

St Mary Magdalen Catholic Church

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*Please contact Fr Bineesh or let Fr Mathew know if you, or any member of your family, are going into hospital. Please be aware that for reasons of patient confidentiality, the current practice in the NHS is **NOT** to inform the chaplains of any Catholics that are admitted to hospital. So unless you or your relatives inform the chaplains of your hospital stay, you will not be visited by a priest or any other member of the chaplaincy team.*

33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time: 15th November, 2020

Sunday Readings: Year A

Weekday Readings: Year II, 33rd Week of the Year

Services This Week

Sunday 15 th November – 33 rd Sunday in Ordinary Time	10:00 am	Holy Mass – Celebrated in private for the people of the parish
Monday 16 th	Feria 10:00 am	Holy Mass – Celebrated in private for the intention of the Janes family.
Tuesday 17 th	Feria 10:00 am	Holy Mass – Celebrated in private for the intention of the Vieira family.
Wednesday 18 th	Feria 10:00 am	Holy Mass – Celebrated in private for the intention of Robert Ford.
Thursday 19 th	Feria 10:00 am	Holy Mass – Celebrated in private for the intention of Mary Winifred Flory.
Friday 20 th	St Edmund 10:00 am	Holy Mass – Celebrated in private for the intention of the Holy Souls.
Saturday 21 st	The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary 10:00 am	Holy Mass – Celebrated in private for the intention of the Angela Walmsley-Cotham RIP
Sunday 22 nd – The feast of Jesus Christ King of the Universe	10:00 am	Holy Mass – Celebrated in private for the people of the parish.

Lockdown II

On 4th November 2020, Parliament passed into law *The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (No. 4) Regulations 2020*. These are in force from Thursday, 5th November to Wednesday, 2nd December 2020. In these Regulations, places of worship are permitted to remain open for certain purposes, and to attend a place of worship is listed as an acceptable reason to leave home. The purposes for which a place of worship may remain open are for "individual prayer" which is defined as "prayer by individuals which does not form part of communal worship." This means that, once again, we are in a position where we cannot attend the celebration of Mass in church. The President and Vice-President of the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales, Cardinal Vincent Nichols and Archbishop Malcolm McMahon, have written to the government expressing their distress at these new restrictions but despite these concerns we are urged to obey the Government rulings and as such only private Masses will be celebrated in church during this lockdown period.

Spiritual Communion

For those occasions when we can't be in our churches, an act of Spiritual Communion can help us keep Christ at the centre of our lives as we worship and pray at home.

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen

Today's Gospel

This week's Gospel speaks of how Jesus' disciples are to conduct themselves as they await the Kingdom of Heaven. In the preceding passages and in last week's Gospel, Jesus taught that there is no way to predict the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven. His disciples must, therefore, remain vigilant and ready to receive the Son of Man at any time.

Jesus' parable talks about Christian discipleship using economic metaphors. Before he leaves on a journey, the master entrusts to his servants a different number of talents, giving to each according to their abilities. A *talent* is a coin of great value. Upon the master's return, he finds that the first and second servants have doubled their money, and both are rewarded. The third servant, however, has only preserved what was given to him because he was afraid to lose the money. He has risked nothing; he did not even deposit the money in a bank to earn interest. This servant is punished by the master, and his talent is given to the one who brought the greatest return.

Read in light of last week's parable of the wise and foolish bridesmaids, this parable teaches that God's judgment will be based on the service we render to God and to one another in accordance with the gifts that God has given to us. Our gifts, or talents, are given to us for the service of others. If we fail to use these gifts, God's judgment on us will be severe. On the other hand, if we make use of these gifts in service to the Kingdom of Heaven, we will be rewarded and entrusted with even more responsibilities.

This Gospel reminds us that Christian spirituality is not passive or inactive. Our life of prayer helps us to discern the gifts that have been given to us by God. This prayer and discernment ought to lead us to use our gifts in the service of God and our neighbour. God's grace allows us to share in the work of serving the Kingdom of Heaven.

