

## PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR THE SICK

Ann Berry, Christine Rogers, David Noble, Patrick Hullinson, Florence Ward, Barbara Murphy, Della McKernan, Dale Broom, Jackie Berry, Bernard Holt, Patricia Greene, Bernadette Greene, Eileen Butt, Frank Colgan, Marian Whyte, Stephen King, William Lyons, Beth Aninstead-Cargan, Sue Zimny, Tom Cutler, Rosemary Keyes, Anne Holland, Caroline Hoad, Kevin McCormick, Ellen Sumaya and Sean Galvin.

## PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR THE DEAD

**Recently Deceased:** Rosalie Dodson, Gordon Frazer, Vincent O'Brien, Patrick Augustine Devlin, Victoria McManus.

**Anniversaries:** Martin and Ellie Mulryan, Maureen and Denis Geraghy, Jack Watson, Deceased members of the Savill and Wrigley Families.

## WISDOM OF THE SAINTS

Today's feast stresses how Jesus, at the beginning of his public life, wanted to receive the "baptism of conversion" (Lk 3:3), administered by John in the Jordan. This act, by which he, though innocent, showed his solidarity with sinners, became a moment of revelation. In fact, as he came out of the water, "immediately he saw the heavens opened and the Spirit descending upon him like a dove" (Mk 1:10). By this singular experience, Jesus is accredited as the Messiah awaited for centuries—and we, through baptism as God's children.

Pope St John Paul II

### Lepra Collection

Details about Lepra's work can be seen on our website.

	Last week's collection was £1044.36	£££	The monthly figure for Standing Orders: £1380.00
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	This week the Sacred Heart Lamp will burn for OLOG School		This week, the lamp at the crib burns for members of our family who are sick.
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## WEEKLY NEWSLETTER 11TH JANUARY 2026



## OUR LADY OF GRACE PARISH, PRESTWICH

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## BAPTISM OF THE LORD

<b>Sunday 11th January</b>	<b>Holy Masses 9am &amp;11am</b>
<b>Monday 12th January</b> St Aelred of Rievaulx	<b>Holy Mass 12 noon</b>
<b>Tuesday 13th January</b> St Hilary	<b>Holy Mass 12 noon</b>
<b>Wednesday 14th January</b>	<b>Holy Mass 12 noon</b>
<b>Thursday 15th January</b>	<b>Holy Mass 12 noon</b>
<b>Friday 16th January</b>	<b>Holy Mass 12 noon</b>
<b>Saturday 17th January</b> St Anthony of Egypt	<b>Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament Confessions 11.40am-12.50pm, 4-4.40pm Holy Mass 11am Vigil 5pm</b>

## Prayer Group

The Prayer Group will meet in the Cottage on Monday 12th January at 7pm. The group is open to everyone and new members are always welcome.

## Book Club

The next meeting of the group will be held on **Monday 12<sup>th</sup> January at 2pm in the Cottage**. We will be discussing *The Beacon* by Susan Hill, a short novel from 2008 that explores the dynamics of family life in a North Country farmhouse.

The full programme for 2026 is listed on the noticeboard outside church. Further details from the group's convenor, Vin Allerton, on 07305-727900.

## Quiz and Bingo Night

To beat the January blues, The Parish Social Committee would like to announce a Quiz and Bingo Night on Friday January 30th at 7.30pm. Tickets only £2.

## Food Bank

The SVP are now taking care of food bank donations for our parish. They can be placed in the basket at the foot of the choir-loft steps or in a basket near the side-door. Please **do not remove the basket**. This will be emptied most days and stuff stored in the house. **Any donations of dry and tinned food** will be gratefully received.

## Crib Offerings

Different organizations make contact almost every week requesting to make an appeal in the parish. I do my best to limit these. For over two years, Laurice Jarman at Lepra has been pleading for help. Since this cause is so specific and close to the Gospel and since Sunday 25th January marks World Leprosy Day 2026, I have agreed. So as not to burden you with yet another collection at this time, I propose that this year's Crib Offering—monies collected from the votives while the crib is in place—be sent to Lepra. If you'd like to make a particular donation then please place that in the crib-side votive wall box too.

## Homelessness

Something strange is at the heart of what we celebrate at Christmas — because homelessness is at the centre of this great Feast and that's an unusual thing to celebrate, isn't it? Everyone knows that there was no room for Him at the Inn, that Jesus and His family had to leave their home and flee to Egypt because of threats. This homelessness of Jesus and His family continues throughout His life—the Gospel records that he had nowhere to lay his head—and year by year, we continue to celebrate it. And we do this for a reason—because Christ's homelessness on earth reflects a deeper homelessness of His. It reflects the fact that for us and for our salvation He has left His home in heaven—He has become homeless so that we can come home—be at home in His Church, in His Kingdom, at home forever in heaven.

His descending into the waters of the Jordan, His being plunged down into the deep at the hands of a mere mortal, is perhaps the clearest sign of His having left home and of our coming home. In many of the ancient icons that depict the Baptism of the Lord, the waters are dark and turbulent. In them lurk all sorts of strange and even demonic creatures. Jesus is not only homeless in the foreign land of our world—He has descended to the depths of its dark chaos.

Just at that moment, just when Jesus touches the depth and comes up out of the water—we are given a clear proclamation of who He is. No longer a stranger, someone foreign to us—the one who shares our life in all its mystery is the Beloved Son of God.

Two aspects of the Baptism of Our Lord strike us deeply today—Just how far from home the Son of God has come to dwell among us and just how close to God He has brought us by making us at home with Him. And the immensity of this gift is not just something we have got to know about, something we've heard witness of, can be sure took place. On this day, we are reminded that we share in this immense gift: Through our Baptism we experience the closeness of One who should be beyond us and whose ways should be foreign to us. We no longer feel like aliens in a foreign land but fellow citizens in our true home.

There is no going back—and if every we slip back into old ways of speaking and behaving we feel we don't belong there. Ours it is now only to go forward, to explore our new home and the benefits of its life—We have died to the past and now our life is hidden with Christ in God: to be explored and enjoyed each day and forever.