



A WARM WELCOME TO THE PARISH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Beeches Green • STROUD • GL5 4AA • (01453) 762442

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Parish Priest: Father Gary Brassington - gary.brassington@clifftondiocese.com

Deacon: Steve Bentley Tel: (01453) 751101 Parish Administrator: Marilynne Morgan Tel: 0784 249 5988

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Ordinary Time Week 3

Sunday Cycle Year B, Weekday Cycle Year 1, Psalter Week 3

Date	Mass Times	Celebrations	Intentions
Sunday 24th January	6:30pm (<i>Saturday</i>) 8:30am (<i>Painswick</i>) 10:00am	Third Sunday in Ordinary Time	People of the Parish Joanne Foran R.I.P. Deacon Steve Bentley
Monday 25th January	10:00am	Feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul	Magdalen Smith R.I.P.
Tuesday 26th January	6:00pm	Saints Timothy & Titus	Mr & Mrs Knight
Wednesday 27th January	10:00am	Weekday	Mary Goodrich R.I.P.
Thursday 28th January	10:00am	Saint Thomas Aquinas	Paulette Shepherd
Friday 29th January	10:00am	Weekday	Mary Baptiste R.I.P.
Saturday 30th January	No morning Mass	Weekday	
Sunday 31st January	6:30pm (<i>Saturday</i>) 8:30am (<i>Painswick</i>) 10:00am	Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time	Michael & Elizabeth Cavanagh Terence Howlett R.I.P. John Mason & Thomas Reilly

Diocesan Prayer Link: We pray for the parishes of **Saint Joseph**, Bridgwater; and Our Lady & the English Martyrs, Burnham-on-Sea

The public celebration of Mass continues this week.

The Sunday Obligation has not been reintroduced.

Social-distancing measures apply, including reduced capacity.

(Sheets with details of these are available from our churches or with this newsletter online)

We pray for all those within our parish and their intentions including: the communities at the Monastery of Our Lady and Saint Bernard, Brownshill and More Hall, Randwick; and all those connected with our schools.

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

In the first reading the prophet Jonah calls the people of Nineveh to change and reform their lives. The swiftness and favourableness of their response can prompt us to ask ourselves: Who are God's prophets today? Do we hear their call to conversion? How well do we respond? How willing are we to change?

In the second reading we are reminded that we often live under the impression that we will always have time. We can do this or that, if not today, then tomorrow. In this reading however, Saint Paul tells us that time is short, that our world is passing away. Like the people of Nineveh in the first reading, we must answer God's call now. Later may be too late. Now is the time to respond to God, now is the time to change.

In our Gospel reading Jesus begins his ministry with a call to conversion. He calls us to reform our lives, and God wants us to answer in the same way as the disciples, with a response that is immediate and complete.

YOUR PRAYERS: *are asked for those who are housebound, residing in nursing homes, ill in hospital or sick:*

Marilynne Morgan, Peter Bouzyk, Pauline Breslin, Antonietta Lazdans, Colin Keegan, Vivienne Tarn, Jean Barber, Finley, Sarah Williams, Jean Barber Gisele Smart, Helen Hursthouse, Christopher Browne, Gerardo Capaldo, Michael Flint, Clare McDermott, Pat King, Margot Williams, June & John Privett, Olivia Bouzyk, Raphael Moore, Brian O'Donoghue, Mary Grant, Finley, Ursula & Desmond Kyne, Imelda Kucharzyszyn, Kitty McCoy, Lisa Knight, Francis Kerrigan, Monika Smit, Pilar, Rebecca Frazier, Lucia Mirkovic, Joan O'Donoghue, Sister Quentin, Peter Ollis, Peter McCombie, Anne Allen, Sister Catherine, Bevan, Daryl Jackson, Lola Long, Grace Harper, Jamie Watt, Maggie, Woody, Thea Gregson, Gwen Kimpton, Peter Tay, Ann Enright, Jill Chapman, Janie Wilmot, Kevin Sivell, Theresa Finneran, Niall Walker, Murray Dolan, Cecilia Redgrave, Christopher & Clifford Browne, Victor Vincent, Stephen Carden, John Stephens, Phyllis Bruton, Marilyn Anderson, Chris Strong, Kate Thorley, Amanda Mullins, Paul O'Keith, Simon Terry, John Cibulskas, Anna Dowdeswell, Stephen & Paul Coupe, Anthea Van Venroy, Maisie McGinley & all their carers.

**To add a name to this list please contact the parish office –
please ensure you have the agreement of the sick person.**

Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for January is for human fraternity. May the Lord will give us the grace to live in full fellowship with our brothers and sisters of other religions, praying for one another, open to all.

