



Parish of the Sacred Heart and Saint Margaret Mary, Aston

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Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham - Registered Charity No. 234216

Palm Sunday 8th/9th April and start of Holy Week

Day	Aston	Nechells	Intention
Saturday	12.30 am	5.30 pm 6.00 pm	Des Teague Stations of the Cross People of Parish
Palm Sunday	10.00 am 5.00 pm		Bernadette St. Martin Stations of the Cross
Monday	10.00 am 7.30 pm		Maura Lawrence SH school in Church SERVICE OF RECONCILIATION
Tuesday	10.00 am		
Wednesday (SJ school)		9.30 am	Louise Tehan Mass in St. Joseph's school
Maundy Thursday	7.30 pm		Eucharistic ministers The Mass is followed by the watch in the garden of Gethsemane until 10.30 pm.
Good Friday Day of Fast & Abstinence	3.00 pm		The Good Friday Liturgy

EASTER 15th /16th April

Day	Aston	Nechells	Intention
Holy Saturday	8.30 pm		People of parish Lighting of Easter fire, the Easter Vigil, renewal of Baptismal vows and 1st Mass of Easter
EASTER SUNDAY	10.00 am	12 Noon	Mervyn's father Sr. Pius

Please Pray for the sick; Anne Stapleton, Bridie Murphy, Sheila O'Reilly, Marion Levell, Peter McKernan, Mary Joyce, Bernadette Harnett, Lisa Brean, May Walker, Nirosha Pathiraja, William Parish, Annie Kennedy, Teresa Francis, Michael O'Connor, Marie Parish, William Parish, Michael O'Reilly.



The collection last week came to £281.60

The second collection for Survive Miva came to £280.85

The retiring collection from Frances Goulding's funeral which is kindly being given to our Roof Fund came to £80.02

On Good Friday there is a retiring collection for the Holy Places in the Holy Land.

It is traditional that the Easter collections are a personal gift for the Parish Priest.

Raise The Roof Raffle: 1st April No: 48 Mrs. McCarron 2nd April No: 28 Mrs. Delaney

SERVICE OF RECONCILIATION at Sacred Heart on Monday 10th April at 7.30 pm.

Confessions on Saturdays at 11.45 am. Also after any Mass.

THE CHRISM MASS takes place at St. Chad's Cathedral on Wednesday this week at 11.30 am.

All the priests of the diocese gather for this Mass with the Bishops and renew their priestly commitment and the Holy Oils are blessed.

GOOD FRIDAY WALKS OF WITNESS There is one both in Aston and in Nechells. Both start at 9.30 am, the Nechells one at St. Joseph's, the Aston one at Mt. Sion Church in Thomas Street going to the URC Church then via Bevington Road to the Birchfield Gospel Hall and on to Sacred Heart and finishing with a cup of tea in Sacred Heart Club.

Everything this week is in Sacred Heart Church (apart from the Mass in St. Joseph's school). St. Joseph's Church will be being used by the Eritrean Orthodox Church every day during Holy Week.

The Easter Triduum is the climax of our Lenten observance and the most important of all our Catholic celebrations. The climax of the whole year is the Easter Vigil which starts after dark with the lighting of the Easter fire.

Parish News

GIFT AID If you are a taxpayer, please see Chris Brown and he will be able to arrange for us to claim money you have paid to the taxman back for the Church with no pain to you!

First reading Isaiah 50:4-7

The Lord has given me a disciple's tongue.
So that I may know how to reply to the wearied
he provides me with speech.
Each morning he wakes me to hear,
to listen like a disciple.
The Lord has opened my ear.
For my part, I made no resistance,
neither did I turn away.
I offered my back to those who struck me,
my cheeks to those who tore at my beard;
I did not cover my face
against insult and spittle.
The Lord comes to my help,
so that I am untouched by the insults.
So, too, I set my face like flint;
I know I shall not be shamed.

Psalm 21(22):8-9,17-20,23-24

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Second reading Philippians 2:6-11

His state was divine, yet Christ Jesus did not cling to his equality with God
but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave and became as men are;
and being as all men are, he was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross.
But God raised him high and gave him the name which is above all other names so that all
beings in the heavens, on earth and in the underworld, should bend the knee at the name of
Jesus and that every tongue should acclaim Jesus Christ as Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Gospel Acclamation

Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!
Christ was humbler yet,
even to accepting death, death on a cross.
But God raised him high
and gave him the name which is above all names.
Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!

