



Dear Friends, **A Synodal parish in a Synodal Church.** This weekend we begin the journey! Pope Francis wants everyone and every parish in the worldwide Church to be part of a Synodal Church and that means we walk, talk and listen together. For us in St Mary's Parish, I want us to be united and inspired with new enthusiasm, having an interest in both the things of God and of the Church. Each member of our parish should know that they are valued and have a role, and those who are on the margins should know that they are always welcome.

Please take your copy of the synod questionnaire. Complete as much of it as you are able; it isn't an exam or a test. There are no right or wrong answers, you will not be judged, you are unique and we want to know about your thoughts, experiences and ideas. You can answer as an individual.

Being safe in Church In recent days I have received some very supportive feedback from members of our parish concerning the continued use of face coverings and social distancing in church. People have reported to me how they appreciate this and how safe they feel being in our church compared to other settings. A full review of the Covid 19 Risk Assessment will take place once the repairs to the church have been completed later this month.

For the time being we shall continue to use hand sanitiser at the door; wear face coverings; and maintain social distance. Baptisms, weddings and funerals can continue with all these precautions in place. Confession – the Sacrament of Reconciliation – will be celebrated in the narthex, face to face, we have a screen to keep both the priest and the penitent safe.

Repairs to the church The scaffolding is, slowly and carefully, being removed. It is now possible to see the west gable and the repairs which have taken place. These were in addition to the original plan, but it was prudent to complete these now. There are some further outstanding items on the plan and these will be completed in the next few weeks.

Can you help? Volunteers are needed in all sorts of areas. It is our generous volunteers who make sure that all our activities and services can continue. We depend on you for this. Can you do something to help? Last year we calculated over 2100 hours of volunteering in our parish. Can you be part of this great movement this year?

- **Church cleaning** on Sunday after Mass and Baptisms when they occur Since the phased reopening of the church in July 2020, we have had teams of cleaners making sure that our church is a safe place. As we move forward, we can't pick up from two years ago. Could you help as part of a team of cleaners on Sunday after Mass, please?
- **Ministry of Welcome** to greet parishioners and visitors at the door of the church, to make people welcome, hand out newsletters, Mass sheets, be a point of contact for people looking for the priest!
- **Sweep and Clean**, Friday 25 February from 2pm, to do a big clean in the church and to tidy the car park, avenue and other outside areas.
- **Ministry of the Reader**, Saturday Mass especially; children from School will continue to read at the monthly Family Mass.
- **SVP**, can you help our enthusiastic SVP Conference?
- **Brass cleaning** - before the pandemic, there was a great routine in place. Can you recommit to this? Can you help to make sure that the brass candlesticks are clean and shiny?

If you can help, even for an hour a week, please let me know. I can put you in contact with the right person. It is best to send an email to me at stmary.leek@rcaob.org.uk

Rosary on Friday 11 February - Memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes We may not be able to make a pilgrimage to Lourdes later this year, but we have our own shrine to Our Lady and St Bernadette in the presbytery garden. On Friday afternoon at 4pm, let's gather in the presbytery garden to recite the rosary. If the weather is inclement, we can go into the church.

200 Club There's still a chance to renew or begin a subscription to the 200 club. If you would like to join, please contact the parish office. The subscription is £1 per month. Cheques should be made out to: **BRC DTR St Mary's Leek.**

Job Vacancies

Youth and Children's Leader – 40 hrs per week (part-time considered), £22,215 – £23,802 pa.

Saint Lawrence's Church, Biddulph is an evangelical, Anglican church in North Staffordshire. We have a long-established ministry with children, young people, families, local schools and the community. If you are passionate about seeing children and young people come to know Christ and grow in faith, we would love to hear from you. For further details and an application pack please visit biddulphchurch.org.uk Closing Date – 25 February 2022.

Asylum Seeker Refugee Children Support Co-ordinator – 14 hrs per week, £12.95 per hour

Asha is a charity based in Stoke-on-Trent (Hanley) providing holistic support to asylum seekers and refugees dispersed to North Staffordshire. The role will be to assess, plan and deliver support services aimed at aiding school integration, reducing social isolation, building self-esteem and confidence, and meeting social and emotional needs of disadvantaged asylum seeker/refugee children and young people in North Staffordshire. For a job description and person specification please contact Godefroid Seminega, Asha Service Manager on 07429 007234 or email: seminega@asha-uk.org

Dates for your diary

Monday 7 February 6.30pm Bible Book Club
 Friday 11 February 4pm Rosary in the presbytery garden.
 Friday 17 February 4pm Parents meeting in the church.
 Friday 25 February Sweep and Clean

Wednesday 2 March Ash Wednesday: The Season of Lent

Thursday 2 - Sunday 5 June Extended Bank Holiday to mark HM the Queen's Platinum Jubilee

At Facebook Mass we can't have a collection Thank you to those who have used the "Donate" button on the Parish Website. If you would like to donate by standing order, please send an email to me at the Parish Office at stmary.leek@rcaob.org.uk.

Collection Gift Aid - £62.00 Non-Gift Aid - £75.48 Total- £137.48

Thank you for your generous support of our parish.

Have a great week! With prayers and best wishes, Fr Martin