



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 Second Sunday of Lent

Today's Liturgy of the Word

First Reading: Genesis 12-14a *The call of Abram, the father of the People of God*

Responsorial Psalm 33 (32) 4-22: May your merciful love be upon us, as we hope in you, O Lord.

Second Reading: 2 Timothy 1:8b -10 *God calls and enlightens us.*

Gospel Acclamation: Glory to you, O Christ, Wisdom of God the Father. From a bright cloud, the Father's voice was heard: "This is my beloved Son, listen to him". Glory to you, O Christ, Wisdom of God the Father.

Gospel: Matthew 17: 1-9 *His face shone like the sun.*

THIS WEEK'S DIARY: Con: Convent; CTK: Christ the King; OLAM: Maryvale; SMM: St Margaret Mary's; SJC: St John's Centre at CTK.

Sat	28/02/26	2nd Sunday of Lent (Vigil Masses)	12.00 CTK	Recitation of the Rosary
			12.30 CTK	Joe McKeown (RIP)
			18.00 OLAM	Sarah
Sun	01/03/26	2nd Sunday of Lent	09:30 CTK	All Altar Servers & Volunteers in the Cluster
			11:15 SMM	Neil O'Donnell (RIP)
			12.30 SMM	Baptism of Brooke Doyle and Stori Doyle
			16.00 SJC	Lent Talk: "St Francis from a Franciscan Perspective"
Mon	02/03/26	St. Chad, Bishop, Feast	07:30 SMM	Fr Joseph Carron
Tue	03/03/26	Lent Feria	09.30 MPS	Sheila Reilly (RIP)
			16.00 CTK	Deacon Gary's Catechism Class (Guild Room)
			19.00 SMM	Stations of the Cross
Wed	04/03/26	Lent Feria	08:00 Con.	Annie Rochford (Anni)
			08.15 SMM	Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament
			09.15 SMM	Private Intention
			17.00 CTK	Reception of Christopher Murray into Church
			17.30 SMM	Sycamore (in the Newman Gallery): "The Sacraments"
			18.00 CTK	Minister of the Word Formation (Guild Room)
			11.00 CTK	Funeral Service for Christopher Murray
Thu	05/03/26	Lent Feria		
Fri	06/03/26	Lent Feria	09.00 CTK	Clara Perry (Anni)
			19.00 CTK	Stations of the Cross
Sat	07/03/26	3rd Sunday of Lent (Vigil Masses)	12.30 CTK	Kathleen Bridger (RIP) 100 th Birthday
			18.00 OLAM	Kitty Heaney (RIP)
Sun	08/02/26	3rd Sunday of Lent	09.30 CTK	Luke Byrne (RIP)
			11.15 SMM	Dennis Jones

Fr. Simon writes: Monday (2nd March) is the Feast of St Chad, Patron of the Archdiocese was born in 620 AD and 672 AD). St Chad was educated at Lindisfarne in Northumbria and he was a pupil of St. Aidan. He completed his training in Ireland. Chad was a monk and began his ministry by being in charge of a monastery established by his brother in Yorkshire (Lastingham Abbey). He was later consecrated Bishop of York. He served as Bishop of York for a short time but in 669 AD he became Bishop of Mercia, centred on Lichfield, which was a vast Diocese. He was much loved by the people who knew that he loved them too. He died in 672 AD. His relics are buried in the shrine at St. Chad's Cathedral.

MERGER NEWS NO.6

Thank you to all those who came to our Merger Consultation meeting on Saturday 6th February. We had a full discussion on a number of important matters. Thank you also to Graham Green for chairing the meeting and to Wendy Gasson for taking the Minutes. At the Parish Pastoral Council meeting held on 10th February, Jackie Scott, who chairs the Merger Advisory Group, presented a report to the Parish Pastoral Council who in turn gave their approval to the following further steps:

(1) Further Consultation on a new name for our new parish when the merger by fusion of CTK and OLAM takes place

