

PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR THE SICK

Pope Francis, 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, Joan Eastwood, William Lyons, Winnie Shelton.

PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR THE DEAD

Recently Deceased: June Doherty, Mary McNelly, Brian Farrand, Karen Rice, Patricia Salts, Vinny Grant, Delia Nilan and Christine Hackland.

Anniversaries: Bishop Hugh Christopher Budd, William Christian, Anna O’Hanlon, Ursula Rybicki.

WISDOM FROM THE SAINTS

“The best time to encounter the Holy Spirit is at the end of the day—when according to a good habit the Spirit comes to help examine our conscience”


“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control”.



St Paul



Fruits of the Spirit

“Imagine a fruit tree. Obviously enough, the fruit itself is not the whole tree. But it’s the product of the tree’s growth. In the same way our good actions are not the fruit itself but the outward sign of an inner transformation taking place by God’s grace. This transformation produces a harvest of virtuous habits that bring us joy.” St Thomas Aquinas

	Last Week’s collection was: £1015.88 Thank you	£££	The monthly figure for Standing Orders: £1380.00
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	This week, the Sacred Heart Lamp burns for Christine Hackland RIP.		This week, Our Lady’s Lamp burns for all those who are sick.
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OUR LADY OF GRACE PARISH, PRESTWICH

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THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

Sunday 23rd March	Holy Masses 9am & 11am
Monday 24th March	Holy Mass 12 noon
Tuesday 25th March Annunciation of the Lord	Holy Mass 12 noon
Wednesday 26th March	Requiem June Doherty 12 noon
Thursday 27th March	Requiem Mary McNelly 12 noon
Friday 28th March	Holy Mass 8am Holy Mass 12 noon
Saturday 29th March	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament Confessions 11.40am-12.50pm, 4-4.40pm Holy Mass 11am Vigil 5pm

Annual Financial Report

Presently, I'm working with the Finance Committee to prepare the annual report to the parish on our finances. This will be made available in April. From it you will be able to get a sense of how we are doing—our income and expenditure. Already we are able to see that our rental income has increased significantly and that the redecoration fund is doing well. When we have a full and clearer picture we will let you know.

St Patrick's Night Celebration

Thanks to everyone who came along to support the parish's St Patrick's Night celebration. Thanks to the band and to all who helped and a special thanks to Nick from Percival's who made welcome donations. The night made £845 for the redecoration fund.

Easter Market

Over the weekend of Palm Sunday—12th and 13th April we will have a little market in the Parish Hall after the Masses. This will be an opportunity to stock up on a few Easter gifts: Homemade Marmalades, Homemade Strawberry, Blackberry and Raspberry Jams, Homemade Breads, chocolate and gifts. All the proceeds of the market will go to the redecoration fund.

Dates For Your Diary

The Social Committee are pleased to announce some up-coming events so that you can keep the dates free should you wish to come along.

Quiz and Bingo Night	Friday April 4th at 7.30pm
Magic Night	Friday May 9th at 7.30pm
Country & Western Night	Friday June 13th at 7.30pm

Friday Early Morning Mass

Each Friday in Lent there is an early morning Mass at 8am with the children and staff from Our Lady of Grace School. Parishioners are most welcome to attend and are invited up to school for a quick breakfast afterwards.

Stations of the Cross

The Stations of the Cross will take place after the noon Mass on each Friday of Lent.

The Season for Fruit

What happens when the Creator Spirit comes? When the future of God touches us and our world? Fruit! That's what happens: - everything God's Spirit touches with holiness springs into life and bears fruit. We can see this all around us in the natural world at the moment and this week, on Tuesday, the Solemn Feast of the Annunciation will give us a reminder that all that is going on in nature is just a poor reflection of what goes on in the realm of the Spirit. Mary lets us see that when we are filled with God's grace, touched and overshadowed by the Spirit, we bear fruit - in our bodies and our souls. When the future touches the present, the future of God's Kingdom, we see fruit in our lives, or we should do! Lent is the season for the fruits of the Spirit to become heavy, ripen and be ready.

Week by week, we're reflecting on the work of the Holy Spirit this Lent. On the first Sunday we considered how, from the beginning, the Spirit has worked creatively in the world making everything and getting it ready. And last Sunday, we thought about how the Spirit guides us to the fulfilment of new life by allowing us to step into the future and experience the life of heaven. We have looked at how it was in the beginning and how it ever shall be but very important for Lent is how these two dimensions, past and future have an impact on how it is now. Now, is the only time that matters to God because, being eternal, God is the everlasting now.

Our first reading from Genesis elaborates this for us today in the story of the burning bush. First, Moses turns away from the bush and hides, like sinful Adam did in the beginning—when they ate forbidden fruit. God tells Moses that he can see the people living under the history of this curse—oppressed by work. Then God lets Moses glimpse the promised land where the Spirit will lead them in the future. But God is not concerned with the past and God is not just a future promise. God says the name by which he is to be called: I Am Who I Am. The God we believe in is the God of now.

This is why Jesus is not interested in the past—just in whether we will repent now, be touched by the grace of his future Kingdom, and bear fruit. These days, in schools, all the talk is about impact. What is the impact of what we learn? Do we learn our lesson, change and lead a different life? Now, I bet when you learned about the Holy Spirit in school, you learned about the Spirit's gifts. We've each been receiving those gifts for years and years. Lent is a time to ask what impact have these gifts had on life? What fruits have they borne? The lesson of the Catechism might have been learned: The fruits of the Spirit are Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-Control. But since the Holy Spirit took possession of our souls, what is the impact? Have his gifts borne fruit? Is the tree of our life heavy and ripe or ready for cutting down?