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FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT – YEAR A SUNDAY 29TH MARCH 2020

Dear Parishioners,

Greetings from my desk in the Presbytery! I don't know about you, but it feels very strange! The roads outside are so quiet and there are only a few people out and about. But, there is a sense of calm descending on the streets of Codsall – despite the uncertain times that we are in.

Following the Prime Minister's announcement on Monday evening, it was with great sadness that we had to lock our church buildings until further notice. It had been a great encouragement to see people calling into the church to pray, but, for now, the statue of Our Lady in front of St Christopher's has become a very popular place for prayer for many people.

In these moments of great uncertainty, let's not lose hope. We commend everyone in our two parishes to Our Lady; asking particularly for her maternal protection for those who are suffering and isolated at this time.

During this past week, it has been lovely to hear from many parishioners who are letting me know that they are well and keeping safe. I also know that you are keeping in touch with each other – this is a wonderful way for us to continue to look out for each other and reassure one another of our prayers. Do get in touch if you need anything, or just want a chat!

On Monday, I was asked if we could look after a Seminarian from St Mary's College, Oscott following the temporary closure of the seminary during the coming weeks. His name is Gerard Bowen and is currently in his first year. Please do keep him in your prayers, as I know that he is praying for you.

Keep safe.

With my best wishes, and continued prayers for you and your families.

*God bless,
Fr Craig.*

*Our Lady of Lourdes...pray for us.
St Christopher...pray for us.
St Thomas of Canterbury...pray for us.*

Merciful God, come to the help of your people. Be our shelter in this time of peril and strengthen the bonds of our communities. Bring healing to all who suffer the ravages of disease, and assist those whose skill can put an end to this affliction. Be with those whose special care is the health of mind and body. Fill their hearts with awe for the life which is your gift, and sustain them daily in your service. May their hands bring to others the comfort of your healing touch. Through Christ our Lord. Amen

KEY CONTACTS

PARISH PRIEST

Rev Fr Craig Szmidt BA STB
The Presbytery
115 Wolverhampton Road
Codsall, WV8 1PF
01902 842891
pp.stchristopher.codsall@rcaob.org.uk

PERMANENT DEACON

Rev Mr Steve Walters

PARISH SISTERS

Sisters of Saint Joseph of Tarbes
33 Alameda Gardens
01902 751614

PARISH SECRETARIES

Codsall: Anne Shipley
Tettenhall: Linda Allen

SAFEGUARDING

Codsall: Jo Stewart
01902 845027
Tettenhall: Angela Walker
01902 751197

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (CONFESSION)

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is available by appointment. Please contact Fr Craig to arrange a time.

ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Adoration will be live streamed at various times during the week

Please visit our Parish Website.

THE PARISH OFFICES – CODSALL & TETTENHALL

Following the advice of the Archdiocese, and of the government, both of our parish offices are closed for the time being. We keep Anne and Linda in our prayers and thank them for all that they do.

CRUCIFIX AND TABERNACLE RESTORATION

The Tabernacle and Main Crucifix at St Thomas' are now away for refurbishment work, with an estimated cost of approximately £4,000. Please think about whether you might be able to contribute financially to this. Every little helps! Thank you for £1650 already received!

Unfortunately, the ceiling above the crucifix and tabernacle in the church are starting to shed paint and plaster, so I have delayed their return until the roof replacement is completed.

NEW VESTMENTS FOR HOLY MASS

You may not be aware, but we are very limited in the number of vestments (what the priest wears to celebrate Holy Mass) available in either parish. Many of the ones which Fr Craig wears at St Christopher's are his own, and Fr Paul also had his own. We have, therefore, ordered a new set for each parish. A set of four will cost £1800. Thank you to those who have already donated £1400 towards these vestments for St Christopher's and £450 for St Thomas's.

Please think about whether you might be able to donate (for either parish)!

Green - £450 White - £450 Red - £450 Purple - £450

CHOIR PRACTICES FOR HOLY WEEK & EASTER

Thank you for the hard work of those who have been meeting for the past few weeks in preparation for the Holy Week and Easter liturgies. Due to the fact that these liturgies will not be celebrated publicly this year, we have ceased the rehearsals. You can always sing from your armchair!

GIFT AID ENVELOPES FOR TAX YEAR APRIL 2020/2021

Are available in the porch at St Thomas's and at St Christopher's. You will (hopefully) be able to collect these very soon!

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

If you have tinned/dried food, baby items, nappies, personal toiletries, gifts/toys leave them in the Hall. Thank you. Ring Tess Fitzsimons 01902 262004/07842 383689 for transport to Mass, shopping, medical appointments etc. The SVP are continuing to be of great help within our parishes as they offer support to our housebound and isolated parishioners. We thank them for this important task!

BAPTISM PREPARATION

All Baptisms have had to be suspended for the foreseeable future. If you would like your child to be Baptised, please contact the Parish Office and we will update you.

