



THE PARISH OF OUR LADY & ST. WULSTAN

WOOD STREET, SOUTHAM CV47 1PP

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



31.01.2021 – Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time – Racial Justice Sunday

Welcome to guests visitors and parishioners.

The Lord our Teacher

Today we celebrate him who speaks with authority and to whom we must give our undivided attention. His words can change our lives if we act on them.

Masses & Intentions

- Saturday 30** People of the Parish
- Sunday 31** **Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time**
Sr. Sharon Peters (Intentions)
- Monday 01** **Feria in Ordinary Time**
Maureen Godrey RIP
- Tuesday 02** **Feast of the Presentation of the Lord.**
PCJ Sisters Mary Paul, Sharon & Maire
- Wednesday 03** **Feria in Ordinary Time**
The White Family
- Thursday 04** **Feria in Ordinary Time**
Henrieta Hunerfurst RIP
- Friday 05** **St. Agatha, Virgin, Martyr**
Kay Griffin RIP
- Saturday 06** **Paul Miki & Companions, Martyrs**
Mary Earley (Intentions)
- Sunday 07** **Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time**
Christopher Pratt RIP

Mass via Internet

We are all aware that due to increase in the number of Covid - 19 infections public Masses in our parish remain suspended. Sadly, the infection rate appears to be rather slow in coming down. Our initial efforts to live stream the Mass from our church have not been successful yet. We will try our best and shall keep the parishioners informed.

As this might be an opportunity to start / restart and cultivate the habit of personal prayer / family prayer, scripture reading & meditation, grace before and after meals and similar private devotions, parishioners are encouraged to consider them positively.

Racial Justice Sunday 2021: This year's Racial Justice Sunday is more important than ever. The effects of the Coronavirus pandemic, the killing of George Floyd, and the powerful message on fraternity and equality by Pope Francis in *Fratelli Tutti* speak of the need to actively oppose racism and pursue racial justice with renewed vigour.

The theme is '*A Time to Act*'. Racial issues and inequalities were identified nationally and internationally in 2020 generating awareness, emotion and outrage. In light of this Racial Justice Sunday 2021 is particularly significant. Action is needed to further the cause of racial justice but what can we do? For more information, visit:

<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/racial-justice-sunday-2021/>

RIP: Please pray for Fr. Giles Goward, Fr. Patrick Joyce, George Derek Watson, Stacy Reed, Kay Griffin, Kathleen Healy and all those who died recently and for all the faithful departed. *May they all, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen*

Sick: Please pray for all those who are unwell at this time, especially all those who are affected by Covid-19, those who are in isolation and all who help / take care of them as well as all those who serve our communities in frontline jobs.

Telephone support: Some of our parishioners are supporting each other by telephone. Please phone 811703 (Shirley) or email (shirley@shirleyrush8.plus.com) if you want a chat or to receive calls or if you would like to join those who are calling others

Unleash the Gospel: The following is a lovely website with week by week activities for families, prayers and exploration of the Gospel. Hope you will find it helpful. (This week):

<https://www.52sundays.com/sundays/january-31-2021>

Lent 2021: The Season of Lent is round the corner. 17th of February is the Ash Wednesday. It will be good to organize a Lenten Course to learn about or to deepen our faith. If anyone could help or take part in this, please let Fr. Arul know.

Jesus Teaches with Authority (Mark 1:21-28): The growing authority of Jesus is the theme of the early part of Mark's gospel and today's story is an excellent illustration of this. Jesus has already called the disciples. He calls and they simply follow: it seems that he is a total stranger to them, yet has such authority that they drop everything to follow him. Now in the synagogue he teaches on his own authority. He does not quote the interpretations of others, as rabbinic teachers did, saying, "Rabbi X says this," "Rabbi Y says that". No, Jesus teaches, "I say to you...". He seems to be master even of the Law. But it is God's Law. Only God has authority over it, so who does Jesus think he is? On one level he is a teacher to be compared with Moses, one who is to come into the world, the teacher prophesied in today's first reading. But he is more than this. To confirm the power of his teaching, he shows what authority he has by overcoming an unclean spirit, wringing from it the snivelling protest, "Have you come to destroy us?" and the acknowledgement that he has a special link with God.

What are the qualities of a good teacher? How does Jesus, the good teacher, reveal his authority?

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

Pope's Prayer Intention for January (Human Fraternity): May the Lord give us the grace to live in full fellowship with our brothers and sisters of other religions, praying for one another, open to all.

Racial Justice: This Sunday is Racial Justice Sunday. There will be a voluntary Second Collection.

Feast of the Presentation of the Lord (February 2nd) occurs forty days after the birth of Jesus and is also known as Candlemas day, since the blessing and procession of candles is included in today's liturgy.



