



## 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 24<sup>th</sup> /25<sup>th</sup> March and start of Holy Week

Day	Aston	Nechells	Intention
Saturday	12.30 am	6.00 pm	Ken Levell People of Parish
Palm Sunday	10.00 am		Annie & Tom Kennedy
Monday	10.00 am		Bridie Murphy in Church with SH school
Tuesday	10.00 am		Pat Wall
Wednesday (SJ school)		9.30 am	Louise Tehan Mass in St. Joseph's school
Maundy Thursday	7.30 pm		Anne Stapleton 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 31<sup>st</sup> March/1<sup>st</sup> April

Day	Aston	Nechells	Intention
Holy Saturday	8.30 pm		Those being baptised Lighting of Easter fire, the Easter Vigil, renewal of Baptismal vows and 1 <sup>st</sup> Mass of Easter
EASTER SUNDAY	10.00 am	12 Noon	People of the Parish Patricia Stokes

**Please Pray for the sick;** Sheila O'Reilly, Marion Levell, Peter McKernan, Mary Joyce, Bernadette Harnett, Lisa Brean, Teresa Francis, Michael O'Connor, William Parish, Michael O'Reilly, Julie Gallagher, Pat Hayes, Jimmy Armstrong, Jim McGuire, Anne Robinson, Peter Marron, John Nolan.



**STATIONS OF THE CROSS** will take place following the Sunday morning Mass during Lent

The collection last weekend came to £170.17

The second collection for the Cathedral Maintenance Fund came to £158.32

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.

**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 The Salvation Army, Gladstone Street, B6 7PA, the Aston one at St. Matthews Church, assemble at 9.15 am.

**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.

**40 DAYS FOR LIFE** finishes on Palm Sunday. There will probably be a last hour event. Listen out for this in the aural notices.

**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. The Elect will be baptised and we shall all renew our baptismal promises.

**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 specially recommended are – 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.

**HELP NEEDED** Could you help with the counting of the money after Mass on Sundays? Would you like to be a reader at Mass on either Saturday or Sunday? Could you ring the bell? Please see Fr. Stephen if you are interested in any of these.

#### **SERVICES OF RECONCILIATION IN LOCAL CHURCHES**

St. Nicholas, Boldmere	Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> March	7.00 pm
Erdington Abbey	Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> March	7.00 pm
Holy Cross, Walmley	Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup> March	7.00 pm

In addition to the normal Saturday time, Fr. Stephen will also be available for confessions after every Mass until the start of the Triduum.

#### **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.

#### **Responsorial 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 Mark 14:1-15:47

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

N. It was two days before the Passover and the feast of Unleavened Bread, and the chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to arrest Jesus by some trick and have him put to death. For they said,

C. It must not be during the festivities, or there will be a disturbance among the people.

N. Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper; he was at dinner when a woman came in with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment, pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the ointment on his head. Some who were there said to one another indignantly,

C. Why this waste of ointment? Ointment like this could have been sold for over three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor.

N. and they were angry with her. But Jesus said,

✕ Leave her alone. Why are you upsetting her? What she has done for me is one of the good works. You have the poor with you always, and you can be kind to them whenever you wish, but you will not always have me. She has done what was in her power to do: she has anointed my body beforehand for its burial. I tell you solemnly, wherever throughout all the world the Good News is proclaimed, what she has done will be told also, in remembrance of her.

Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, approached the chief priests with an offer to hand Jesus over to them. They were delighted to hear it, and promised to give him money; and he looked for a way of betraying him when the opportunity should occur.

On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb was sacrificed, his disciples said to him,

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

N. So he sent two of his disciples, saying to them,

✕ Go into the city and you will meet a man carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him, and say to the owner of the house which he enters, 'The Master says: "Where is my dining room in which I can eat the passover with my disciples?"' He will show you a large upper room furnished with couches, all prepared. Make the preparations for us there.

