

PARISH OF BLESSED JAMES BELL

*Serving St Benedict's, St Mary's & St Oswald's,
Warrington*



Newsletter

**4th Sunday of Easter (A)
3 May 2020**

My dear sisters and brothers,

Today, the 4th Sunday of Easter, is known as 'Good Shepherd Sunday' because we listen to the passage in St John's Gospel in which Jesus describes himself as a good shepherd. The image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd has always brought enormous comfort and reassurance to Christians. It's an image that Pope Francis has engraved on the cross he wears around his neck.

This week, three occasions made me think of the Good Shepherd. The first was when I was walking from St Benedict's to St Oswald's. As I walked up Padgate Lane, I saw a mum walking with her two pale faced teenage sons. She had obviously dragged them away from their computers to get some fresh air! It made me smile. Then, when I was driving to the cemetery, I saw a dad taking his young children out on a bike ride. How often do you see that these days when parents are usually under so much pressure from work? Finally, when I'm in the hospital, often families can't be with their loved ones who are very poorly or dying, and yet I see nurses sitting with their loved one, holding their hand and staying with them. For me, these were three beautiful moments which reminded me of Jesus, the Good Shepherd.

Good Shepherd Sunday is also the annual World Day of Pray for Vocations. Perhaps I could ask you to join me in praying this prayer today:

**Loving Father,
you call us by name.
As we journey through life,
help us to be confident in our own unique identity
and to find opportunities to
develop our own gifts and passions.
We pray that the Holy Spirit**

**will pour on us wisdom and guidance
to help us realise and follow our dreams,
discerning your plan for our lives.**

Bless your Church

**by raising up dedicated and generous people
from our families and friends**

**who will serve as Priests, Deacons,
Sisters and Brothers.**

**May we support one another
in response to God's call.**

**We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Finally, this weekend we should have been celebrating the first of this year's First Communion Masses. I have written to all the children this week assuring them of our thoughts and prayers, and promising them we'll celebrate with them as soon as we're advised that it's safe to do so.

With my prayers,
Fr Dave

Useful Information

1) **Fr Dave** is available by phone (01925 630127) or by email frdave@rcaolp.co.uk

2) **Parish Website**

The Parish Website is updated each day with news, as we get it, as well as prayers and reflections. **If you know of any parishioners who don't have internet access and would like to receive a copy of the newsletter and other items that are posted during the lockdown**, please forward their name and address to Fr Dave and he will add them to the mailing list.

3) **Sunday Mass**

While our churches are closed, you may like to join in the celebration of Mass online. There are plenty of links on the Parish Website. You may prefer to pray in your own way at home or gather those who share your home and have a little time of prayer together. There are resources you can use on the Parish Website.

4) **Buddy System**

If you are lonely and feeling isolated, please call Fr Dave (630127) and he will put you in touch with a fellow parishioner you can talk to on the phone.

5) **Warrington Hospital**

Fr John Schofield and I are covering the hospital for the time being. Due to the pandemic, we are only attending in person those who are critically ill or in danger of death. In these situations, the hospital will page us, or relatives can ask the hospital to page us. For those patients who are not in danger of death, we can offer to support them and pray with them over the

phone. This avoids the risk of spreading infection between the wards. *Fr Dave*

6) "Isolated but not alone"

'The Tablet' has a whole host of resources that are very helpful under the title, "Isolated but not alone". Go to www.thetablet.co.uk and scroll down the page.

7) Want to Volunteer?

Warrington Council have set up a great support scheme for those who don't have family to support them. If you're interested in volunteering, there's more information on the Parish Website.

DONATIONS

Thank you so much to those who have been able to make donations to our parish Caritas Fund. I am using this money to help individuals and families who are struggling during the pandemic. This week: £400 (St Catherine of Siena) & £70 (Anon).

MASS FOR THE SICK, NHS WORKERS & THOSE WORKING IN SOCIAL CARE

In order to show a spiritual solidarity with all those affected by the pandemic, each Thursday at 7.00 pm, a Catholic Bishop will celebrate Mass in their Cathedral which will be live-streamed for people to join. You can join in the Mass here: www.cbcew.org.uk

NEW 24/7 MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS LINE

People of all ages, including children and young people, living in Warrington who are experiencing a mental health crisis can now access support through a new, 24/7, mental health crisis line: **01925 275309**.

SYNOD 2020

In order to consider what our Synod can learn from our current situation, an extra period of reflection has begun and will run until **Monday 18 May**. A short film, together with a leaflet, has been produced to help our reflection: <https://synod2020.co.uk/>

POPE FRANCIS

➔ Many times we make comments that set off a small daily lynching. May the Lord help us to be righteous in our judgments and not to begin or follow gossip that provokes an undeserved condemnation (28 April).

➔ What patience the Lord has with each of us! He respects our situation, walks at our side as He did with the disciples of Emmaus, and listens to our dissatisfactions. He respects us. He enjoys listening to how we speak so as to understand us well and give us the correct response (26 April).

➔ We pray today for teachers who have to work so hard to take lessons via the internet and other media channels, and we also pray for students who have to take exams in a way they are not used to. Let us accompany them with prayer (24 April).

LITURGICAL CALENDAR

(Divine Office – Psalter Week 4)

Today	4th Sunday of Easter (A)
<i>Readings</i>	Acts 2: 14a, 36-41; 1 Peter 2: 20b-25 John 10: 1-10
Weekdays	4th Week of Easter
Monday	Feast of the English Martyrs
Next Sunday	5th Sunday of Easter (A)

MASS INTENTIONS

Fr Dave will offer Mass for the following intentions this week: The Parishioners & the First Communion Children and their Families, Private Intention (LISC), Keith & Craig, Chamberlain & Roach Families, Maureen Holt, Veronica Edwards, All who work in the NHS and Social Care.

FUNERALS

Funerals this week: Nora Mary Hart (Mon), Maureen Kay (Tue) and David Holbrook (Wed). Please keep their families and friends in your prayers. If you are unable to attend because of the pandemic, there are resources on the Parish Website that you could use for a time of prayer at home.

LET US HOLD IN PRAYER

Those who are sick or homebound, especially:

St Benedict's

Paul Vernon, Brenda Snelson, Jean Molphy, Anne Hill, Vera Brindle, Susan Keating, Ann Brown, Peter Milner, Thomas Ireland, Matilde Valentine, Syd Bradshaw, Sandra Richardson, Kate Rigby, Margaret Russell-Cruise, Barbara Edmondson, Mary Hinchliffe, Ernie Roocroft, Josie Hackwell, Paul Whitlow.

St Mary's

Luciano Bartolo.

St Oswald's

Susan Disley, Mary Massey, Catherine Carne, Jo Roberts, Sam Johnson, Margaret Watts (nee McGinty), Mike McCarrick, Betty Fiddler, Veronica Edwards, Miriam Jones.

Other Parishes

Catherine Donaldson, Alan Brompton, Jo Busby, Veronica Baker, John Hughes (Vietnam), Bishop Vincent Malone, Fr Bill Murphy, Clare Holloway.

Those who have died recently, especially:

Clive Wilcox, Liam James Walsh, Norah Mary Hart, Maureen Kay, David Holbrook, Paul Stanton, Peter McCullen and Fr Joe Weston.

If you would like to add a parishioner to the prayer list, please check with them first and then email Fr Dave or give him a note of their name and phone number. Many thanks.