

**The Catholic Parish of St Mary, Leek**  
**This parish is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham Registered Charity No 234216**  
**Compton, LEEK, Staffordshire, ST13 5NH**

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**“Our vision is to be a Catholic Parish living Christ’s command,  
‘Love one another as I have loved you’.**

- Saturday 16 March** 10am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament: Confessions  
**FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT** *Day of Prayer for the Candidates of the Sacraments*  
*Jeremiah 31:31-34; P 20; Hebrews 5:7-9; John 12:20-33*  
6.15pm Mass Shirley Regan (RIP) (JR)
- Sunday 17 March** 9.30am Morning Prayer from the Divine Office  
10am Mass Janusz Szura-Zwierski (Spec Int)  
1.30pm Polish Mass  
4pm Stations of the Cross and Benediction
- Monday 18 March** **Lent Feria**  
*Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ps 50; Hebrews 5:7-9; John 8:1-11*  
9.40am Rosary 10am Mass Arthur Piggott RIP  
11.30am Funeral Liturgy for Arthur Piggott RIP
- Tuesday 19 March** **SOLEMNITY OF ST JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**  
*25 Samuel 7:4-5, 12-14, 16; Ps 88; Romans: 4:13, 16-18, 22; Luke:2:41-51*  
9.40am Rosary 10am Mass Billy Powers Ints  
12.30pm Funeral Liturgy for Alma Merry RIP
- Wednesday 20 March** **Lent Feria**  
*Daniel 3:14-20, 24-25, 28; Dan 3; John 8:31-42*  
9.40am Rosary 10am Liturgy of the Word and Holy Communion
- Thursday 21 March** **Lent Feria**  
*Genesis 17:3-9; Ps 104; John 8:51-59*  
9.40am Rosary 10am Mass For you, the People of the Parish
- Friday 22 March** **Lent Feria**  
*Jeremiah 20:10-13; PS 17: John 10:31-42*  
10.30am School Mass in Church Celebrant’s Intention
- Saturday 23 March** 10am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament: Confessions  
**PALM SUNDAY OF THE LORD PASSION OF THE LORD** *Day of Prayer for the Candidates of the Sacraments*  
*Isaiah 50:4-7; PS 21; Philippians 2:6-11; Mark 14:1-15:47*  
6.15pm Mass Christine McGinnley
- Sunday 24 March** 9.30am Morning Prayer from the Divine Office  
10am Mass Piotr Zwierski (RIP)  
1.30pm Polish Mass  
4pm Stations of the Cross and Benediction

<b>Parish Priest</b>	Fr Martin Pratt	tel 01538 382385 <a href="mailto:stmary.leek@rcaob.org.uk">stmary.leek@rcaob.org.uk</a>
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**Parish Safeguarding** The Parish operates in accordance with Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and the National and Archdioceses policies & procedures at all times. Our Parish Safeguarding Representative is Malcolm Sproat. He can be contacted at: [sg.stmary.leek@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:sg.stmary.leek@rcaob.org.uk) or alternatively the Diocesan Safeguarding team can be contacted on 0121 230 6240/ [safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk) if you have any concern.

**The Pope’s Prayer Intention for March For the new martyrs.** We pray that those who risk their lives for the Gospel in various parts of the world inflame the Church with their courage and missionary enthusiasm.

**Please pray for Vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life** Can you set aside one day each month to pray for Vocations? If so, could you sign the list at the back of church, please.

**Please pray for the sick** Jenny Kirkham, Moyra Chadwick, Chris Rea, Kathryn Higginbotham, Norman Syddall, Andrew Clifford, Janusz Szura-Zwierski, Fr Anthony Dykes, Madeline Horter.

*Due to data protection legislation, in order for a name to be printed in this newsletter, the consent of the person who is unwell needs to be given.*

**Please pray for the Faithful Departed** Let’s pray for the repose of the souls of, Arthur Piggott and Alma Merry. The arrangements for Arthur’s Funeral: Monday 18 March 1130am Funeral Liturgy followed by committal at Carmountside. The arrangements for Alma’s Funeral: Tuesday 19 March 1230pm Funeral Liturgy followed by Committal at Carmountside.

**Anniversaries for this week:** Jane Munday, Evelyn Carding, Joan Doreen Shufflebotham, John Goodfellow, Martin James Moran, Elsie Moran, Marie Theresa Balay, John Brindley, Audrey Oulsnam, Sister Scholastica Davies I.B.V.M., Margaret Ann Ryan I.B.V.M., Sister Veronica Bill, Frederick Vincent Wood, Halina Turek, Jane Manuel, George Cockburn, Margaret Berrisford, Antonia Davies, Kathleen Proctor, Thomas Joyce, Rose Elizabeth Cockburn, Lilian Mellor, Joe Cox, Mother Paul Finn I.B.V.M., Herbert Hambleton, Patricia Anne Kent, Harold Francis Kelsall, Olive Hogan

Dear friends, this weekend, we welcome the students from Painsley Catholic College to our Saturday evening Mass! As part of our reflections for the Synod, we identified that we want to build relationships with both St Mary's Academy and Painsley Catholic College, and in particular, the students, pupils and their families. We believe that there is a great working relationship between our schools, homes and parish community: let's encourage this relationship and let's encourage our young people.

