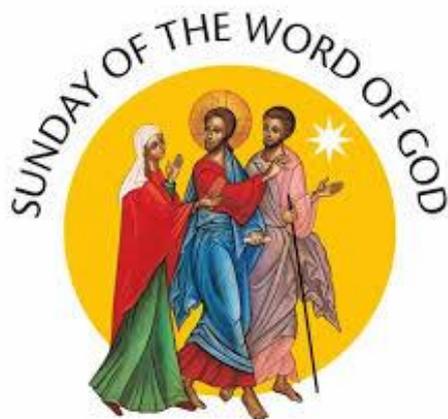


# PARISH OF BLESSED JAMES BELL

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



## *Newsletter*

**3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)  
Sunday of the Word of God  
24 January 2021**

My dear sisters and brothers,

What a week it's been! A new President and Vice President for the USA, snow and floods across the country and in our own town and, tragically, a frighteningly high death toll from Covid-19.

### **Remembering**

On the eve of his inauguration as the 46th President of the United States, Joe Biden held a vigil for all those who have died of Covid-19 in America. The pool in front of the Lincoln Memorial was flanked by 400 candles to represent the 400,000 Americans who have died – the highest death toll of any country in the world! Bells tolled across the country and families were invited to place a candle in their windows. It was the first national event of remembrance in the USA since the pandemic first hit.

In his remarks, Joe Biden said, "It's hard sometimes to remember, but that's how we heal. It's important to do that as a nation." This is something we need to do in the UK and in our own parish. I hope to share some thoughts about how we can do this as a parish in the coming weeks.

### **Celebrating**

The following day, Joe Biden and Kamala Harris were sworn in as the new President and Vice President of the United States in what was a very moving and ceremony, filled with hope and humility, dignity and respect. It was a breath of fresh air. It was as if people across the globe collectively breathed a sigh of relief. In the words of Pope Francis, may God, the source of

all wisdom and truth, guide their efforts to foster understanding, reconciliation and peace within the United States and among the nations of the world in order to advance the universal common good.

### **Covid-19 Vaccine**

This week, I was alarmed to hear that some of our parishioners have been worried by messages being promoted by anti-vaxxers. I was even more concerned to hear that some of these messages had come from clergy (who should know better). Rather than listening to people who don't know what they're talking about, look at those receiving the vaccine – Pope Francis, the Queen, and so many other good and holy people. They are doing so, not just for themselves, but for others as well. The Church encourages us to respond generously to the invitation to be vaccinated for the good of all. Vaccination is our only way out of the pandemic. This week, Sheikh Muhammad Tahir ul-Qadri, a leading Islamic scholar, said: "Saving lives is an act of worship".

### **Sunday of the Word of God**

Today is the second time we celebrate the annual 'Sunday of the Word of God' instituted by Pope Francis. It's an opportunity to remind ourselves of the importance of reading and listening to the Scriptures. If you have a Bible at home, or a missal which contains the Scripture Readings at Mass, why not join me in a simple blessing today:

**Everlasting God,  
when he read in the synagogue at Nazareth,  
your Son proclaimed the good news of salvation  
for which he would give up his life.  
Bless all who will read from these sacred texts.  
As they read, listen and reflect on your words of life,  
strengthen their faith  
so that what they read in hope,  
they may live in love and charity.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.**

There are lots of really good resources about the Scriptures here: [www.godwhospeaks.uk](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk)

### **Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity**

Tomorrow (Monday), the annual Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity concludes with the Feast of the Conversion of St Paul. Sadly, we've not been able to gather with our sisters and brothers from the other local Christian Churches and groups this year, but we can still hold one another in prayer. You will find resources on my blog on the Parish Website.

### **Holocaust Memorial Day**

Finally, this coming Wednesday, 27 January, is Holocaust Memorial Day. It's a day to remember the

six million Jews murdered in the Holocaust, and the millions of people killed under Nazi Persecution, and in the genocides which followed in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. The date – 27 January – is significant because it marks the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi death camp. We remember so that we don't forget. If we forget, we're in danger of repeating the past.

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

This week, the Parish Office will be open on Tuesday and Thursday, 10.00 am – 3.00 pm.

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.

### SAFE SPACES

'Safe Spaces' is a free and independent support service, providing a confidential, personal and safe space for anyone who has been abused through their relationship with either the Church of England or the Catholic Church in England and Wales. A telephone helpline and live chat facility is available from Monday to Saturday, 10.00 am – 6.00 pm (apart from Thursdays when the service is open 12.00 – 8.00pm).

**Telephone** 0300 303 1056 (*answerphone available outside of opening times*)

**Email** [safespaces@victimsupport.org.uk](mailto:safespaces@victimsupport.org.uk)

**Website** [www.safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk](http://www.safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk)

### FISH WITH MARK

"God Speaks in our Time" – reflections on our journey through St 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 a little deeper.

### LITURGICAL CALENDAR

(Divine Office – Psalter Week 2)

<b>Today</b>	<b>3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)</b> <i>Sunday of the Word of God</i>
<i>Readings</i>	Jonah 3: 1-5, 10 1 Corinthians 7: 29-31 Mark 1: 14-20
<b>Weekdays</b>	Ordinary Time – Year 1, Week 3
<b>Monday</b>	Feast of the Conversion of St Paul
<b>Tuesday</b>	Saints Timothy & Titus
<b>Thursday</b>	St Thomas Aquinas
<b>Next Sunday</b>	<b>4th Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)</b> <i>Day of Prayer for Racial Justice</i>

### FUNERALS

*This week:* Frances Fawcett (Monday) and Joyce Yates (Friday). 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, Fr Jim Matthews, Fr Gerry Britt.

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