Gospel Matthew 26:14-27:66

Key: N. Narrator. ✕ Jesus. O. Other single speaker. C. Crowd, or more than one speaker.

N. One of the Twelve, the man called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said,

O. What are you prepared to give me if I hand him over to you?

N. They paid him thirty silver pieces, and from that moment he looked for an opportunity to betray him. Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus to say,

C. Where do you want us to make the preparations for you to eat the passover?

N. He replied:

✕ Go to so-and-so in the city and say to him, 'The Master says: My time is near. It is at your house that I am keeping Passover with my disciples.'

N. The disciples did what Jesus told them and prepared the Passover. When evening came he was at table with the twelve disciples. And while they were eating he said:

✕ I tell you solemnly, one of you is about to betray me.

N. They were greatly distressed and started asking him in turn,

C. Not I, Lord, surely?

N. He answered,

✕ Someone who has dipped his hand into the dish with me will betray me. The Son of Man is going to his fate, as the scriptures say he will, but alas for that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! Better for that man if he had never been born!

N. Judas, who was to betray him, asked in his turn,

O. Not I, Rabbi, surely?

N. Jesus answered:

✕ They are your own words.

N. Now as they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and when he had said the blessing he broke it and gave it to the disciples and said:

✕ Take it and eat; this is my body.

N. Then he took a cup, and when he had returned thanks he gave it to them, saying:

✕ Drink, all of you, from this, for this is my blood, the blood of the covenant, which is to be poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. From now on, I tell you, I shall not drink wine until the day I drink the new wine with you in the kingdom of my Father.

N. After psalms had been sung they left for the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus said to them,

✕ You will all lose faith in me this night, for the scripture says: I shall strike the shepherd and the sheep of the flock will be scattered, but after my resurrection I shall go before you to Galilee.

N. At this, Peter said,

O. Though all lose faith in you, I will never lose faith.

N. Jesus answered him,

✕ I tell you solemnly, this very night, before the cock crows, you will have disowned me three times.

N. Peter said to him,

O. Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.

N. And all the disciples said the same.

Then Jesus came with them to a small estate called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples,

✕ Stay here while I go over there to pray.

N. He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee with him. And sadness came over him, and great distress. Then he said to them,

✕ My soul is sorrowful to the point of death. Wait here and keep awake with me.

N. And going on a little further he fell on his face and prayed:

✕ My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass me by. Nevertheless, let it be as you, not I, would have it.

N. He came back to the disciples and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter:

✕ So you had not the strength to keep awake with me one hour? You should be awake, and praying not to be put to the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.

N. Again, a second time, he went away and prayed:

✕ My Father, if this cup cannot pass by without my drinking it, your will be done!

