

Blessed Robert Grissold Catholic Church, Balsall Common

In the Archdiocese of Birmingham

Sunday Mass Time 9.30 am

6th December 2020 – 2nd Sunday of Advent

“Make his paths straight.”

Pope’s Prayer Intention for December: For a Life of Prayer – We pray that our personal relationship with Jesus Christ be nourished by the Word of God and a life of prayer.

Fr. Frank: *The invitation to welcome the God who comes to us in Christ and to cast away empty living is repeated in the liturgy of the Second Sunday of Advent. The Opening Prayer of the Mass asks that no earthly undertaking hinder those who set out in haste to meet Christ. And today we hear the lonely voice of John the Baptist who exhorts us to prepare a way for the Lord. May our faithfulness to the spirit of Advent create a space so that the Lord can come to us.*

Welcome back to Mass: My thanks to all the volunteers who have made this possible. Due to my underlying health conditions I have received medical advice that it would be unwise for me to celebrate Mass in the same space as a congregation, therefore I will continue to celebrate Mass from behind the glass screen. I realise this is not ideal - it is frustrating for all of us. I know that I can rely on your patience and understanding.

I hope that you are all keeping well under these trying and frustrating circumstances and that you are coping with the new lockdown. You continue to be in my prayers daily as I offer the Mass. ***I will continue to post a weekly Spiritual Communion and reflection on the parish website so that we can still pray together.***

It has been encouraging to see the generous response to the call for volunteers needed to celebrate Mass. Once again, I have cause to be impressed and grateful for your selfless dedication and for the love of Christ and his Church which this shows. Archbishop Bernard has also recognised the diligence and devotion of the volunteers and has asked me to pass on his gratitude and appreciation.

Christmas Masses:

Christmas Eve Thursday 24th December at 7.30pm

Christmas Day Friday 25th December at 9.30am

Due to the current restrictions and the need for social distancing there are a limited number of places available at each of the Christmas Masses. The only way to secure a place is to **text** 07512 100908. The places will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Please specify in your text:

- + The day you wish to attend
- + The number of seats you require
- + Whether you require seating alone, for a couple, or for a family group.

Please note that in Tier 2 and 3 areas (we are currently in Tier 3), people must not mingle indoors with anyone they do not live with or have formed a support bubble with.

No one can be admitted once the seating capacity has been reached. Information about arrangements for parishioners attending masses and for wardens during Advent and Christmas can be found towards the end of this newsletter.

Christmas Giving Tree: Our annual giving tree has to take a different form this year. Rather than buying and wrapping gifts for different age groups, Fr Hudson’s society has asked that we donate cash or store vouchers instead. Covid-19 has hit us all this year but, as with any crisis, the people who were already disadvantaged will have been most affected. We are therefore asking the parish to come together, in a safely socially distanced way, to make a Christmas offering for this.

We will be collecting cash, cheques, or store vouchers (please include a receipt with these) outside the church between **9.00am and 9.30am on Sundays 6th and 13th December**. There will be an additional collection in the car park on **Saturday 12th December 10.00am-11.00am**.

Some of the funds collected will be used to send Christmas cheer to members of the parish who are unable to come to church during the pandemic. If you would like to help with distributing a local gift please leave your contact details for Kathryn Driffield at one of the collections.

Volunteers needed: Thank you to all those who have already volunteered to act as wardens at masses, taking responsibility for helping parishioners to adhere to the guidelines, and for ensuring the church is sanitised. We will need teams for the Christmas masses – please contact Joe Martin at joem9@tiscali.co.uk if you are available to help. New volunteers, either for Christmas or to join the rota for the New Year, are always welcome!

Churches Together in Balsall And Berkswell and Christian Aid: Christian Aid Week as we know it couldn't take place this year, so the Solihull Churches Committee set up a Solihull Churches Christian Aid Week Just Giving page, which raised £4173. This has now been replaced with a new page for an Autumn and Christmas appeal. Churches Together in Balsall and Berkswell is represented on the committee and is asking for donations from the member churches. Here is the new link for you to use if you would like to do so. <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/SolihullChurchesChristianAid>.

Advent Resources: The Archdiocese of Birmingham has links to a range of advent activities, resources and retreats for adults and young people on its website. Visit <https://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/advent-2020> to find out more.

Faith Engagement Review: Following his appointment as Faith Engagement Adviser at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Colin Bloom has been asked to lead a review into how best the government should engage with faith groups in England. The review invites anyone who has a religion or faith to answer an online questionnaire on a number of topics. Further information can be found on the diocesan website: <https://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/news/faith-engagement-review>.