Parish Development Project

The news was received this week that we have been given planning permission for the construction of the new parish room alongside the church, details and plans of which have been displayed in the narthex and on the parish web site for some time. The vast majority of the funding for this project has been provided by a generous, Gift Aided donation from one of our parish families, but there is a balance which we will need to raise ourselves. There is a letter from Fr Mathew to all parishioners which provides more information about this, but circulating this letter in the current lockdown will be a challenge. The letter can be seen on the parish web site and is being sent out to all parishioners for whom we have registered email addresses. Hard copies will be available in the narthex should you visit church for private prayer.

World Day of the Poor

The World Day of the Poor is a Roman Catholic observance, celebrated on the 33rd Sunday of Ordinary Time since 2017. It was established by Pope Francis in his Apostolic Letter, *Misericordia et Misera*, issued on 20 November 2016 to celebrate the end of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy.

The World Day of the Poor was established with the theme, "Let us love, not with words but with deeds". The theme for the 4th World Day of the Poor, today, is "Stretch forth your hand to the poor", taken from the book of Sirach. Drawing from this text, Pope Francis observes that "its author presents his advice concerning many concrete situations in life, one of which is poverty. He insists that even amid hardship we must continue to trust in God." The Pope points out that from these pages we see, "prayer to God and solidarity with the poor and suffering are inseparable. Generosity that supports the weak, consoles the afflicted, relieves suffering and restores dignity to those stripped of it, is a condition for a fully human life," Pope Francis says. "The power of God's grace cannot be restrained by the selfish tendency to put ourselves always first." In his message, the Pope acknowledges that "keeping our gaze fixed on the poor is difficult", but, he underlines, it is "more necessary than ever if we are to give proper direction to our personal life and the life of society." The full text of Pope Francis' message can be found on the parish web site.

Christmas 2020

Several bookings for the proposed Christmas services have been received and acknowledged. Clearly under the current restricted operations, services this year are going to be rather different from normal, and there is a strong possibility that any arrangements made may have to be changed should government guidance change between now and December. At this time, it is intended to say Mass at 5:00 pm on Christmas Eve, Thursday 24th December. This Mass will be aimed primarily at families with children. On Christmas morning, there will be Mass at 8:00 am and 10:00 am.

It is possible that, being Christmas, these Masses will be very well attended, but in order to comply with social distancing regulations, numbers will have to be limited. To ensure safety and legal compliance, we are going to have to implement a booking system for places at these Masses. It is not possible to state a maximum number of people who can attend any one service, as the total will depend on the size of the parties – clearly the total accommodated will be bigger with a smaller number of larger family groups which do not have to be distanced, where as individuals attending will need to be distanced from others leading to a lower total. To help this to be managed, you are asked to register your intention to attend the Christmas Masses and book places for your families as required. If you have not yet done so, please do so quickly. Places will be allocated on a strictly first come, first served basis. Please email bookings@marymagdalens.org or use the contact form on the parish web site – select Christmas 2020. Please provide your name, contact telephone number and email address, the Mass you wish to attend and the number in your party. You will receive a confirmation of your booking if you can be accommodated. Fr Mathew has said that should these Masses be heavily oversubscribed, he will say additional Masses to meet the demand, either later on Christmas Eve or on Christmas Day.

The Sick of the Parish

Please pray for those who are sick or housebound: John Anderson-Hurst, Margaret Arbon, William Barnes, Peggy Barron, Jason Beaumont, Michael Clarke, Monica Ford, Josephine Kalagira, Fabiana Di Mascio, Ron Green, Jo Kelly, Molly Mc Garry, Yvonne Metcalfe, Robert Mullan, Anna Nelli, Mary O'Reilly and Pippa Williamson.

Own Dear Departed

Of your charity, pray for the repose of the souls of the faithful departed and especially for Norah Scoging, Kathleen Royle, Malcolm Lewis, Anthony Hinton, Christina Fisher, Catherine Boar (née Cleary), Sybil Reynolds, Geraldine Lofthouse, Joseph Gildea, John Dooley and Ellen Wright whose anniversaries occur at about this time.

Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them. May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Mass Readings: Thirty Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, 15th November, 2020

Entrance Antiphon: The Lord said: I think thoughts of peace and not affliction. You will call upon me, and I will answer you, and I will lead back your captives from every place.

Collect: Grant us, we pray, O Lord our God, the constant gladness of being devoted to you, for it is full and lasting happiness to serve with constancy the author of all that is good. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

First Reading: Prov. 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31 *A perfect wife – who can find her?*

A perfect wife - who can find her? She is far beyond the price of pearls. Her husband's heart has confidence in her, from her he will derive no little profit. Advantage and not hurt she brings him all the days of her life. She is always busy with wool and with flax, she does her work with eager hands. She sets her hands to the distaff, her fingers grasp the spindle. She holds out her hand to the poor, she opens her arms to the needy. Charm is deceitful, and beauty empty; the woman who is wise is the one to praise. Give her a share in what her hands have worked for, and let her works tell her praises at the city gates.

Responsorial Psalm: Response to the psalm is: *O blessed are those who fear the Lord.*

O blessed are those who fear the Lord
and walk in his ways!

By the labour of your hands you shall eat.

You will be happy and prosper

Your wife lie a fruitful vine
in the heart of your house;

your children like shoots of the olive,
around your table.

Indeed thus shall be blessed

the man who fears the Lord.

May the Lord bless you from Zion

in a happy Jerusalem

all the days of your life.

Second Reading: 1Thes. 5:1-6

Let not the Day of the Lord overtake you like a thief.

You will not be expecting us to write anything to you, brothers, about 'times and seasons', since you know very well that the Day of the Lord is going to come like a thief in the night. It is when people are saying, 'How quiet and peaceful it is' that the worst suddenly happens, as suddenly as labour pains come on a pregnant woman; and there will be no way for anybody to evade it. But it is not as if you live in the dark, my brothers, for that Day to overtake you like a thief. No, you are all sons of light and sons of the day: we do not belong to the night or to darkness, so we should not go on sleeping, as everyone else does, but stay wide awake and sober.

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia! Even if you have to die, says the Lord, keep faithful, and I will give you the crown of life. Alleluia!

Gospel: Matt, 25:14-30

You have been faithful in small things; come and join in your master's happiness.

Jesus spoke this parable to his disciples: 'The kingdom of Heaven is like a man on his way abroad who summoned his servants and entrusted his property to them. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to a third one; each in proportion to his ability. Then he set out. The man who had received the five talents promptly went and traded with them and made five more. The man who had received two made two more in the same way. But the man who had received one went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. Now a long time after, the master of those servants came back and went through his accounts with them. The man who had received the five talents came forward bringing five more. "Sir," he said "you entrusted me with five talents; here are five more that I have made." His master said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have shown you can be faithful in small things, I will trust you with greater; come and join in your master's happiness." Next the man with the two talents came forward. "Sir," he said "you entrusted me with two talents; here are two more that I have made." His master said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have shown you can be faithful in small things, I will trust you with greater; come and join in your master's happiness." Last came forward the man who had the one talent. "Sir," said he "I had heard you were a hard man, reaping where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered; so I was afraid, and I went off and hid your talent in the ground. Here it is; it was yours, you have it back." But his master answered him, "You wicked and lazy servant! So you knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered? Well then, you should have deposited my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have recovered my capital with interest. So now, take the talent from him and give it to the man who has the five talents. For to everyone who has will be given more, and he will have more than enough; but from the man who has not, even what he has will be taken away. As for this good-for-nothing servant, throw him out into the dark, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth."

Prayer over the Offerings: Grant, O Lord, we pray, that what we offer in the sight of your majesty may obtain for us the grace of being devoted to you and gain us the prize of everlasting happiness. Through Christ Our Lord.

Communion Antiphon: To be near God is my happiness, to place my hope in God the Lord.

Prayer after Communion: We have partaken of the gifts of this sacred mystery, humbly imploring, O Lord, that what your Son commanded us to do in memory of him may bring us growth in charity. Through Christ our Lord.