- N.** And he came back again and found them sleeping, their eyes were so heavy. Leaving them there, he went away again and prayed for the third time, repeating the same words. Then he came back to the disciples and said to them,
- ✘ You can sleep on now and take your rest. Now the hour has come when the Son of Man is to be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up! Let us go! My betrayer is already close at hand.
- N.** He was still speaking when Judas, one of the Twelve, appeared, and with him a large number of men armed with swords and clubs, sent by the chief priests and elders of the people. Now the traitor had arranged a sign with them. He had said,
- O.** 'The one I kiss, he is the man. Take him in charge.'
- N.** So he went straight up to Jesus and said,
- O.** Greetings, Rabbi.
- N.** and kissed him. Jesus said to him,
- ✘ My friend, do what you are here for.
- N.** Then they came forward, seized Jesus and took him in charge. At that, one of the followers of Jesus grasped his sword and drew it; he struck out at the high priest's servant, and cut off his ear. Jesus then said,
- ✘ Put your sword back, for all who draw the sword will die by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father who would promptly send more than twelve legions of angels to my defence? But then, how would the scriptures be fulfilled that say this is the way it must be?
- N.** It was at this time that Jesus said to the crowds,
- ✘ Am I a brigand, that you had to set out to capture me with swords and clubs? I sat teaching in the Temple day after day and you never laid hands on me.
- N.** Now all this happened to fulfil the prophecies in scripture. Then all the disciples deserted him and ran away. The men who had arrested Jesus led him off to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. Peter followed him at a distance, and when he reached the high priest's palace, he went in and sat down with the attendants to see what the end would be. The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus, however false, on which they might pass the death sentence. But they could not find any, though several lying witnesses came forward. Eventually two stepped forward and made a statement,
- O.** This man said: 'I have power to destroy the Temple of God and in three days build it up.'
- N.** The high priest then stood up and said to him,
- O.** Have you no answer to that? What is this evidence these men are bringing against you?
- N.** But Jesus was silent. And the high priest said to him,
- O.** I put you on oath by the living God to tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.
- N.** Jesus answered:
- ✘ The words are your own. Moreover, I tell you that from this time onward you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.
- N.** At this, the high priest tore his clothes and said,
- O.** He has blasphemed. What need of witnesses have we now? There! You have just heard the blasphemy. What is your opinion?
- N.** They answered
- C.** He deserves to die.
- N.** Then they spat in his face and hit him with their fists; others said as they struck him,
- C.** Play the prophet, Christ! Who hit you then?
- N.** Meanwhile Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard, and a servant-girl came up to him and said,
- O.** You too were with Jesus the Galilean.
- N.** But he denied it in front of them all, saying:
- O.** I do not know what you are talking about.
- N.** When he went out to the gateway another servant-girl saw him and said to the people there,
- O.** This man was with Jesus the Nazarene.
- N.** And again, with an oath, he denied it:
- O.** I do not know the man.
- N.** A little later the bystanders came up and said to Peter,

- C.** You are one of them for sure! Why, your accent gives you away. Then he started calling down curses on himself and swearing:
- O.** I do not know the man.
- N.** At that moment the cock crew, and Peter remembered what Jesus had said, 'Before the cock crows you will have disowned me three times.' And he went outside and wept bitterly. When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people met in council to bring about the death of Jesus. They had him bound, and led him away to hand him over to Pilate, the governor. When he found that Jesus had been condemned, Judas his betrayer was filled with remorse and took the thirty silver pieces back to the chief priests and elders, saying:
- O.** I have sinned. I have betrayed innocent blood.
- N.** They replied:
- C.** What is that to us? That is your concern.
- N.** And flinging down the silver pieces in the sanctuary he made off and hanged himself; The chief priests picked up the silver pieces and said,
- C.** It is against the Law to put this into the treasury: it is blood-money.
- N.** So they discussed the matter and bought the potter's field with it as a graveyard for foreigners, and this is why the field is called the Field of Blood today. The words of the prophet Jeremiah were then fulfilled: And they took the thirty silver pieces, the sum at which the precious One was priced by children of Israel, and they gave them for the potter's field, just as the Lord directed me. Jesus, then, was brought before the governor, and the governor put to him this question:
- O.** Are you the king of the Jews?
- N.** Jesus replied,
- ✕** It is you who say it.
- N.** But when he was accused by the chief priests and the elders he refused to answer at all. Pilate then said to him,
- O.** Do you not hear how many charges they have brought against you?
- N.** But to the governor's complete amazement, he offered no reply to any of the charges. At festival time it was the governor's practice to release a prisoner for the people, anyone they chose. Now there was at that time a notorious prisoner whose name was Barabbas. So when the crowd gathered, Pilate said to them,
- O.** Which do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?
- N.** For Pilate knew it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. Now as he was seated in the chair of judgement, his wife sent him a message,
- O.** Have nothing to do with that man; I have been upset all day by a dream I had about him.
- N.** The chief priests and the elders, however, had persuaded the crowd to demand the release of Barabbas and the execution of Jesus. So when the governor spoke and asked them,
- O.** Which of the two do you want me to release for you?
- N.** they said,
- C.** Barabbas.
- N.** Pilate said to them:
- O.** But in that case, what am I to do with Jesus who is called Christ?
- N.** They all said:
- C.** Let him be crucified!
- N.** Pilate asked:
- O.** Why? What harm has he done?
- N.** But they shouted all the louder,
- C.** Let him be crucified!
- N.** Then Pilate saw that he was making no impression, that in fact a riot was imminent. So he took some water, washed his hands in front of the crowd and said,
- O.** I am innocent of this man's blood. It is your concern.
- N.** And the people, to a man, shouted back,
- C.** His blood be on us and on our children!
- N.** Then he released Barabbas for them. He ordered Jesus to be first scourged and then handed over to be crucified. The governor's soldiers took Jesus with them into the Praetorium and collected the whole cohort round him. Then they stripped him and made him wear a scarlet

cloak, and having twisted some thorns into a crown they put this on his head and placed a reed in his right hand. To make fun of him they knelt to him saying,

