



# OUR LADY OF GRACE PRESTWICH

‘Stay with us, Lord, on our journey’

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## 2<sup>nd</sup> SUNDAY OF EASTER DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY 19 APRIL 2020

### My dear Parishioners and Friends,

“We’ve not murdered anybody yet!” So one mother said to me on the phone the other day. We were talking about what effect the lockdown is having on our homes.

It was of course said in jest. The family members were in fact enjoying their time together. The mother said how they were doing more things together. As well as the children’s school work, they were talking together more, watching programmes together, praying and attending Mass together in different parts of the world. They had been to Rome, to the Holy Land, to Walsingham as well as to Salford Cathedral.

I’ve heard much the same from other families, too, as well as a suggestion that with time on our hands we can have a clear out, so that when the charity shops reopen, we will be continuing to help others!

What I’ve heard this week from both families and individuals has strongly reminded me of the ‘domestic

church’. What is that, you might ask?

In answer, I quote from the Catechism of the Catholic Church, no.1656:

***In our own time, in a world often alien and even hostile to faith, believing families are of primary importance as centres of living, radiant faith. For this reason, the Second Vatican Council, using an ancient expression, calls the family the Domestic Church.***

Notice that the Catechism says believing families are of ‘primary importance’ as centres of living faith. Not the parish, not the diocese, but ‘believing families’.

When we speak of ‘Church’ we might think of the universal Church, led by Pope Francis as bishop of Rome, and all bishops in union with him. Or we might think of the local diocesan church, led by our Bishop John. Or we might think of Our Lady of Grace parish. After all, this is where we receive most of our religious instruction and the sacraments.

But there is this other level, the Domestic Church. In many ways, this is more basic than the other three levels. After all, it is in the family first of all that we live and grow and love.

The Second Vatican Council spoke very warmly about Christian marriage, and how husband and wife reflect the unity and fruitful love which exists between Christ and His Church. How they help each other to attain to holiness in their married life and in the rearing and education of their children. How they have their own special gift among the people of God. And then:

*From the wedlock of Christians there comes the family, in which new citizens of human society are born, who by the grace of the Holy Spirit received in baptism are made children of God, thus perpetuating the people of God through the centuries. **The family is, so to speak, the domestic church.** In it parents should, by their word and example, be the first teachers of the faith to their children; they should encourage them in the vocation which is proper to each of them, fostering*

*with special care vocation to a sacred state (Lumen Gentium 11).*

In this pandemic, when churches are closed and we are forced to isolate in our homes, the Domestic Church comes into its own. This is the time to treasure the sacrament of marriage, by which our homes are small Domestic Churches. We remember that Christ our Lord is present with us. And not only when we gather and pray, but all the time.

I hope your home will truly be a Domestic Church, with plenty of fun and laughter, with everyone trying to be helpful, and using modern ways to keep in touch with grandparents and elderly friends and relatives.

I decided not to live stream from Our Lady of Grace. It would probably have been very amateurish, and anyway, we are Catholics! That means, as many of you have proved, that we can go anywhere in the world and the Mass will be the same. So do travel and share the Mass, the rosary and other devotions with our brothers and sisters elsewhere.

And no murdering!

Fr Dearman joins me in sending warmest greetings to all, and our prayers that you will keep safe and well.

Fr Allen

### **Come and Join Us!**

***Our virtual congregation has much more than doubled from last week. There are now 538 parishioners and friends in church.***

*Your photos have been printed and BluTacked onto the benches. They provide a*

*colourful and encouraging background to the celebrations. **If you haven't already emailed in your photos, please do so and add to our congregation.** And if you have sent in yours, spread the word and encourage family members and friends to send in theirs.*

### **Where can I find Mass?**

***<https://www.churchservice.s.tv/whats-on-now>***

***[www.walsingham.org.uk](http://www.walsingham.org.uk) Monsignor John Armitage will give a **Retreat** via the Shrine Livestream. Starting on **Sunday 19 April** after Compline at 8.00 pm **until Sunday 26 April.** Talks each day will be at 10.30 am and 4.00 pm. There will be Mass each day at 12 noon. The Divine Mercy prayers will be recited with the Rosary at 3.00 pm daily. Morning and Evening prayer will be at 8.30 am and 5.00 pm respectively.***

***EWTN Daily Mass at 12 noon, 6.00pm and 11.00pm. Rosary for children 7.30pm. EWTN can be accessed from the internet and by satellite TV. On Sky, 588.***

***Pope Francis' daily Mass any time of the day on **Vatican YouTube.** Go to **vatican.va** then 'Vatican News', then the YouTube symbol on the right, then 'Mass at Santa Marta'.***

***Locally, **St Clare's, Blackley Facebook page,** and others.***

***[www.lourdes-france.org](http://www.lourdes-france.org) also has English Rosary at 2.00 pm BST.***

### **Parish Collection**

For setting up a monthly standing order for the parish:

Barclays Bank. Sort code 20-55-34. A/C no 60192309.

A/C name, TSDT Our Lady of Grace Prestwich

Please put an identifier on your payments, so that we know for reclaim purposes.

### **A Helpful Indulgence**

*From the Vatican, authorised by Pope Francis: A Plenary Indulgence is granted to the faithful suffering from Coronavirus, if, with a spirit detached from any sin, they unite spiritually through the media to the celebration of Holy Mass, the recitation of the Holy Rosary, to the pious practice of the Way of the Cross or other forms of devotion, or if at least they will recite the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and a pious invocation to the Blessed Virgin Mary, offering this trial in a spirit of faith in God and charity towards their brothers and sisters, with the will to fulfil the usual conditions (sacramental confession, Eucharistic communion and prayer according to the Holy Father's intentions), as soon as possible.*

Health care workers, family members and all those who care for the sick of Coronavirus will obtain the same gift of the Plenary Indulgence under the same conditions.

Also those faithful who offer a visit to the Blessed Sacrament, or Eucharistic adoration, or read the Holy Scriptures for at least half an hour, or recite the Holy Rosary, or follow the pious exercise of the Way of the Cross, or the recitation of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, to implore from Almighty God the end of the epidemic, relief for those who are afflicted and eternal salvation for those whom the Lord has called to Himself.

The Church prays for those unable to receive the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick and of the Viaticum, entrusts each and every one to divine Mercy by virtue of the communion of saints and grants the faithful a Plenary Indulgence on the point of death, provided that they are duly disposed and have recited a few prayers during their lifetime. The use of a crucifix or a cross is recommended.