

PASTORAL: Committee is led by Shirley.

Hospital Chaplaincy: If you or a family member is in hospital and would like a visit by a Priest or Eucharistic Minister, please inform the parish office.

Baptism: A parent of the child to be baptised must be baptised, **attend Sunday Mass regularly** and undertake the preparation meetings. Please see Fr after Mass to discuss your request. You will be required to attend a preparation course before confirming any date for baptism so please bear this in mind in preparing for the child's baptism.

Marriage: Please contact Fr Mathew initially to discuss your request for marriage. This must be done before Fr can agree any dates with you as you may be required to attend preparation classes.

Mass Intentions: If you would like to have a Mass celebrated for a particular intention: on behalf of a family member, a friend, a deceased loved one, to remember a birthday or anniversary, envelopes are available at the back of church.

Communion to the Sick and the Housebound: Please speak to Fr if you know of anyone who is unable to come to Mass and would like to receive Communion.



St Gerard's Catholic Primary School

'We Live, Love and Learn Together with Jesus'

Twitter: @StGerardsBham **School website:**

www.stgerard.bham.sch.uk

Visit from Archbishop Bernard Longley: A wonderful evening was had on Wednesday as we welcomed Archbishop Bernard Longley to our parish to celebrate Confirmation for 24 children from our school. Thankyou to all the children, their families, teachers and parishioners for their preparation and making this such a memorable occasion.

PARISH ADMINISTRATION: Parish Administrator: Sue Perkins: stgerard.bham@rcaob.org.uk

HEALTH AND SAFETY: Parish Health and Safety Hayley Macilwraith-hs.stgerard.bham@rcaob.org.uk

YOUTH: Young Persons Officer: *To be appointed:* yth.stgerard.bham@rcaob.org.uk **Children's Liturgy Leaders and Helpers:** Sue, Grace, Will, Annie, Sarita, Faith and Cynthia. **Altar Server Chaperone:** Hayley Macilwraith.

FINANCE/PREMISES: Parish Finance and Premises Committee: Fr, Sue Perkins, Sue Byrne and Frank.

SAFEGUARDING: The Parish operates in accordance with Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and the National and Archdioceses policies and procedures at all times. Our **Parish Safeguarding Officer** is Hayley Macilwraith who can be contacted on sg.stgerard.bham@rcaob.org.uk or alternatively the Diocesan Safeguarding team on 0121 230 6240 if you have any concerns.

SOCIAL: Committee: Beulah, Sarita, Bernie, Rosaline and Sue

Reflection: 3rd Sunday of Advent: Mary Waits with the Word

There must be times during pregnancy when waiting for the baby to arrive is exciting. There must also be times when it is frustrating. There could also be times of fear, of expectation, of hope, of joy, of confusion. During the nine months of waiting, there could be so many different and opposing feelings. Being open to the Word, receiving the Word into our lives and allowing him to grow in us and change us, leads us to the mystery of waiting with the Word. During Mary's pregnancy we know of two journeys, one to her cousin Elizabeth and one to Bethlehem where she gives birth. The rest of the time we might assume that Mary waited. She waited with all the many feelings she had, the love she felt, the time she spent in prayer.

In the period of waiting Mary had the joy of knowing the Word was wondrously close to her. At this midpoint in the season of Advent, can we find joy in waiting with the Word. Whatever may be happening in our lives, all those conflicting thoughts and feelings, can you wait with the Word and find joy in the certainty of his presence in your life?

This weekend: St Chad's Cathedral Carol Service. All welcome at our Diocesan Mother Church on Sunday 17 December at 5pm. The Cathedral Choir, under the direction of Professor David Saint, will present a festive programme to start Christmas Week. Followed by refreshments. The Carol Service is free and no booking is required.

RIP David Bacchus.

As we pray for the eternal rest of David, our most beloved brother, husband to Roseline, father to Nancy, son and brother and friend to many, may we all find comfort in knowing that we do not walk this journey alone. Let us pray that the Lord comforts us, strengthens us and carries us through this time of sadness. We thank God for David and his wonderful life that touched so many of us. We keep Roseline and Nancy in our prayers and ask God to watch over them. RIP David. You will always be remembered in your beloved St Gerard's parish.



