



OUR LADY OF GRACE PRESTWICH

'Stay with us, Lord, on our journey'

Phone/Fax: 0161 773 2324

Parish web page:
www.ourladyofgrace.co.uk

Parish Email:
john.allen@dioceseofsalford.org.uk

Diocesan web page:
www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk

2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT 6 December 2020

HOLY MASS THIS WEEK

MONDAY	12 noon	St Ambrose, Bishop & Doctor of the Church
TUESDAY	12 noon	The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
WEDNESDAY	12 noon	Advent Weekday/St Juan Diego Cuauhtlatotzin
THURSDAY	12 noon	Advent Weekday/Our Lady of Loreto
FRIDAY	12 noon	Advent Weekday/St Pope Damasus I
SATURDAY	12 noon	Advent Weekday/Our Lady of Guadalupe
SUNDAY	First Mass of Sunday is 7pm Saturday. Sunday morning 9.00 & 11.00 am	

The church is open every day

Monday to Friday from 11.45 am-4.00 pm. **Saturdays** from 11.45 am-3.00 pm, 6.45-8.00 pm
Sundays from 8.45 am to 10.00 am, 10.45 am to 1.00 pm.

My dear Parishioners and Friends,

It has been good to see so many of you again at Holy Mass this past week. They say absence makes the heart grow fonder, and that has been the reaction of so many of you who have said how much you have missed being able to come together for Mass.

You have also been asking about the **Christmas Masses**. You have seen the problem. How can the numbers who usually come at Christmas be accommodated?

The simple answer is, they can't! We have to observe social distancing even at Christmas. This means there are only sixty places in church. Those places can of course hold more than one

person, provided that they are from the same 'bubble'.

Our Bishop has suggested one way of meeting this difficulty. He suggests that people might stagger their attendance at Mass, taking it in turns to come on the weekdays following Christmas Day itself. I'm not sure how this might work out in practice but it is worth keeping in mind.

For Christmas Day, admission will be by ticket only. First choice will be given to those of you who are at Mass today. Please take the application form away with you and send it in asap. That will greatly help with our planning.

Meanwhile, Our Lady of Grace church remains open at the times given above.



Next Tuesday we will celebrate the feast of Our Lady's Immaculate Conception. The poet William Wordsworth was a Protestant but he wrote a beautiful sonnet (called 'The Virgin') about Our Lady. In the sonnet he called her '**our tainted nature's solitary boast**'. That's a lovely way to describe her Immaculate Conception. When we say Mary was conceived without sin, we mean that from the very first moment of her existence she was free from original sin. She was full of grace, as Gabriel saluted her.

Having said that, Wordsworth was not quite right. Our human nature has another and even greater boast. Advent is getting us ready for Christmas when we will celebrate the fact that God the Son took on our human nature 'and was

made man'. His mother Mary is not therefore the *solitary* boast of our human nature.



This week also sees two more commemorations of Our Blessed Lady. Thursday's is **Our Lady of Loreto**, a very big feast day in Italy. Our Lady's shrine in Loreto recalls the Holy House of Nazareth, transported there in the 13th century. Our Lady of Loreto is the patroness of aviators and Apollo 9 carried a Loreto medallion on its flight to the moon.

Saturday's commemoration is of **Our Lady of Guadalupe**. Our Lady appeared there in 1531 to a simple Mexican man in his 50's, a convert to the Faith. The story of Guadalupe is truly astonishing. No wonder then that it is the most popular Catholic shrine in the world, welcoming some 20 million pilgrims every year.

Last week's newsletter noted how we can be especially close to Our Lady in the Advent season. She gives us an example of being close to her Son. How she must have looked forward to seeing his face as his birth drew near!

The Advent liturgy refers to Our Lady frequently during Advent but even more particularly in the second half of the season.

We can find many websites to help us during Advent, the diocesan website included.



On Tuesday, 8 December, there will be a funeral Mass at 10.00 am for **Mary Enid McArdle**, late of Top'o'th'Fields, Whitefield. It will be the Mass of the day, namely the Immaculate

Conception. There will only be three or four family members present, so it would be a kindness if some of you were to come also. Since we are limited to thirty people at a funeral, it would be as well to give me your names beforehand.



If you live in the parish you should by now have received the **parish yearbook for 2021, along with raffle tickets** and an explanatory letter. A warm thank you to all who delivered these. Already the raffle tickets are coming back in good numbers. Don't be put off by the date on the tickets which says the draw will be on 28 November. As explained in the covering letter, we have had to postpone the raffle draw until **13 December**. So ignore the date on the raffle tickets. If you live in the parish and haven't received these items please let me know. If you don't live in the parish, you can pick them up from the welcomers' table in church.



We haven't been able to have the usual **Traidcraft** sales for some time now. It would be good to support Fairtrade in the run up to Christmas. Many parts of the Third World are suffering worse than we are. You may pick up an information/order form from the welcomers' table at the back of church.



A newspaper cartoon shows the Three Kings coming to the crib at Bethlehem but being refused entry because they come from three different households. The Nativity brought up-to-date! Here's hoping that you will all have a safe and healthy week.

Fr Allen

Fr Dearman's reflections on the Creed -

8 THE SECOND COMING

"He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end."

As the Chosen People longed (and still do) for the coming of the Saviour, we now have another great event to long for, that of the same Saviour coming again. This longing is very much the mood of the Advent season. Jesus will come not as a tiny baby but riding on clouds of glory. He will bring his Kingdom on earth to its fulfilment and introduce his

Kingdom in Heaven, a Kingdom without end, a Kingdom of everlasting happiness.

But first there is the Judgement! As the Father created the universe through the Son, so now he entrusts the task of judging us to him as well. Since Jesus shared our humanity and "was tempted as we are but did not sin", we have good reason to trust a judge who has experienced all our difficulties and understands us better even than we do ourselves. Of course, it is in the nature of God to be infinite in mercy. But we should be careful lest we fall.

So ends this long section dealing with the Second Person of the Trinity and we invite the Third Person to take centre stage.