



The Newman Cluster

Parish Priest: Rev. Fr Simon Ellis

Parish Office for the Cluster

Email: christ-theking.bham@rcaob.org.uk

Tel: 0121 373 0988

Opening Hours: Mon-Fri 8.30am- 4pm

The Newman Cluster is a growing into a united Catholic community comprising the following places of worship

Christ the King ("CTK")
124 Warren Farm Road
Kingstanding
B44 0QN

Our Lady of the Assumption ("OLAM")
82 Old Oscott
Maryvale
B44 9SP

St Margaret Mary ("SMM")
59 Perry Common Road
Perry Common
B23 7AB

Other Clergy in the Cluster

Assistant Priest: Fr Leonard Cox fr.leonard.cox@rcaob.org.uk

Also in the Parish: Fr. Jude Mbonu fr.jude.mbonu@rcaob.org.uk

Parish Deacons: Rev. Mr. Gary O'Brien dcn.gary.obrien@rcaob.org.uk
and Rev. Mr. Dominic Fahey dcn.dominic.fahey@rcaob.org.uk

Convent of the Sisters Minor of St Francis
192 Hawthorn Road Kingstanding B44 8PU
Phone +44 121 3500 716

Email: smsfbirmingham@gmail.com

Welcome to Mass on the Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Today's Liturgy of the Word

First Reading: *Isaiah 58:6-10 Your light shall break forth like the dawn.*

Responsorial Psalm 112 (111) 4-9: A light rises in the darkness for the upright.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 2: 1-15 *I proclaimed to you the mystery of Christ crucified.*

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia! Alleluia! I am the light of the world, says the Lord; whoever follows me will have the light of life. Alleluia!

Gospel: Matthew 5: 13-16 *You are the light of the world.*

LITURGIES AND EVENTS THIS WEEK: Con: Convent; CTK: Christ the King; OLAM: Maryvale; SMM: St Margaret Mary's; MPS Maryvale Primary School.

Sat 07/02/26	Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Vigil Masses)	12.00 CTK	Recitation of the Rosary
		12.30 CTK	John Mitchell (Anniv.)
		15.00 OLAM	Merger Consultation Meeting at Maryvale Community Centre, Old Oscott Hill B44.9SP.
		15.00 SMM	Wedding: Gemma Murphy & Samuel Jefferson
		18.00 OLAM	Kitty Heaney (Anniv.)
Sun 08/02/26	Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time	09:30 CTK	Edward Ranahan (RIP)
		11:15 SMM	Barbara King
		12.30 SMM	Baptism of Amelia-Rose Faith Wylde
Mon 09/02/26	Feria in Ordinary Time	07:30 SMM	Private Intention Muriel Cowan (RIP)
		08.00 Con.	Luke Byrne (RIP)
		19.00 SMM	Finance Committee Meeting (for SMM only)
Tue 10/02/26	Saint Scholastica, Virgin Memorial	09.30 MPS	John Roche & Family (RIP)
		16.00 CTK	Deacon Gary's Catechism Class
		19.00 SMM	Cluster Youth Club (11-18s): Movie Night
		19.30 CTK	Parish Pastoral Council (CTK/OLAM only)
Wed 11/02/26	Our Lady of Lourdes, Memorial	08:00 Con.	Fr Noel Breslin (RIP)
		08.15 SMM	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
		09.15 SMM	Celebrants Intention
		17.30 SMM	Sycamore: The Power of Prayer
Thu 12/02/26	Feria in Ordinary Time	17.00 OLAM	Reception of Margaret Costello's Body into Church
Fri 13/02/26	Feria in Ordinary Time	09.00 CTK	Anthony Reilly – On His Ordination
		11.30 OLAM	Requiem Mass for Margaret Costello
Sat 14/02/2026	Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Vigil Masses)	12.30 CTK	Jozef Gniadkowski (Anni)
		18.00 OLAM	Kath Reid
Sun 15/02/2026	Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time	09.30 CTK	Joe McKewan (RIP)
		11.15 SMM	Liam Curren (RIP)