This weekend, Archbishop Bernard has sent a Pastoral Letter to every parish in the diocese, asking that Parish Councils be established. Here at St Mary's, I am incredibly grateful for our Parish Council.

**Meeting Fr Martin after Mass** I am glad to meet parishioners after Mass. The Sacristy is a busy place especially after the weekend Masses with altar servers, their relatives, children attending Sacramental Preparation, and volunteer cleaners. For those who wish to see me and to ensure confidentiality, I ask that you wait in the benches by the Confessional. I will be happy to see you once the live-stream has stopped and I have seen the children attending Sacramental Preparation. If this is not a convenient time, contact me in the usual ways. Thank you for your help in this matter.

**Filip Gronkiewicz** We congratulate Filip who has been accepted to begin training for the Priesthood in the Archdiocese of Birmingham. Let's continue to support Filip both with our prayers – let's wrap him in a blanket of prayer, and by encouraging him.

Let's continue to pray for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life: let's double our efforts, asking God for another vocation. Please sign the prayer calendar at the back of the church. Please take with you some prayer cards from the table at the back of the church.

**Holy Week** I am looking forward to celebrating Holy Week and all the liturgies and devotional activities associated with this high point of the Church's calendar. The weeks of Lent have been preparing us for Holy Week, and in particular, the Easter Triduum, the days which include Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday; the season of Lent has been acknowledging the divine dignity which God gave us at our baptism.

We are now in the last two weeks of Lent which used to be called Passiontide. This period of Lent is marked by the custom of covering the crucifixes and statues; there is a special Preface before the Eucharistic Prayer; and, there is a growing focus on the Lord's Passion and Suffering.

**Next weekend, 23- 24 March, we celebrate Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord.** The two Masses next Sunday will begin with the Commemoration of the Lord's entrance to the Holy City of Jerusalem with the blessing of Palm Crosses and a procession. Please do take a Palm Cross next weekend and place it in a prominent place in your home.

**Thursday 28 March Holy Thursday, the Mass of the Lord's Supper.**

**6pm Mass of the Lord's Supper followed by prayer at the Altar of Repose** This Mass is celebrated in the evening to correspond with the Biblical accounts of both the Passover in the Old Testament and the Lord's Supper in the Gospels. At the Last Supper, Christ instituted both the Sacrament of the Eucharist (the Mass) and the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

During the Mass of the Lord's Supper, the priest washes the feet of 12 parishioners, copying the action of the Lord. At the end of the Mass, the Blessed Sacrament is taken to the Altar of Repose where it will be kept during the Easter Triduum season. Those who attend the Mass of the Lord's Supper are encouraged to remain in church in prayer at the altar of repose.

**Can you help?** 12 volunteers for the washing of the feet. Please sign the list at the back of the church and on the day bring your own towel

**Friday 29 March, Good Friday.**

**10am Stations of the Cross for children and young people**

**12noon Walk of Witness from the Nicholson Memorial**

**3pm Solemn celebration of the Lord's Passion**

**7pm Stations of the Cross**

"Good" comes from an old English word meaning, "Holy". Today, the Sacrament of the Eucharist (the Mass) is not celebrated. The Solemn Celebration of the Lord's Passion is celebrated during the

afternoon to correspond to the timings given in the Gospels. It begins in silence and with the priest laying prostrate on the floor of the church in front of the altar as a sign of honour to Christ and a reminder of his Ordination when he lay prostrate as a sign of self-giving and trust in God. The three parts of the Solemn Celebration of the Lord's Passion include, first, the Liturgy of the Lord which has the Passion according to St John as its centrepiece. Next, the Veneration of the Cross: two parishioners bring the cross to the front of the church in procession. This procession is punctuated by three moments of veneration before all the members of the congregation come forward to make their own personal act of veneration. Finally, there is the administration of Holy Communion. The Good Friday liturgy concludes in silence with all the members of the congregation genuflecting to the crucifix.

**Can you help?** I am inviting children and young people to read at Stations of the Cross. If you would like to help, please ask a grown up to send an email to me.

### **Saturday 30 March is Holy Saturday**

**10am Devotions to Our Lady of Sorrows**

**230m Blessing of Food, Swierconka**

**730pm Easter Vigil**

Sadly, popular culture has renamed this day. Mass is not celebrated until the Easter Vigil. During the day, the Church is at prayer at the Lord's tomb. We shall host a traditional Polish custom, the Blessing of Food, Swierconka, families prepare food baskets. The items in the baskets have a religious significance: the baskets are lined with linen or lace napkins and Easter evergreen; there are decorated eggs representing Christ's resurrection; bread representing Jesus the Bread of Life; cooked lamb representing Jesus the Lamb of God; salt for purification; horseradish for Christ's sacrifice; and, ham for joy.

