



OUR LADY & ST. BENEDICT'S CHURCH NEWSLETTER

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The Parish is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham.

Registered Charity No. 234216

"Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." John 8:1-11 Psalter Week 4

Fifth Sunday in Lent, 5th – 6th April.

Holy Father's Prayer Intention for April. For the use of the new technologies. Let us pray that the use of the new technologies will not replace human relationships, will respect the dignity of the person, and will help us face the crises of our times.

Sat 5 th April	Vigil for the Fifth Sunday in Lent	5.30 pm Mass: Divine Healing on Maureen and Michael Walsh Peggy Lennon
Sun 6 th April	Fifth Sunday in Lent Children's Liturgy	10.00 am Mass: Divine Healing on Katie Higgins and Charlotte Higgins Coffee Morning
Mon 7 th April	Lent Feria	9.30 am Mass
Tues 8 th April	Lent Feria	9.30 am Mass
Wed 9 th April	Lent Feria	6.30 pm Stations of the Cross 7.00 pm Mass
Thurs 10 th April	Lent Feria	No Mass
Fri 11 th April	Lent Feria	10.30: Lenten Study Group 6.30 pm Stations of the Cross and Easter Reconciliation.
Sat 12 th April	Vigil for Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord	5.30 pm Mass:
Sun 13 th April	Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord Day of Prayer for Candidates for the Sacraments.	10.00 am Mass:

Our Lady and St. Benedict's. Holy Week and Easter Services

Friday, 11th April, 6.30 pm Stations of the Cross and Service of Reconciliation. Anyone wanting to do their Easter duty by going to confession, we will have a visiting priest to offer confessions after our usual Friday Stations.

Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th April. Palm Sunday and Passion of the Lord Blessing of Palms

Wednesday, 16th April Ecumenical Stations of the Cross 7.00 pm

Thursday 17th April, Maundy Thursday: Mass of the Lord's Supper 6.30 pm

Friday 18th April Good Friday: Prayers at Market Cross and Walk of Witness in Henley 10.00 am*

Celebration of the Passion of the lord. 3.00 pm

Station of the Cross 7.00 pm

Saturday 19th April Holy Saturday: Easter Vigil Mass, Blessing of the Fire and Holy Water 7.30 pm

Sunday 20th April Mass of the Resurrection of the Lord 08.30 am and 10.00 am.

All are welcome to come and share these services. All our services will be at Our Lady and St Benedict Church, Alcester Road B95 6BQ.

Readings for the Fifth Sunday in Lent: As we get Closer to Holy Week and Easter, our Readings this week invite us to reflect on God's promises, our journey in faith, and the call to forgiveness and change. We are encouraged to focus on new beginnings and God's mercy. In the first reading, God tells His people that He will do something new for them. This shows us that God offers a fresh start, no matter what mistakes we have made in the past. We are encouraged to forget past failures and look forward with hope.

In Philippians, Paul emphasizes the importance of making Christ the center of our lives. He urges us to press on toward our spiritual goals, always striving to grow closer to Jesus. This teaches us to keep moving forward, even when the journey is difficult.

The Gospel highlights God's mercy with the story of the woman caught in adultery. Jesus forgives her, showing that God is always ready to forgive us, too. He reminds her not to sin again, offering freedom from sin's burden. This Gospel reading teaches us not to judge others, as we are all in need of God's forgiveness.

Archbishop Bernard's Pastoral Letter This weekend: Terminally ill Adults (End of Life Bill)



Church Cleaning Easter Deep Clean 10.00 am 12th April, The Cleaning team are having a big push on the 12th of April to get the church sparkling for Easter. Please come along if you can help; any assistance would be appreciated.

Parish Coffee Morning: Thanks to some kind volunteers, we will be having regular coffee mornings on the first Sunday of each month. In term time, this will be the same Sunday as children's liturgy. Please do come along, and more help is always welcome both for the coffee mornings and children's liturgy.

Prayer Intentions: We pray that our Holy Father Pope Francis makes a full recovery from his illness. We pray for all on our parish sick list and those who care for them,

Let us pray for those who have died, for our parish anniversaries, Michael Sargeant, Leo Berry, Mayou McCall, Leo Taylor, and William Coulson; may they be held in the light of God's love. We pray for those who are suffering from the loss of a loved one; may they be comforted by the loving presence of Christ.

Our Lady and St. Benedict's Parish, Easter Lilies: If you would like to donate to the floral displays in our Church at Easter in memory of a loved one or as a celebration, please complete the form/ envelopes in church. All those to be remembered will be placed on a Prayer Board. Donations can be made by Cash, Cheque or BACS. Please mark your payment 'Easter Lilies and drop your envelope in the flower box by Palm Sunday. For more information, please get in touch with Lesley on WhatsApp at +44 7912 623990 or email, lesleyeharvey@yahoo.co.uk. Please return your envelope by Palm Sunday.

Parish Easter Raffle. We have at least two Easter Hampers of chocolate goodies to raffle to raise badly needed funds to support the church. ***The tickets will go on sale this weekend @ £2.00 a strip or 3 strips for £5.00. Please remember your change to support this fundraising effort.*** We are still collecting donations for the Easter Raffle. Any chocolate or Easter-related items would be very much appreciated. Please leave any Donations in the Sacristy with Fr Damian or contact Louise.

Lent 2025: In this Jubilee year, this is a chance to review your spiritual life. Maybe picking up again something you have lapsed from or taking on a new form of worship? It is not all about "giving up" something.

