



OUR LADY OF GRACE PRESTWICH

‘Stay with us, Lord, on our journey’

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3rd SUNDAY OF EASTER 1 MAY 2022

HOLY MASS THIS WEEK

SUNDAY	First Mass of Sunday is 7pm Saturday. Sunday morning 9.00 & 11.00 am
MONDAY	9.15 am St Athanasius
TUESDAY	12 noon St Philip & St James, Apostles
WEDNESDAY	12 noon The English Martyrs
THURSDAY	12 noon Requiem Mass for Patricia Connaughton
FRIDAY	9.15 am Easter Weekday
SATURDAY	11.00 am Easter Weekday

The church is open every day

Monday and Friday from 9.00 am to 6.00 pm
Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 11.45 am to 6.00 pm
Saturday from 10.30 am to 8.00 pm
Sundays from 8.30 am to 12 noon (or later if baptisms)

Confessional times: Saturday 11.40 am to 12.50 pm, 6.00 pm to 6.40 pm
Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament: Saturday after 11.00 am Mass until 1.00 pm

My dear Parishioners and Friends,

May is the month of Mary, month we all love so well. Mary is God's own mother, gladly her praise we tell.

So begins a simple yet profound hymn our children love to sing during the May crowning. I'm hoping that will be on Sunday 15 May this year. The date coincides with the feast day of Our Lady of Grace.

For hundreds of years the Church has dedicated the month of May to the Blessed Virgin Mary. This month is always part of the Easter season, the fifty days we celebrate in the liturgy for

the Resurrection of Our Lord and a time also of awaiting the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

Keeping May as a Marian month fits in well with the liturgical celebrations of Easter and Pentecost. We remember Mary's joy in her Son's victory over death as well as her presence with the apostles in the upper room, prayerfully awaiting the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

Pope St Paul VI wrote a short encyclical on the month of May. He said that May is an occasion for a 'moving tribute of faith and love which Catholics in every part of the world pay

to the Queen of Heaven. During this month Christians, both in church and in the privacy of the home, offer up to Mary from their hearts an especially fervent and loving homage of prayer and veneration. In this month, too, the benefits of God's mercy come down to us from her throne in greater abundance.'



Next Saturday will see the annual diocesan **pilgrimage to Walsingham**. We have a party of 24 going from Our Lady of Grace parish. Fr David Quiligotti has kindly agreed to supply for me here next Saturday, enabling me to join the pilgrimage. He will

be here for Mass and Confessions, both morning and evening.

The Bury deanery coach will leave from Our Lady of Grace church next Saturday at **7.00 am**. If you have booked, please don't be late! Bring a packed lunch. We should be back in Prestwich about 10.00 pm.



The 11 o'clock Mass here at Our Lady of Grace on **Saturday 14 May** will be offered especially for past pupils and staff of **Notre Dame schools**, followed by refreshments in the parish hall. This is a good opportunity to meet friends and renew acquaintances. If you haven't been before you will be most welcome. Enquiries to Margaret Dolan (marlydolan@aol.com) or tel. 07718 363540



The coming week celebrates some important saints, including the **English Martyrs**. The plaque in our Sacred Heart chapel records the canonisation in 1970 of forty of the English Martyrs and recalls some words of Pope St Paul VI: 'They are worthy to stand alongside the greatest martyrs of the past.'

The plaque also says: 'May we imitate them in their love of the Holy Mass and loyalty to the See of Peter.' Pope St Paul VI recalled how these two truths were central to the witness the martyrs gave. 'Faced with the choice of remaining steadfast in their faith and of dying for it, or of saving their lives by denying that faith, without a moment's hesitation and with a truly supernatural strength they stood for God and joyfully confronted martyrdom ...

'May the Lord grant that, in these times of increasing religious indifference and of the spread of materialism, not only as a philosophy but as a way of life, the example and the intercession of the Forty Martyr-Saints may comfort us in the faith and strengthen our authentic love for God, for his Church and for all people.'

We might well pray for that, and compare our practice of the faith with that of the martyrs. They knew how essential Holy Mass is if we are to keep close to God and to grow as Christians.



Next Sunday 8 May is the **World Day of Prayer for Vocations**. Didn't Our Lord ask us to pray to the Father 'to send workers into the vineyard'? There are six seminarians in training for the priesthood for service in this diocese, five at Oscott, Birmingham, and one at the Venerable English College, Rome. We will keep them in our prayers.

Next Sunday, as well as the contents of the special envelopes, all the loose money in the collection buckets will go to the Priests Training Fund.

May Our Lady take care of you and your families in this her special month.

Fr Allen

Fr Dearman's Reflections on Easter hymns

3 – EASTER GLORY FILLS THE SKY

This hymn has *Alleluia!* at the end of every line, inviting us to praise God over and over again as our joy overflows throughout the

Easter season. The hymn also helps us to view the events surrounding Our Lord's resurrection through the eyes of two Marys, his Mother and Mary Magdalen.

Our Lady, of course, suffered extreme pain as she saw her divine Son dying in agony, but now she can *share his reign* and joyfully welcome his rising to new life. As our mother she can share that joy with us.

Mary Magdalen also experiences a wonderful change, from tearful bewilderment to ecstatic joy when she hears *the Master speak her name*.

We too may have our moments of doubt, but we know that he knows each one of us by name, and we have only to turn to him to know that he is close to us.

The hymn then calls on Jesus himself as he is faced with the denials of St Peter, which were so unworthy of the friend and follower who was chosen to be the rock on which the Church would be built. Peter is seen as the sheep that had strayed, and we know from Our Lord's parable that the Good Shepherd will seek out that wandering sheep and *strengthen him* once more to be that rock.

As we reflect on the last two verses of this hymn we can express our gratitude to Jesus for so many blessings: his risen glory, his priesthood, his body and blood which he gives us at our feast, his gift of the Holy Spirit, and the promise of paradise, of *endless Easter with our Lord!*