Job Vacancy- Chief Operating Officer: The Archdiocese of Birmingham is recruiting a Chief Operating Officer. The closing date for applications is 9am, Friday 18th December. Information about the role and how to apply is available on the diocesan website: <https://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/FAQs/chief-operating-officer-aob>.

Your prayers are asked for those who are sick and their carers.

If you would like someone to be named on our list of those who are sick, please contact David Green (david.monica@btinternet.com) or complete the online form (under Parish Life) on our website.

Anniversaries: James and Daisy Cone, Caroline Giles, Peter Carroll, Denis Moroney, David Scannell, Mary Hayhurst, Cyril Howse.

Mass Intentions, Solemnities and Memorials for this week

| | |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sun 6 Dec | SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT <i>Wardens: Monica and David Green, Clare Keane, Chris Lynn, Irene Gibbons</i> |
| Mon 7 | St Ambrose |
| Tue 8 | SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY <i>Intention: Peter Carroll (RIP)</i> |
| Wed 9 | St John Diego |
| Sat 12 | Our Lady of Guadalupe |
| Sun 6 | THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT <i>Wardens: Eileen and Elizabeth Selby, Helen Woods, Sarah Noonan</i> |

Items for Weekly Bulletin: Please note that **Ellie Clarke** is now editing the bulletin. Please send items to her at: iehclarke@btinternet.com or call on **01676 533931** by **7.00pm on Wednesday**.

Priest: Revd. Father Frank Smith. Tel: 07512 100908 Email: parishpriest@brgparish.org.uk

The parish is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham, Registered Charity No. 234216.

Parish website: www.brgparish.org.uk

Warwick Catholic Deanery website: www.warwick-catholicdeanery.org.uk

Archdiocese of Birmingham website: www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk

Masses at Blessed Robert Grissold in a Time of Covid-19

Guidance for Parishioners

- + Attendees must wear a mask
- + Remain 2 metres apart
- + Sanitise hands on entering and exiting the Church
- + Follow the signs
- + Always follow the stewards' instructions

Holy Communion

- + All responses during the Mass to be whispered
 - + Single file queue for Holy Communion (in one kind only) - please follow stewards' guidance.
 - + The Host to be received in silence, on outstretched hand
 - + Masks to be worn to receive the Host
 - + Leave the church immediately after consuming the Host
- Please do not congregate in the car park after leaving the church

During Mass there will be no:

- + Altar servers
- + Readers
- + Children's liturgy
- + Offertory procession
- + Sign of peace
- + Parish missals, misalettes or hymn books
- + Singing
- + Passing of collection bags
- + Flowers

Please stay at home if...

- + You are feeling ill or show any symptoms
- + You suspect you may be ill or have been exposed to Covid 19
- + You have a sick family member at home
- + You have come into contact with someone who is infected

Those attending Mass will be asked to supply contact details for track and trace.

Please Note:

- + The Church will be cleaned after each Mass
- + In the first instance, attendance will be on a first-come, first-served basis. Once capacity (30 persons) has been reached the stewards will prevent entry. (*Please note arrangement for reserving a place at Christmas Masses at the beginning of this newsletter*).
- + Wrap up warm - doors will be left open to increase ventilation wherever possible
- + All areas of the church, apart from the narthex and hall area during Mass, are out of bounds until further notice.

Information for wardens:

One person to open up coming through the door from the car park and then open the main door in the main entrance. All other wardens and parishioners to then ONLY use the main door at the front. After mass, all parishioners and wardens to exit through the main door, with one warden then locking up and leaving through the car park door. No-one else should use the corridor from the narthex to the car park.

Warden's duties – please arrive by 9am to prepare the church.

- Sanitise all door handles, light switches and plain surfaces
- At the front entrance, collect names and phone numbers for track and trace
- Ask parishioners to sanitise their hands and remind people to wear masks unless they are exempt
- Guide everyone to their seats
- Direct parishioners to receive Holy Communion keeping 2 metres apart
- After Communion, supply each parishioner with sanitising wipes to clean their own seat before leaving the church
- Lock up after Father has left the church

Warden Teams and Rota

Names in bold indicate those responsible for unlocking and locking up the church as specified above

Team 1: **Joe and Pam Martin**, Terry Biles, Stefan Hunka, Dave Cant

Team 2: **Dominic and Teresa Green**, Dominic Wright, Aidir Parizzi, Liz Temperley-Preece

Team 3: **Monica and David Green**, Clare Keane, Chris Lynn, Irene Gibbons

Team 4: **Eileen and Elizabeth Selby**, Helen Woods, Sarah Noonan

Rota for December

6th: Team 3

13th Team 4

20th Team 1

Christmas Eve (7.30pm) – TBC

Christmas Day (9.30am - TBC

Please contact Joe Martin if you are available to be a warden for either of the Christmas masses.