

# Holy Trinity Catholic Church

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Holy Trinity is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham Trust

**Sunday 17 March 2024 Fifth Sunday of Lent**  
**Readings: Year B**

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**Dear Parishioners please read the following letter from Archbishop Longley...**



**PASTORAL LETTER**  
**OF THE**  
**MOST REVEREND BERNARD LONGLEY**  
**ARCHBISHOP OF BIRMINGHAM**  
**FOR THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT, 16/17 MARCH 2024**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

*When I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all men to myself.*

Every Lent is a pilgrimage of faith when we try to come closer to the Lord through our prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Although we may be unable to travel on pilgrimage to the Holy Land, we can still make a journey of faith in our innermost heart. The story-telling of the Scriptures enables us to imagine ourselves accompanying Our Lord and through the power of the sacramental action during each Mass we are truly present with the Lord at his Last Supper and we witness his sacrifice on Calvary.

Today we begin the final two weeks of Lent and enter into Passiontide, when our thoughts turn more and more to the sacrifice Our Lord made on the Cross for our sake. At this stage on our journey through Lent we try to renew our efforts to be more prayerful, to make other people's wellbeing our priority and to be generous to those who are in need.

In our undertakings of prayer, fasting and almsgiving we are also imitating the Lord in his forty days in the desert. In prayer we come face-to-face with God, in fasting we confront the reality in our own lives and in almsgiving we see more clearly the needs of others – in these three ways we pray that we may continue to bear good fruit this Lent.

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Today's Gospel is a demonstration of the love of God that inspires and sustains us during Lent and that compels us to draw others into the presence of Christ. Today's reading from St John's Gospel tells us that a group of Greek people asked if they could see Jesus and immediately Philip and Andrew went to discuss this request with Our Lord himself. The apostles were moved by what they heard - *we should like to see Jesus* – and they were persuaded to take this request directly to Jesus for his response.

We notice that the apostles first listened to the Greek searchers who had been inspired by the Holy Spirit and then they acted. In this we can see a reflection of the Synodal Pathway that Pope Francis has called the Church to follow.

So that we may ourselves move from collaboration to co-responsibility in the same spirit I am asking every parish and deanery in our Archdiocese - through the parish priests and the deans - to establish pastoral councils. Whether in individual parishes, working closely with our schools, or groups of parishes working in clusters together, as well as in our deaneries, pastoral councils can focus and motivate the Body of Christ for mission, with the Diocesan Vision as our guide.

These future gatherings of clergy and lay faithful, assisted by the prayers and participation of our Religious and our school communities, will pray and reflect together about the local mission of the Church. They will act as consultative bodies, informing and guiding the decisions that need to be taken as we look to the future.

Thus they will help us prepare for a closer working together of neighbouring parishes, with the likelihood of fewer clergy, the possible merger of parishes and the likely need to close some of our churches in the years ahead. Through our baptism we all have a share in the Priesthood of Christ and that invests in all of us a responsibility for the future of the Church.

Where deanery pastoral councils do not already exist I am now asking that they should be created. Over the coming weeks further guidelines will be provided to enable these pastoral councils to be established in the coming months - with due respect for the particular nature, the pastoral priorities and the achievements of the parishes and deaneries they will serve. Whatever the context, our shared goal is to see the Diocesan Vision become a reality.

I would also like to thank those parishes and deaneries where pastoral councils, or their equivalent, have already been established or where they have been active and

fruitful for many years. Their experience and example can act as a welcome encouragement to others.

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In his response to Philip and Andrew Our Lord is conscious of his mission to reach out to all people with the Good News - he is also conscious of the sacrifice of love that he must make for them. *When I am lifted up, I shall draw all men to myself.* In a few days' time we shall once again remember the shadows of Calvary and the sign of the Cross which is Jesus' triumph over sin and death. Like Philip and Andrew, we need to help others to see the Cross of Christ as the sign of God's love for them.

This Lent we should look about us and recognise the ways that active and sacrificial Christian love is already at work in our parish communities. Then we can try to make our own contribution to this treasury of love – to be the Philips and Andrews, the Marthas and Marys of today, drawing close to the Lord ourselves and bringing others with us.

This weekend we also ask for the intercession of St Patrick - the patron saint of Ireland and of Nigeria – and I offer my thanks for the longstanding work and witness of clergy, Religious, families and individuals from Ireland, and more recently from Nigeria, in so many of the parishes and chaplaincies of the Archdiocese.

May Christ our Saviour guide us as we seek to do his will – and may he sustain us throughout the coming days of Passiontide and Holy Week until we come to celebrate together the joy of Easter.

Yours devotedly in Christ

+ *Bernard Longley*

✠Bernard Longley  
Archbishop of Birmingham

Given at Birmingham on the 9 March 2024 and appointed to be read in all Churches and Chapels of the Archdiocese on the Fifth Sunday of Lent (16/17 March 2024)



**Parish Notices – Masses Holy Trinity – 9:15am.** Monday, and Thursday. (Tuesday No Mass Fr Clive away on diocesan course – no Stations of the Cross Thursday)

**Please note the Holy Week times. Why not "do Holy Week" this year?**

**Palm Sunday 24 March:** 9.15 am St Teresa's and 11 am Holy Trinity ...both with a Procession.

**Monday/Tuesday 25/26 March:** 9.15 am Holy Trinity (note: Tuesday is a school Mass).

**Tuesday 26 March:** 7 pm Service of Reconciliation (Confessions) Holy Trinity.

**Wednesday 27 March: Chrism Mass in St Chad's Cathedral. No Masses in either parish.**

**Thursday 28 March:** 7 pm Mass of the Lord's Supper, Holy Trinity.

**Friday 29 March:** 10 am Stations of the Cross and 3 pm The Passion...both Holy Trinity.

**Saturday 30 March:** 8 pm The Easter Vigil Holy Trinity.

**Sunday 31 March:** 11 am Easter Sunday

**Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for March 2024: For the New Martyrs.** For those around the world who risk their lives for the gospel, to inspire the Church with their courage and missionary zeal.

**Please continue to pray for our sick, housebound and frail parishioners of both our Parishes:** Carol Wilson, Tom Cantwell, Bridget Kennelly, Audrey Nellis, Richard O'Farrell, Mary Ward, Paula Biggs, Lynette Murphy, Betty, Ania.

**In addition to your own daily prayers please remember:** All those who mourn the loss of loved ones: The repose of the souls of those who have died: People whose anniversaries occur at this time: The people of the Middle East, Morocco, Ukraine, Turkey and Syria.

**The Parish operates in accordance with Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and the National and Archdiocese policies and procedures at all times.** Our Parish Safeguarding Representative is **Tammy Lawson**. Alternatively the Diocesan Safeguarding Team can be contacted on 0121 230 6240 or at [safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk) if you have any concerns.

**NEXT WEEK in Holy Trinity:**

**Monday 18 March Mass at 9:15am Saint Patrick: Saint Cyril of Jerusalem**

**Tuesday 19 March Saint Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

**Wednesday 20 March Thursday 21 March Mass 9:15am**

**Friday 22 March Prayer for Peace 9:15am**

**Saturday 23 March 6pm Vigil Mass**

**Sunday 24 March Mass 11am Fifth Sunday of Lent**

ALL WELCOME

**Weekday Masses in our sister parish St Teresa's Charlbury 9.15am on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday.**