

**St Anne's Parish, Wappenbury
with
Our Lady of the Angels', Princethorpe**

14 June 2020

The Most Holy Body and Blood of the Lord

Year A

Fr Teddy O'Brien MSC - Parish Priest

The parish is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham
(Registered Charity Number: 234216) and is conducted, on behalf of the Archdiocese,
by the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart.

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A Parish Without a Pandemic

I am sure that we are familiar with the idea of being present to someone though they remain absent from us just as we can be physically present to someone and yet experience a great chasm between us. It is that surely that causes us to feel lonely when unable to meet someone we love. Covid-19 has demonstrated this well for each of us. Who among us has not missed seeing and talking with a relative or friend for the past 12 weeks or so – and, perhaps, into the future.

Is not this something that we are reluctant to speak about – the heartache of being apart? We speak words to express this though we know that the reality behind the words can be painful. This is also surely the case with those unable to be present with loved ones as they departed this life. And even long after a death, do we not continue to experience this loss - a presence while absent.

On the two great occasions reported to us when Jesus left His apostles – at his death and later when he ascended into heaven – the accounts tell of confusion and uncertainty. Only later on did they remember that he had left them a way in which to remember him, a simple yet very common human activity during which they were to remember him and during which they were to make him present' but in a new way. "Take and eat", He said; "Take and drink", He said and make sure you do this "in memory of me".

Over time, this has become known as the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, simplified as 'Eucharist' or 'Mass' during which celebration we were to "take and eat.....". For almost three months now you have been deprived of this. You have been unable to gather to 'eat and drink...in memory of me'. You may have watched, perhaps with some longing, as the priest alone 'ate and drank'. You may have been encouraged to partake of a 'spiritual communion' which cannot, we know, take the place of the 'real thing', the "Real Presence".

And yet, is this really true? Are we to be deprived of the "Real Presence" of Jesus Christ simply because we cannot gather to "eat and drink.....". Even though some churches may soon be open for private prayer, we do not know just how long it will be before we can gather as a worshipping community, and even then, social distancing may make this "gathering" see and feel somewhat artificial. The writer of a recent article in the Catholic Weekly paper, The Tablet, commenting on the priest celebrating Mass streamed from a cathedral, wrote of the priest: "how lonely he looked, a solitary figure in an empty church saying Mass into an abyss" while in the same article the author found "Pope Francis inspiring", alone in St Peter's Square in the rain. In both cases, priests alone and apart.

I chose to stream Mass daily from St Anne's, not in competition to other churches from whom this streaming is more professional. I wanted daily to feel the real presence of parishioners and, hopefully, for them to experience my presence to them, scattered widely as they are through the seventeen villages of this parish, most of whom I have not seen since I closed St Anne's on 14 March, some time before church and state imposed self isolation. Not once have I felt 'lonely' as I celebrated Mass, neither did I experience that I was "saying Mass into an abyss". In each Mass, I experience the very real presence of St Anne's parishioners, many of whom are named during Mass and for whom this act of 'knowing' them meant so very much to them and to me. We were present to each other in our absence as Jesus was to the apostles after His Resurrection and Ascension.

There are many ways of 'being present while absent' just there are many ways of being 'absent while present'. What shape our church will take once Covid-19 is mastered we do not know, and speculation seems in vain... In the meantime, we can either bemoan our deprivation of the sacramental presence which today's feast celebrates or we can treasure memories of each other and, through these memories, we can be really present, and be a 'real presence' to each other while remaining apart. We must not be defined as a people who were deprived of the real presence because of Covid-19. We can re-define ourselves and our parish communities as people for whom the 'real presence' is your presence to me and me to you, whether physically close or apart, which is not to decry the very Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.

Mass streamed live from St Anne's every morning at 9.30am

Thank you to those of you who are able to join me in the weekly daily Mass. I hope that celebrating with me for this short service gives you a feeling of community which still remains for all of us.

Sunday 14 June – Sunday 21 June	9.30am	Wappenbury	Live streamed using fb.me/stanneswappenbury
Sunday 14 June - Friday 19 June	9.30am	Wappenbury	Continuing the Novena to The Sacred Heart of Jesus (Feast day is Friday 19 June). The prayer for the Novena is available to read on the Homepage of the website.
Thursday 18 June	5.00 – 5.45 pm	Wappenbury	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. A time for quiet personal prayer.
Friday 19 June	9.30am	Wappenbury	Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Masses streamed throughout the Archdiocese and elsewhere

You can follow these on

<https://www.mcimedia.tv/camera/st-chads-cathedral-birmingham>

Mass streamed live on weekdays and Sundays.