Deacon Steve celebrates the silver jubilee of his ordination as a deacon this Sunday 24th January. Although we cannot have all the celebrations we would wish due to the pandemic, this important day will be marked particularly during the 10:00am Mass. We congratulate Deacon Steve on this important anniversary and wish him every blessing as he continues his service of God and his people.

This Sunday is also known as the Sunday of the Word of God and gives us a particular opportunity to appreciate the Bible. While there are many ways to enrich our understanding of the Bible, these include the online course, Echoes of God, which some may find useful. This seven section course can be found at <https://www.godwhospeaks.uk/the-god-who-speaks/focus/sunday-of-the-word-of-god/echoes-of-god-journeying-with-the-word-of-god/>.

The Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity continues until this Monday 25th January (the Feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul). We continue to pray and work together so that all followers of Jesus may be united ever more fully and be an ever more effective sign of his love for all people.

200 Club: If you are a member of the 200 club then most annual payments are due in January. To make payments this year please place £12.00 (cheques should be made payable to 'Immaculate Conception, Stroud') into an envelope marked '200 Club Payment' with your name and, if possible, a contact telephone number also on the outside. The envelope may be posted through the parish office door or given to Father Gary or one of the stewards at Mass. Those who are not coming to the church at present may post their contribution to the parish. If anyone wishes to contact Carmel please telephone her on 01453 762260.

Diocesan Pilgrimage to the Holy Land: Bishop Declan hopes to lead a pilgrimage from 11th October until 19th October. The estimated cost is £1959 (based on two people sharing). For more details please visit <https://cliftondiocese.com/news/clifton-diocesan-holy-land-pilgrimage-2021-led-by-bishop-declan-lang/> or contact Sarah Adams (0117 902 5595 or adult.education@cliftondiocese.com).

Holy Land Coordination Group: For many years Bishop Declan has led this international group of bishops on an annual visit to the Holy Land supporting the local Christian communities. This year the visit had to be virtual. Bishop Declan can be heard speaking about this important work on our diocesan website at <https://cliftondiocese.com/news/bishop-declan-talks-about-the-holy-land-podcast/>. Information about this year's final communique can be found at <https://cliftondiocese.com/news/israel-must-work-with-palestinian-authorities-to-make-covid-vaccines-accessible-to-palestinians-in-west-bank-and-gaza/>.

School Governors: The Diocese is seeking to recruit people to serve on school governing bodies. If you believe in Catholic education, have enthusiasm and commitment, then you can make a valuable contribution to the governing body of a Catholic school. If you think you could serve as a Foundation Governor then please contact bill.mcentee@cliftondiocese.com or 07710094976 for more information.

EU Settlement Scheme: Citizens of the European Union who live in the United Kingdom should consider applying to the EU Settlement scheme to protect their rights. To find out more please visit the government website <https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families>. The deadline for applying is 30th June. The North and West Gloucestershire Citizens Advice is also able to offer assistance with this. In the first instance contact Jennie Watts (jennie.watts@gloscab.org.uk or 01452 527202 extension 262) or visit <http://gloscab.org.uk/eu-settlement-scheme/>.

The Stroud Foodbank continues to provide important help for those who need it. For more information on how to 'get help' or 'give help' please visit their website <https://strouddistrict.foodbank.org.uk>.

We remember in our prayers Terence Howlett and Jean Kerry who died recently. We also pray for their families and friends.

Parish Information during Covid-19: There is a separate sheet available with information regarding the celebration of Mass and other aspects of parish and sacramental life during this time (it is included as pages three and four of version of the newsletter available from our website).

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SITUATION REGARDING SUNDAY AND WEEKDAY MASSES

In common with the other bishops of England and Wales, Bishop Declan has issued a decree in light of the current Covid-19 situation. Within this decree it is clear that:

- The obligation of the faithful to attend Mass on a Sunday or Holy Day of Obligation is removed until further notice.
- The faithful may choose one of the following alternatives to attending Sunday Mass:
 - Taking part may include watching a Sunday Mass online, or on television, and so receive Holy Communion spiritually; OR
 - Reflecting on the Sunday Liturgical text, reading the Bible or saying the Rosary

Public Mass has resumed in our churches. If seeking to attend Mass please be aware that the following instructions apply (all measures are intended to enable people to confidently and safely participate in the celebration of Mass):