Congratulations: We send congratulations to and offer prayers for Fr. Leonard and his wife Janice who celebrate their 60th Wedding Anniversary this week.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL AND FORMATION FOR CATHOLIC LIFE

The Sacrament of Reconciliation: A priest will be available to hear Confessions from 11.45 am on Saturdays (CTK) 5.15 pm on Saturdays (OLAM), 08.45 am on Sundays (CTK) and Wednesdays 08.15 (SMM) or by prior appointment

Please Pray: for Bishop Richard Moth who will be installed as Archbishop of Westminster on 14th February

Sanctuary Lamp Dedication throughout February at OLAM is dedicated to the Butler & Maxwell Families, there is still availability for February at CTk.

Pray For The Sick: Jean McCabe, Paul Cowan, Gerald, John, Josephine Brown, John/Sandra Mageean, Sadie Pulido, Sarah McCallion, Claire/Mark, Carole Smith, Niamh O'Reilly, Jo Teece, Mary Ann Gniadkowski, Alberto Bolongaro, Kyle Billing, Nicola Jones, Patricia Nash, Joanne Fields, Caitlin Hodgetts, Joan/Alan Horton, Peggy O'Donovan, Pauline O'Brien, Elizabeth Teague, Christine Stephens, Margaret Coogan, Sadie Kennelly, Michael Deane, Peter Hadland, Margaret Head and Anne Cunningham.

RIP: Please pray for Margaret Cookson, Margaret Costello (Peggy), Julie Geraldene Fleming, David Fitzsimmons Janette Hainsley and Christopher Murray who died recently and for Alan Collins, Joseph Thomas, Dave Edgington, Jamie Arrowsmith, Jazdia Zarzycka, Averil Cozens, John Driver, Catherine Ivy Byrne, Dom Kevin Taggart OSB, Joyce Holloway, Fr. Simon Hall, Christopher Calland, Eddie Walsh, Jennifer Harrison, Grazyna Grunau, Brenda Jones, Hughie Patricik Underwood, Val Lennon, Danny McCrossan, Peggy Jackman, John Murtagh, Michael Patrick O'Donoghue, Anthony Crear; Ruth Black, Michael Coffey, Fr. Osmond Abbott, Esther Hill, Margaret Greenleaf, Nola Murray, Linda Cookson, David Fitzsimons, Takii Mariam and Christopher Diggle.

Forthcoming Funerals: **Margaret Cookson; Funeral 11th February 12.00 at CTk. Margaret Mary Costello:** Margaret will be received into church on **12th February at 5pm.** Margaret's Funeral Service will be celebrated on **13th February at OLAM. Julie Geraldene Fleming:** Funeral will be celebrated on **16th February 11.30am at SMM. David Fitzsimons:** Service of Life will be celebrated on **24th February at CTk. Christopher Murray:** Christopher will be received into church on **4th March at 5pm** Christopher's Funeral service will be celebrated on **5th March at 11am CTk,** and **Janette Margaret Hinsley: Funeral will be celebrated on 9th March at 11.15am SMM.** May the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace!

Mass Intentions: We will do our best to respect specific dates and requests for places of worship, but we cannot absolutely guarantee it. In particular, we cannot necessarily ensure that a weekend Sunday Mass will be available. Please continue to put your envelope and stipend into the parish office so that we can keep a record of all Masses requested, **please also make sure to add a contact number to your intention.** There will need to be a discussion at the next Parish Pastoral Council meeting about the best long-term solution in the circumstances.