The evening's Easter Vigil is the Church's most important liturgical action: everyone should be there! The four parts of the Easter Vigil are about the four foundations of the Christian life: the service of light and the lighting of the Easter candle is about the Resurrection; the Liturgy of the Word; the renewal of Baptismal promises; and, the liturgy of the Eucharist.

**Can you help?** Three people to assist with removing the purple veils during the Easter Vigil. Please sign the list at the back of the church.

### **Sunday 31 March is Easter Sunday!**

**10am Easter Sunday Mass**

**130pm Polish Mass**

Let's all be together for Easter Sunday Mass. I have an Easter gift for you! I want us to be together to encounter the Risen Lord at Easter Day Mass. I want our belief and our participation at Mass to take off!

**Easter Duties** The Church wants us to benefit from the spiritual effects of Christ's suffering and resurrection and calls us to go to Mass, receive Holy Communion and go to Confession during the period of Lent and Easter.

**Devotions to Our Lady of Sorrows** From next Monday, 18 March, we shall use the Devotion to Our Lady of Sorrows before Mass until Easter. I have been very encouraged by the number of people who have bought the special rosary beads for this devotion; I have had to reorder twice! One parishioner said to me the other day when asking me to bless their rosary beads, "This devotion to Our Lady of Sorrows is a mother's prayer!" And, I must agree! The seven sorrows of St Mary do connect with real life situations which mothers, fathers and priests connect with. There are more on the piety stall at the back of the church.

**Bene Merenti Presentations** Following the recent news that Pope Francis has honoured three of our parishioners with the Bene Merenti award, I am now glad to let you know that Canon Paul McNally, the Parish Priest of Holy Trinity, Newcastle, and Episcopal Vicar for this region of the Archdiocese will present the awards at Mass on Sunday 19 May. I am looking forward to a great parish celebration which we can all enjoy.

**Gift Aid to St Mary's Parish** As we approach the start of a new tax year, if you are a UK taxpayer and do not currently donate with Gift Aid, please consider signing up to make your donations with Gift Aid. This will increase your donation by 25% which we claim annually. Donating by standing order is safe and secure, it is simple and you are in control to change or cancel at any time.

If you would like to discuss this please talk to Marie Lawton, the parish Gift Aid administrator, we do not require any of your confidential finance information. If you choose to go ahead please collect a form from Marie. Every donation is much appreciated.

### **Dates for your diary**

**Tuesday 26 March** Sweep and Clean in church for Easter

**Sunday 19 May** Presentation Bene Merenti awards

**Going into hospital** If you are going into to hospital, there is now no obligation for the hospital to inform its chaplaincy department of your admission. When admitted to hospital, please ask the hospital to be in contact with their chaplain. Alternatively, be in contact with me and I will make contact with the chaplain for you.

**Edge@Alton** is our Catholic youth group for young people in school years 6-9. They have lots of fun, games and challenges and are a great way to make new friends. Sessions cost just £2 and new members are always welcome. Please encourage your child to come along - we can promise lots of laughs! The next session is in Alton on Sunday 17th March from 3:15pm to 5:15pm. For more information or to book for your child to attend the session please email: [edgeatalton@gmail.com](mailto:edgeatalton@gmail.com)

### **North Staffordshire Deanery**

**Tuesday 19 March 7pm** at Ss George and Martin, Birches Head, Mass for the Year of Prayer

**Monday 1 April 10am** at Sacred Heart, Hanley, Easter Men's Mass

**Holy Week Retreat** You are invited to take part in a four-evening retreat for Holy Week at St Patrick's church, Mellor Street, Packmoor, ST7 4SN. The retreat is called "A Path of Pain and of Love" and follows the teaching of Fr Ignacio Larranaga OFM Cap, the founder of Prayer and Life Workshops. The retreat will be given by prayer guides of PLW. The four retreat evenings are from Palm Sunday (24 March) to Spy Wednesday (27 March) from 7pm to 8.30pm. From Monday to Wednesday the retreat session is preceded by Mass and Stations of the Cross at 6pm, for those who wish. Everyone is welcome!

### **Churches Together in Leek and District**

**Good Friday 29 March** the annual walk of witness will begin at 12 noon from the Nicholson memorial.

### **Second Collections**

**Friday 29 March** The annual collection for the shrines and holy places in the Holy Land

**Saturday 30 and Sunday 31 March** The Easter collection is for the parish priest and forms a major part of his income.

**Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 April** Mission appeal for the Association of the Propagation of the Faith

<b>Collection</b>	Gift Aid £167.00	Non Gift Aid £132.05	Total £299.05
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*Have a good week! With my prayers and best wishes, Fr Martin*