



OUR LADY OF GRACE PRESTWICH

'Stay with us, Lord, on our journey'

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4th SUNDAY OF EASTER 8 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 Easter Weekday
TUESDAY	12 noon Easter Weekday/St John of Avila
WEDNESDAY	12 noon Easter Weekday
THURSDAY	12 noon Easter Weekday/Sts Nereus & Achilleus/St Pancras
FRIDAY	9.30 am Mass for Our Lady of Grace with primary school children
SATURDAY	11.00 am St Matthias, Apostle

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,

We join the Church around the world today as we pray for **vocations to the priesthood and the religious life**. We should pray for such vocations from the families of this parish. Not all parents though encourage such a vocation. This is the confession of two such parents, recorded from St Peter's Square, Rome, on Good Friday:

Only now can we laugh as we recall all the expectations we had for our son. We raised him to be happy and to have a fulfilling life. We had hoped that he would follow his grandfather's

footsteps. Yes, perhaps, we wanted a very different life for him: a family, a job, children, grandchildren. In short, a "normal" life. We had already lived his life for him.

But then You came and You upset everything. You swept away our dreams for something greater. You made sure that his life did not take the usual path and You called him for Yourself.

But why? Why him? Why our son? At first, we did not take it well. We argued with him. We turned away from him. We believed that our coolness would make him retrace his steps. We tried to plant doubt in his mind

about whether he was taking the wrong path, like those two thieves. But we came to realize that no one can fight with You. We are a glass of water and You are the sea. We are a spark and You are the fire. And now, like the good thief, we too ask You to remember us when You come into Your Kingdom.

Today is also a good day to pray for the six men who are training for the priesthood in the service of the Salford diocese: **Peter, Carmine, Mark, Paul, Luke and Theo.**

We need more like them. What about it, families of Our Lady of Grace? What about it, you young men? A good simple prayer is, 'Lord, show me what you want me to do,

and give me the strength to do it.'



The feast day of Our Lady of Grace is 15 May. It falls this year on next Sunday, when we will have to celebrate the Mass of Eastertide. **So we will celebrate our patronal feast this coming Friday.** A number of the primary school children will join us for Mass at 9.30 am that day.

I had hoped to have our May procession and crowning next Sunday. However, some Covid restrictions still operate in school. Rather than have a procession and crowning with depleted numbers it might be wiser to postpone again this year. Could we perhaps plan something similar for October, traditionally the month of the holy rosary?



The children in Year 3 are looking forward to their **first Holy Communion** in a few weeks' time. The dates are Saturday 18 June and Saturday 25 June.

Their preparation continues **next Sunday, 15 May**, with a meeting for children and their parents in the parish hall at 9.50 am. It is important that they should all be here. We will be learning about following Jesus and about prayer.

The remaining parish meetings will be on Sunday 29 May, learning about Community, and Sunday 12 June, about immediate preparations for Communion.



Tomorrow, Monday, sees the next meeting of the parish **Book Club** at 2.00 pm in the Cottage. The topic is 'The Rosie Project', by

Graeme Simsion, a 2013 comedy(?) said to be 'bursting with warmth, emotional depth, and...humour'. Vin Allerton would be glad to tell you more: 0161-773 3318 or text 07305 727900 or email vinallerton@gmail.com



The 11 o'clock Mass here at Our Lady of Grace next 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. Enquiries to Margaret Dolan (marlydolan@aol.com) or tel. 07718 363540



Returning to today, World Day of Prayer for Vocations, the Bishop was interviewing a candidate for the priesthood. He asked him three questions.

1st, who was born in a stable? 'Red Rum' came the answer. 2nd, what do you know of Damascus. 'It kills all known germs.' 3rd, what happened when the disciples went to the Mount of Olive? 'Popeye kicked the life out of them.' He wasn't accepted.

There is usually a collection to pay for the training of our seminarians and young priests. As we have not yet resumed the normal collections, all the loose money in the collection buckets today will go to the Priests Training Fund.



You were all remembered yesterday at Our Lady's shrine in Walsingham.

Fr Allen

Fr Dearman's Reflections on Easter hymns

4 – LOVING SHEPHERD OF THY SHEEP

Good Shepherd Sunday reminds us that Jesus is not just a victorious hero but also a caring lover. This simple hymn begins by assuring us that our shepherd is immensely powerful, so that he can protect us from all dangers. ***Nothing can thy power withstand.***

Since he gave his life for love of us, we are inspired to love him in return and follow him in whatever way we can: ***gladly thy sweet will obey.***

Our Lord is always close to us, so we should be able to hear what he is telling us. We are reminded that the path to heaven is often hard to follow, so we ask him, ***Suffer not my steps to stray from the strait and narrow way.***

If we find this too hard, we remember that we are after all only following the way of suffering that Jesus himself trod before us. The reward is that the path leads to the throne of God the Father, where we ask Our Lord, ***Jesu, claim me for thine own.***

An encouraging end to a lovely hymn, and a preparation of our minds for the coming of the Spirit of Love at Pentecost.