



**Parish of the Sacred Heart and Saint Margaret Mary, Aston**  
**Parish of St. Joseph's Nechells**

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Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham - Registered Charity No. 234216

**EASTER 5**

**10<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

**Dear Parishioners,**

I hope everything is going as well as possible as we continue the lockdown and that you have been able to enjoy some of the lovely weather we have been having this week. Sadly it is forecast to end on Sunday.

Here are some reflections which I you may find helpful.

Some people are of a naturally pessimistic disposition. They think that it is best to be ready for the worst so that whatever happens it won't be so bad. Others are of naturally optimistic disposition. We have got enough to worry about so don't let's worry about things we don't have to. I don't know which you are. There is nothing inherently wrong with either; it is just how we are. Sometimes we can confuse optimism with hope. The Christian faith gives us hope, a special joyful hope, whether we are naturally optimistic people or pessimistic people. It does this because He calls us and leads us where he has gone before, that along the way of the Cross, through disappointment, rejection and indeed death itself to resurrection and eternal life with God.

Fr. Jim McManus says this. "Sometimes I think we can allow the gift of joyful hope to remain inactive in our lives. If we had only ourselves to rely on it would be natural to be anxious and fearful about the future. But in the Mass we welcome Christ as our Saviour and we welcome one another as members of Christ's body. We are never all alone and we never have to rely on ourselves alone for our salvation. Christ alone is our Saviour and, even in all trials and uncertainties of our situation, we have his great victorious return in glory to look forward to. Neglect of this wonderful truth of our faith would rob us of great consolation in the present, especially when things are going wrong and when trouble mount up."

This is very apt for our present situation. We draw on our past experience of attending Mass regularly and look forward with a renewed eagerness to getting back to sharing with one another in that direct way that we do at Mass. Nevertheless there is still a sharing going on and perhaps some of us are becoming more aware of our belonging together in the mystical Body of Christ than we were.

In the Gospel this Sunday, Philip asks Jesus to "let us see the Father." Jesus replies "To have seen me is to have seen the Father" and goes on to say "whoever believes in me will perform the same works as I do myself, he will perform even greater works, because I am going to the Father". We take over the work of Jesus with a power even more remarkable than that which was visible in the ministry of Jesus when he was on earth.

I have been reading a book about Edith Stein (St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Patron saint of Europe). She was a very great philosopher from a Jewish family, but had renounced her faith early on and become an atheist. Her philosophical studies were opening her up to the possibility of God following her teacher, friend and mentor Adolf Reinach. Reinach was killed in the first World War and Edith went to see his wife Anna to give her her condolences and comfort her in her loss. Adolf and Anna had recently been baptised in the Lutheran Church. Instead of her comforting Anna, she experienced a calm demeanour and inner peace in Anna, in which Edith encountered the cross and the divine power that it bestows on those who carry it. "For the first time," she said, "I was seeing with my very eyes the church, born from its Redeemer's sufferings, triumphant over the sting of death. That was the moment my unbelief collapsed..." In this we can see the

extraordinary way the power of Christ can work through his disciples. Anna was soon to be received into the Catholic Church.

**The Kingdom Warriors** have started a skype Bible Study Group which meets on line on Mondays at 5.30 p.m. If you would like to join it, please contact Shirleyni on 07562754382.

I hope some of you will be able to participate in the Theology of the Body Conference which starts this evening at 5 pm and runs until 5 am on Monday. You can listen to whichever talks you want to during these times at no cost. Probably St. John Paul's greatest legacy to the Church is his Theology of the Body.

I pray that we may all be filled with joyful hope and power to witness to the cross and resurrection of Christ.

Fr. Stephen

Please pray for the souls of Bishop Leo McCartie, Fr. David Duggan, Mary McMurrough, Sheila O'Reilly and Mick O'Connor recently departed and for their relatives and friends .

**VE Day** Where possible Church bells will ring out tonight, Friday, at 7 pm

**EWTN** is broadcasting what it calls EWTN essentials which is a continuous devotional broadcast with the Mass every 2 hours. Get it on the free EWTN app.

**Please Pray for the sick;** Mary Levell, Peter McKernan, William Parish, Julie Gallagher, Anne Robinson, Maura Greene, Jimmy Armstrong, Pat Davis, Bernadette Harnett, Lisa Brean, Michael O'Connor, Andy Walsh, Michael Brennan, Alex McClure.

**CORONAVIRUS** For the Church's guidelines see the Conference of Bishops website <https://www.cbcew.org.uk> or go to [gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public)

**USEFUL WEBSITES** <https://www.mcnmedia.tv>

<https://www.wordonfire.org>

<https://www.stchadscathedral.org.uk/>

<https://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/>

<https://www.ewtn.com/radio/shows/called-to-communion>

<https://www.catholic.com/>

<https://www.walsingham.org.uk/>

**BECOMING A CATHOLIC** If you wish to become a Catholic, or know someone who wishes to become a Catholic, or perhaps are a Catholic but have little perception of what that means, please contact Fr. Stephen by phone, email or in person.

**DAILY EXPOSITION** and the English Prayer Time are suspended during the Corona virus pandemic. To check on any further details phone Sr. Meena on 0795 7342742.

**MARRIAGE MATTERS** ([www.twoinoneflesh.org.uk](http://www.twoinoneflesh.org.uk))

Fifth Sunday of Easter (Acts 6:1-7 1 Peter 2:4-9 John 14:1-12)

*I am in you and you are in me*

Jesus says, "To have seen me is to have seen the Father". In our married life, through the visible sign of the way we love each other, when people meet one of us we can be a sign that 'when seeing me, you see the one I love, in me and with me', thus emulating Jesus' relationship with His Father.