For other Masses

<https://www.mcimedia.tv/cameras/county/warwickshire>

Mass and Evening Prayer streamed live each day from Sacred Heart Church Cork

<https://www.mscmissions.ie/spirituality/sacred-heart-live-services/>

Music and Reflective Resources for reflection from the Emmaus Retreat Centre Dublin

<https://www.emmausproductions.com/special-feature/spiritual-comfort-for-troubled-times-holy-week-2020/>

Parish Community Evening Prayer

You can now join with me and other parishioners for a short evening prayer on Wednesday and Friday evenings in May at 7.00pm. This prayer will last about twenty minutes. A copy of the evening prayer will be sent out prior to the meeting.

To join in this prayer, you will need to be using **ZOOM**.

The ID for all meetings on Wednesdays and Fridays is **798 7539 5937** with the password **0(zero)YQRdf**

If you have not joined me up to now, please let me know so that I can send you the prayer.

Sunday Collections

Since it is likely that our restrictions as regards gathering for Mass at either St Anne's or Princethorpe will remain in force for a considerable length of time, may I ask those who contribute weekly, through the collections at Mass, to review how they might contribute while we wait to return to attendance at Mass. Our current overdraft is just over £7000.00 as on 5 May 2020 and, as with all of you, regular expenses continue to be incurred, such as Community Charge, Lighting, Heating, Communication, Cemetery and grounds maintenance etc. DD and SO provide the advantage that you continue to contribute directly during these difficult times. For this, I remain grateful.

You can contribute to cheque if you still use cheques or through BACS if that is your preferred way. For BACS, the details are: National Westminster Bank **Sort Code 60-02-35 - Account number 67502784 – Please reference your surname/name of bank**

Details about Standing Orders, Direct Debits and Gift Aid can be found on the diocesan website -

<https://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/FAQs/standing-order-gift-aid>

My thanks to those who had sent contributions and who have set up SO and DD. I very much appreciate this.

The Finance Committee is also investigating an on-line donation method – further details shortly.

Understandably, in these difficult financial times it is every family's concern to ensure that money can be found for their own budgets. That must remain your priority.

Thank you

I would like to thank all of you who have been so kind and generous in leaving me groceries and gifts during the lock down. It has often happened that I have not heard you coming and going and on opening my front door I have found treats left in bags without me knowing who has dropped them off. Thank you whoever you are and my blessings to you all.

Continue with Sensible Precautions and No Panic

Stay at home/Stay Alert – in either case, please continue to behave in a manner that keeps you and others safe.

Enjoy the outdoor life but with care.

Wash hands thoroughly and regularly.

Avoid close contact and avoid shaking hands – you can be ‘Thai like’.

Think thoughts of peace instead of wishing peace through handshake at any time anywhere.

Receive Jesus in spirit – seek a greater awareness of God’s presence with you each moment.

Use tissues – do not leave used tissues lying about: bin them or burn them!

Even though there are changes ‘freeing’ us up, we must prepare mentally and emotionally to endure, for some considerable time, on-going limitations to our freedom. Always remember that the ‘limitations’ on health care workers on the front line are there to stay.

Shoe-Boxes 2020 – Bars of Soap Appeal

In these difficult times Pam and her team are still trying to gather items together for the shoe-boxes for 2020. We have received an email from Glen, the area co-ordinator, asking for bars of soap especially. Understandably, because of the coronavirus situation, the usual supply of gifted hotel guest soap is limited as well as regular bars of soap. If you could consider buying any type of solid bars at all when you are ordering on-line or out shopping please do so. Any gifts can be left in Teddy’s porch – no need to ring the door bell just drop off the bag.

Please remember especially in your prayers this week – let us not tire of praying

All those people who put the lives of others before their own in whatever branch of community life they work.

Sue whose expected operation was cancelled at the last minute. Hold Sue’s family in your prayers.

Bill who continues tomorrow with week three of his treatment. Hold Bill and Yvonne in your prayers.

Tom who is undergoing treatment for prostate cancer.

Stephen, friend of Milena’s, who is seriously ill.

