hurt you and even mistreat you. The whole world justice system is based on hate your enemy, punish the enemy, destroy the enemy so that one can survive the injustice. But Jesus reverses the entire justice system and invites us not to hate, not to punish, not to destroy anyone rather to love and forgive. If we extract an eye for an eye the whole world will go gradually blind. So, someone has to break the chain of retaliation and hatred to restore peace in the world. Therefore, forgiveness is not a sign of weakness, but it is the only way to restore peace and brotherhood in the world.

On this Sunday, the liturgy invites us as Christian to take the fight in our hand not by retaliating evil but by infusing message of love and forgiveness even in front of our worst enemy. This is the way to holiness and this is the Christian spirituality which we are all invited to live. Fr. George Mathew SCJ