C. Hail, king of the Jews!

N. And they spat on him and took the reed and struck him on the head with it. And when they had finished making fun of him, they took off the cloak and dressed him in his own clothes and led him away to crucify him. On their way out, they came across a man from Cyrene, Simon by name, and enlisted him to carry his cross. When they had reached a place called Golgotha, that is, the place of the skull, they gave him wine to drink mixed with gall, which he tasted but refused to drink. When they had finished crucifying him they shared out his clothing by casting lots, and then sat down and stayed there keeping guard over him. Above his head was placed the charge against him; it read: 'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.' At the same time two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left. The passers-by jeered at him; they shook their heads and said,

C. So you would destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days! Then save yourself! If you are God's son, come down from the cross!

N. The chief priests with the scribes and elders mocked him in the same way, saying:

C. He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the king of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He puts his trust in God; now let God rescue him if he wants him. For he did say, 'I am the son of God.'

N. Even the robbers who were crucified with him taunted him in the same way. From the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour, Jesus cried out in a loud voice,

✠ Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?

N. That is, 'My God, my God, why have you deserted me?' When some of those who stood there heard this, they said,

C. The man is calling on Elijah.

N. and one of them quickly ran to get a sponge which he dipped in vinegar and, putting it on a reed, gave it him to drink. The rest of them said:

C. Wait! See if Elijah will come to save him.

N. But Jesus, again crying out in a loud voice, yielded up his spirit.

Here all kneel and pause for a short time.

At that, the veil of the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom; the earth quaked; the rocks were split; the tombs opened and the bodies of many holy men rose from the dead, and these, after his resurrection, came out of the tombs, entered the Holy City and appeared to a number of people. Meanwhile the centurion, together with the others guarding Jesus, had seen the earthquake and all that was taking place, and they were terrified and said,

C. In truth this was a son of God.

N. And many women were there, watching from a distance, the same women who had followed Jesus from Galilee and looked after him. Among them were Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons. When it was evening, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, called Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate thereupon ordered it to be handed over. So Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean shroud and put it in his own new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a large stone across the entrance of the tomb and went away. Now Mary of Magdala and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the sepulchre. Next day, that is, when Preparation Day was over, the chief priests and the Pharisees went in a body to Pilate and said to him,

C. Your Excellency, we recall that this impostor said, while he was still alive, 'After three days I shall rise again.' Therefore give the order to have the sepulchre kept secure until the third day, for fear his disciples come and steal him away and tell the people, 'He has risen from the dead.' This last piece of fraud would be worse than what went before.

N. Pilate said to them:

O. You may have your guard. Go and make all as secure as you know how.

N. So they went and made the sepulchre secure, putting seals on the stone and mounting a guard.

Reflection

For Jesus' friends and followers, every element of the ancient story of God's deliverance of their ancestors from slavery, resonates with echoes of the experience of Jesus who is now present to them in a new way

Capital punishment is abhorrent to most of us, particularly when a just person dies for specious reasons or to political ends. Public executions of convicted criminals were part of life in the ancient Roman Empire. That's what confronts us in today's gospel, although the gospel writers pay little attention to the details of the death and suffering of Jesus. They are much more interested in the meaning of these events.

The Romans execute Jesus outside Jerusalem when the city is filled with Jewish pilgrims who have come there for the Passover festival. For Jesus' friends and followers, every subsequent Passover is celebrated in the light of his death by crucifixion. They share their memories and reflect on the meaning of his death in the light of their sacred traditions. Every element of the Passover story, the ancient story of God's deliverance of their ancestors from slavery, resonates with echoes of the experience of Jesus who is now present to them in a new way. It is not surprising, then, that the final events of Jesus' life were probably the first part of his story to be committed to writing.

