

**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](http://www.stgerard.bham.sch.uk)

First Confession for Year 3: Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> May 9.00am

Year 3 confession Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> June in school

First Holy Communion: Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> June 10.00am.

Please take a copy of the Archbishops letter which has been placed at the back of church. This was read out at Mass a few weeks ago but includes important information regarding the reduction of serving priests and the consequences on the number of parishes expected within our Archdiocese moving forward. Meeting 24<sup>th</sup> May 6.00pm St Peters and Pauls.

**VACANCY:** Foundation Governor at St Gerard's Catholic Primary School. Foundation governors are appointed by the Bishop to serve as his representatives on the governing body of diocesan school to ensure the Church's mission is upheld. Governors have oversight of the curriculum and the appointment of staff and are accountable for the performance of the school. They have a strategic role to play as well as acting as critical friend to the headteacher. Training is provided to help governors fulfil this very important role. If you are interested and would like more information, please contact the school office on 0121 464 2613.

**World Day of Prayer for Vocations:** This year it is on Sunday 21 April, which marks the 61st Anniversary of World Day of Prayer for Vocations. The Diocesan Vocations Office asks all to pray for an increase in vocations for the Archdiocese. The Second Collection in our churches over the weekend 20/21 April is for the Clergy Training Fund, which pays for the formation of future priests and deacons for our Archdiocese.

John's words "the good shepherd is one who lays down his life for his sheep" set the tone for us this Good Shepherd Sunday. As a child I was fascinated by the start of the Good Friday liturgy where the clergy would lie flat on the church floor. With enthusiasm, I also wanted to be lying down at that moment. We all make sacrifices in this life, often in ways hidden to many, but seen by God (think of the widow's mite). In loving others, sacrifice is always involved as we reach out of ourselves and seek to understand the other, and this helps us understand the power of the call to lay down our lives. Laying down ourselves is not about being a doormat or self-neglect. Rather, as Pope John Paul II reminded us, we are called to be bridges (pontifex) in helping people reach God through the way we reveal the love of God incarnate in the concrete reality of our lives. We are all called to be shepherds, then, and we lie down every day and not just on Good Friday. Let us give thanks, too, for the shepherds and shepherdesses whom we have known and who have helped reveal something of the face of God, bridging the gap between heaven and earth.

*Fr Ryan Service, Holy Trinity, Sutton Coldfield*

#### **Prayer for Vocations**

*"You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit" John 15:16*

*"Pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest" Matthew 9:38*

*Heavenly Father, we ask you to send labourers into your harvest. Inspire, in the hearts of your people, vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life. Bless our families with a spirit of generosity, so that those whom you call have the courage to give themselves to your Church in faith. Through Christ our Lord.*

*O Sacrament most holy, O Sacrament divine, all praise and all thanksgiving be every moment thine.*

#### **Cluster Meeting re Birmingham Diocese re modification and amalgamation of parishes:**

*St Peters and Pauls church Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May 6.00pm. Each parish is expected to bring along 4 parishioners who would be willing to establish a parish council for our parish. Refreshments will be provided. Please see Fr if you would like to attend.*



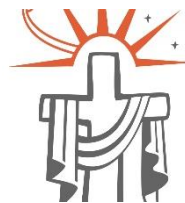
## Parish of St. Gerard, Castle Vale

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

**Parish Priest:** Father Mathew Pinakkattu: 07788790928 **Email:** [stgerard.bham@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:stgerard.bham@rcaob.org.uk)

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

**W:** [www.stgerardschurch.co.uk](http://www.stgerardschurch.co.uk)



### FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

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Almighty ever-living God, lead us to a share in the joys of heaven, so that the humble flock may reach where the brave Shepherd has gone before.

### 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.

### Mass Times

#### Sunday 21st April

#### Fourth Sunday of Easter

*Confession 9.30am*

*Mass 10.00am*

Mass of Commitment for First  
Holy Communion

#### Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> April

*Mass 10.00am*

#### Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April

#### Solemnity of St George

*Mass 5.00pm*

#### Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> April

*Mass 10.00am*

#### Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April

*No Mass*

#### Friday 26<sup>th</sup> April

*No Mass*

#### Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April

*No Mass*

#### Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> April

#### Fifth Sunday of Easter

*Confession 9.30am*

*Mass 10.00am*



Based on the gospel for Sunday 21 April, Fourth Sunday of Easter: John 10:11-18

### "Jesus said: I am the good shepherd."

In the life of Jesus, we can get an understanding of why he used the word 'shepherd' to describe himself. He cared about people, listened to them, gave them food and drink, helped them get better when they were ill, and was willing to give up his life and die for them.

But in 2024, for most people, in the UK at least, the word 'shepherd' is more often used in connection with the word 'pie'.

An everyday word that captures all that Jesus said when he referred to himself as 'the Good Shepherd' is 'parent'. A good parent can be compared very favourably to the description of Jesus, the good shepherd.

Like a shepherd, a parent is never off duty. The length is for life, the reason is for love.

CAFOD's Lent appeal this year helped fishing communities in Liberia. It reminded us of those parents caring for their families by trying to feed them not just for today, but for good. How we try to help others should be for life and for love.

### Prayer

God of all people, you have given us a reliable and caring guide, in Jesus, our good shepherd.

May the message of his good news help us to hear his voice speaking to us today.

May we recognise his voice in the cry of all those in need.

Amen.

**Recently died and 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.

**The sick:** Marjorie Burke, Pat Bonner, Kath McMullen, Margaret Ludlow, Rose Cogan, Andrew Trueman, Eileen Morrissey, Frances Irwin, George Irwin, Debbie Johnson and all the sick priests of the diocese. May the Lord grant them the healing they require.

**Mass Intentions:** on behalf of a family member, a friend or a deceased loved one, to remember a birthday or anniversary, envelopes are available at the back of church or email Fr Mathew.

### Offertory 7<sup>th</sup> March

GA: £69.50

NGA: £60.80

100 Club: £150.00

Easter Raffle: £304.00

Donation: £40.00

Total: £624.30

**Attendance:** 52