We will have Stations of the Cross and Mass on Wednesday and Friday evenings. There will be morning Masses on Monday and Tuesday during Lent. **If Anyone wants Confessions during Lent, please ask Fr. Damian.**

Parish Reconciliation Service 12th of April. Parishioners are invited to make use of the opportunity to come to Sacramental Confession to prepare for Easter at our church. One of the priests from the deanery has offered to come and hear confessions.

"Walk with Me" booklets and calendars are now available in the church.

Parish Lenten Study Group. The Group meets on Fridays in the parish rooms. **"Journeying Lent with the Psalms"** All are welcome.

CAFOD's online Lent Prayer Calendar 2025: Their daily Lent emails of prayer and reflection will offer an opportunity to pause, reflect, pray and take action through Lent. <https://cafod.org.uk/pray/lent-calendar>

100 Club March Draw: Congratulations to our winners from the past draw made last Saturday. Helen Linfoot No 10 won £120, Nora Larkin No 37 won £80 and the third prize of £40 was won by no 50, Mary Mayo. We still have some numbers left. It is not too late to sign up! There are "sign-up envelopes" at the back of the church for new subscribers. For BACS payments, please get in touch with Mary Mayo at pt.olasb.woottonwawen@rcaob.org.uk. You can contact me for any queries at netandsteve@gmail.com. Many thanks. Annette.

Stratford Food Bank: This month's most needed items are Coffee, Hand Wash, Instant Mas, Shaving Foam, Tinned meat meals, UHT Milk, UHT Fruit Juice, washing up liquid, or any other items you can spare. Please drop off any donations in the box at the back of the church.

Archdiocese of Birmingham Vision: *"Our Vision is to be a Catholic Diocese which is faithful to the mission entrusted to us by Jesus Christ, full of missionary disciples who work together co-responsibly in vibrant communities of faith, joyful in their service of God and neighbour."*

The Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage Saturday 24 – Friday 30 May 2025. Lourdes Pilgrimage Booking is now open for this year's Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage. You are most welcome to join in this Jubilee Year as we journey to Lourdes in May. The pilgrimage runs from Saturday 24 - Friday 30 May 2025 with the theme: "With Mary, Pilgrims of Hope". If you would like to travel to Lourdes but need assistance, help is available. You will participate fully in the pilgrimage and experience the love of God through the care, love and friendship of volunteers. Please contact the Lourdes Pilgrimage Office to discuss assistance requirements: 0121 230 6288 / admin.lourdes@rcaob.org.uk Find out more here:

<https://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/lourdes-pilgrimage>

Follow the Readings at Mass: www.universalis.com/mass. or www.alivepublishing.co.uk.

Deanery Website: <https://banburyandwarwick-catholicdeanery.org.uk/>

For all the Archdiocese news, please go to Birmingham Archdiocese Link: www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk

Safeguarding Information from The Archdiocese Office: Our Lady and St. Benedict's parish always operates following Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and the National and Archdiocesan policies & procedures. Our Parish Safeguarding Representative is Catherine Treacy. She can be contacted at: sg.olasb.woottonwawen@rcaob.org.uk or the Diocesan Safeguarding team can be contacted at 0121 230 6240 safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk if you have any concerns.

Parish AGM Chairperson's report.

2024 was a significant year for Our Lady and St Benedict as it saw the complete repair of the cemetery wall. This followed several months of road closure with traffic management but once started, the work was finished quickly and to a high standard ensuring its future safety. The parish has weathered local criticism of the disruption to traffic and the response to the finished wall is positive.

The work was overseen by the Diocese but the debt is in the parish name. We have signed an agreement to this effect with the Diocese and although the expectation is that the parish will make some effort towards paying off the debt, the day to day running of the parish takes precedence in terms of fundraising.

The Diocese is conducting a comprehensive review of all parishes and their assets and will give feedback in due course. This is relevant to Our Lady and St Benedict regarding the future status of the paddock.

Looking forward the parish falls in the newly formed Stratford Cluster, now renamed Mission which is part of the wider Deanery Pastoral Council. We are involved in regular local meetings with our fellow Mission churches from Stratford, Kinton, Brailes and Shipston as well as those of the Deanery Pastoral Council. Discussions are at an early stage focussing on what parishes currently do and how we might better work together as more priests retire and parishes will inevitably have to share priests. The last meeting saw a request for more guidance from the Diocese and greater liturgical involvement of the laity as examples of the wide ranging discussions.

As regards our own parish, the successful Episcopal visit from Canon Paul Fitzpatrick in June 2024 reflected the present strength of our parish. We must continue to build our community and to work together as we face the challenges ahead.

Ending on a joyful note, we had a wonderful celebration of Fr Damian's Silver Jubilee in August last year. We were blessed with the weather and just over 100 parishioners and friends of Fr Damian enjoyed a long lunch in the sunshine following a concelebrated mass led by the Bishop with music from our parish and Fr Damian's Nigerian friends. It was a fitting tribute to Fr Damian and a reflection of the affection and regard the parish have for him.

Thank you to everyone who in any way has supported the parish in the previous year- your support has been invaluable and we appreciate it. Special thanks to John for his support in Father's absence and to Lesley and Margaret who have recently stepped down from the committee- the impact you have had on our parish has made it a better place to be, thank you!

In our last meeting it was decided to hold a thanksgiving Mass on a feast day associated with volunteering and I think the 28th September would be perfect as the feast of St Vincent De Paul is 27th. We will be celebrating volunteers past and present and would especially like the afore mentioned parishioners to keep the date free!!