Reorganisation of our ministry of Holy Communion to the sick and housebound: we will need to integrate this absolutely vital ministry across the Cluster, and this will inevitably require new Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EMHC) to be commissioned. We know that there many people either at home or in care homes whom we need to visit. **Please pray about this. Is God calling you to this ministry?** . All existing and any potential new Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are requested to attend a meeting **on Wednesday 11th February 2026 at 7.30 pm** in the Guild Room to address the following: reminder of the nature of the Ministry both in Mass and outside Mass; what the Church expects of Ministers from the *moment they receive the Sacrament to take out to the sick and house bound; discussion about current practice with a view to establish a single best practice throughout the Cluster; allocation of responsibilities.* Please make every effort to attend this. The experience of existing Extraordinary Ministers will be a valuable contribution to the meeting. All Extraordinary Ministers (current and new) will be commissioned afresh on Holy Thursday at the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper (**Thursday, 2nd April**).

Baptism: There is a baptism meeting on 14/02/2026 in CTk Church at 10.30am for all that have expressed a wish for baptism. Please contact the parish office for a baptism application form. Please return the completed form before attending the meeting.

Reorganisation of the preparation of our parish children for First Holy Communion and Confirmation: We need to start getting information to the parents of children preparing for First Holy Communion and Confirmation. However, before we can do any of that we need to review how this important subject has been dealt with over the past two years, make changes where necessary and establish a best practice across the Cluster. To that end, fr. Simon is inviting all interested parties to a day on evangelisation, initiation and the sacraments which the Newman Cluster of parishes (Christ the King, Our Lady of the Assumption & St Margaret Mary) will be having on **Saturday, 21 February in the Newman Gallery at SMM beginning at 10 am aiming to finish at 2 pm.** The guest speaker will be Fr Sean Gough who is the parish priest at the Divine Mercy Cluster of parishes at Chelmsley Wood. Fr Sean has produced some wonderful resources and, equally importantly, has done some critical thinking around initiation, catechesis and evangelisation. To let Fr. Simon know you are coming, please email him on: fr.simon.ellis@rcaob.org.uk.

Sacrament of Holy Communion & Confirmation 2026: A third and final enrolment date of Sunday 22/02/2026 9.30am has been arranged. Please contact the parish office on 0121 3730988 or christ-theking.bham@rcaob.org.uk to confirm your attendance. Please hand in a completed enrolment form to the parish office before the enrolment date. In preparation for this enrolment, parents are asked, please, to complete and application form from the parish office which is open from 08.30 am to 3 pm Monday to Friday. Telephone and email details are given on p.1. of this Newsletter.

PARISH, COMMUNITY, DEANERY AND DIOCESAN NOTICES

Christ the King/OLAM



St Margaret Mary / POLW



Mass attendance for last weekend
CTK/OLAM -458 (CTK 393 – and OLAM –65).

SMM: TBC

Dona average per week (CTK

Last Week's Collection CTK

Loose: £428.41
Envelopes: £96.10
S/C £171.31
Total: £695.82

Last Week's Collection SMM

Loose: £223.63
Envelopes £101.00
S/C £72.29
New Building Fund: £44.23
Total £441.15

Last Week's Collection OLAM

Loose: £105.08
Envelopes: £176.50
S/C £73.58
Total: £355.16

Fr. Simon writes: This week, on Wednesday 11th February, Our Lady of Lourdes, we also appropriately keep World Day of Prayer for the Sick. The Holy See has issued the Holy Father's message for the day which can be found at: [Pope's World Day of Sick message: Love by bearing another's pain - Vatican News](#). It is also a good moment to share with you the date for the Archdiocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes which is 25th – 30th May 2026. If you are interested in going, please go to: [The Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes 2026: Join us as a Pilgrim or Volunteer | Birmingham Diocesan Trust](#). We welcome Fr. Jude Mbonu to the Newman Cluster and assure him of our prayers as he settles in to living in the Presbytery. His work at Newman University will, of course, continue (full-time), so please remember not to bombard him with work and please, with all the activity in the Cluster, book all requests involving Fr. Jude as you would any other request, through the Cluster Office.

