

**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**

Tel 01538 382385

Email [stmary.leek@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:stmary.leek@rcaob.org.uk)

Facebook @stmaryleek

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

<b>Saturday 23 March</b>	10am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament: Confessions <b>PALM SUNDAY OF THE LORD PASSION OF THE LORD</b> <i>Day of Prayer for the Candidates of the Sacraments</i> <i>Isaiah 50:4-7; PS 21; Philippians 2:6-11; Mark 14:1-15:47</i> 6.15pm Mass Christine McGinnley
<b>Sunday 24 March</b>	9.30am Morning Prayer from the Divine Office 10am Mass Piotr Zwierski 1.30pm Polish Mass 4pm Stations of the Cross followed by Benediction Confession will be available during Stations of the Cross
<b>Monday 25 March</b>	<b>Monday of Holy Week</b> <i>Isaiah 42:1-7; Ps 26; John 12:1-11</i> 9.40am Rosary 10am Mass Richard Green
<b>Tuesday 26 March</b>	<b>Tuesday of Holy Week</b> <i>Isaiah 49:1-6; Ps 70; John 13:21-33, 36-38</i> 9.40am Rosary 10am Mass Nora Walsh RIP
<b>Wednesday 27 March</b>	<b>Wednesday of Holy Week</b> <i>Isaiah 50:4-9; Ps 68; Matthew 26:14-25</i> 9.40am Rosary 10am Liturgy of the Word and Holy Communion
<b>Thursday 28 March</b>	<b>Thursday of Holy Week</b> <i>Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14; PS 115; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-15</i> 6pm Mass of the Lords Supper For you, the People of the Parish
<b>Friday 29 March</b>	<b>Good Friday</b> <i>Isaiah 52:13-53: 12; PS 30; Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9; John 18:1-19:42</i> 10am Stations of the Cross for children and young people 3pm Solemn celebration of the Lord’s Passion 7pm Stations of the Cross
<b>Saturday 30 March</b>	10am Devotions to Our Lady of Sorrows 230pm Blessing of Food, Swierconka <b>SOLEMNITY OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD: Easter Sunday</b> <i>Acts 10:34, 37-43; Ps 117; Colossians 3:1-4; John 20:1-9</i> 7.30pm Easter Vigil Jan and Maria Szura (RIP)
<b>Sunday 31 March</b>	9.30am Morning Prayer from the Divine Office 10am Mass Margaret Scanlon (RIP) 1.30pm Polish Mass

<b>Parish Priest</b>	Fr Martin Pratt	tel 01538 382385 <a href="mailto:stmary.leek@rcaob.org.uk">stmary.leek@rcaob.org.uk</a>
<b>Parish Administrator</b>	Mrs Alice Murray	
<b>St Mary’s Catholic Academy</b>	Mrs G Turner	tel 01538 493888
<b>Painsley Catholic College, Cheadle</b>	Mrs R Waugh	tel 01538 493777
<b>Safeguarding Rep</b>	Mr Malcolm Sproat	<a href="mailto:sg.stmary.leek@rcaob.org.uk">sg.stmary.leek@rcaob.org.uk</a>
	Archdiocese of Birmingham	tel 0121 230 6240
	NSPCC	tel 0808 800 500
<b>Gift Aid Co-ordinator</b>	Mrs M Lawton	<a href="mailto:ga.stmary.leek@rcaob.org.uk">ga.stmary.leek@rcaob.org.uk</a>
<b>Hospital Chaplaincy</b>	University Hospital North Midlands	tel 01782 676400
	Macclesfield District Hospital	tel 01625 663386

**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, Anne Malkin.  
*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.*

**Anniversaries for this week:** Patricia Anne Kent, Harold Francis Kelsall, Olive Hogan, Joseph Spencer, Margaret (Peggy) Noel, Edward Carding, Patrick Joseph Wallace, Sarah Mary Fitchett, Jack Casey, Doris Julia Kidd, Sister M Paul, Audrey Sheila Paulukiewicz, Joan Barlow, Audrey Margaret Oulsnam, Piotr Zwiercki, Nancy Flanagan, Amelia Cox, Katherine Pointon, Maud Agnes Smith, William Astles, Father Thomas Cockburn

Dear friends, I am incredibly grateful to you for your support and loyalty! You are appreciated very much and I am very thankful for all that you do for our parish.

**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 on being accepted to begin formation for priesthood in the Archdiocese of Birmingham. He will begin his formation in September at the Royal English College at Valladolid, Spain. He will begin what is called the, "Propaedeutic Year", propaedeutic comes from the Greek word meaning "to teach beforehand".

The propaedeutic stage prepares each individual candidate for the priesthood for the journey ahead. It gives time and space to develop a grounded spiritual life and helps them to prepare for the prolonged study that the formation journey demands.

The year-long programme recognises that candidates for the priesthood today come from many different backgrounds and all have unique circumstances. As a result, the formation process takes nothing for granted. The programme helps students develop a solid, missionary vision for the priesthood and understanding of the Catholic Church.

At the end of the propaedeutic stage a candidate should be aware of the challenges that lie ahead and well prepared to give himself fully to his formation for a life of ministry within the Universal Church.

The propaedeutic stage is the indispensable period of intellectual, spiritual, human and pastoral formation of candidates for the priesthood. These are vital areas of growth in developing the skills necessary to enable seminarians to look towards the next stage of formation with greater personal self-awareness and honesty.

It gives the student an opportunity to explore the faith, so that when they move on to the next seminary phase, where the academic element is substantial, this challenge will seem less daunting as they will have constructed more solid foundations.

**Altar Servers** There will be practices for the Altar Servers on Good Friday morning at 1030am and Holy Saturday morning at 1030am if they are attending Good Friday's 3pm Solemn Celebration of the Passion and Holy Saturday's 730pm Easter Vigil.

**Holy Week** This weekend we begin the most sacred time of the year for members of the Catholic Church: Holy Week. We are close to the Lord in the days of his suffering, death and resurrection. I am looking forward to keeping these Holy Days with you and making it, as it should be, a time of prayer, of making time for God and for one another. The weeks of Lent have prepared us to be at this point. Let's make the most of these Holy Days!

**This weekend, 23- 24 March, we celebrate Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord.** The two Masses this 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 this 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 coming 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**

**230pm 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 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** Before Weekday Masses we are using the Devotion to Our Lady of Sorrows 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.

## **Penance Services Monday**

**25 March** 7pm at St Augustine's, Meir

**Tuesday 26 March** 7pm at St Giles', Cheadle

**Bene Merenti Presentations** Following the recent news that Pope Francis has honoured three of our parishioners with the Bene Merenti awards, 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

### **North Staffordshire Deanery**

**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!

### **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

**Collection** Gift Aid £112.00

Non Gift Aid £131.03

Total £243.03

*Have a good week! With my prayers and best wishes, Fr Martin*