Sean who is unwell at present.

Fr Dan O’Connor MSC who is seriously unwell at present in a nursing home in Ireland.

Di, awaiting further tests.

Fr John Fitzgerald as he cares for the elderly members of MSC communities in Ireland.

Fr Manus Ferry MSC as he works as a hospital chaplain in Dublin

Paddy Mernagh RIP 24 May. Pray for Bridget (wife) and children Peter, Seamus, Dermot, Ray, Denise and Louise

Education staff, children and their parents as there are moves to open schools once again.

Melanie, a young girl who struggles with identity. Pray for her family and friends as they present support.

Anastasia as she is cared for at home.

Eileen who is unwell in a rest home.

Wolfgang, Chrissie’s father, who died recently.

Norman, close friend of Paul. Norman is unwell in hospital.

Alice whose Lupus has returned.

Maura Bennett RIP, mother to Fr John Bennett MSC. Maura died unexpectedly recently.

Liz’s mum who is unwell.

Peter Power family.

Catherine, niece to Una Power, who gave birth to a baby recently.

Alice, sister to Jimmy Murray, who has been ill and is now recovering at home.

Members of the medical profession who have died while ministering to those ill with coronavirus.

Parishioners who have been diagnosed with coronavirus.

MSC Priests from the Belgian Province of the MSCs who have died because of coronavirus.

Continue praying for

Parishioners with underlying medical problems of varying kinds and for whom this present viral situation induces increased anxiety. Pray for patience for all as times moves on.....

Our medical staff – some members of this parish are actively engaged on the front line in our hospitals.

John whose family has asked for prayers.

Domonkos Kordas (14) who has lost sight in one eye. Pray for him and family and friends. His parents work on the front line.

Steve, who continues to receive treatment.

Peter Lamb, recovering from a stroke

Elizabeth and Neville Compton, sister and brother-in-law of Margaret Simmons.

Lawrence who has completed the three years of maintenance chemotherapy. The family gives thanks for your love and prayers.

John (75) diagnosed with bladder cancer.

Liz Griffin's parents as they settle in to their new home.

Elizabeth who has been diagnosed with a long term illness and is improving. She has had some good news recently.

Paul, a paramedic friend of Kathy Bond, Stretton on Dunsmore, seriously ill in University Hospital, Coventry.

Marc, who is seriously ill.

Keren and her husband. Keren is a member of Princethorpe College staff.

Karen, waiting results of an exploratory investigation.

Linda, Stretton on Dunsmore, who is recovering at home. Thank you for your continued prayers.

Adrian, a friend of Loretta, who is continuing to receive treatment. Adrian has had some good news.

Carolyn whose daughter is experiencing on-going mental health difficulties.

Roisin and Niamh, as they cope with difficult health problems. Their health problems are on-going.

Claire, who is going through a tough time right now.

Linda, who is recovering from the effects of her treatment for cancer.

Michael, who is awaiting further tests.

Louise, suffering from various cancers.

Zavier, a young child who is ill.

Lucy (29), who is suffering from bacterial meningitis and is unable to digest food.

Jade (28), who is receiving chemotherapy.

Liam (44), who is undergoing chemotherapy for bowel cancer.

Eileen, friend of Mary Hewitt who is suffering from cancer.

Harry (23), who has undergone serious heart surgery and is returning to work.

Sue, who is enduring further chemotherapy for her cancer.

Seamus, who suffers from prostate cancer. Hold Seamus' family and friends in your prayers.

Michele, who has some serious health issues.

Kathy, who is recuperating after her successful operation.

Lola (29), who has been ill for most of her life and is again very ill.

Rose, who has severe mental health problems.

Frank

Carolyn, who is ill with breast cancer.

Bishop Leo McCartie RIP, who died recently.

Mildred (87) RIP (Ryton on Dunsmore)

Betty Lucas RIP

Kay RIP, aunt to Yvonne.

Peter Morgan RIP, father of Helen Morgan, a member of staff at Princethorpe College.

Antonio (80) RIP who died recently.

Betty Kaminski RIP

Thomas Duffy RIP

Pauline RIP.

Chris Smart (77) RIP

Con McCorrison (88) RIP

Darren RIP

Joan (91) RIP

Myrtle Forster (64) RIP

Joan and Sister RIP

Bob RIP

Maria Ramsay (76) RIP

Mont RIP

John RIP