N. The disciples set out and went to the city and found everything as he had told them, and prepared the Passover.

When evening came he arrived with the Twelve. And while they were at table eating, Jesus said,

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

N. They were distressed and asked him, one after another,

C. Not I, surely?

N. He said to them,

✕ It is one of the Twelve, one who is dipping into the same dish with me. Yes, 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. And as they were eating he took some bread, and when he had said the blessing he broke it and gave it to them, saying:

✕ Take it: this is my body.

N. Then he took a cup, and when he had returned thanks he gave it to them, and all drank from it, and he said to them,

✕ This is my blood, the blood of the covenant, which is to be poured out for many. I tell you solemnly, I shall not drink any more wine until the day I drink the new wine in the kingdom of God.

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

✕ You will all lose faith, for the scripture says: 'I shall strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered.' However, after my resurrection I shall go before you to Galilee.

N. Peter said,

O. Even if all lose faith, I will not.

N. And Jesus said to him,

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

N. But he repeated still more earnestly,

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

N. And they all said the same.

They came to a small estate called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples,

✠ Stay here while I pray.

N. Then he took Peter and James and John with him. And a sudden fear came over him, and great distress. And he said to them,

✠ My soul is sorrowful to the point of death. Wait here, and keep awake.

N. And going on a little further he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, this hour might pass him by. He said:

✠ Abba (Father)! Everything is possible for you. Take this cup away from me. But let it be as you, not I, would have it.

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

✠ Simon, are you asleep? Had you not the strength to keep awake 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 he went away and prayed, saying the same words. And once more he came back and found them sleeping, their eyes were so heavy; and they could find no answer for him. He came back a third time and said to them,

✠ You can sleep on now and take your rest. It is all over. The hour has come. Now the Son of Man is to be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up! Let us go! My betrayer is close at hand already.

N. Even while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, came up with a number of men armed with swords and clubs, sent by the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. Now the traitor had arranged a signal with them. He had said, 'The one I kiss he is the man. Take him in charge, and see he is well guarded when you lead him away.' So when the traitor came, he went straight up to Jesus and said,

O. Rabbi!

N. and kissed him. The others seized him and took him in charge. Then one of the bystanders drew his sword and struck out at the high priest's servant, and cut off his ear.

Then Jesus spoke:

✠ Am I a brigand, that you had to set out to capture me with swords and clubs? I was among you teaching in the Temple day after day and you never laid hands on me. But this is to fulfil the scriptures.

N. And they all deserted him and ran away. A young man who followed him had nothing on but a linen cloth. They caught hold of him, but he left the cloth in their hands and ran away naked.

They led Jesus off to the high priest; and all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes assembled there. Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the high priest's palace, and was sitting with the attendants warming himself at the fire.

The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus on which they might pass the death sentence. But they could not find any. Several, indeed, brought false evidence against him, but their evidence was conflicting. Some stood up and submitted this false evidence against him,

C. We heard him say, 'I am going to destroy this Temple made by human hands, and in three days build another, not made by human hands.'

N. But even on this point their evidence was conflicting. The high priest then stood up before the whole assembly and put this question to Jesus,

O. Have you no answer to that? What is this evidence these men are bringing against you?

N. But he was silent and made no answer at all. The high priest put a second question to him,

O. Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?

N. Jesus said,

✠ I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power and coming with the clouds of heaven.

N. The high priest tore his robes, and said:

O. What need of witnesses have we now? You heard the blasphemy. What is your finding?

N. And they all gave their verdict: he deserved to die.

Some of them started spitting at him and, blindfolding him, began hitting him with their fists and shouting,

C. Play the prophet!

N. And the attendants rained blows on him.

While Peter was down below in the courtyard, one of the high priest's servant-girls came up. She saw Peter warming himself there, stared at him and said,

O. You too were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth.

N. But he denied it, saying.

O. I do not know, I do not understand, what you are talking about.

N. And he went out into the forecourt. The servant-girl saw him and again started telling the bystanders,

O. This fellow is one of them.

N. But again he denied it. A little later the bystanders themselves said to Peter,

C. You are one of them for sure! Why, you are a Galilean.

N. But he started calling down curses on himself and swearing,

O. I do not know the man you speak of.

N. At that moment the cock crew for the second time, and Peter recalled how Jesus had said to him, 'Before the cock crows twice, you will have disowned me three times.' And he burst into tears.