On the weekend of **7th/8th March** there will be a second and final consultation on the new name for our newly merged parish. To reemphasise: this has no impact on the names of the actual buildings we use for our places of worship in CTK, OLAM or SMM. It is a new name for the new united community that gathers across those places of worship. This is the new united community which the merger will form. Having looked at the feedback from the September consultation, we realise that a second consultative vote is needed. The aim is to draw up a shortlist which we can present to Archbishop Bernard who alone has the power to decide which one we ought to have. The long list published previously had one name added to it following the invitation and encouragement to do so in Merger News No. 5. Consequently, the final long list is:

St John Henry Newman (on its own), St John Henry Newman **and** the Sacred Heart - Blessed Dominic Barberi - St. Augustine of Hippo - St. John of the Cross - St. Francis of Assisi - St. Francis de Sales - St Thérèse of Lisieux - St. Pier Giorgio Frassati - St. Padre Pio - St. Alban (11 names)

This is how the consultation will be conducted:

- As you come into Church at any of the Sunday Masses on 7th/8th March, all 11 names will be up on a board at the entrance to the Church.
- All members of the congregation who are in Year 7 in secondary school or older will be given a sticker to place against ONE name on the list.
- The short list will then be drawn up according to which names receive the most votes.
- The result of this consultative vote will be confirmed in a future newsletter and will then be included in the petition..

(2) Opportunities to review the Petition

The Petition is the formal document which has to go to Archbishop Bernard to set the canon law wheels in motion. It is a request for him to pray, reflect and come to a decision regarding these matters. We, in fact, need two: the first for the merger by fusion and the new name; the second for our proposal regarding the future of our parish buildings. Each petition sets out the rationale for the request. **The draft petition relating to merger/change of name only** will be available for inspection after all Masses on the weekend of 21st/22nd March and before the evening Mass on 25th March. The aim is to present the final version to Fr. Simon so that he can sign it and send it to the Archbishop and other relevant parties very shortly after Easter Sunday.

(3) The future of our Church on Old Oscott Hill

Regarding the second petition relating to the place of worship on Old Oscott Hill, it is now accepted that the current building no longer serves our purposes and that a move to a smaller, warmer one is what we need. The hope is that by retrenching, we will end up with a better platform from which to offer pastoral care in the Maryvale area of the Cluster. The Merger Advisory Group and the Parish Pastoral Council offered various suggestions about this to Fr. Simon. Last weekend the following announcement was read out on Fr. Simon's behalf explaining the current situation: **"In order to accurately ascertain the value and potential plans for Maryvale House including the OLAM site, the Archdiocese will begin a marketing exercise starting this week, which will help us plan ahead"**. The Archdiocese has this week confirmed to Deacon Gary that the exercise to which Fr. Simon refers has now begun.

Information about Holy Week; To prepare for this all-important week in the Church's calendar, please note the following:

- **Sunday 22nd March** (Lent V), meeting after the 09.30 Mass at CTK for any young people wanting to plan for the Youth-led Stations of the Cross on 27th March at 7 pm at CTK.
- **Saturday 28th March:** beginning at 09.30 at CTK with a second part at OLAM, there will be a rehearsal for Holy Week for all altar servers covering **Maundy Thursday (3rd April – at CTK)** and the Easter Vigil on **Holy Saturday Night (4th April at OLAM)**. The servers will be bussed between the venues. New servers are welcome provided they are over 7 and have already received their First Holy Communion.
- **Foot washing on Maundy Thursday (19.30 at CTK):** we need 4 people from each parish within the Cluster. Please sign up on the sheet at the back of each Church. Watching in Prayer will take place in the Chapel of Repose from the conclusion of the Mass of the Lord's Supper until 6 am on Good Friday morning. Please sign up for the watch for an hour so that is a continuous cycle of prayer.

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

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.

Sanctuary Lamp Dedication throughout February the Sanctuary Lamp at OLAM is dedicated to the Butler & Maxwell Families. The Sanctuary Lamp at CTK the Bridger family (past and present).

Pray For The Sick: 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, Anne Cunningham and Anne O'Brien (Deacon Gary's mother).

