



OUR LADY OF GRACE PRESTWICH

'Stay with us, Lord, on our journey'

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CHRIST, UNIVERSAL KING 22 November 2020

CALENDAR FOR THIS WEEK

MONDAY	(St Clement 1, Pope & Martyr/St Columban, Abbot)
TUESDAY	St Andrew Dung-Lac, Priest & Companions, Martyrs of Vietnam)
WEDNESDAY	(St Catherine of Alexandria, Virgin & Martyr)
THURSDAY	Weekday
FRIDAY	Weekday
SATURDAY	Weekday
SUNDAY NEXT	First Sunday of Advent

The church is open every day for private visits and prayer
Monday to Friday from 12 noon to 4.00 pm. **Saturdays** from 12 noon to 3.00 pm.
Sundays from 11.00 am to 1.00 pm.
We hope to open for public Mass very soon.

My dear Parishioners and Friends,

Today is a very special and much-loved feast. It is the solemnity of **Christ the King**. To mark the day, there will be **Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament** while the church is open today from 11 o'clock until 1 o'clock. If you are able, do try to call in.



Today we should also be celebrating the annual **International Mass**. We can't do that this year, but we can at least renew our word of welcome to all who come, wherever they come from. As the notice outside church says: *All are welcome in God's house. Come in!*

Pope Pius XI put the feast of Christ the King in the Church's calendar in 1925,

nearly a hundred years ago. He did so to oppose the rampant secularism of the day. In so many parts of the world, people and governments were planning and living as though God did not exist. It is a world we might recognise today, and underlines the importance of today's feast.

A few years later Archbishop Downey of Liverpool led plans for the building of a Catholic cathedral in the city. Pope Pius XI suggested that it be dedicated to Christ the King. The foundation stone was laid in 1933 and the hymn, *Hail Redeemer, King Divine*, was composed for the occasion and sung then for the first time. How I wish we could sing it together today! At least we can read it and use it in prayer, together with its chorus:

*Angels, saints and nations
sing:
"Praised be Jesus Christ our
King;
Lord of life, earth, sky and
sea,
King of love on Calvary!"*

I can hear you singing it now!



Next Saturday should have been the day of our **Christmas Fair**. We shall miss it this year, both the social side and the financial side. It usually brings out the best in us in teamwork and it also provides a useful income for parish funds.

Can we show something of that teamwork during the coming week? I'm hoping that those who can will use their daily exercise walk to drop off an envelope where parishioners live. The envelope will contain the

2021 parish Year Book, a letter from me and two books of raffle tickets. The letter will explain all.

The bags for the parish districts are available now from the welcomers' table in church. If you come here regularly but don't live in the parish, please take an envelope from the welcomers' table when you come in.



Last week's newsletter quoted from a letter entitled *Facing Change with Courage and Vision* and written by **Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa**, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem. Here are some more extracts:

Most people are forced to remain without the Eucharistic celebration, the heart of the church. In this painful moment of fasting, we can perhaps perceive a call to rethink and recreate our family relationships — to re-establish the domestic church in the light of the Gospel, which shows us in the gesture of Jesus, who washes the feet of his disciples, the way to heal our relationships in order to resume community life with a new spirit, with more humility...

We will need to prioritize ourselves, to review with the courage of vision what we do and ask ourselves what is essential and what is not...

We will need to rethink our future radically, and we have an ancient and ever-new reference: not works that announce our power, but a faith that becomes a gift of life through our works. Will we have the courage for such a vision?



Our Bishop, John Arnold, has been busy this past week. He had a three-day meeting by Zoom with the other bishops of England and Wales plus a one-day meeting face-to-face in London. He has written a **pastoral letter** for the feast of Christ the King. You can access it from the parish and from the diocesan websites.

The Bishop is also going to celebrate **Mass of the Chrism** at 11.00 am next Friday 27 November in Salford Cathedral. The Mass will be live streamed. The easiest way to watch this is to go to churchservices.tv and click on Salford Cathedral. This Mass is usually celebrated during Holy Week. It is also a celebration of the sacred priesthood. During the Mass, Bishop Arnold will bless the oil of catechumens, the oil of the sick and the sacred chrism, all of which will be used in the parishes of the diocese during the ensuing year.



On Wednesday next, 25 November, many people around the world will be **wearing something red**. We are invited to join them. It is an initiative of Aid to the Church in Need, drawing attention to the persecution in different parts of the world of Christians and other minority faith groups.

A recent report shows how *'Christians are unjustly denied their freedom, many for the precise reason that they refuse to give up their faith. They live in fear and many suffer in complete silence.'*

ACN does a good job in reminding us to the plight of so many of our Christian

brothers and sisters. Let's keep them in our prayers.

Next Sunday we begin Advent. Until then, my heartfelt good wishes to all.

Fr Allen

Fr Dearman's reflections on the Creed -

6 RESURRECTION!

"He rose again on the third day." This is the ultimate triumph, the crowning glory of the Son of God made man. After his passion and death he shows himself to his followers as fully alive, body and soul. This is the climax of the Gospel story, the vindication of his Father's decision that he should take our nature, and the reason that Christians celebrate every Sunday as our Sabbath day.

"... in accordance with the Scriptures." The Creed sees this wonderful event as the fulfilment of all the prophecies that were made about the Messiah during the centuries of preparation for his coming to earth.

St Paul says that if Jesus had not been raised from the dead, our faith would be in vain. That is why it is so important for us that the Crucifixion was a historical event which really happened, and that the evidence for the Resurrection was so firmly established by the witness of the Apostles.

O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?