First thing in the morning, the chief priests together with the elders and scribes, in short the whole Sanhedrin, had their plan ready. They had Jesus bound and took him away and handed him over to Pilate.

Pilate questioned him:

O. Are you the king of the Jews?

N. He answered,

✠ It is you who say it.

N. And the chief priests brought many accusations against him. Pilate questioned him again:

O. Have you no reply at all? See how many accusations they are bringing against you!

N. But, to Pilate's amazement, Jesus made no further reply.

At festival time Pilate used to release a prisoner for them, anyone they asked for. Now a man called Barabbas was then in prison with the rioters who had committed murder during the uprising. When the crowd went up and began to ask Pilate the customary favour, Pilate answered them

O. Do you want me to release for you the king of the Jews?

N. For he realised it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed Jesus over. The chief priests, however, had incited the crowd to demand that he should release Barabbas for them instead. Then Pilate spoke again:

O. But in that case, what am I to do with the man you call king of the Jews?

N. They shouted back,

C. Crucify him!

N. Pilate asked them,

O. Why? What harm has he done?

N. But they shouted all the louder,

C. Crucify him!

N. So Pilate, anxious to placate the crowd, released Barabbas for them and, having ordered Jesus to be scourged, handed him over to be crucified.

The soldiers led him away to the inner part of the palace, that is, the Praetorium, and called the whole cohort together. They dressed him up in purple, twisted some thorns into a crown and put it on him. And they began saluting him,

C. Hail, king of the Jews!

N. They struck his head with a reed and spat on him; and they went down on their knees to do him homage. And when they had finished making fun of him, they took off the purple and dressed him in his own clothes.

They enlisted a passer-by, Simon of Cyrene, father of Alexander and Rufus, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross. They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha, which means the place of the skull.

They offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he refused it. Then they crucified him, and shared out his clothing, casting lots to decide what each should get. It was the third hour when they crucified him. The inscription giving the charge against him read: 'The King of the Jews.' And they crucified two robbers with him, one on his right and one on his left.

The passers-by jeered at him; they shook their heads and said,

C. Aha! So you would destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days! Then save yourself: come down from the cross!

N. The chief priests and the scribes mocked him among themselves in the same way. They said,

C. He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Christ, the king of Israel, come down from the cross now, for us to see it and believe.

N. Even those who were crucified with him taunted him.

When the sixth hour came there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice,

✠ Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?

N. which means, 'My God, my God, why have you deserted me?' When some of those who stood by heard this, they said

C. Listen, he is calling on Elijah.

N. Someone ran and soaked a sponge in vinegar and, putting it on a reed, gave it him to drink, saying:

O. Wait and see if Elijah will come to take him down.

N. But Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.

### ***All kneel and pause for a moment.***

And the veil of the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The centurion, who was standing in front of him, had seen how he had died, and he said,

O. In truth this man was a son of God.

N. There were some women watching from a distance. Among them were Mary of Magdala, Mary who was the mother of James the younger and Joset, and Salome. These used to follow him and look after him when he was in Galilee. And there were many other women there who had come up to Jerusalem with him.

It was now evening, and since it was Preparation Day (that is, the vigil of the sabbath), there came Joseph of Arimathaea, a prominent member of the Council, who himself lived in the hope of seeing the kingdom of God, and he boldly went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate, astonished that he should have died so soon, summoned the centurion and enquired if he was already dead. Having been assured of this by the centurion, he granted the corpse to Joseph who bought a shroud, took Jesus down from the cross, wrapped him in the shroud and laid him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a stone against the entrance to the tomb. Mary of Magdala and Mary the mother of Joset were watching and took note of where he was laid.

## Reflection

A lot is going to happen this coming week. Jesus is going to do and say things that will annoy and anger the Jewish and Roman leaders. He is going to do and say a lot of things that will confuse and challenge his closest friends, followers and even his family.

