

Extraordinary Newsletter for the Catholic Parishes of St John Vianney & St Monica and St Cuthbert, Blackpool

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THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR (B) – 14TH FEBRUARY 2021

LENT 2021

During Lent we focus, in our Christian discipleship, upon:

PRAYER: We know we should be praying anyway, but in preparing for Lent we are again confronted with the reality that we ought to pray more and with greater devotion and love. Perhaps, this Lent, look again at prayer at home, perhaps: take up daily Mass, pray the Stations of the Cross, go to Confession, try *Lectio Divina*, pray the rosary or spend time in Adoration or come to our Sunday Benediction.

FASTING: Lent is still marked by two solemn days of fasting (*one meal and two snacks*) and abstinence (*not eating meat*): Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Perhaps we can also use the Fridays of Lent to abstain from meat and to take up intentional fasting again and thus deepen its place in our spiritual training.

ALMSGIVING: We might consider sharing our time with others people in need, be it a phone call, making sure our neighbours are secure and cared for, volunteering in our parishes or giving to our cherished charities.

ASH WEDNESDAY (*not a holyday of obligation*)

This Wednesday, 17th February, is *Ash Wednesday* and marks the beginning of the season of Lent. Our Masses will be celebrated at: 9.15am at St John Vianney's and 12noon at St Cuthbert's. Ashes will be distributed at both Masses but in a slightly adapted form given the pandemic and the recent instruction received from the Vatican.

OUR SYNODAL JOURNEY

Sincere thanks to each of those 28 individual parishioners, across both parishes, who attended our very positive meeting online, last Wednesday, to share and listen to one another on the question of a possible canonical merging of our two parishes into one new parish. Thanks, too, for all those who are praying for us in this synodal journey.

A growing consensus appears in favour of this proposal. However, I continue to take broad soundings. For many, this move does seem necessary and advantageous so as to reduce administration and to ensure the strengthening of our ongoing and shared mission, which will face significant challenges as we emerge out of the pandemic. Moreover, there are likely to be even bolder plans from the Diocese for reconfiguration going forward, so our own preparation now will only assist with this and reinforce our place within any future plans for the area. In the meantime, for *next* weekend, I will be putting up the meeting notes on the porch noticeboards for parishioners' perusal. I will also be consulting shortly with our joint Fabric and Finance Committee on this question.

Ultimately, it will be for the Bishop to make any final decision, but it is still good to have a synodal discernment.

*OUR SAFETY MEASURES FOR THE PANDEMIC

We remain vigilant in our strict adherence to the following:

- 1. Please do not come to church if you have symptoms of COVID-19 yourself or if you live with someone with such symptoms or if you are 'shielding', self-isolating or feel in any way vulnerable.** Given that the obligation to attend Sunday Mass remains suspended you might consider attending a quieter Mass during the week.
- 2. Do always, wear your (mandatory) face covering in church ensuring that both your nose and mouth are covered. Some, however, will have an exemption.**
- 3. Wrap up Warm** - we need to have fresh air circulating to ensure your safety from COVID-19, so the church doors will often be left open during Mass. (Yes, even in winter!)
- 4. Once you have sanitised your hands, please leave your name and number on the Track & Trace List or use the app on your mobile phone with the QR code on display.**
- 5. Do keep a physical distance from others as you come into church and at all times in the building. Spread out in church and sit strictly in households/bubbles only. Do not move the benches or touch or attempt to alter the bench-ropes.**
- 6. For the duration of the pandemic, there is no sign of peace. Please do not wander round church greeting people and under no circumstances go into the sacristy.**
- 7. For Holy Communion, which for the duration of the pandemic, is under the form of the Sacred Host only, come out calmly, bench by bench (starting from the front), forming one single-file queue in the centre aisle and keeping well-spaced behind the person in front, using the full spacing available at the front (i.e., at St John Vianney's around the altar steps) returning to your original place down the side aisles as per usual.**
- 8. At Holy Communion, unloop one's face covering and consume the Sacred Host and then replace the face covering before moving immediately back to your original place. Upon your return try not to cross by others.**
- 9. There is no congregational singing in church, so if you hear the organ at Mass please do not start singing.**
- 10. After a brief act of thanksgiving, please leave church using the one-way system without any mingling whatever.**

MEMORIAL CARDS FOR BISHOP O'DONOGHUE RIP

We are pleased to have been invited to produce this prayer card for the entire Diocese. These are available to our own parishioners at the back of our two churches this weekend, so as to aid us in our prayers for our late Bishop.

RESUMPTION OF SUNDAY BENEDICTION

Benediction resumes this Sunday at 3.30pm at St John Vianney's. All are welcome!