RIP: Please pray for Linda 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, Jadzia 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 Patrlcik 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, Edward Oliver Bailey, David Fitzsimons, Takii Mariam, Christopher Diggle and William Vincent Moloney.

Forthcoming Funerals: **Christopher Murray:** Christopher will be received into church on 04/03, 5pm at CTK. Christopher's funeral will take place on 05/03 at 11am CTK. **Janette Margaret Hinsley's** Funeral Service will be celebrated on 9th March at 11.15am SMM. **Patrick Duignan:** Patrick's funeral service will be celebrated on 12/03, 1pm at CTK. **Monica Czernay:** Monica will be received into church on 12/03 at 4.30pm OLAM. Monica's funeral mass will be celebrated on 13/03 at 1pm at OLAM. **Jean McCabe:** Jean's funeral mass will be celebrated on 17/03, 12.30 at CTK. May the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace!

Mass Intentions: Following on from previous notices, we can now confirm how we will manage the allocation of Mass Intentions. **Where a specific date has been requested**, we will do our best to allocate the requested Mass to that specific date. However, since there are no regular public Masses on a Thursday and now only four Sunday Masses, we are no longer able to guarantee that we can offer the Mass as a public Mass on the date requested. **This is why we need you always to put your contact number on the Mass envelopes so that we can contact you about it.** Fr. Jude says a private Mass in the Presbytery Chapel every weekday. It is not possible for members of the congregation to be there when he does. However, a Mass intention can be offered. If you are willing to have Fr. Jude say the Mass in order to guarantee the date, then write "Fr. Jude" on the envelope. You will be notified of the date privately. **If no specific date has been requested** then these Mass intentions will be allocated in the following way: if any can be allocated to Fr. Jude, they will be. Otherwise, they will be sent away in batches of 50. We currently have over 200 Masses still to allocate. The first batch of 50 will go to the Vicar-General for him to allocate to retired priests of the Archdiocese who need support. The second batch of 50 will be sent to Fr. The in Taiwan. The final batch of 50 will be sent to Fr. Nazary Njiku, a priest in Tanzania known to Deacon Gary. Fr. Nazary desperately needs support for his mission there. We will repeat this as necessary. In this way, we will be supporting priests both at home and abroad in keeping with the principle of Christian solidarity and at the same time continue to pray for our faithful departed. We will be notified when the Mass has been celebrated. Please see below for details of other services to remember our loved ones.

Remembrance of our faithful departed: Now that Masses are to be sent to other places for celebration, we need to have another service within the Cluster to provide an opportunity for remembrance and prayer. The first such service will be on **Thursday 26th March at 7 pm in CTK**. It will be based on the Office of the Dead from the official Prayer of the Church and will include the naming and lighting of candles for all those loved ones we are remembering. The hope is that we can make it a monthly event and circulate the venue around all three places of worship in the Cluster.

Ministry of Holy Communion: the Ministry of Holy Communion has two aspects - the distribution of Holy Communion within Mass and the distribution of Holy Communion outside Mass to our sick and housebound parishioners. Following discussion at the Parish Pastoral Council last Tuesday, it has been agreed that with effect from and including Maundy Thursday (2nd April), communion under both kinds (the Sacred Host and the Precious Blood from the chalice) will be offered both on Maundy Thursday and at all Sunday Masses thereafter. We shall be calling upon existing Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to assist us; but we also need new recruits. As regards, Holy Communion outside of Mass, we are VERY short of Ministers. We do not currently have enough people to cover all those who are currently expecting visits. Please do think carefully and consider whether you can help. Any of the parish clergy will be able to let you know specifically what is involved. The time commitment can be adjusted to whatever you have available. Potential new ministers will need to have a training session with Deacon Gary.