Parish of St. Gerard, Castle Vale

part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham—Registered Charity No. 234216

Parish Priest: Father Mathew Pinakkattu: 07788790928 Email: stgerard.bham@rcaob.org.uk

Presbytery: 2 Renfrew Square, Castle Vale, Birmingham B35 6JT T: 0121 747 7390

W: www.stgerardschurch.co.uk



Parish Mission Statement

We, the members of St Gerard's R.C. Church, are baptised in Jesus Christ, empowered by the spirit, nurtured in community, and nourished by prayer, word, and sacrament. Therefore, for the greater glory of God, we proclaim for all people the saving message of the Gospel, and joyfully share our time, talent, and resources, in works of mercy and justice, both within and beyond our parish community.

Third Sunday of Advent Sunday 17th December 2023 Year B Volume 1 Page 87

O God, who see how your people faithfully await the feast of the Lord's Nativity, enable us, we pray, to attain the joys of so great a salvation and to celebrate them always with solemn worship and glad rejoicing.



Mass Times

Sunday 17th December

3rd Sunday of Advent

Confession 9.30am

Mass 10.00am for Teresa

Jennings and Mary McHugh RIP

Monday 18th December

Mass 10.00am

Tuesday 19th December

Mass 10.00am

Wednesday 20th December

Mass 10.00am

Thursday 21st December

Mass 10.00am

Friday 22nd December

School Mass 9.00am

Saturday 23rd December

Mass 5.00pm

Sunday 24th December

4th Sunday of Advent

Confession 9.30am

Mass 10.00am

Carols and Christmas Vigil

Mass 6.30pm

Monday 25th December

Christmas Day

Mass 10.00am

Tuesday 26th December

Feast of St Stephen

Mass 10.00am

Advent is a time of preparation and joyful expectation. As we prepare for the birth of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, these weeks provide a wonderful opportunity to slow down and reflect.

We look forward to the coming of Christ: celebrating His birth, His renewed coming into our lives this Christmas, especially through the Eucharist, and His second coming at the end of time. Advent marks the start of the Church's liturgical year.

Advent comes from the Latin *adventus*, meaning 'arrival' or 'coming'. Each Gospel reading during Advent has a distinctive theme: the Lord's coming at the end of time (First Sunday of Advent), John the Baptist (Second and Third Sunday), and the events that prepared immediately for the Lord's birth (Fourth Sunday). **Advent**- A period to "Prepare and be ready, Watch and wait".

We get impatient with God's plan. We wander. We choose our own plans instead. God is faithful though. He calls us to return to Him. God's plan is not about getting what we want. It is about God restoring the whole world to himself. In our lives we will experience events which we don't understand. There will be senseless tragedies and undeserved triumphs. We must be vigilant and ready for those, especially for trials and difficulties. There are always uncertainties in life. We must be ready at all times to serve Christ when we encounter the Lord in our daily lives. The four Sundays of Advent each have a specific theme or focus- Hope, Love, Joy and Peace.

As we light our third candle on our Advent Wreath, the candle of Joy, we remember that the third Sunday of Advent is called "Gaudete" Sunday. Each Sunday in the season of Advent is supposed to be feast day, a celebration, but this week is especially so. The third week of Advent is a time of joy, a time of being thankful for all that has been given—the promise of the Saviour who has come, who is present, and who promises a return.



**Third Sunday
of Advent**

Recently died and those whose anniversaries occur at this time: **David Bacchus:** Eternal rest grant unto him O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace. Amen.

The sick: Christine, Margaret Ludlow, Rose Cogan, Andrew Trueman, Eileen Morrissey, Mary Quilty, Mark Ford, Frances Irwin, George Irwin, Debbie Johnson, Perry Desmond, Philip Fox, Kevin Hollis, Tina Parkes and all the sick priests of the diocese. May the Lord grant them the healing they require.

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