Today's first reading (Malachi 3: 1-4) gives us an important insight to understand profoundly the mystery of the Lord's Presentation in the Temple by Mary and Joseph, in accordance with Mosaic Law. The text, taken from the Prophet Malachi says, '*I am*

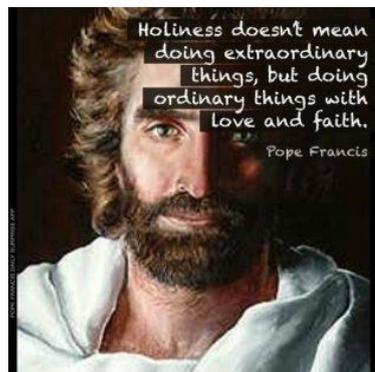
sending my messenger to prepare the way before me; and suddenly there will come to the temple the Lord who you seek' (Mal 3:1). From all the Gospels, we know that it is the Precursor, St John the Baptist who was born 6 months before Jesus, that God sent to prepare His way. Putting these evangelical facts together, we can comprehend the words of the Prophet Malachi. The Lord God promised that He would send a Precursor to prepare His way. Since there is only 6 months between the birth of St John the Baptist and Jesus it is clear that the prophecy meant that *suddenly* after the Precursor, the Lord Himself will come. So, soon after the Baptist's birth, God entered His temple. Jesus' presentation signifies God's entrance to His temple. God made man entered His temple, presenting Himself to those who were really searching for Him.

The Gospel (Luke 2:22–40) introduces us to different people and events that in themselves provide numerous lessons and themes for further reflection. First of all, Mary and Joseph respect the Mosaic Law by offering the sacrifice prescribed for the poor: a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.

Simeon and Anna were two venerable elderly people dedicated to prayer and fasting and so their strong religious spirit rendered them able to recognize the Messiah. In this sense we can see in the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple an extension of the '*Pro Orantibus Day*' (For those who pray) that is celebrated on the feast of the Presentation of Mary (21 November). On this day, the Church demonstrates its gratitude to all those in the community that dedicate themselves in a privileged way to prayer, to those who have a particular religious vocation to the contemplative life. In the figure of the venerable Simeon, Jesus' presentation in the temple, also reminds us that prayer and contemplation are not just a waste of time or an obstacle to charity. On the contrary, time could not be better spent than in prayer as true Christian charity is a consequence of a solid interior life. Only those who pray and offer penance, like Simeon and Anna, are open to the breath of the Spirit. They know how to recognize the Lord in the circumstances in which He manifests Himself because they possess an ample interior vision, and they have

learned how to love with the heart of the One whose very name is Charity.

At the end of the Gospel Simeon's prophecy of Mary's sufferings is emphasized. Pope John Paul II taught that, '*Simeon's words seem like a second Annunciation to Mary, for they tell her of*



the actual historical situation in which the Son is to accomplish his mission, namely, in misunderstanding and sorrow.' (*Redemptoris Mater*, n16) The archangel's announcement was a fount of incredible joy because it pertained to Jesus' messianic royalty and the supernatural character of His virginal conception. The announcement of the elderly in the temple instead spoke of the Lord's work of redemption that He would complete associating Himself through suffering to His Mother. Therefore, there is a strong Marian dimension to this feast and so in the Liturgical Calendar of the Extraordinary Form it is called the *Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary*. This refers to the other aspect of the presentation that consists of the ritual purification of Jewish women after they had given birth. In Mary's case this purification was not necessary, but it indicates the renewal of her total offering of herself to God for the accomplishment of His Divine Plan.

Simeon's prophecy also announces that Christ will be '*a sign of contradiction*'. St Cyril of Alexandria, in one of his homilies, interpreted the words '*sign of contradiction*' like a noble cross, as St Paul wrote to the Corinthians '*a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles*' (1 Cor 1:23) [...] *It is a sign of contradiction in the sense that those who loose appear as foolish while in those who recognize its power [the cross] reveals salvation and life*'. <https://www.catholicculture.org>

Prayer of Spiritual Communion

(St Alphonsus Liguori)

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.

A Prayer of Spiritual Communion for Vocations to the Priesthood

Lord Jesus Christ, Eternal High Priest, offered as a Sacrifice on the Cross to take away the sins of the world:

I unite myself with your sacrifice on the altar, with the Eucharist which I cannot receive. You have given to your Church the Sacrament of Baptism through which your people are made holy. You have given to your Church the Sacrament of the Priesthood by which the banquet of the Eucharist is set before us. I pray today for all priests, who through their consecration make present in your Church your real and abiding presence. I thank you for the gift of the Priesthood. I praise your wonderful presence in the Eucharist. Amen.

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT FOR THE RENEWAL IN OUR PARISH

Father, pour out your Spirit upon your people, and grant us a new vision of your glory, a new experience of your power, a new faithfulness to your Word, and a new consecration to your service, that your love may grow among us, and your kingdom come: Through Christ our Lord. Amen.