

Sunday 7th February 2021

Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time

Again this week we are asking you to book in advance for all Masses. This is particularly important for the Vigil Mass and Sunday Mass, but it also helps us with 'track and trace' which we are asked to be able to follow up should we need to.

To book your place, just click on the Mass or phone the parish office. Thank you.

In the parish this week from 8th February

Monday 10.00am Requiem Mass, Sacred Heart, for John McBeath RIP (invitation only)

Tuesday *Sacred Heart 10.00am Mass church closed – live-streamed only*

Wednesday [Sacred Heart 10.00am Mass](#) (booking required)

Thursday Sacred Heart 5.45pm – 6.20pm. Exposition and Benediction
[Sacred Heart 6.30pm Mass](#) (booking required)

Friday [10.00am Requiem Mass, Holy Saviour](#), for Michael Loftus RIP
(if you wish to attend this funeral, please book. Maximum of 30)

Saturday *no midday Mass*
[Holy Saviour 6.30pm](#) (booking required)

Sunday [Sacred Heart 9.30am](#) Mass (booking required)

Prayer Resource - Lord's Day at Home

For those still at home and not attending Mass the Liturgy Office has prepared a service called "The Lord's Day at Home", based on the Sunday Scriptures, that you can pray on your own or with your family. It is particularly aimed at those not able to follow a Mass on the internet.

This week's Lord's Day at Home resource [can be found by clicking here.](#)

Word on Fire Bible – the Gospels – a great gift to yourself for LENT

Bishop Barron's edition of the four Gospels is a very beautifully produced book of the gospel texts with articles and notes from himself along with commentaries from great saints and Fathers of the Church along with other great names right up to our present times. He includes some great artwork with descriptions and explanations. I've been asked to recommend it by a parishioner who finds it a most inspiring companion to reading the Gospels. I must add that I too have a copy and am very impressed with it and can add my recommendation.

It is available from Amazon but be careful to look at the price because different suppliers on Amazon are charging different prices and postage can be free or quite pricey. Also note that there is a paperback version and a hardback version with very little difference in price. I haven't seen the paperback, although I'm told it is a beautiful book. However, the hardback is stunning and good to hold.

Talking of LENT

Lent begins a week on Wednesday with a rather strange ASH WEDNESDAY. We will have Masses and the blessing of ashes, but no distribution of ashes. This is in the interest of our safety from transmission of infection. That, however, does not negate the value of the Mass on this day, nor the fact that it marks the beginning of a very important Season in the life of the Church.

Lent is a Penitential Season. That means not just a time for doing penance, but a time for reminding ourselves that we need to do penance – unless of course you are absolutely perfect in every aspect of your life and totally sinless – in which case, not only do you not need to do penance, but you don't need Jesus and you certainly don't need the Church. We are a Church of Sinners in need of the Saviour. We

confess the fact that we are sinners at the beginning of every Mass and ask God's mercy and forgiveness. But this shouldn't be the end of the matter. We need to grow in Grace every single day to be able to combat evil and temptation (sin) and to grow in our relationship with God.

St. Peter wasn't just messing around when he said in one of his letters, "Be sober and watch, for your enemy the devil is prowling round like a roaring lion looking for someone whom he may devour." He was serious. He knew that the devil and evil and evil spirits are very much for real and are opportunists!

We need to strengthen ourselves against evil and sin. We can't stand still. We either make progress towards God or we slide away, often without even realising how we are drifting until we have lost all sight of land. We also need to grow in our relationship with God if we are to 'radiate' God to others. We are made in the image and likeness of God. Is that who people see when they see us? Has the image of God got a bit tarnished and unrecognisable? We need to polish it up and make it gleam. We cannot do that on our own. We need the saving grace of Jesus Christ to recharge us, redeem us and reinvigorate us. That's why Lent is a good, annual reminder to put some extra effort into our relationship with God. Perhaps after almost a year of a reduced diet of the church and the sacraments we need to seriously consider how we can ensure we are not only losing ground in our membership of the Church and our relationship with God through the practice of the Faith and the Sacraments, but need to look again at what we can do, whilst still under limitations, to put some extra effort into those relationships.

So whether you pray with us 'on-line' or actually come to Mass, let's pray together for a growth and renewal of Faith in each other and in our parish as a whole as we prepare to celebrate the great feast of Resurrection and Redemption at Easter.

There will be a morning Mass at [10.00am at Sacred Heart](#) on Ash Wednesday and an evening Mass at [7.00pm at Holy Saviour's](#) on Ash Wednesday. Please click on the Mass to book a place. Booking is already available.

God bless and keep safe,
Fr. Peter