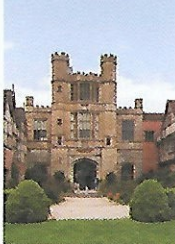


As you'd expect, secret Masses were held at Coughton for many years after they were outlawed at the Reformation; the house contains a particularly unusual priest's hiding hole, in that it's a double-decker space designed to outwit the keenest of searchers. The idea was that, if soldiers arrived to search, they'd find the top layer hole (which would be empty) but wouldn't detect the second hole below, in which the priest would be hiding.



Mary, Queen of Scots, also has a special place in Coughton's history: one of the family's forebears, Francis Throckmorton, was one of her aides, and after she was beheaded during the reign of her Protestant cousin Queen Elizabeth I, the family came into the possession of a chemise which, legend has it, she was wearing at her execution. Another item of great interest to Catholics, dating from slightly earlier, is a bishop's cope whose intricate needlework is said to have been worked on by Queen Catherine of Aragon, first wife of Henry VIII; it was in divorcing her that he cut himself, and England, off from the Catholic Church in Rome.

### COLOURFUL GARDENS

Coughton is a beautiful mansion with a turreted, castle-like central building and black-and-white-beamed wings to either side. It's ranged around three sides of a courtyard, and the gardens lie mostly behind – they're a vibrant high point of a visit here, colourful and flower-filled, with the same feel of informal friendliness that runs through the entire place – they were designed by Magnus Throckmorton's mother, Christina Williams. Find yourself there on a summer's day and you'll feel like you've stumbled on the quintessential English country dream.

For more information, or to plan a visit, see [www.coughtoncourt.co.uk](http://www.coughtoncourt.co.uk)

### Mass text

#### ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

**O Lord, hear my voice, for I have called to you;  
of you my heart has spoken: Seek his face;  
hide not your face from me, alleluia**

#### FIRST READING Acts 1:15-17. 20-26

#### PSALM Psalm 102

#### RESPONSE **The Lord has set his sway in heaven.**

Or **Alleluia!**

1. My soul, give thanks to the Lord,  
all my being, bless his holy name.  
My soul, give thanks to the Lord  
and never forget all his blessings. **R.**
2. For as the heavens are high above the earth  
so strong is his love for those who fear him.  
As far as the east is from the west  
so far does he remove our sins. **R.**
3. The Lord has set his sway in heaven  
and his kingdom is ruling over all.  
Give thanks to the Lord, all his angels,  
mighty in power, fulfilling his word. **R.**

#### SECOND READING 1 John 4:11-16

#### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**Alleluia, alleluia!  
I will not leave you orphans, says the Lord;  
I will come back to you, and your hearts  
will be full of joy.  
Alleluia!**

#### GOSPEL John 17:11-19

#### COMMUNION ANTIPHON

**Father, I pray that they may be one  
as we also are one, alleluia.**

#### Next Sunday's Readings:

Acts 2:1-11  
Galatians 5:16-25  
John 15:26-27; 16:12-15



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# SUNDAY BULLETIN



## REMEMBER, REMEMBER: THE GUNPOWDER PLOT HOUSE

It's been described as one of the finest treasure troves of Catholic history in Britain, and it's not difficult to see why. Every room at Coughton Court, a fifteenth-century amber-stoned manor house, has its tales to tell. Take the Tower Room, where on the morning of 6 November 1605 a young mother called Lady Mary Digby waited for a messenger on horseback, who would bring her news about whether the plot to blow up Parliament, in which her husband was heavily involved, had succeeded or not.

As we remember each year on Bonfire Night, the plot had failed. Mary never saw her husband again, although there is a story that as he was being taken to the scaffold in London she held her toddler son up to the window so he could catch sight of his father one final time, before he was executed, along with fellow conspirators including Guy Fawkes.

Coughton Court was where the plotters planned to regroup, if things had gone their way. Many of the plotters had family connections with the house, and indeed a dinner is held each year, with a tour – it must be one of the most evocative Bonfire Night venues in Britain. But the gunpowder plot is only one part of this house's close connection with Catholic history. Central to it all is the family that has lived in it for twenty generations: the Throckmortons, who chose – when Henry VIII broke with Rome in the sixteenth century – to stick with the “old faith”, a decision that led to countless hardships for them through the years.

It's their presence that gives the house its friendly feel – the hats on the stand in the hall, and the family photographs everywhere, remind you that you're in a family home. The National Trust has owned the house since 1946, but the Throckmortons – currently represented by Magnus Throckmorton and his family – are still in residence, and the place oozes the love and attention they have lavished on the handsome building that encompasses so much of their family's fascinating story.

## Catholic heritage in Britain



Joanna Moorhead  
visits Coughton Court,  
Warwickshire.



16 MAY 2021

7TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

YEAR B

DIVINE OFFICE WEEK III