Though Matthew draws much of his material from Mark, he fashions the tradition into a new narrative and adds several distinctive features. "To fulfil all righteousness" is Jesus' stated mission. He has declared "blessed" those who suffer for the sake of righteousness [justice]". He now embodies his own teaching as the just or righteous one, the one in right relationship with God. The prayer on his lips as he faces death is that of the suffering just Israelite who is utterly faithful to his mission and whose trust in God never fails.

There are hints that Jesus' death is not the end, but rather the beginning of the new age of God's empire, a compassionate alternative to the brutality of Rome. In response to the high priest Caiaphas, Jesus points beyond death to his post-resurrection life "at the right hand of power...." Extraordinary signs follow his death: the tearing of the temple curtain; the trembling of the earth; the recognition of the Roman centurion and his companions that this man is of God; and finally, the opening of the graves and appearance of the dead in anticipation of the final resurrection. The story offers the hope of reversal to all who witness the events surrounding Jesus' death. It offers hope to the women who have followed him all the way from Galilee and "ministered to him". It offers hope to the male disciples who have deserted or denied him, to faithful disciples like Joseph of Arimathea, and even to his Roman executioners. It has the potential to bring hope to their counterparts through the ages such as those who keep watch for the condemned on death row or for desperate seekers of asylum.



What's going on in the Diocese

TAIZÉ INTERNATIONAL EVENT in Birmingham called HIDDEN TREASURE.

Young adults (16-35) are encouraged to register for the event Friday 28th April – Monday 1st May 2017. Go to the Taizé website www.Taize.fr/Birmingham and search for Hidden Treasure. The organisers are looking for people in the Aston area who could put up some of the young people. Their needs are modest, just floorspace (2m x 1m/person) would be acceptable, plus a modest breakfast in the morning. Please take a form, complete it and give it to Fr. Mark. The contact person in Aston is Fr Mark Van Beeumen or speak to Shirleyni. You can contact him on 07974904793 or via email mark@msceurope.co.uk.

LENTEN ALMS Lent is especially the time for works of penance and one of the works of penance is almsgiving. It is up to you to which charities you give your alms, but two are being specially recommended to us – Fr. Hudson's Care and Aid to the Church in Need. You will be able to find out more details about them on their websites and also where to send the money.

40 DAYS FOR LIFE The 40 days finishes on Palm Sunday.

A CONCERT WITH Fr. FRANCIS MAPLE FROM ST. PANTASAPH FRIARY and Jobe Baker-Sullivan on Friday 21st April at Maryvale Institute. Doors open 6.00 pm for 6.30 pm start. Tickets £5. Tel. 0121 325 2414

Aston & Nechells Foodbank have greatly appreciated the generosity you have shown previously with food donations. We currently are running short of the following food lines: UHT long life milk, long life fruit juice or squash, tinned fruit, tinned tomatoes, toilet rolls, other toiletry items. If you are able to assist, please bring donations to the warehouse on any Tuesday between 11.00 - 13.00 at 1- 41 Sutton Rd Erdington B23 6QH. If this time is not possible donations can be left at any of our distribution centres. Opening times are on our website www.astonnechells.foodbank.org.uk

WALSINGHAM PILGRIMAGE If you would like to join the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Walsingham on 13th.May, led by Bishop Byrne, please get in touch with Anne Roebuck on 454 0130 for full details, cost and a booking form.

A Retreat with a Difference A Foyer de Charité Retreat will be held at the new Retreat Centre in Walsingham, from Sunday 30 April (6pm) – Saturday 6 May (2pm). The theme is **God's Plan for the Fullness of Time**, and the preacher will be Mgr. Keith Barltrop, with help from Foyer members and past retreatants. Foyer retreats are held mainly in silence, with three talks a day, and offer a holistic way of deepening our faith in the Church's teaching and our life in Christ. The Foyers are communities of consecrated lay people living with a priest in order to help others grow closer to Christ and live the Catholic faith more fully. For further information or to book a place, contact Mgr. Barltrop: keithbarltrop@rcdow.org.uk; 07879 953953; St. Mary of the Angels, Moorhouse Road, Bayswater, London W2 5DJ

Special Invitation from the Sacred Heart School

Each year Class 6 perform 'Born for This' a portrayal of Christ's passion, death and resurrection. This year it will be on Wednesday 12th April at 2.00 pm. Why not come along and experience this wonderful portrayal. Remember to come early as there will be no admittance to the school after 1.50 pm.