

**Education Sunday**, observed on 8th September, marks the beginning of the academic year with a focus on praying for those in our Catholic schools, colleges and universities. Catholic educators hold a unique role in positively influencing young lives through faith and hope. The message draws parallels between Jesus' healing of the deaf man in Mark's Gospel and the spiritual and social mission of Catholic education, emphasising the importance of hearing, living and evangelising the Good News of Jesus Christ both in our Catholic schools and through attendance at Mass for spiritual growth through the Eucharist.

The Archdiocese of Birmingham is privileged to educate over 90,000 young people in Catholic schools, fostering a community of faith, prayer, and academic excellence that outperforms national standards. The success of this mission depends on the dedication of school staff, governors, and directors, who ensure that Catholic Social Teaching is lived and appreciated on a daily basis. Here are some key statistics from the Archdiocese of Birmingham:

In your prayers this weekend, please do ask for God's blessing upon all those who govern, lead, teach, guide, and support the children and young people in our Catholic schools, colleges and universities.

You too, as a practising Catholic, can be a part of our journey by applying to become a governor or director in one of our schools or multi-academies. If you are interested, please email Rebecca Tonks of the Diocesan Education Service at: [r.tonks@bdes.org.uk](mailto:r.tonks@bdes.org.uk)

**Organ Recitals at St Chad's Cathedral every Thursday through summer** : 40-minute Organ Recitals every Thursday 1 August to 5 September at 1:15pm. Hosted by Thursday Live. Featuring an array of organists. All welcome.

**Oscott College Tours Return:** St Mary's College, Oscott is happy to announce the return of its popular College Tours. Take a walk through the public halls of the college, visit the chapel, library and newly renovated museum and finish with homemade cake and a cup of tea. Tickets are £15 per person. Want to take things at your own pace? Why not visit us on one of our free-flow afternoons. Take in all the public areas and talk to our friendly volunteers who are on hand to answer any of your questions. Take a few minutes to sit and admire the peace and beauty of the chapel or take the time to discover more in our new exhibition. Tickets are £8 per person.

#### **Warm Welcome every Tuesday**

**The Erdington Abbey (Parish of St Thomas & St Edmund of Canterbury in Erdington, Birmingham) have a Warm Welcome every Tuesday 11am-2pm at the Parish Hall** : Everybody is welcome to come for refreshments, sandwiches and lunch and access food parcels when available. There is also a craft group, fortnightly chair pilates and occasional benefit/energy advice and art classes. There is no charge for this, only a donation asked if possible.

#### **Education Sunday- Sunday, 8 September 2024**

Education Sunday is marked this year on 8 September - just after the new academic year starts. The theme for 2024 is, "He makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak", taken from St Mark's Gospel (7:31-37). Education Sunday is one of the oldest Days of Special Prayer in England and Wales, established 175 years ago in 1848. It provides an opportunity to celebrate and give thanks to all involved in making Catholic schools places of enlightenment, as well as to look forward in anticipation of the year ahead

**Our Cluster Mass Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> September: Things to do!** Church cleaning-inside and out- Altar servers-Flowers-Choir/Music/Refreshments/Childrens Liturgy to do offertory?- Which jobs may you be able to assist with? See Sue to put yourself forward. Thank you in advance.

#### **Reflection: Based on the gospel for Sunday 8 September, Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time: Mark 7: 31-37**

*"Then, looking up to heaven Jesus sighed; and he said to him 'Ephphatha' that is 'Be opened.'"*

*In today's Gospel we see Jesus at work in the 'pagan' Decapolis region, a place of Greek non-Jews. It was seen as an unclean region and looked down on by the Jewish community. It may well have been the 'distant land' Jesus had in mind when he told the parable of the prodigal son. Jesus, however, does not feel obliged to steer clear of such places but, rather, offers this region, too, his loving message of forgiveness and healing. As he opens the ears and mouth of this 'foreign' man with a single word, Ephphatha (be opened), so he also opens the minds and hearts of the disciples who were witnesses to his universal compassion.*

*It's a gospel which certainly has challenges in our own time. Am I able to identify no-go areas for me? Perhaps people and situations I shun, or judge unfairly? Do I feel tied to my own people and place, or to circumstances I know and feel comfortable with? As a disciple, do I feel free enough to follow the Master to unorthodox places, and to people that are different from me? Can I allow him to open the closed places of my heart and to loosen the strictures of my mind, so that I may understand more compassionately, hear more clearly and respond more courageously? Can I then say humbly, but confidently, that Jesus continues to do 'all things well', even in me?*

**Lord, help me be open to situations, places and people that are different to my own. Help me to show them that they are not forgotten and let me find you already at work in them. Amen.**



**Parish of St. Gerard, Castle Vale**  
(Part of the Erdington Cluster which includes The Abbey, St Peter and St Paul's and St Mary and St John's)  
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)  
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### TWENTY THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

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O God, by whom we are redeemed and receive adoption, look graciously upon your beloved sons and daughter, that those who believe in Christ may receive true freedom and an everlasting inheritance.

*"Look on me and answer, O Lord my God. Give light to my eyes" Psalm 13:3*

#### Mass Times

**Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> September**  
**Twenty Third Sunday in**  
**Ordinary Time**

*Confession 9.30am*

*Mass 10.00am*

**Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September**

*Mass 10.00am*

**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> September**

*No Holy Mass*

**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September**

*No Holy Mass*

**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> September**

*No Holy Mass*

**Friday 13<sup>th</sup> September**

*School Mass 9.00am*

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> September**

*Mass 5.00pm*

**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September**

**Twenty Fourth Sunday of**

**Ordinary Time**

*Confession 9.30am*

*Mass 10.00am*



#### 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.

#### Parish Pastoral Council.

Thank you to those who have come forward to offer their time to take up a position on the Parish Pastoral Council. The first step is for me to collect contact details i.e. telephone numbers and email addresses of those that have agreed to serve on the council and then I will share some information and gather suggestions for a date/time for our first meeting.

Please provide your details to me if you feel that I may not already have them. I will be lurking after Mass today and next Sunday so can collect them then. I hope that we will be able to hold our first meeting before the end of September

***Popes Intentions for September: We pray that each one of us will and take to heart the cry of the earth and of victims of natural disasters and climatic change, and that we all will undertake to personally care for the world in which we live.***

#### Dates for your diary:

***Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> September 7.00pm-*** First Erdington cluster Mass here at St Gerard's-See overleaf how you may be able to help us get ready for this Mass! Please support your parish with your attendance.

***Change of Date: Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October @7.15-*** Cluster Mass at St Peter and St Pauls, Erdington. Rosary from 5.30pm and healing prayers after Mass approx. 8.00pm.

***Saturday 5 October at 12noon, St Chad's Cathedral:*** Altar servers and their families are invited to join this year's annual Mass of Thanksgiving for the Guild of St Stephen.

***Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> October 7.00pm-*** Feast of St Gerard- Mass here at 7.00pm- we have invited our cluster parishes to join us for this celebration so we hope as many parishioners as possible are able to join us.

***Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October 7.00pm-*** Cluster Mass at St Mary and St Johns, Erdington

***Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> December 7.00pm-*** Cluster Mass at Erdington Abbey

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

**The sick:** Sarah Purcell, Theresa Floyd, 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

**1<sup>st</sup> September 2024**

**GA £69.00**

**NGA £37.00**

**Attendance: 68**

**Today there is a second collection for Catholic Education.**