



OUR LADY OF GRACE PRESTWICH

'Stay with us, Lord, on our journey'

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24th SUNDAY 'OF THE YEAR' 13 September 2020

HOLY MASS THIS WEEK

SUNDAY First Mass of Sunday is 7pm Saturday. Sunday morning 9.00 & 11.00 am

MONDAY	12 noon	The Exaltation of the Holy Cross
TUESDAY	12 noon	Our Lady of Sorrows
WEDNESDAY	12 noon	St Cornelius & St Cyprian
THURSDAY	12 noon	(St Robert Bellarmine)
FRIDAY	12 noon	
SATURDAY	12 noon	(St Theodore of Canterbury)

The church is open Monday to Friday from 11.45 am to 4.00 pm, and on Saturdays from 11.45 am to 3.00 pm, opening again at 6.40 pm on Saturday evening for the first Mass of Sunday at 7.00 pm.

My dear Parishioners and Friends,

Our Lady of Grace primary school is once more up and running. By the end of the coming week, all children should be in place and enjoying another school year. It has taken a lot of planning and careful management but all concerned have pulled together to achieve a good start.

It's a pity that current restrictions prohibited a school Mass for the start of the year. However, on Our Lady's birthday last Tuesday, the children were able to celebrate with their teachers in their own classes.



This week's feasts

We keep the feast of the
Exaltation of the Holy

Cross tomorrow, Monday. This day brings together three historical events:

- 1 The finding of the True Cross by St Helena, mother of the emperor Constantine.
- 2 The dedication of churches built by Constantine on the site of Mount Calvary and the Holy Sepulchre.
- 3 The return of the True Cross to Jerusalem by the emperor Heraclius II.

More than these historical events, the feast celebrates the Holy Cross as the instrument of our salvation. As we say during the Stations of the Cross: 'We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world'.

This feast is also known as Holy Rood Day or Roodmas. The word 'Rood' comes from Old English, meaning a pole and the cross. There are a number of streets in this

parish called 'Holy Rood'. Can anyone tell us why?

Tuesday's memorial of **Our Lady of Sorrows** is especially dear to our neighbours, the Servites. When the infant Jesus was presented in the Temple at Jerusalem, the old man Simeon prophesied that a sword would pierce Mary's heart. On Tuesday we will focus on what are traditionally called the 'Seven Sorrows' of Our Lady, and especially on her intense suffering during the passion and death of her divine Son.



Last Thursday we kept the feast day of a local saint, **St Ambrose Barlow**. Born in Manchester, he became a priest and ministered around this part of Lancashire for over twenty years before he was put to death for his priesthood in Lancaster. We

might think that times of persecution like we had in England are now gone. But read on:

Every day, 8 Christians worldwide are killed because of their faith.

Every week, 182 churches or Christian buildings are attacked.

And every month, 309 Christians are imprisoned unjustly.

So reports the 2020 World Watch List (WWL), the latest annual accounting from Open Doors of the top 50 countries where Christians are the most persecuted for their faith. The nations listed comprise 260 million Christians suffering high to severe levels of persecution, up from 245 million in last year's list.

Where It's Hardest to Follow Jesus:

1. North Korea
2. Afghanistan
3. Somalia
4. Libya
5. Pakistan
6. Eritrea
7. Sudan
8. Yemen
9. Iran
10. India

We should often keep these persecuted brothers and sisters of ours in our prayers.



On 25 October 1970, **Pope St Paul VI** canonised forty of the English and Welsh martyrs put to death during penal days. The Holy Father said at the canonisation that these forty 'are worthy to stand alongside the greatest martyrs of the past'. St Ambrose Barlow is one of the forty.

On 25 October 2020, it will be fifty years since their

canonisation. To keep their witness in mind, I have commissioned a marble memorial to be placed in the Sacred Heart chapel. It will complement the memorial of the visit of **Pope St John Paul II** now in the Lady chapel. The memorial will include the motif used at their canonisation, and also the words: *May we imitate them in their love of the Holy Mass and loyalty to the See of Peter.*



The 52nd **International Eucharistic Congress** should have been held this very week in Budapest, the capital of Hungary. It has had to be postponed and will now be held 5-12 September 2021.

However, the organisers decided to make this present week as memorable as possible. They are presenting some of the guest speakers via the **IEC2020 YouTube channel**. Each day this week, from 13 to 20 September, one or more speakers will share their thoughts.



A collection for the Church in the Holy Land is normally taken on Good Friday in churches around the world. This year, churches in many countries, including our own, were closed. No collection could therefore be taken.

There are very serious concerns in the Holy Land about the impact of the coronavirus as it spreads in Israel and the Palestinian Territories, where there is acute poverty and very poor living conditions and many people are at risk. We must show our support for them as best we can. **All loose cash in next week's collection**

(i.e. not in envelopes) will go to the Church in the Holy Land.



Theo Sharrock, one of our seminarians, received the Ministry of Acolyte last week. We congratulate him and continue to remember him in our prayers.

Fr Allen

Fr Dearman's reflections on the Lord's Prayer. Part Ten: Do not lead us into temptation.

"If your right eye should cause you to sin, cut it out!" In colourful language Jesus warns us of the danger of temptation. He knew what it was like to be tempted. He was tempted as we are but did not sin.

When we look back at the times when we have fallen into sin, we often remember that before the sinful act we were engaged in some activity which was harmless in itself but led us on into wrongdoing. It may have been a game or hobby, or drinking or gambling. Jesus is telling us that we should be ruthless in our efforts to cut out what we sometimes call "occasions of sin" - situations in which we find it difficult or impossible to avoid offending God's infinite majesty.

We could simply ask the Father to give us the strength to resist temptation, but knowing our human weakness we ask not to be put in such a dangerous situation. And we pray for people who are struggling against the terrible curse of serious addiction, and for those who give them much-needed support.