

University of Warwick Chaplaincy

Fifth Sunday of Lent

29th March, 2020

Catholic Chaplain: Fr. Harry Curtis

email: stjoseph.covty@rcaob.org.uk or h.a.curtis@warwick.ac.uk

www.sjtwcoventry.org.uk

St. Joseph the Worker Catholic Church, The Presbytery, 1 De Montfort Way, Coventry, CV4 7DU.

Tel: 024 76 419111 or 0788 190 1587

Today is the fifth Sunday of Lent.

It used to be called Passion Sunday (because the Gospel reading would be the Passion of Jesus), and it marks the beginning of the end of Lent. We are now entering the final weeks of preparation for Easter. This is the time for us to renew our efforts of prayer, fasting and almsgiving so that we are renewed within for the celebration of Our Lord's death and resurrection in Holy Week.

Prayer Before Mass

God our Father, you sent Jesus, our High Priest, to redeem us and you willed that His saving work should continue through the ministry of priests. Enlighten us to celebrate this Sunday Mass with our priest, so that, empowered by the Word of life and the Eucharist, we may be strengthened by the Holy Spirit to live to the full our Christian calling. We ask this through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, 29 th March Fifth Sunday of Lent <i>Day of Prayer for the Candidates for the Sacraments</i>	UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE ALL MASSES WILL BE CELEBRATED WITHOUT A CONGREGATION.	<i>Chris Mullen</i>
Monday, 30 th March		<i>The People of the Parish</i>
Tuesday, 31 st March		<i>Angela Shilton</i>
Wednesday, 1 st April		<i>Olive Kilroy</i>
Thursday, 2 nd April <i>Com. of St. Francis of Paola, Hermit</i>		<i>Holy Souls</i>
Friday, 3 rd April		<i>John Paul Cassidy</i>
Saturday, 4 th April <i>Commemoration of St. Isidore, Bishop</i>		<i>Paul Finn</i>
Sunday, 5 th April Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord <i>Day of Prayer for the Candidates for the Sacraments</i>		<i>Margaret Ward</i>

Rededication of England. The Archbishop will celebrate Sunday Mass in St. Chad's Cathedral today at 11.00am for the Rededication of England as the Dowry of England. We can join him via live-streaming.

Funeral Services. Churches should no longer be used for funerals. Funeral Services may take place at the crematorium and by the graveside with immediate family only. Here in Coventry there is a maximum of five mourners at the service.

Collections. It sounds mercenary, but the church still needs to have an income, and there will be no collections if there are no celebrations of Mass. I know that it is challenging financially for some at the moment, but if you could continue to put something aside each week for the collection and bring it to the church when possible it would help a lot. Or you could consider donating by Standing Order.

On the Archdiocese website there is a standing order and Gift Aid form to use if you wish (<https://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/pages/FAQS/category/finance-resources>). Thank you very much for your generosity at all times.

“A Retreat in Daily Life”: I am sorry to say that it looks as though too will be cancelled – at least in its normal form. It is just possible that something may be done, but it is unclear what that may be at present.

Dear Friends. Because of the need to prevent the spread of disease, the difficult decision was taken that from Friday, 20th March, until further notice there should be no public services held in any Catholic church in the country. That was followed on Monday, 23rd March, by the Prime Minister's broadcast outlining further necessary steps to be taken to combat the spread of the Coronavirus.

It would undermine the Government's attempts to persuade us to remain at home if we are then allowed to go out to church. As a sad but necessary consequence we must ensure that the doors of all churches and chapels in the Archdiocese are closed to the public and that they remain permanently locked until these restrictions are lifted. In this way we shall continue to play our part within every parish in fighting the Coronavirus and to show our solidarity with all those who are striving to overcome the current pandemic.

Be assured of my prayers for you all during these difficult days. As Pope Francis reminded us in the Holy Hour at St. Peter's on Friday, 27th March, the Lord is with us in our storm-tossed boat and the glory of His Resurrection will shine through this crisis.

We are called to be model citizens in protecting the most vulnerable and I thank you for the example that you are giving to society by staying at home. The instructions to stay at home apply as much to priests as they do to everyone else. I am sorry to say that in the context of the epidemic, any pastoral work must now be very limited. I can perform funeral services, and anointing and baptising in danger of death. Beyond that, I have to ask myself, is it essential that this visit happens now, and does it justify the danger of unwittingly passing on the virus to others? Such pastoral acts with others, I fear, will be very few in number.

On a positive note, the necessary lockdown should give us more time for prayer and reflection. Let's do our best to use the time well.

May God bless us all, keep us safe and sustain us through this period of trial.

Sacrament of Reconciliation. Unfortunately, because the church is closed and we are required to practise "social distancing" it is not possible to offer Confession at this time. Nor can the Sacrament be celebrated over the telephone or by conference call. However, a recent Note from the Apostolic Penitentiary on the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the current epidemic, 20th March 2020 states:

Where the individual faithful find themselves in the painful impossibility of receiving sacramental absolution, it should be remembered that perfect contrition, coming from the love of God, beloved above all things, expressed by a sincere request for forgiveness (that which the penitent is at present able to express) and accompanied by ... the firm resolution to have recourse, as soon as possible, to sacramental confession, obtains forgiveness of sins, even mortal ones.

So if you need to go to Confession you should make a Perfect Act of Contrition and then to go to Confession as soon as it becomes possible. Perfect contrition is true and real sorrow for our sins. It requires us to be contrite of heart for what we have done, know and be overwhelmed by the love and mercy of God for His children, and to approach this grace with humility and resolution not to sin again.

An Act of Contrition.

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Saviour Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy.

Dispensation from Easter Duties. Normally we should receive Holy Communion and go to Confession at least once during this period. Since it is not possible to receive Holy Communion because of the Coronavirus, the Bishops of England and Wales have dispensed the Easter Duties for this year. They have asked that we should all make a Perfect Act of Contrition.

Tailpiece: At Sunday School the children were learning how God created everything. Little Johnny seemed especially intent when they told him how Eve was created out of one of Adam's ribs. Later in the week his mother noticed him lying down as though he were ill, and said, "Johnny, what is the matter?" Little Johnny responded, "I have pain in my side. I think I'm going to have a wife."

May God bless you and all those whom you love and keep you safe.
Fr. Harry