



OUR LADY OF GRACE PARISH, PRESTWICH

PARISH PRIEST Fr. PHILIP CALDWELL

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Prayer Intentions for the Sick

Maureen Holt, Silvana Mantio, Christine Rogers, Craig Millward, David 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: Kathleen Carroll, Stephen Alcroft, Michael McCormack.

Anniversaries: Begoña Peinador, Andrew Walsh, Brian Miller, Mary Mann, Anne McLoughlin, Gladys Chapman, Sr Ann McLoughlin.

WISDOM FROM THE SAINTS

“Lent is a time to put life back in its proper place and remember two things about ourselves: We came from God and through our transfiguration are going back to God.”
St John Paul II

“Apart from the Cross, there is no other ladder by which we will get to heaven.”

St Rose of Lima



Soul of Christ, sanctify me.
Body of Christ, save me.
Blood of Christ, inebriate me. Water from Christ's side, wash me.
Passion of Christ, strengthen me. O Good Jesus, hear me.
Within Thy wounds hide me.
Suffer me not to be separated from Thee.
From the malignant enemy defend me.
In the hour of my death call me, and bid me come unto Thee.
That with all Thy saints, I may praise Thee, forever. Amen



Last Week's collection was:
£1047.18. Thank you

£££

The monthly figure for
Standing Orders: £1366.00



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



This week, Our Lady's Lamp burns for the sick and house-bound.

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

Sunday 25th February

Holy Masses 9am & 11am

Monday 26th February

Holy Mass 12 noon

Tuesday 27th February

Holy Mass 12 noon

Wednesday 28th February

Holy Mass 12 noon

Thursday 29th February

Holy Mass 12 noon

Friday 1st March
St David

Holy Mass 8am
Holy Mass 12noon

Saturday 2nd March

Exposition 11.30am-1pm
Confessions 11.40am-12.50pm, 4-4.40pm
Holy Mass 11am Vigil 5pm

St Patrick's Night Celebration

We are incredibly fortunate to be able to welcome Rionaghach Connolly to lead our parish's St Patrick's Night celebrations on Saturday, 16th March. Rionaghach, originally from Armagh but now living in Manchester, was BBC Radio 2 folk singer of the year for 2023 and sings with Honeyfeet and The Breath. With a few musicians she'll lead an evening of singing and dancing in the Hall. There will be a hot supper and a bar until late. Please look out for details and save the date.

Cafod Appeal

This Lent, your donations to CAFOD's *Family Fast Day* appeal will help hardworking people like James, the fisherman in Liberia, with resources, tools and training to feed their families for good. Please give today, using the envelope that was included in your Lent bag. Just put your envelope in with the offertory collection, either this or next weekend. Spare envelopes, and prayer cards, are available by the church doors.

Baptism Meeting

There are no baptisms during Lent. The next meeting for those seeking a baptism at Our Lady of Grace will be on **Wednesday 6th March at 7.30pm** in the Hall.

Premises and Finance Committees

Could members of both Committees please check your emails and respond.

Safeguarding

At some point in the next month, we expect all our parish volunteers who currently need a DBS to have had one. This includes new volunteers and those whose certificate had expired. Many thanks to everyone for your co-operation. Safeguarding is not a job that can be completed but an on-going concern and care for God's people. It's the responsibility of us all to watch out for and keep safe anyone in our community who may be at risk.

Day of Recollection for Readers and Eucharistic Ministers

On Saturday, 16th March I'm hoping to have a few hours recollection for our parish Ministers and Readers. If we met for Mass at 11am, we could then go over to the Hall for two short talks and a buffet lunch together. I expect the recollection being complete by 3pm at the latest. It would be great if as many of us as possible could meet together.

The Mass of the Lord's Supper on Maundy Thursday provides a perfect opportunity for the commissioning and recommissioning of ministers. I understand that some may be away for Easter but it would be good if as many as possible could attend the commissioning.

Arma Christi

Lent began with a declaration of war: A spiritual battle against the dark powers that control us, rob us of our freedom, and make life unmanageable. In this struggle, St Paul gives us great encouragement by reminding us that God is on our side. But what does this mean in reality?

Last week, I mentioned Christ, the arrow, who takes our humanity straight to the Father's heart. Just as I finished preaching and turned round, I noticed the angel behind me carrying the long arrow—the lance that pierced the Saviour's side and went up into his Sacred Heart, as he hung on the Cross. And then I noticed that this was one of four angels hovering round the Cross that is always before us here; angels that carry in their hands what are called the *arma Christi*—the weapons of Christ. Maybe these angels have a message for us this Lent—some wisdom they'd like to share with us about the spiritual battle we're engaged in? About what it means to have God on our side and the weapons of Christ at our disposal.

If you take a closer look, you'll notice that one angel carries the image of Christ's face left on Veronica's veil:—So that, like the disciples in today's Gospel, we come face to face with our humanity, as through the instruments of the Passion and the ministration of the angels, it's transfigured into the image of God. Let's consider then, for a few moments, how these terrible weapons have changed transfigured us.

Whose weapons are they anyway? Well, they're certainly not just the weapons of Jews—or Romans or leaders: they're the weapons of humanity itself, instruments of evil that still mark our world and that we all use to wage war on each other and on creation. But Jesus, who is on our side, has taken up these weapons of ours. For us and for our salvation he has allowed them to be used against him, so that the humanity he shares with us might be transfigured into the image of God. They have become the weapons of Christ—the *arma Christi*, so that we might use them now to transfigure us and our world. How?

Well every time we're pierced by criticism or crowned with some indignity—every time we have our image maligned, thirst for what's right, or taste the bitterness of life, we might share his work of transfiguration. And every time these pin-pricks happen, we're united to our sisters and brothers throughout the world, who suffer far more grievously. Then, we have the chance to use these weapons for their good and God's glory. Let's ask the angels who surround the cross, that we will shortly kiss, to minister to us as they did to him and to help us to win glory in the day of battle.