

**PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR THE SICK**

John Higgins, Caroline Williams, Christine Rogers, David Noble, Patrick Hullinson, Barbara Murphy, Florence Ward, Peggy Sugrue, Della McKernan, Dale Broom, Jackie Berry, Bernard Holt, Patricia Greene, Bernadette Greene, Eileen Butt, Carol Doherty, Frank Colgan, Marian Whyte, Stephen King, William Lyons, Beth Anistead-Cargan, Sue Zimny.

**PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR THE DEAD**

**Recently Deceased:** Paul Ryan, Pat Gooddy, Kevin Butler, Ashley Salmon Snr., Judith Allerton, James Boyle.

**Anniversaries:** Cornelius Carr, Catherine and Peter Gallagher, David Briggs Patricia Vancalsteren.

**WISDOM FROM THE SAINTS**

“Faith lifts the soul. Hope supports it. Experience says it is so—and that’s how Love wants it to be.”

St Elizabeth Seton

“Surrender without reservation is what is asked—it’s required of us so that the face of the earth be renewed.”

St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross



**Habemus Papam**

Lord, source of eternal life and truth, give to your shepherd a spirit of courage and right judgment, a spirit of knowledge and love. By governing with fidelity those entrusted to his care, may he, as successor to the Apostle Peter and vicar of Christ, build your Church into a sacrament of unity, love, and peace for all the world.

 Last Week’s collection was: £1022.85 Thank you

£££

The monthly figure for Standing Orders: £1380.00



The Sacred Heart Chapel will be blocked off for renovation..



This week, Our Lady’s Lamp burns for Pope Leo XIV.



**OUR LADY OF GRACE PARISH, PRESTWICH**

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**FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**

Sunday 11th May

Holy Masses 9am & 11am

Monday 12th May

Holy Mass 12 noon

Tuesday 13th May

Our Lady of Fatima

Holy Mass 12 noon

Wednesday 14th May

St Matthias

Holy Mass 12 noon

Thursday 15th May

Holy Mass 12 noon

Friday 16th May

Requiem Paul Ryan 12 noon

Saturday 17th May

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament  
Confessions 11.40am-12.50pm, 4-4.40pm  
Holy Mass 11am Vigil 5pm

## Building Works

As you can see, helped by good weather, the contractors have got off to a good start. They have made progress on the new side entrance and are well on with removing the lantern roof over the Sacred Heart chapel. Some good news is that using the present contractor to do the re-decoration works would mean that we save on preliminary costs for scaffolding and setting up and that this work could happen in the same twenty-one week period. Less good news is that costs will prohibit us doing the whole of the redecoration at once. The Finance and Property Committees will discuss these things at our next meeting and then provide more information for the whole parish.

## Parishes Tackling Poverty

Thanks to those who have expressed an interest in attending this workshop. When a date and venue has been decided by the organisers, I'll publish this in the newsletter.

## Cafod Talk: The Atrato River, Columbia

Learn more about how your donations make a difference. Join us to hear from our visiting Columbian partners, SIEMBRA, about their work supporting human rights and protecting the environment in the Atrato River region. **Tuesday May 13<sup>th</sup>, 7.30pm** at Our Lady of Dolours, 500 Bury New Rd, Salford M7 4ND. For more info and to register (for refreshment purposes) email: [kkeenan@cafod.org.uk](mailto:kkeenan@cafod.org.uk)

## Book Club

The next meeting of the group will be held on **Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May at 2pm in the Parish Hall**. Our theme is Pastoral Poetry - a popular form in England from the 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> Century, but we will accept any poems about nature. If you can, please bring 12 copies of your chosen poem. New members will be very welcome. For further information: phone Vin Allerton 0161-773 3318 text 07305 727900 or email [vinallerton@gmail.com](mailto:vinallerton@gmail.com). The full programme for 2025 can be seen on the notice board outside church.

## New Parish Website

A new Parish website is presently being completed and it's necessary to populate it with news about the different groups and parish activities. Could I ask that each group send a short piece containing information relevant to your group so that this can be up-loaded? The aim is to have a simple, clear and easily-navigated site so that people can easily access what's available.

## God's Right Hand and His Left

From Wednesday, this week, all eyes were on Rome: specifically, on the chimney coming out of the Sistine Chapel roof. Was it black smoke or white? And what of the Cardinals inside that chapel who were meeting to elect a new Pope? Where were their eyes directed until they fell on the man they had chosen? Most likely upwards and ahead to the beautiful ceiling painted by Michelangelo and to his enormous fresco of the Last Judgement above the high altar. Hopefully, these two scenes focused the minds of those gathered in conclave: speaking of the gravity and creativity of their choice and inspiring them to elect the one identified by the hand of God.

Since all eyes were turned to the Sistine Chapel in these days - perhaps we could go there this Sunday too? Go there in our mind's eye. Because the hand of God, spoken about by Jesus in today's Gospel, is beautifully depicted there in a scene most familiar to us all: the famous image of God's extended right hand effortlessly and lovingly giving life to Adam and the whole human race. Centuries after Michelangelo made the fresco with his own hand, that image of the two, out-stretched and almost touching hands, remains electric.

Jesus tells us that no one can be taken from the hand of God. He doesn't say from which hand! And one of the things Michelangelo shows us with great delicacy is that it's not a matter of either/or but of both. All the eyes of the world have tended to focus on the outstretched right hand. That's the iconographic image copied and repeated so that it's fixed in our minds. But the fresco shows God to be something of a magician! While all eyes are on the creative right hand, we do not notice the work of the left! God's other hand goes behind his back and embraces a woman and child in a wonderful act of mercy. As if the right hand doesn't know what the left is doing, God creates and saves in a single moment; we who are the work of God's hands. Jesus says that no one can remove us from this on-going, eternal work ...

And Jesus should know because His human hands are at one with this work. His hands hold the exact same creative and merciful touch, and through His Resurrection they are now stretched out towards us eternally. This is beautifully captured by another painting housed in Rome, where Caravaggio, a disciple of Michelangelo, copies the hand of his master from the Sistine, and inserts it into an image of Jesus calling the disciple Matthew. In Jesus, the hand of God still stretches out to create and save.

Have you ever taken a long look at your own hands, at how marvellous they are? Taken time to appreciate what the Supreme Artist, God the Father has done for you - not in fresco but in fact? It's through the two hands we have that the Master still inserts His creativity and mercy into the world. Didn't Christ say to St Teresa of Avila, "I have no hands now but yours"?