



St. John Rigby Parish NEWSLETTER.

Incorporating the Former Parishes of Sacred Heart, Hindley Green, St. Richard's, Atherton & Sacred Heart, Hindsford.

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Deacon: Ken Holding (Tel: 255834)

14th February 2021

Church Closure.

Sadly all of the churches in the Deanery remain closed at this time. The urgent message from the Government and from senior health officials is to **STAY AT HOME**. The situation seems to be getting better, especially with the distribution of the vaccines, but we still need to stay safe. When we are in a position to re-open the churches we will let you know as soon as we can. In the meantime keep on praying, stay safe and look after one another. Hopefully we will be back together again very soon.

Just a Reminder.

Please remember, if you or someone you live with has Covid-19 symptoms, then please stay at home and help us to protect everyone. You should stay at home if you are unwell or awaiting a test result. People who are vulnerable or who feel unsure about returning to Mass need to consider the wisdom of doing so. Remember the Sunday obligation has not been reinstated.

Pray for our sick

Joan Baines.
 Eileen McAlister.
 Joyce Gorton.
 Nora Smith
 Jed Bamber.
 John Atkins.
 Eileen Watkinson.
 Shelia Ratcliffe.
 Maureen Blears.
 Jean Culkin.
 Martin Culkin.
 Bernadette Boardman.
 Teresa Weatherhead.
 Neil Gunson.
 Frank Vose.

Lately Dead

Rosalind Richardson.
 Brenda Southern.
 Brian Crowther.
 James Potts.
 Arnold Southern.
 Anne Wielding.
 Fred Billington.

Anniversaries

Elizabeth Cooke.
 Joan Morris.
 Dorothy Unsworth.
 James Woodward.
 William Dickinson.
 Peter Smith.
 Teresa Ramsdale.

Collection Last Week.

Envelopes:
 Loose Plate:
 CAFOD Box:

FEASTDAYS.

There are no major feast days this week. However, on Wednesday we do begin the season of Lent as we celebrate Ash Wednesday.

First Reading – Joel 2:12-18.

When we are called to fast, do not let your fasting be seen by everyone, for God will see all the good that you are doing.

Second Reading – 2 Corinthians 5:20-6:2.

St. Paul reminds the people of Corinth to be reconciled to God and with each other, for "now is the favourable time."

Gospel Reading – Matthew 6:1-6,16-18.

Jesus warns his disciples not to boast about all that they are doing, but reminds that "Your Father, who sees all that is done in secret, will reward you."

If anyone would like to add any items for the Newsletter each week then please let Deacon Ken or Fr. Paul know by Wednesday evening at the latest.

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READINGS FOR THE WEEKEND.

Sixth Sunday of the Year.

First Reading – Leviticus 13:1-2,44-46.

The Book of Leviticus shows us the practical implications of the Law of Moses. At a time when people had no defence against different diseases, rules are laid down which exclude those with kin diseases from mixing with the wider society, for the protection of all people.

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1.

Paul is talking to early Christians about how to behave when dining with pagans. Paul balances the freedom of the Spirit, which no longer requires strict adherence to the Law of Moses, and the need to avoid shocking the conscience of others.

Gospel Reading – Mark 1:40-45.

Jesus heals a man with a really bad skin disease and puts himself at risk of being rendered ritually unclean in the process. There is nothing any of us could ever do that Jesus would not do for others at whatever cost to himself.

GOSPEL REFLECTION.

As we prepare ourselves for the beginning of Lent this week the readings this weekend really challenge us to ask ourselves, do we really treat people in the way that Jesus did? It is OK to say our prayers, to attend Mass, when we can, but how do we practice our faith in the midst of living our lives each day? This is the real test of our discipleship and whether or not we really are putting our faith into action. Jesus calls us to be a welcoming family. We are, after all, as St. Theresa once prayed, “Christ’s Body here on earth”. He has no other Body but ours as we live out our faith each day.

So it is not for us to stand in judgement on one another, but to mirror the welcome of Jesus even for those whose beliefs or practices we may find strange. This isn’t to say “anything goes”. But it is to proclaim the Christian belief that everyone can find a home in the family of God. Our first task is to keep the door wide open, to make space for others to enter in God’s own time and way. Pope Francis preaches this in “EvangeliiGaudium”, “The Joy Of The Gospel”, when he reminds us that the Eucharist is “not a prize for the perfect but a powerful medicine and nourishment for the weak”. And he goes on, “the Church....is a place for everyone.”

So how do we live these words out in our lives? Not by being judges of others that’s for sure, but by being accepting and compassionate as Jesus was throughout his life here on earth. We must offer the same welcome and compassion that we hope to receive ourselves. That is why forgiveness is at the heart of the prayer Jesus taught us. He puts the grace of forgiving and being forgiven alongside daily survival itself. At the heart of Jesus’ teaching is mercy and compassion. Let us pray that we may do this and so allow the love of Jesus to flow through us and touch the lives of others.