Ministers of the Word: *All current commissioned* Ministers of the Word are earnestly requested to attend a meeting with Deacon Gary on 18th March 2026 at 7 pm in the Guild Room for a review of how the Liturgy of the Word changes during the Sacred Triduum and a discussion on how this impacts their ministry. *Any potential new* Ministers of the Word are invited to attend the necessary formation sessions on the following dates (all in the Guild Room at 7 pm): 4th March, 11th March. Current Ministers are also welcome to attend these both for a refresher and also to give those entering the ministry the benefit of their practical experience.

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PARISH, COMMUNITY, DEANERY AND DIOCESAN NOTICES

Christ the King/OLAM



St Margaret Mary / POLW



Mass attendance for last weekend

CTK 270

OLAM- 55

SMM: 145

Second collection today for CAFOD Family Fast Day

Last Week's Collection CTK

Loose: £355.42

Envelopes: £186.00

S/O £171.31

Total: £712.73

Last Week's Collection

SMM

Gift Aid £25

Loose: £277.65

Building Fund: £145

Total: £447.65

Last Week's Collection OLAM

Loose: £134.47

Envelopes: £138.50

S/O £73.58

Total: £346.55

Date for your Diary: On Tuesday 21st April, our Dean, Fr. Andrew Franklin will formally induct Fr. Simon into his office as parish priest both of CTK and OLAM. This is a wonderful opportunity for the whole of the Cluster to celebrate and to recommit itself to its mission. Mass begins at 6.00 pm and will be followed by a social gathering. More details to follow.

Urgent Appeals for volunteers for parish ministry:

- (1) We are in 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.
- (2) We also need someone who can help with all aspects of preparing for the Saturday Mass in addition to the work our current Saturday sacristan already does. It will involve working in the parish office for a couple of hours each week. Please speak to Deacon Gary if you think you can help with this.

New initiative for families: CTK currently has a small group of volunteers who meet with Claire Adler, our Cluster Secretary, to discuss and plan fundraising ideas. We are very grateful to the existing regulars. It is a key strength of this group that it is based on families with connections to Christ the King Primary School. We would like to open this up to families with connections to our other two primary schools in the Cluster to make this a Cluster wide initiative. The intention is that this group will meet once every few months to help with making decisions concerning types of fundraising ideas and future events. Please put your name forward to the parish office if you think you can make a difference to our parish and most importantly our community, meeting dates to follow.

Unclaimed Raffle: We still have unclaimed prizes from the Christmas Fete. If the prizes are not claimed by 06/03/2026 they will be re raffled. Numbers are on the board at the back of church, please contact the parish office to claim any prizes

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.

St. Patrick's Day at MPS: Maryvale Primary School have a mass on St Patricks Day in school. Parishioners are welcome to attend at 9.30a.m. followed by coffee/cake and a chat or board game session with Year 6 pupils and the Mini Vinnies at Maryvale. We welcome all from all 3 parishes in the Cluster to join us.

New Heights News: Would like to introduce Friendship Fridays. A brand-new session designed to bring people together in a relaxed, friendly, and supportive environment. It's all about connection, conversation, laughter, and reminding ourselves that no one must feel alone. If this is something that would interest you then please make your way to the Community Café every Friday 10am – 11am. It's a warm space to meet new faces, build genuine friendships, and enjoy some quality time together. Please feel free to bring a friend.

St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) Update: Dear parishioners, we had a very active time over the Christmas and New Year holiday. As a result of your support, we were able to provide 49 families with food and grocery items and made sure each child had a festive treat. We also provided items of furniture to several households. We continue to visit and phone our housebound and elderly parishioners and help with transport on occasion. If you would like to know more about our activities or believe you may have a few hours to spare each week and might consider becoming a member, please contact Fr. Simon or any of our members. On behalf of all our members, we would like to sincerely thank you for your continued ongoing support. Please keep us and all our beneficiaries in your prayers. Christian and Theresa.

Little Vinnies Stay and Play: The Little Vinnies Stay and Play at Maryvale Community, run by the local SVP, is now up and running on Friday Mornings in term time. The children are having a great time, but we need more helpers. Could you spare a few hours some Friday mornings to support this important work? You would be sure of a warm welcome. Please call 07548 937287 for more information.

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