

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

Readers Rota: Thankyou to both our current readers and those new readers that have offered their service to our parish. A new rota covering January to June 2024 is available on the notice board at the back of church.

PARISH ADMINISTRATION: Sue

Perkins: stgerard.bham@rcaob.org.uk.

HEALTH AND SAFETY: Hayley Macilwraith-hs.stgerard.bham@rcaob.org.uk.

YOUTH: To be appointed: yth.stgerard.bham@rcaob.org.uk.

Children's Liturgy Leaders and Helpers: Sue, Grace, Will, Annie, Sarita, Faith and Cynthia.

FINANCE/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.

Altar Server Chaperone: Hayley Macilwraith

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

Baptism of the Lord Reflection from Fr Ryan Service: Back in the 1960s in Milan, the council were developing the metro underground system and were stopped in their tracks. They found an ancient crypt underneath the main Cathedral. Among the ruins and dust, they found an octagonal shape that can be seen with steps going down one side into what was obviously a pool and with steps going up out of the other side. This was no ancient roman spa bath but a baptismal pool. In 387 a man called Augustine was baptised by Ambrose in that pool, being immersed into the water three times before coming out of the waters on the other side, robed in white, to be greeted by community members.

For those of us who are baptised, even if we were not plunged into the pools in the dramatic style of Augustine, the reality is precisely the same. We entered that same pool of life, that pool of history and tradition, the same waters that re-birth sinners, saints and popes, the waters that Jesus entered in the Jordan, the flow of history. Yet, like those ruins buried deep under il duomo, our faith and hope, at times, need to be uncovered and renewed. For years that place was thought to be lost, then just a myth (non-existent). For years it was covered by dirt, gravel, and rubble. Perhaps it existed once, but no more. But it was always there, waiting to be uncovered, waiting to be restored, waiting to be seen again. In our difficulties, may God help us to excavate our hope.

2024-Year of Prayer: *"May it be an intense year of prayer in which hearts are opened to receive the outpouring of God's grace"*
Pope Francis.

The Holy Father has asked that 2024 be year of prayer, as a preparatory year for the Jubilee. In preparation for the Jubilee, dioceses are invited to promote initiatives to remind people of the centrality of both individual prayer and community prayer. Adventure in prayer will involve being guided in different types of prayer, individual time for prayer and sharing in groups. Fr Mathew is keen to guide us on our journey to explore our prayer habits and find a way of praying that works for you and for us to experience the riches of prayer. Prayer group every Friday evening 7.00-8.00. Please come along and make this a wonderful community gathering here at St Gerard's. Maybe attendance could be your New Years resolution!

David Bacchus- Funeral Details: Sunday 7th January 11.00 Seventh-Day Adventist Church, B7 4HX Burial 2.00pm New Hall Cemetery.

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.



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.

Sunday 7th January 2024 Year B Volume 1 Page 118

O God, who on this day revealed your Only Begotten Son to the nations by the guidance of a star, grant in your mercy, that we, who know you already by faith, may be brought to behold the beauty of your sublime glory.

Mass Times

Sunday 7th January

Feast of the Epiphany

Confession 9.30am

Mass 10.00am

Monday 8th January

Mass 10.00am

Tuesday 9th January

Mass 10.00am

Wednesday 10th January

Mass 10.00am

Thursday 11th January

Mass 10.00am

Friday 12th January

School Mass 9.00am

Prayer Group 7.00pm

Saturday 13th January

Mass 5.00pm

Sunday 14th January

Confession 9.30am

Mass 10.00am

Based on the gospel for Sunday 7 January, Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord: Matthew 2:1-12 **"We saw his star as it rose and have come to do him homage."**

Preaching on the feast of the Epiphany, St Oscar Romero spoke of the Magi searching in the darkness for a mystical light, shining as a sign of God present to all the nations, through his Son who would bring universal salvation and wellbeing. At a time of increasing conflict in El Salvador it was, he said, time to heed Pope St Paul VI's call "No to violence! Yes to peace". Journeying to pay homage to the infant King, the Magi may have followed the path taken by Mary and Joseph from Nazareth. Today this would take them through a land aching under years of conflict, a Holy Land which is not a place of peace. Bethlehem is now partly surrounded by a wall, once depicted by the artist Banksy with Mary & Joseph on one side, the stable with the star above on the other. A wall seen by some as an essential means of protection, by others a sign of occupation and a barrier to freedom. As we witness the latest conflict in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory, let us hope that one day the light of true peace and reconciliation may emerge from the darkness of war. May there be peace and justice for all for whom Abraham is one father in faith, in the Holy Land where the Prince of Peace was born, taught, and died for us all.

Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace, may your light shine for all the nations, to follow the path to reconciliation and peace. May all people live together in freedom and without fear, walking side by side on the road to Bethlehem and throughout the Holy Land. Amen.

Pilgrimage to Walsingham Saturday 6th April to Monday 8th April : The Birmingham and Wolverhampton Association is organising a pilgrimage to Walsingham this year from Saturday 6th April until Monday 8th April. The cost is £299pp for en-suite and £261pp for budget accommodation. This includes coach travel from various pick-up points across Birmingham and Wolverhampton. For more details and bookings contact Charles Keily before Friday 19th January on 07710 189036.

Recently died and those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Timmy Miller and David

Bacchus: Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they 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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Offertory

£31st December 2023

GA	£93.00
NGA	£17.42
Total	£110.42

Attendance: 48

Christmas Raffle raised £ 237.00.

Christmas Offerings for Fr Matthew: £ 320.00

Thank you all for your generosity.