



CATHOLIC CHURCHES
of
OUR LADY & ST. KENELM, HALESOWEN
OUR LADY OF LOURDES, OLD HILL



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(Part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham Registered Charity No. 234216)

LITURGY FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING SUNDAY 5th MAY 2024
SIXTH SUNDAY of EASTER

TIMES OF MASS & MASS INTENTIONS

Sat 4th	Vigil of Sixth Sunday of Easter	6.30pm H	Pam & John Woods (R.I.P)
Sun 5th	Sixth Sunday of Easter	10.00am H 11.30am OH	Pro Populo Joseph Dao and Maria Hue (R.I.P)
Mon 6th	Easter Feria	No Mass	—————
Tues 7th	Easter Feria	10am OH	Celebrant's Intention
Wed 8th	Easter Feria	No Mass	—————
Thurs 9th	Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord	9am SCH 12noon OH 7.30pm H	Pro Populo Rani Jose (R.I.P)
Fri 10th	Easter Feria	12noon H	John Conlan (Int)
Sat 11th	Easter Feria Vigil of Seventh Sunday of Easter	10.00am H 6.30pm H	Pro Populo James & Carl McAleenan (R.I.P)
Sun 12th	Seventh Sunday of Easter	10.00am H 11.30am OH	Joe Lowes (R.I.P) Winifred Andrews (R.I.P)

MASS INTENTIONS to Father Stefan please

Masses marked H will be at Halesowen, OH will be at Old Hill

Confessions

There will be an opportunity for Confessions at Halesowen from 10.30 am (After Saturday 10am Mass) until 11am. The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed during confessions.

Confessions are also available by appointment.

Ascension Thursday

This Thursday 9th May is the solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord and is a **Holyday of Obligation**. Masses will be at 9am at the School, 12 noon at Old Hill and 7.30pm at Halesowen.

Second Collections

On the weekend of the 12th May, there will be a second collection for Catholic Communications.

On the weekend of the 19th May there will be a second collection for parish maintenance fund (H) and Parish Debt (OH).

Lately Dead

Please keep in your prayers Damian Joseph "Joe" Lowes. *May he rest in peace.*
Joe's Funeral will take place on Friday 24th May at 11.30am at St Chad's Cathedral followed by a private family cremation at Rowley Regis.

MAY Anniversaries

Remember in your prayers those deceased members of our parish:

Hugh Kenneth Williams, Margaret Clarke, Edward Gill, James Ryan, Ivy Williams, Kenneth Short, Yvonne Lindsey, Jim Dempster, Jim Price, Bridie McAndrew, Lyn Welch, Michael Hubbard, George Clifford Barr, Peggy Harris, Leslie James, Winifred Price and Nicole Jeanne Odile Hazlewood and John Sheils (!st Anniv) *May they rest in peace.*

Fr Stefan

This weekend we are reminded that Jesus calls us his friends, a relationship that we cannot take for granted. Let us ask the Lord to strengthen us especially with our relationships to one another, as the Lord often reminds us if we need to make peace with our neighbour, we need to do it before we come before the sacred liturgy!

There will be no Mass on Wednesday as I need to attend a meeting of the Johnson Fund, as our usually Deanery representative is unavailable.

Diocesan Day Pilgrimage to Walsingham – 11th May

The coach from Stourbridge to Walsingham is now full and they are taking a wait list. If you have booked and are for any reason unable to go please do get in contact so that the place can be offered to someone else - 01384 395308 or olas.stourbridge@rcaob.org.uk.

More information about how important our Lady of Walsingham is to us and our country can be found at www.walsingham.org.uk

Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes 2024

This year's Pilgrimage to Lourdes takes place from 27th May to 1st June. Three members of the parish will be going on the Pilgrimage – Shelagh Ash, Anne Lloyd and John Conlan.

If anybody in the parish would like to have their petitions to Our Lady of Lourdes placed at the Grotto in the Sanctuary, can they please bring these to Church on the next three weekends and give them to either Shelagh, Anne or John who will ensure that they are placed in the Grotto during the Pilgrimage.

If you would like to have a lighted candle placed for your intentions in Lourdes, please give a donation to one of the three who will purchase a candle and place it in the Grotto.

Reflection for Ascension Thursday

Readings: Acts 1:1-11; Psalm 47; Ephesians 4:1-13; Mark 16:15-20

After giving his final instructions to his apostles, the risen Christ is taken from their sight – "taken up", "hidden by a cloud", "into heaven", "exalted" and "seated at God's right hand". The very multiplicity of the ways the sacred authors strive to describe the indescribable warns us that the way the mystery is too readily visualized – a rocket-like Jesus lifting off from a launching pad in the Holy Land, as the curtains come down on his earthly sojourn – is inadequate and fails to do justice to its rich content. The second reading already begins to spell out the early understanding of the Church, that will develop over time under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, of an event that is at once "historical and transcendent".

