



**OUR LADY OF GRACE
PARISH, PRESTWICH**

PARISH PRIEST Fr. PHILIP CALDWELL

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Prayer Intentions for the Sick

Caroline Williams, Silvana Mantio, Christine Rogers, Craig Millward, David Noble, Roxine Callow, Patrick Hullinson, Barbara Murphy, Florence Ward, Peggy Sugrue, Dale Broom, Jackie Berry, Bernard Holt, Patricia Greene, Bernadette Greene, Brenda Neiles.

Prayer Intentions for the Dead

Recently Deceased: David Millward, Gerard Crolla, Marie Valgimigli, Mike Kennelly, Margaret Kelly, Paul Peacock.

Anniversaries: Patrick McDonald, Martin and Ellie Mulryan, Maureen and Denis Geraghty, Irene Caswell.

WISDOM FROM THE SAINTS


“The loveliest masterpiece of the heart of God is the heart of a mother.”

St Thérèse of Lisieux

“In the evening, when you go to sleep, hold your beads, doze off reciting them, do like those little ones who go to sleep mumbling, ‘Mamma!’.”
St Bernadette



“The most important person on earth is a mother. She cannot claim the honour of having built Notre Dame Cathedral ... She has built something more magnificent than any cathedral—a dwelling for an immortal soul, the tiny perfection of her baby’s body ... The angels have not been blessed with such a grace. They cannot share in God’s creative work to bring new saints to heaven. Only a human mother can. God joins forces with mothers in performing this act of creation.”
Cardinal Mindszenty.

 Last Week’s collection was: £1238.20. Thank you

£££

The monthly figure for Standing Orders: £1366.00



This week, the Sacred Heart Lamp burns for peace in the Holy Land.



This week, Our Lady’s Lamp burns for all Mothers.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Sunday 10th March	Holy Masses 9am & 11am
Monday 11th March	Holy Mass 12 noon
Tuesday 12th March	Holy Mass 12 noon
Wednesday 13th March	Holy Mass 12 noon
Thursday 14th March	Holy Mass 12 noon
Friday 15th March	NO EARLY MASS Holy Mass 12noon
Saturday 16th March	Confessions 4-4.40pm Holy Mass 11am Vigil 5pm

Mothers' Day

On Laetare Sunday, we show our appreciation for all the women in our parish who contribute so much and we thank God especially for our mothers and all mothers. There's a small posy available for all women today as a mark of our appreciation.

Fr Joel Yeboah CSSp

I'm very grateful to Fr Joel who has come to celebrate the Masses for you this weekend. I'm sorry I can't be with you for Mothers' Day but I will be leading a retreat for the priests of Southwark Diocese. Fr Connolly will be here to celebrate the weekday Masses. Should you need a priest in an emergency please contact the presbytery as usual.

Recollection for Readers and Eucharistic Ministers

This Saturday, 16th March, there'll be a time of recollection for Readers and Eucharistic Ministers—I understand that not everyone will be able to make it but hope as many who can will come. We'll begin at 11am with Mass together and then go into the Hall for two short reflections and lunch. It's an opportunity to be together and reflect on our ministry of helping the Word to be made flesh in our community. **There will be no Exposition.**

Car Park Barrier

This week, the carpark barrier has been replaced. The old one wasn't working properly and didn't meet safety standards. Presently, the barrier will raise when your car approaches to either enter or leave the carpark. However, when the carpark at the end of Fairfax Rd closes we will need to consider how to keep the carpark secure for parish use only. We will keep you updated as to any necessary changes.

Book Club: Monday 11th March at 2pm in the Cottage. All Welcome.

Couples for Christ Filipino Choir

I'd like to express our gratitude to the Filipino Choir who sang at Mass last Saturday. Many in the congregation commented on how beautiful the Mass was last weekend. Who knows, perhaps we could welcome the choir once a month to lead us in worship?

Finance and Buildings Report

We've had some very positive feedback on the Report that was issued last weekend and people have expressed their appreciation of a clear and transparent report on our situation. I'd like to thank the members of both committees for their help in putting this together.

Snakes and Ladders

The story of the People of God is full of ups and downs: Second Chronicles records the burning down of the Temple and the descent of the people into infidelity and depravity:—a downward spiral that leads them from the Holy City to exile by the rivers of Babylon. It was there that the chosen people were at their lowest—where they sat down and wept.

And the Serpent that Moses holds up in the wilderness was a low-down, slippery thing: spreading poison and death. Lifted up, by the prophet, it becomes a sign of the Cross: the lowest point in the history of humanity, through which God raised a fallen world. Over this whole, sorry story of snakes and ladders, Jesus, the risen Christ now presides.

Over the last few weeks, we've considered the *arma Christi*, the weapons of salvation and today our readings inspire us to think of two more instruments of the Passion: the ladders and the dice.

Like the people of Israel, we sometimes refuse to believe that there's any providence in what happens to us. Why this now? Why me? As if life were a cruel game and everything subject to chance. And then we remember the dice cast at the foot of the Cross—the lottery for Christ's clothing—and we think again. In the story of the Passion, we see how the love and mercy of God turns everything to the good: even the most desperate things. By his grace, God weaves all that seems random and wrong in our lives into a work of art—the good life we were meant to live from the beginning.

Proverbs 16:33 says: “We may throw the dice but the Lord determines how they fall.” Through the obedience of Jesus, God turns the desperate, downward spiral of human history around and “raises us up with him and gives us a place with him in heaven.”

God raises us on the ladder of the Cross—when according to the light of Christ's death and resurrection, we start to understand the mystery of our own lives: That through the action of God's grace all that has brought us down and made us low becomes the means of our being raised in Christ: sickness, sin and suffering become the ladder by which we reach new life.

To see the work of art that God makes from the change and chance of life we need the light of faith—to believe. We need to live in Christ and accept that through the ladder of the Cross we can climb to new life. Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born again, leave go of old patterns and step out into the light of faith. God's grace helps us to do this in Lent. It helps us to see in the ups and downs of life—an artful pattern whereby God is bringing us closer to himself and making us more like him. In Lent, grace gives us courage to mount the ladder of the Cross and to make our way to God.