OFFERTORY COLLECTION

Your offerings can still be pushed through the presbytery letterbox or arranged by parishioners with their own bank - via bank transfer/standing order. For details go to: <https://catholicsinsouthblackpool.com/contact/giftaid/>

OUR MASSES & CONFESSIONS

Please note, with care, the times and location for Masses and Confessions in the coming week:

Saturday 13th February

5.00pm – 5.20pm (SJV) Confessions

5.30pm (SJV) Mass for the people of our parishes

Sunday 14th February

SIXTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR (B)

9.00am (SJV) Mass for Marie-Louise & Arthur Aspin

10.00am (SC) Mass in Eugene Kelly RIP (Anniv)

11.00am (SJV) Mass for Rose Chakraborty

3.30pm Benediction at St John Vianney's

Monday 15th February

9.15am (SJV) Latin (EF) Mass for Annie Lee RIP

Tuesday 16th February

9.15am (SJV) Mass in Thanksgiving

11.00am (SC) Requiem Mass for Patricia Doherty RIP

Wednesday 17th February

ASH WEDNESDAY

9.15am (SJV) Mass for John Morley RIP followed by Confessions: 9.45am-10.15am

10.30am (SJV) Requiem Mass of Baby Simon McDonagh

12noon (SC) Mass for Andrew Courtney RIP

Thursday 18th February

9.15am (SJV) Mass for Hayley Brown (Health)
Day for church sanitisation (SC) – No Mass at SC

Friday 19th February

Day for church sanitisation (SJV) – No Mass at SJV

12 noon (SC) Mass for Canon Giles Goward RIP

Saturday 20th February

Confessions (SC): 11.30am-11.50am

12 noon (SC) Mass for Oliver Etienne Ints

Confessions (SJV): 5.00pm – 5.20pm

5.30pm (SJV) Mass for Alban Lee RIP

Sunday 21st February

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT (B)

9.00am (SJV) Mass for the people of our parishes

10.00am (SC) Mass for William Dempsey L.D.

11.00am (SJV) Mass for Mr & Mrs Buckley

3.30pm Stations & Benediction at St John Vianney's

PLEASE NOTE: At this time both our churches open just 15 minutes before Mass/confessions/devotions and close 15 minutes after Mass/confessions/devotions.

NUMBERS ATTENDING WEEKEND MASS LAST WEEK

St Cuthbert's: 47

St John Vianney & St Monica's: 30 – 20 – 52

MASS INTENTIONS

Please do continue to present us with your Mass intentions **well ahead of time** and in writing. All our Public Masses in February already have intentions.

MISSIO RED BOXES:

If your box is rather full you can deposit the contents in a marked envelope and place it in one of the collection baskets. If you don't have a Red *Missio* Box in your home, and would want one for Lent, please speak to Fr Etienne.

PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENTS

Thank you for your supportive comments on the recent improvements made, despite the pandemic. In particular:

- ❖ At St John Vianney's, certain electrical safety and improvement works to the lights on the main sanctuary and to the church entrances and car park. Please pray for the donor Michael Corkery (SJV). Some re-pointing has taken place – plenty more to be done!
- ❖ At St Cuthbert's the sanctuary has been fully re-lit to draw out its beauty. Please pray for the donor John Malone (SC). Also at St Cuthbert's, there are now new car park lights and security lighting at the back of the presbytery. The rear-fencing and gate has also been repaired and secured.
- ❖ Also at St Cuthbert's, investigative works continue on the water leaks under the church/presbytery which I discovered soon after my taking on the parishes in July, but were apparently first-highlighted some years ago.
- ❖ An independent heating engineer will be visiting St John Vianney's church shortly to offer advice upon the possibilities for heating going forward.

YEAR OF ST JOSEPH

We are marking the *Year of St Joseph* in our parishes by:

- On Wednesdays, when there is no feast, we will offer the Mass that day as a votive Mass of St Joseph.
- On the First Wednesday of the month we have a short service of devotions, sermon and Benediction at **6.00pm at St Cuthbert's**.
- Also this weekend, do take a prayer card we have made in honour of St Joseph. We will use this card on Wednesday after Masses and at Benediction this year.

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK

Please pray for Molly Ince and John Radcliffe and for all our parishioners who are sick, especially for all those suffering from COVID-19 and for those caring for them.

PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD

We pray for our recently-deceased: Bishop Patrick O'Donoghue, Patricia Doherty, John Bilsborrow and Baby Simon McDonagh. May they each rest in peace.

OUR OWN WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA

In these days, please do keep an eye on our parish website: <https://catholicsinsouthblackpool.com/> and our accompanying Facebook and Twitter accounts for the latest news and developments in the Catholic Church and for our two parishes.