CHURCH COLLECTION

In answer to a number of enquiries about church collections in the current situation of the Coronavirus pandemic, please do consider continuing to support your parish financially either by Gift Aid envelopes or cash. You can either wait until we are able to return to Mass, or alternatively, you can post it through the Presbytery letterbox at 115 Wolverhampton Road, (not the office side). If instead, you would like to consider setting up a Standing Order, please get in touch. Thank you.

WALSINGHAM PILGRIMAGE – SATURDAY 9 MAY

The annual diocesan pilgrimage to Walsingham has now been cancelled for this year due to the Coronavirus pandemic. We look forward to the pilgrimage next year.

LOURDES PILGRIMAGE 23 – 29 May 2020

Unfortunately, the annual diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes has been cancelled this year due to restrictions on travel to and from France. Please continue to keep the sick and young people of our Archdiocese in your prayers.

REDEDICATION OF ENGLAND AS THE DOWRY OF MARY

This Sunday (29th March) is the rededication of England as the Dowry of May. It is both a personal promise of the people of our country and a renewal of the entrustment vows made by King Richard II in 1381. See www.behold2020.com At 3.00 p.m. please join the Live Stream on the parish website for Rosary and Benediction.

FROM OUR SEMINARIAN...

My name is Gerard Bowen and I am a seminarian for the Archdiocese of Birmingham. Birmingham has always been my home. Ever since I was a young boy, I felt that God was perhaps calling me to the Priesthood. However, for a long while I lacked the courage to move forward with this calling. As a teenager I completed a gap year at Alton Castle, then went to university to study Teaching. For almost ten years I was a primary school teacher, but the call to the Priesthood was still there. A few years ago, I reached a point where I felt that if God was calling me to the Priesthood, then I should do something about it. The Diocese sent me to Valladolid in Spain for a year, where I was given a year-long opportunity to spend time in prayerful discernment. Now I'm in my first year at St Mary's College, Oscott and I still feel that this is the path that God is calling me to.

I will keep you all in my prayers over these coming weeks. Many thanks, and God bless you all.

PRAYER FOR A SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

My Jesus,

I believe that You are present in this Holy Sacrament of the altar.

I love You above all things and I passionately desire to receive You into my soul.

Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come spiritually into my soul so that I may unite myself wholly to You now and forever. Amen.

based on a prayer of St Alphonsus Liguori

There are lots of other resources for prayer on our own parish website, and at www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk

All Parish groups have stopped meeting until further notice due to coronavirus medical guidelines.

**Acts29@CT – Youth Group
ST CHRISTOPHER'S TOTS
ST CHRISTOPHER'S CRAFT AND CHAT
BODY IN BALANCE
OVER 60'S – NEWMAN CENTRE
SEWING CLASS – NEWMAN CENTRE**

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT – YEAR A

29TH MARCH 2020

Saturday	28		Doreen Plimmer RIP
Sunday	29		Christine and Bert Bloxham RIP
			Pro Populo
Monday	30		Benefactors Ann Picken & Vicky Brown RIP
Tuesday	31		Intentions of Gill Whieldon
Wednesday	01		Gerard Fernandes
Thursday	02		Eugene Healy RIP
Friday	03		Frances Krzyszowski RIP
Saturday	04		Gagandeep (Good Health)

PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD – YEAR A

5TH APRIL 2020

Saturday	04		Pro Populo
Sunday	05		Kelechi Oduoza
			Ann Blud RIP

N.B. ALL MASS INTENTIONS WILL CONTINUE TO BE CELEBRATED ON THE DATE REQUESTED. WHILST FR CRAIG WILL NOW CELEBRATE HOLY MASS PRIVATELY, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO JOIN HIM IN PRAYER VIA OUR PARISH LIVE STREAM.

SEE OUR PARISH WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION.

LITURGICAL NOTES...

Monday	Lent Feria
Tuesday	Lent Feria
Wednesday	Lent Feria
Thursday	Lent Feria
Friday	Lent Feria
Saturday	Lent Feria

PRAY FOR THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES OCCUR AT THIS TIME...

*Eternal Rest grant unto them O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them,
May they rest in peace. Amen.*

PRAY FOR THE SICK OF OUR PARISHES... Zofia Stanislawska, Dee Allsopp, PWB, Mary Doherty, Ian Morris, Leon Thompson, Maureen Everitt, MK, T Hill, John Lewis, Mr & Mrs JT Begue, Margaret Waleczek, Alexandra Marshall, Anthony Jones, Marian Allen, Jayne Wiggins, Julian Chalmers, Jane Taylor, Sister Genevieve, Jeff Gibbs, Mary Spratt, Emily Jarvis, Fr David Duggan, Chris Kennedy, Antonina Alaimo, Liliana Alaimo, Giuseppe Alaimo, Joy Westley, CHY, Eutemia Fernandes, Maisie Hargreaves, Mary Rock.

To add a name to the sick list, please contact the Parish Office.

FINANCIAL MATTERS...

No financial information at this time.

Thank you for your ongoing support!

DIARY DATES...

Something for us all to look forward to...!

Sat 17 October	Holy Mass to celebrate the Opening (20 years) and Consecration of St Christopher's (10 years)	St C	5.30 pm
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