Half-Day of Recollection at the Convent of the Sisters Minor of St. Francis: The Sisters invite you to join them for prayer, worship, bible study and cake over tea on 21st February at the Convent beginning at 3 pm.

Urgent Appeal for Volunteers: We need new volunteers to take charge of the PowerPoint and projection at the 11.15 Mass at SMM. Our thanks go to Christian and Yvonne who previously did this for us and who have relocated out of the Cluster. **We are also in urgent need of volunteers to help maintain CTK church and grounds.** If you could spare any amount of time, please let Claire know in the Presbytery office, all help is greatly received and appreciated.

Sycamore Course: The Sycamore Course offers an opportunity to get to know our faith better and to reflect on it. Sessions take place in the Newman Gallery at SMM You reach the Newman Gallery via the Church. **Parents of children preparing for First Holy Communion and Confirmation are especially encouraged to attend.**

Cluster Youth Group: The Cluster Youth Group meets in the Newman Gallery at SMM on Tuesdays. Forthcoming dates and topics are: 24/02 (Police Visit); 27/02-01/03 (Called to Serve Altar Servers' Retreat at Alton Castle); 10/03 (Art Night); 24/03 (Easter Biscuit making night).

Vacancy at St. Thomas and Edmund of Canterbury, Erdington Abbey: The Abbey is looking for a new Receptionist and Office Assistant. The salary will be £13.75 per hour. It is a permanent part time post seeking 8 hours per week, Those interested must send a CV and supporting statement to Fr. Kieran (fr.kieran.brady@rcaob.org.uk) by **5th February 2026**. Shortlisting will take place on 5th and 6th February 2026. Interviews will take place in the 2nd week of February. Full job description is on the poster at the back of each Church.

40 days for Life: This is a focussed period of prayer which officially begins on Ash Wednesday (18th February) and ends on Palm Sunday (29th March). The Launch Event in this Diocese will take place on Sunday 15th February 2026 at 2 pm at St. Joseph and St. Helen's Church Hall, 84 Northfield Road, King's Norton, Birmingham B30 1JG. It is an all-age event entitled: "A New Generation Rising to Defend Life". Young pro-lifers will share their reasons for being involved in this project. No booking is necessary. Contact Isabel on 07773 501721 or izzyvs@gmail.com for more information or to get involved.

Fr. Hudson's Race Night: There will be a fundraising Race Night at Coleshill Town Hall on 10th March 2026 in aid of Fr. Hudson's projects: 7pm to 10.30 pm (First Race 7.15 pm). The entry cost is £20 to include a fish and chip supper.

Preparation for Ash Wednesday: Please bring into the Parish Office or hand in after Sunday Mass any Palm Crosses you have at home that you are willing to let Fr. Simon burn in order to create the Ashes for Ash Wednesday.

Parish Office Extended Opening Time: The parish will now be open Monday- Friday 8.30am – 4pm.

The Parish operates in accordance with Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and National and Archdiocesan policies and procedures at all times. Our Parish Safeguarding Representatives in the Cluster are Caroline Gorman (CTK), Angela Hooker (OLAM) and Renata Olkowska (SMM). To report concerns or issues email Caroline on sg.christ-theking.bham@rcaob.org.uk; Angela on sg.ol-assumption.bham@rcaob.org.uk and Renata on sg.margaret.mary.bham@rcaob.org.uk Alternatively concerns or issues can be reported to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team on **0121 230 6240** or safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk

MERGER NEWS NO. 4

Merger Consultation – Next Meeting: There will be a meeting in the Maryvale Community Centre, Old Oscott Hill B44 9SP on **Saturday 7th February 2026 at 3 pm** to consider issues raised in the September consultation specifically about that area of the Cluster. Anybody in the Cluster is welcome to attend whether they worship regularly at OLAM or not. The meeting will be chaired by Graham Green (Vice-Chair of the Parish Pastoral Council). Jackie Scott (the Chair of the Merger Advisory Group) will be present and address the meeting. Deacon Gary will also address the meeting. Wendy Gasson will take minutes.

