



OUR LADY OF GRACE PRESTWICH

'Stay with us, Lord, on our journey'

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18th SUNDAY 'OF THE YEAR' 2nd AUGUST 2020

My dear Parishioners and Friends,

'Go, tell the priests to come here in procession and build a church here.' So Our Lady told St Bernadette. The day was Tuesday, 2 March 1858. The place – Lourdes, France.

People have gone on pilgrimage to Lourdes ever since. It has been a place of much grace and healing.

This week would have seen several hundred people from Salford in Lourdes, on the annual diocesan pilgrimage. It was not to be. Covid-19 decreed otherwise.

However, the diocesan pilgrimage is still taking place – virtually! **Bishop John Arnold** began the pilgrimage with a Holy Hour in Salford Cathedral on Friday. The pilgrimage programme will continue into the coming week. If you can, do follow it. Friday and Saturday have gone but here is the rest of the programme:

Sunday 2 August, 3.00 pm
Livestreamed pilgrimage Mass from Salford Cathedral with Bishop John. This will be livestreamed on **ChurchServices.tv**

Monday 3 August, 7.00 pm

*A video message from pilgrimage volunteers will be shared on the **Salford Lourdes website**, the **Facebook page** and on **YouTube**.*

Tuesday 4 August, 7.00 pm, Stations of the Cross with Bishop John from Salford Cathedral. This will be livestreamed on **ChurchServices.tv**.

Wednesday 5 August, 7.00 pm, A Rosary and farewell message from Bishop John, followed by footage of a candle being lit in Lourdes to signify the spiritual presence of the Diocese of Salford. This will be livestreamed on **ChurchServices.tv**.

*Our Lady of Lourdes, pray for us.
Saint Bernadette, pray for us.*

To find out more, visit the Salford Lourdes website



Our area of Greater Manchester has been in the news these last few days, but alas for the wrong reasons. So it was a great pleasure to receive an email on Friday from the now retired **Archbishop Patrick Kelly**, formerly of course our bishop

in Salford. He wrote to say that he was offering Mass for us all that morning, and telling us to keep safe and well. I'm sure we much appreciate his typically kind and thoughtful act.



The Government now wants us to extend lockdown. This is especially hard on families and friends who do not form a 'bubble'.

We must accept it as a necessary step to keep us all safer. The coronavirus can be a very serious infection for many people.

At the same time, these new directives can give us more time to think about even more important things. Last week's newsletter listed three things that **Pope Francis** would like us to consider. In case you missed them last week, they are repeated here:

1. *It is a time for us to choose. What really matters for us? What passes away?*
2. *It is a time for us to separate what is necessary from what is not.*
3. *It is a time for us to get our lives back on track with regard to God and to others.*



One of the new government directives is that people coming to places of worship **must wear face coverings from Saturday 8 August.** This coincides with the day when we propose to re-start Sunday Masses.

We are already familiar with wearing face coverings in shops and other places, so although it may feel strange to wear them in church it is not something to trouble us unduly.

Most people will already have their own mask, but there will be a supply at the church door for anyone who may have forgotten. It is good to remember that some people are exempt from wearing face coverings, for example those with breathing problems, children under 11 years of age and others too. So we mustn't look critically at anyone without a mask. We are advised that the priest need not wear a face covering when on the sanctuary.



A reminder: Our Lady of Grace church is currently open from Monday to Friday from 11.45 am to 4.00 pm, and on Saturday from 11.45 am to 3.00 pm. There is Mass each day Monday to Saturday at 12 noon.



The plan is to resume the celebration of Mass on Sundays on the second Sunday of this month. That means Mass at 7.00 pm **next Saturday 8 August** and the usual Masses at 9.00 and

11.00 on the morning of **next Sunday 9 August.**

During the pandemic, the Sunday Mass obligation is of course suspended. So when we do start, no-one must feel obliged to come on that day. The number of those who can be present will be limited, and much smaller than our usual Sunday attendance. So if you can come on a weekday you are invited to see that as your 'Sunday' Mass. That would leave the church available on Sundays for those individuals and families who can't come on a weekday.

As was said last week, many of you are rightly cautious about venturing into public places, especially if you come under the 'vulnerable' category. If that is the case, even though Sunday is 'special', you must feel comfortable about staying and praying at home.

Websites which can help include the diocesan website and that of the Catholic Bishops' Conference: www.cbcew.org.uk There's also EWTN and churchservices.tv



Thursday next, 6 August, is the solemnity of Our Lord's Transfiguration. The Gospels tell how Jesus took Peter, James and John with him up the mountain and 'There in their presence he was transfigured: his face shone like the sun and his clothes became as white as the light'. Jesus is with us still, none more so than when present in our tabernacles. **Next Thursday we will celebrate his presence by exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from the end of**

12 noon Mass until 4.00 pm.

Despite the lockdown measures, may you all have a happy and blessed week.

Fr Allen



Fr Dearman's reflections on the Lord's Prayer.

Part Four:

May your kingdom come.

King Henry VIII had the power to order the death of anyone who thwarted his wishes. Even a wife to whom he swore lasting love and affection was not safe from a painful death at his command. St Edward the Confessor, on the other hand, is better remembered for feeding poor people than for making political alliances. Clearly the position of an earthly king is full of temptations to greed and the abuse of power. Yet these temptations can be overcome by the grace of God.

Jesus often spoke of "the kingdom of heaven", a way of living our life in this world in agreement with the ideals of self-sacrificing love which he showed by the example of his own life on earth. When Pilate asked him if he was really a king, he answered "My kingdom is not of this world".

By praying that God's kingdom should come we are praying that people might receive the gift of using their earthly power wisely and generously, with an awareness of the responsibility which comes with that power. We ask our Father for the grace to live our own lives in that spirit.