By the end of the week he will share a meal with his family and friends. He will offer himself to them through bread and wine. He will take the place of a slave and do the unthinkable; he will wash the feet of those who are at table with him. After this meal his closest friends will turn their backs on him. Judas will betray him and Peter will deny that he even knows him. A few hours later Pilate will condemn him to death. The soldiers will beat him and make him carry his own cross. On the way to Calvary, Simon will be forced to help him carry this cross. Veronica will push her way through the crowd and wipe his face in a daring act of tender compassion.

The danger is that because we read and hear this story every year, we can become used to it and a bit overly familiar with it and what it means to us. The invitation and question that Passion or Palm Sunday puts before us is where am I as Jesus is going through all of this? At the beginning of Lent Jesus said to each of us 'Take up your cross and follow me.' Are you still walking with him or are you hiding safely at the back of the crowd keeping your distance? Where are you as Jesus carries his cross?

Mary, the Mother of Jesus is the great disciple of Holy Week. She followed him and stayed with him every step of the way. She has the courage, strength and faith to stand with the other women as he died when all the others deserted him. As we begin our own Journey through the dramatic events of Holy Week can we stand with Mary? Can we be inspired by her and so draw courage and strength from her so we too can stay with Jesus?

The journey of Holy Week does not end nor stop at Calvary. But before we can stand at the empty tomb with Mary Magdalene we have to travel with Jesus as he carries his cross and stands on the Hill of Calvary. There is no resurrection without crucifixion. We are not asked to stay at the cross, but we are asked to experience the cross. Then and only then can we share in and experience the joy and new life that God freely offers each of us through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. If we die with him, we shall live with him. If we hold firm, then we shall reign with him.

Perhaps Holy Week offers each of us the opportunity to hear that invitation that Jesus gave us at the beginning of Lent; 'Take up your cross and follow me.' This is invitation that Jesus gives to each of us. However, each of us have to make our own response. What's yours?

**DONATIONS TO THE ROOF APPEAL ON LINE** You can now make a donation to our roof appeal on line by going to our website [www.sacredheartaston.com](http://www.sacredheartaston.com) and going to the Giving page. We are using "Mydonate" and they don't take any commission so we get 100% of what you give and you can Gift Aid it too if you are a taxpayer.

**Tuesday Bible Sharing Class** will not meet in Holy Week

**THE FAMILY GROUP MOVEMENT** Family Groups are parish friendship groups drawn from the Catholic community open to any parishioner irrespective of age or personal circumstances. They are made up of young, mature, single, widowed, married, separated and divorced parishioners who commit to spending time together once a month for low cost activities. Go to <https://familygroupmovementenglandwales.blogspot.co.uk/> or email Fr. Stephen who will email more information. This sounds a really good and practical initiative.

**COCAINE ANONYMOUS** is a fellowship of, by and for addicts seeking recovery. It is run on similar lines to AA. For more information see <http://www.centralukca.co.uk> or email [ca.pi.midlands@gmail.com](mailto:ca.pi.midlands@gmail.com) or phone 07380 291080.

**THE KINGDOM WARRIORS** meet on Tuesdays at 6.30 pm at St. Vincent's Church, Nechells Parkway. This is a group for young adults (18+) and involves the study of the Bible. This week preparation for Easter.

**Second Saturday Convention** - Every 2nd Saturday of the month from 8am - 4pm at Bethel Convention Centre, Kelvin Way, West Bromwich, B70 7JW (including a Rosary procession, Holy Mass, Confession, talks, spiritual sharing, testimonies, praise and worship and Eucharistic Adoration).



**HOLY WEEK ASSEMBLY**  
**Sacred Heart Catholic School**  
**Earlsbury Gardens**  
**Birmingham B20 3AE**

Class 6 will be doing a special 'Holy Week' assembly which tells the story of Jesus' journey to the cross.

The assembly will be on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March at 10.30am in the Junior Hall.

All family and friends are welcome to join us in this very special portrayal of Jesus' final days. Please arrive at the school for 10.20am at the latest, as we will be unable to admit any latecomers.