Quick Recap

- The September Consultation across CTK and OLAM received 375 replies and numerous comments by way of feedback. Of those replies two thirds came from CTK and one third from OLAM. What was then the 10.00 Sunday morning Mass at CTK accounted for 50% of all the replies just on its own.
- With varying degrees of enthusiasm, it seems now to be generally accepted that there must be a merger by fusing the two parishes of CTK and OLAM so that resources, human and otherwise, can be shared to everybody's benefit.
- When CTK and OLAM are fused into one parish, the new parish must have a new name. "Parish" here does NOT mean the building in which we worship but the community that comes together to worship in whatever buildings we have. A new name marks a fresh start in that community's mission to live out and spread the Gospel. The new name does not require the schools to change their name. The buildings which serve as our places of worship will not be changing their name either.
- The Parish Council, following a suggestion from the Merger Advisory Group, agreed that two names be put forward to you for consideration. Those names were: (1) St. John Henry Newman and the Sacred Heart and (2) Blessed Dominic Barberi. "Saint John Henry Newman and Sacred Heart" was overwhelmingly more popular but there were a number of comments indicating that the choice was too narrow and that whilst St John Henry Newman and the Sacred Heart captured the rich history of Maryvale, other parishes with similar names were close by and it was, being frank, a bit of a mouthful. The Merger Advisory Group recognises that we need a second look at that aspect of the merger.
- The other major matter in the September consultation was the question of the future of the current OLAM Church. The issue there is: can the building be repurposed or should we move down the hill to use the Sacred Heart Chapel at the Maryvale Institute or find some other place of worship. Since September, work has been going on behind the scenes to examine a proposal from Cardinal Wiseman school that they buy the building from the Parish and convert it into a 6th Form Centre with the parish using what would then be a school chapel for Mass at weekends.

Where are we now?

- Amongst the various issues considered in the Merger Document (on the websites) was that of Mass times. We no longer need to consult on that because the new schedule has been fixed following Fr. Thé's departure for Taiwan.
- There will be a second consultation specifically about new parish name on 7th/8th March. There will be a list of names at all three of our places of worship for which you can vote. The aim is to draw up a short list of 3-5 names which we can submit to Archbishop Bernard. He has the ultimate decision. Parish names have to have "a sacred designation", i.e. a saint's name. Names referring to Council Wards or postcodes are not allowed (Rome's rules).
- After careful investigation, the Cardinal Wiseman proposal is not feasible. This will be a disappointment to many but unfortunately it is a no go.

What will be discussed on Saturday 7th February?

- There will be a fuller explanation of why the Cardinal Wiseman proposal cannot happen and what other options there are for providing an appropriate place of worship on the Maryvale side of the parish.
- In view of some of the comments on the feedback, the way Diocesan Finances work, who is responsible for building repairs and what happens to the money if parish buildings are sold needs to be thoroughly explained.
- There is clearly also some concern about the place of OLAM within the Cluster so that will have to be discussed as well.

How will the meeting be run?

- The meeting will start at 3 pm with prayer. After some introductory comments from the three members of the panel, there will be an opportunity for small group discussion. We will have a tea break somewhere around 3.45/4.00 pm. Then there will be feedback from the groups and any final questions. The meeting will close with prayer at 5 pm.
- There will be an opportunity to join with Deacon Gary in Evening Prayer at 5.15 pm.

After Saturday's meeting, what next?

- There will be a report to the Parish Pastoral Council when it next meets on 10th February.
- There will be the consultation on names on 7th/8th March – see above.
- The draft Petition for Merger which must be submitted to the Archdiocese will be available for comment after all Masses on the weekend of 21st/22nd March and before the evening Mass of the Annunciation on 25th March.
- The aim is to submit the petition as soon as possible after Easter Sunday.

The parishes in the Cluster are part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham: Registered Charity No. 234216