



# OUR LADY OF GRACE PRESTWICH

‘Stay with us, Lord, on our journey’

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## 5<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF EASTER 15 MAY 2022

### HOLY MASS THIS WEEK

<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>First Mass of Sunday is 7pm Saturday. Sunday morning 9.00 &amp; 11.00 am</b>
MONDAY	9.15 am Easter Weekday
TUESDAY	<b>9.15 am</b> Easter Weekday
WEDNESDAY	12 noon Easter Weekday/St John I, Pope & Martyr
THURSDAY	12 noon Funeral Mass for Sheila Finley
FRIDAY	9.15 am Funeral Mass for Delia Fraser
SATURDAY	11.00 am Easter Weekday/St Christopher Magallenes

### **The church is open every day this week**

**Monday, Tuesday and Friday** from 9.00 am to 6.00 pm

**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,**

On Thursday at St Monica's I celebrated Mass for Year 11 Leavers. Canon Parkinson, our neighbouring parish priest, gave the homily and spoke of the difficult two years it has been in schools. Teachers and pupils have had to keep going in very difficult situations.

Now at last things are changing. More and more people are getting back to work, to shopping, to getting out and about, even to holidays at home and abroad.

Isn't it time therefore that we got back to Sunday Mass? **Our Bishops think so.** Last

week they invited us all to **return to Sunday Mass at Pentecost, that is, on Whit Sunday, 5 June.**

*They wrote: Since the beginning of the Covid pandemic, until the present time, we have shared with you our judgment that the situation of the last two years has meant that the Sunday Obligation has been impeded and has needed to be fulfilled in other ways.*

*We thank God that this situation has now changed. The pressing challenges of the pandemic have lessened significantly. Most people have resumed the wide range of normal activities, no longer restricted by the previous Covid measures.*

***We therefore believe that the reasons which have prevented Catholics from attending Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation no longer apply.***

It is an old and true saying that 'It's the Mass that matters'. Sharing in Holy Mass on the Lord's Day, Sunday, is the best way we have of worshipping God. We are doing what Our Lord asked us to do, when he said 'Do this, in memory of me'. Sharing in Sunday Mass is our sacred obligation.

The Bishops know that some people still feel hesitant about mixing in public, and so they write:

*We understand there will still be some members of our*

congregations who, for reasons of health, do not feel safe enough to return to Mass. It has always been the understanding of the Church that when the freedom of any Catholic to attend Mass in person is impeded for a serious reason, because of situations such as ill health, care for the sick or legitimate fear, this is not a breach of the Sunday Obligation.

I hope that very many of you will feel able to resume our custom of Sunday Mass. Numbers have been increasing weekly of late. But if you still feel unable to mix in public, try to make Sunday holy in other ways.



We have several events to look forward to in our parish in the near future.

On **Tuesday 31 May** we will celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the visit of **Pope St John Paul II**. On that day in 1982 he celebrated Mass in Heaton Park, within this parish, and ordained twelve priests. One of those priests is now **Bishop Tom Neylon** of Liverpool. He will be the main celebrant at Mass here at 7.00 pm on 31 May, along with Bishop John Arnold of Salford and Bishop Mark Davies of Shrewsbury (who served the papal Mass in the Park, two years before his own ordination). There will be a reception in the hall afterwards to which you are all invited.

Plans are also in hand for a celebration of the **Queen's Jubilee** with a Family Night in the parish hall on Friday 3 June. Details next week.

Looking further ahead, the next parish trip will be to the Manchester Opera House on Thursday 21 July for the

musical '**South Pacific**'. Booking forms and poster are at the back of church. Ticket price including coach is £43.00. Come and join us to sing along to 'Some Enchanted Evening' or 'I'm Gonna Wash That Man Right Outa My Hair'!



Children in Year 3 continue today to prepare for their **first Holy Communion** in a few weeks' time. They meet with their parents in the parish hall at 9.50 am.



I warmly welcome to our parish **Iryna Oliynyk** and her son **Luka**. They have come from Ukraine for safety and are guests of a parishioner. I'm sure we all wish them well and we will continue to pray for peace in their homeland. Luka will start at our primary school shortly.



Your continued financial support of the parish during the past difficult years and despite rising domestic costs is deeply appreciated. If you gave to the parish in the financial year that ended on 5 April – either using gift envelopes or by bank transfers – **there is a letter for you** at the back of church. Please collect your letter, and so save the cost of postage.

If you think you should have a letter, but you can't find one, please ring Vin Allerton on 0161-773 3318 or text to 07305-727900.

Thank you for your generous support last week of the **Priests Training Fund**. The total so far is £619.32.

And let's make the most of the sunshine this weekend!

**Fr Allen**

## **Fr Dearman's Reflections on hymns to the Holy Spirit**

### **1 – COME DOWN, O LOVE DIVINE**

This is a popular hymn for weddings, but it is also a wonderful source of inspiration for all of us who need love in our lives, love received and love given, and the Holy Spirit is the divine source of that love. He is not directly named until the very last line of the hymn, but in the first verse he is addressed by one of his special titles, Comforter.

We ask our comforter to seek us out, since we do not always remember to seek him out. We ask him to visit us with his *glowing ardour*, his *holy flame* of love.

Our *earthly passions* form a very important part of our lives, yet in the second verse we ask that these should be turned to *dust and ashes*, overwhelmed by the heat of love that the Spirit brings into our hearts. His *glorious light* will illuminate our path through life and will be like a cloak surrounding us with his warm embrace.

As well as the external gift of holy charity, we ask for the internal gift of humility, of *true lowliness of heart*. We need to *weep with loathing* for our personal failings which can obstruct our love of our neighbours.

The last verse draws us to aspire to a heroic level of love, far exceeding our natural human powers. *None can guess its grace till he become the place wherein the Holy Spirit makes his dwelling!*