

# PARISH OF BLESSED JAMES BELL

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



## Newsletter

**2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)  
Peace Sunday – 17 January 2021**

My dear sisters and brothers,

### Lockdown Closure of Churches

Following the statement from the Chief Medical Officer last Sunday and the alarming rise in the number of infections in Warrington as well as across the UK, I made the difficult decision to close St Benedict's and St Oswald's last Tuesday.

Last week, the Archbishop wrote to all the priests of the Archdiocese. In his letter, he said: "Although I have circulated the recent government advice on the opening of churches, I want to emphasise that the final decision in this regard is yours. Only you know your people, their age profile and the risks that they are likely to be exposed to and present to others. You have to consider your volunteers and stewards. You also have yourself to consider and I would not want you to expose yourself unnecessarily to infection from the virus... Now is the time to make wise decisions for the good of all."

In my homily last weekend, I said that although the Government have allowed places of worship to stay open for communal worship, we have to ask ourselves: is it wise to do so? All the priests of the area have wrestled with this question. However, the rise in the number of people being admitted to Warrington hospital has confirmed for me that it is not wise to keep our churches open for the time being. It's a decision I've made, in the Archbishop's words, "for the good of all".

We are asked to **STAY AT HOME** as much as possible. This is the only way to prevent the spread of infection. We know we can pray at home. We know

we can manage without the sacraments for a time. So, although it's hard, we make this sacrifice for the good of all.

The Chief Medical Officer, Professor Chris Whitty, has given some valuable advice: **behave as if you have the virus** – it will help to keep you and others safe.

I will continue to post prayers, reflections and useful information each day on the parish website and, of course, I'm available by phone or email. In addition, I will celebrate Mass for the parish each Sunday at 10.00 am in one of our churches. I will stick to that time in case you want to join me in prayer at that time.

### Peace Sunday

The Bishops of England and Wales invite us to observe today (Sunday) as a day of prayer for world peace, using the theme proposed by Pope Francis: 'A Culture of Care as a Path to Peace'.

In his message for World Peace Day, Pope Francis says: "How many resources are spent on weaponry, especially nuclear weapons, that could be used for more significant priorities such as ensuring the safety of individuals, the promotion of peace and integral human development, the fight against poverty, and the provision of health care." Pope Francis calls on us to "strive daily, in concrete and practical ways, to form a community composed of brothers and sisters who accept and care for one another."

In the UK, we have an active Catholic peace movement called Pax Christi. Their website offers lots of ideas of ways we can promote peace in our daily lives: <https://paxchristi.org.uk/peace-sunday-2021>

### Some Good News!

The UK, along with Germany, Canada and Japan, has pledged one billion doses of the coronavirus vaccine to developing nations. Foreign Secretary, Dominic Raab, said: "We'll only be safe from this virus, when we're all safe – which is why we're focused on a global solution to a global problem."

### And he's off!

I know I'm tired and in need of a rest, so I'm going to take this week off and have a 'staycation'. I'll be back in the saddle, as they say, next weekend.

With my prayers,  
*Fr Dave*

### General Information

1) **Fr Dave** is available by phone (01925 630127) or by email [frdave@rcaolp.co.uk](mailto:frdave@rcaolp.co.uk) Address: St Benedict's Priory, Rhodes Street, Warrington WA2 7QE.

## 2) Parish Office

The Parish Office will be closed this week while Fr Dave has a break.

## 3) Parish Website [www.blessedjamesbell.co.uk](http://www.blessedjamesbell.co.uk)

## 4) Funerals

Funerals will continue to be celebrated at the graveside or crematorium for now. A Memorial Mass or Service can be celebrated in church at a later date.

## 5) Care of the Sick & Dying

Fr John and Fr Dave continue to cover the hospital. If you are concerned about a loved one, please ask the hospital to page us and we will attend as soon as possible. If you're worried about a loved one in a care home, please ask the care home to contact us directly.

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## VACCINATION SCAMS

In the UK, coronavirus vaccinations will only be available via the NHS. **You can be contacted by the NHS, your employer, a local GP surgery or pharmacy to receive your vaccination.** Remember, the vaccinations are free of charge and you will not be asked for a payment.

The NHS will **never** ask for your bank account or card details, your PIN or banking passwords, arrive unannounced at your home to administer the vaccine, or ask for documentation to prove your identity, such as a passport or utility bills.

If you receive a call you believe to be fraudulent, hang up. If you are suspicious about an email you have received, forward it to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk) Suspicious text messages should be forwarded to the number 7726, which is free of charge. If you believe you are the victim of a fraud, please report this to Action Fraud as soon as possible on 0300 123 2040 or by visiting [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)

## Archdiocese of Liverpool J&P Commission

### ANNUAL MEMORIAL LECTURE

**Today (Sunday) at 2.00 pm (on Zoom)**

This year's Memorial Lecture will be given by Mary Colwell, an award-winning writer and producer specialising in natural history, environment, religion and human stories. The title of the lecture will be 'To Prepare a Future Full of Hope Amid Chaos and Uncertainty'. To register your place, please go to the J&P website: [www.jp.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk](http://www.jp.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk)

## ECHOES OF GOD

A 7-week look at Old and New Testament Scripture on Mondays, 7.00 – 8.00 pm, on Zoom starting on 18 January. Using David McLoughlin's scripture sessions that start with Exodus and end with St Paul's Letters,

an opportunity to read, reflect and share facilitated by Pastoral Associates. Registration and materials (free) at [www.godwhospeaks2020.org.uk](http://www.godwhospeaks2020.org.uk)

## FISH WITH MARK

"God Speaks in our Time" – reflections on our journey through Mark's Gospel are available to view at [www.godwhospeaks2020.org.uk](http://www.godwhospeaks2020.org.uk) Voices from the Archdiocese share what has struck them in the Gospel of Mark as we follow the Lectionary for Year B this year, and prompt us to delve deeper.

## LITURGICAL CALENDAR

*(Divine Office – Psalter Week 2)*

<b>Today</b>	<b>2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)</b> <i>Peace Sunday</i>
<i>Readings</i>	1 Samuel 3: 3-10, 19 1 Corinthians 16: 13-15, 17-20 John 1: 35-42
<b>Weekdays</b>	Ordinary Time – Year 1, Week 2
<b>Monday</b>	Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity begins
<b>Thursday</b>	St Agnes
<b>Next Sunday</b>	<b>3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)</b> <i>Sunday of the Word of God</i>

## FUNERALS

If someone you know has died and you are unable to attend their funeral, there are resources on the Parish Website 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*

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

### *St Mary's*

Luciano Bartolo, Hilda Creagan, Michael Meadows.

### *St Oswald's*

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

### *Other Parishes*

Alan Brompton, Catherine Donaldson, Clare Holloway, John Hughes (Vietnam), Joseph Webster, June Fallon, Carole Hart.

**Those who have died recently, especially:**

Frances Fawcett, Anthony Gibbons, Joyce Yates.