- The obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation is **not** being reintroduced at this time. Those who prefer not to come to the church for Mass at this time are not obliged to do so.
- Numbers are restricted so that the two-metre (or one metre plus) rule can be observed. There are **33 places** in Stroud. Some of these can be for more than one person if they are from the same household. The capacity at Painswick is **22 individuals**.
- Once the designated church capacity is reached further people may not be admitted.
- Social distancing must be maintained and face coverings/masks are to be worn (unless exempt). Households/support bubbles are not to mix either inside or outside of the church.
- Hand sanitiser will be available and must be used upon entering and leaving the church.
- Those attending Mass will have to use the pews/chairs as indicated by the stewards.
- The Mass will be adapted in various ways including the omission of: the prayers of the faithful; procession of the gifts; and the sign of peace. The collection will be taken at the end of Mass, although people are encouraged to use standing orders or online methods.
- Altar servers and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are not exercising their ministry during Mass at this time, and access to the sacristy before and after Mass will be limited to the priest, deacon and stewards. The sacred vessels will be prepared by the priest.
- There will be one reader for the first reading, psalm and second reading who will be provided with single-use gloves. The reader may remove their face covering/mask while actually reading.
- There will be no singing.
- Before the distribution of Holy Communion the priest will raise the Sacred Host and say: 'The Body of Christ', and then everyone may respond 'Amen'. He will then raise the chalice and say: 'The Blood of Christ', and then everyone may respond 'Amen'. This will remove the need for any dialogue when each communicant comes forward.
- **Holy Communion must be given silently in the hand only, with the communicant standing, and avoiding any physical contact. People should wait in their pews until instructed to move forward for Holy Communion by the stewards, always aware of the regulations on social distancing. When they approach the priest or deacon (or extraordinary minister of Holy Communion) they should do so with arms at 'full stretch' so that there is a good distance between the priest and the communicant. Their hands, palms upwards, one on top of the other, should be extended as flatly as possible. The communicant should unloop their face covering and consume the Sacred Host and then replace the face covering before moving back to their pew or chair in an orderly manner.**
- At Stroud there will be a designated route for entering and leaving the church.
- At Painswick please observe social-distancing when entering or leaving.
- After Mass the church will be closed for cleaning.
- There are no toilet facilities available at this time.
- Directions from the priest, deacon and stewards must be followed.

A possible form of prayer for use when Mass cannot be publicly celebrated can be found at <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2020/03/No-Mass-A4.pdf>.

Sunday and daily Mass readings can be found at <https://www.universalis.com/mass.htm>. Sunday Mass and weekday Mass from Clifton Cathedral is available every day at 9:30am on our diocesan website www.cliftondiocese.com. Celebrations from Rome can also be found on 'Vatican Media Live' on YouTube. Our Bishops' Conference website www.cbcew.org.uk is also a source for details of celebrations in our country and beyond.

Spiritual Communion: Prayer of Saint Alphonsus

*My Jesus, I believe that you are present in this Holy Sacrament of the altar.
I love you above all things and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul.
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my soul
so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and forever. Amen.*

OTHER INFORMATION

While the parish administration continues, access to the parish office is restricted to appointment only. For those matters normally dealt with by the parish office please use the parish email or telephone 0784 249 5988 (Tuesday to Friday 10:00am – 3:00pm). The normal parish telephone number should be used to contact Father Gary.

All parish groups and programmes are suspended until further notice.

There will continue to be a weekly newsletter available on the parish website. Please make the details of the newsletter known to those who may not access the website.

Prayer is always important. Even when we cannot be physically close, prayer unites us. As well as traditional prayers known to us there are also resources online: www.prayasyougo.org offers daily meditative prayer which some may find useful.

First Holy Communion and Confirmation: There is still no indication when it will be possible to prepare children for First Holy Communion or begin the programme for Confirmation in the normal way. If any parent or young person is particularly concerned about receiving these sacraments, they are welcome to discuss the situation with Father Gary.

Baptisms and Marriages cannot take place in the usual way at this time. For more information contact Father Gary or Deacon Steve.

Funerals may be celebrated within strict regulations. Arrangements may be made for a Mass *in memoriam* when congregations are allowed to gather safely.

Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) is available in the church by appointment. It may not be possible to celebrate the sacrament before or after Mass as Father Gary has extra responsibilities in preparing for Mass which he cannot delegate at this time.

Pastoral Visits by clergy or lay people cannot take place in the normal way at present. Father Gary is happy to speak with people by telephone. Please contact Father Gary to request the Sacrament of the Sick.

Parish Finances: Although public Masses have resumed, and there is a collection at the end of the weekend Masses, we are encouraged to use methods which avoid physical cash if possible. Those who currently do not contribute via standing order may like to consider the following:

- Set up a standing order via online banking. Please contact the parish for the necessary details.
- Donate via the 'Paypal' button on the parish website. Donations can be gift-aided if applicable. You do not need your own paypal account to use this service. We believe that the cost to the parish for donating in this way is 1.4% and 20p per donation.

Some second collections are being taken at the end of Mass.

Please speak with Father Gary regarding these or other aspects of parish life or sacramental celebration.