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Christ remains with us. Paradoxically, when Jesus takes his place beside the Father, his presence among us is perpetuated and confirmed. For by being glorified, Jesus' humanity is no longer subject to any created power (it is "high above every principality, power..." – including space and time. During the days of his earthly existence, he remained confined to a small corner of the earth, a brief span of thirty some years. But now, "he fills the universe in all its parts", so that Christians of all times and all places can enter into living contact with him. The Londoner finds "Christ walking on the waters, not of Genesareth, but of the Thames"

At the moment of his Resurrection Christ's body was glorified, and moved beyond human experience. But for the forty days God allowed the appearance of ordinary humanity to veil his glory, so that he can eat and drink familiarly with his disciples What for? To leave the disciples in no doubt that Christ is "truly risen"; that he is alive; that he is "always with them". Even now that he has been glorified. Even more than before.

Maturing in faith. Throughout those forty days, Jesus, now present now absent, was training his apostles to discover his presence even when their corporal senses would no longer help them do so, but only their faith. In fact, even when they "saw" him they had difficulty being sure it was he; they always had to "believe" as well. The "seeing" ceases with his ascension; now they must depend on faith alone. With his training, they became models and teachers for all those who would be "blessed" because they "would believe without seeing" (John 20:29). A necessity for us, for the Ascension is the irreversible entry of Jesus' humanity into divine glory, symbolized by the cloud –which hides him from our sight. From now on his glory veils his humanity. And therefore, the Christian must live in faith.

Christ is in heaven. Heaven, of course, is also a fundamental part of the message of the Ascension. That he has gone before us as our head is the foundation of the "great hope to which God has called us". But where is heaven? Saint John Paul II once said that heaven is not, as many people imagine, "a place in the clouds.". Certain representatives of the secular media, predictably, got in a tizzy, and would have had us believe that heaven had been abolished. Fortunately for all of us, it's still there. Of course, it's not a "place" peopled by a benign, bearded Grandfather on a throne in the clouds, surrounded by plump babies with wings and larger ones in their nighties blowing trumpets: an image that is not only difficult to place in the cosmos but also singularly unattractive to most of us.

Heaven is much more than a "place". It's a state of total happiness that transcends anything we are familiar with. Saint John Paul II described heaven as "the fullness of communion with God which awaits all those who have welcomed him into their lives and who have sincerely opened themselves to him. --

Divine revelation teaches us that heaven is neither an abstraction nor a physical place in the clouds, but a living and personal relationship of union with the Holy Trinity. Heaven is our definitive meeting with the Father which takes place in the Risen Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit". If we were to say that heaven is the most dizzying love affair with the most marvellous Person we will ever know, in its most exhilarating expression and with the certainty that it will go on for ever, or to say, with the Catechism, that it is "definitive, supreme happiness," we would still come up very short. Because "no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him" (1Corinthians 2:9).

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Pastoral Applications

With Jesus departure, the mission of the Church begins. The apostles are not to stand around looking up into the heavens; before his return in glory at the end of time, but "go into the whole world and proclaim the good news to all". Essential: because the Church is Christ's body through which alone he is present throughout the universe (Second Reading). In this work they, and we, were not left alone: "the Lord continued to work with them throughout...". And a new "power" is given to us.

The mystery of the Ascension is a celebration of the maturity of Christians in the faith. A faith that can believe "without seeing", or feeling, or touching... - such a Christian acts constantly in the firm conviction that Jesus is not "absent" but in fact is always with us (Matthew 28:20). And a faith that seeks the Lord where he is to be found: in and through his Church (with all her pimples!): guardian of his word, celebrant of his sacraments, home of his Spirit, stadium of his commandment of love.

Heaven is wherever Jesus is. If Jesus is on earth, heaven is to be found on earth too, even if veiled, without a doubt, and so far from its full realization to be difficult to compare. But the first intimations of the fullness of joy that heaven offers is already on offer here, to those who do seek him out, and remain in him by being where he is: wherever his Father's will is done.



Sixth Sunday of Easter

Entrance Antiphon

Proclaim a joyful sound and let it be heard;
proclaim to the ends of the earth:
The Lord has freed his people, alleluia.

Responsorial Psalm

Response: The Lord has shown his
salvation to the nations.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!
Jesus said: 'If anyone loves me he will
keep my word,
and my Father will love him,
and we shall come to him.' Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon

If you love me, keep my commandments,
says the Lord,
and I will ask the Father and he will send
you another Paraclete,
to abide with you for ever, alleluia.

Shelagh, Fr Stephen

Ascension of the Lord

Entrance Antiphon

Men of Galilee, why gaze in wonder at the
heavens?
This Jesus whom you saw ascending into
heaven will return as you saw him go,
alleluia.

Responsorial Psalm

Response: God goes up with shouts of joy;
the Lord goes up with trumpet blast.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!
Go, make disciples of all the nations.
I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.
Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon

Behold, I am with you always,
even to the end of the age, alleluia.

The Parishes operates in accordance with Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and the National and Archdioceses policies & procedures at all times. The Parish Safeguarding Representative for Our Lady and St Kenelm is Shelagh Ash. Shelagh can be contacted at: sg.olstkenelm.halesowen@rcaob.org.uk. The Parish Safeguarding Representative for Our Lady of Lourdes is Nadine Hancox. Alternatively, the Diocesan Safeguarding team can be contacted on 0121 230 6240/ safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk if you have any concern.