

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 Anistead-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: Anna Martini, Kathleen Higgins, Rosalie Dodson.
Anniversaries: Lawrence Oluham, Jerome Vancalsteren, Anne Johnson, Fr Thomas M Robinson OSM
Christmas Remembrance: Stephen Walsh, Mary Gallagher, Ellen Gallagher, John Gallagher, Catherine Gallagher, Peter Gallagher, Terry Connor.



A PRAYER FOR OUR FAMILY

Heavenly Father,
 We thank You for the gift of our family,
 for the love that binds us
 and for the moments we share in joy and in trial.
 Bless each member with health and faith.
 Guide our words to carry kindness
 and our actions to reflect Your love.
 Make our home happy:
 a refuge of forgiveness
 a place of peace.

Epiphany of the Lord

This Year the Epiphany will be celebrated on Tuesday January 6th 2026.

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|  | The Christmas has not been counted yet. | £££ | The monthly figure for Standing Orders: £1380.00 |
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|  | This week the Sacred Heart Lamp will burn for families in distress. |  | This week, the lamp at the crib burns for members of our family who are sick. |
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WEEKLY NEWSLETTER 28TH DECEMBER



OUR LADY OF GRACE PARISH, PRESTWICH

PARISH PRIEST Fr. PHILIP CALDWELL
 11, Fairfax Road, Prestwich, Manchester, M25 1AS
 Tel: 0161 773 2324

Website: ourladyofgrace.co.uk
 Email: philip.caldwell@dioceseofsalford.org.uk

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

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| Sunday 28th December | Holy Masses 9am & 11am |
| Monday 29th December St Thomas Becket | Holy Mass 12 noon |
| Tuesday 30th December | Holy Mass 12 noon |
| Wednesday 31st December New Year's Eve | Holy Mass 12 noon |
| Thursday 1st January Solemnity of Mary Mother of God | Holy Mass 12 noon |
| Friday 2nd January Ss Basil and Gregory | Holy Mass 12 noon |
| Saturday 3rd January The Most Holy Name of Jesus | Sunday Vigil Mass 5pm |

A Seasonal Thank-You

Thank you to Fr Joel for standing in to celebrate the Sunday Masses here at very short notice—and that after only just finishing work as a school chaplain for Christmas. I picked up norovirus. Thank you to the volunteers who help keep the house and church open, those who helped clean the church, prepare the sanctuary, those who ministered, collected, counted, played or sang. And thank you for all the greetings, Mass intentions, cards and gifts that have arrived to the Presbytery over the last few days.

Requiems

Because of the holidays and a slight change to weekly scheduling I'd like to give you advance notice of the Funeral for Mrs Anna Martini. Her Requiem Mass will be on Thursday 8th January 2026 and it will commence at 11.30am not the usual 12 noon. A Requiem for Rosalie Dodson has also been arranged on Tuesday 20th January at the usual time of 12 noon. These will appear on next week's newsletter.

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.

The Ladder of Humility

Today's Feast speaks of the example of the Holy Family - and the opening prayer calls that example 'shining'. What example does the home of Nazareth give us? What makes it shine? And how does that example come to us? How do we receive it and make it shine in the families that shape our life - the human family, the family of the church and the parish, our own family? Christmas teaches that the example comes to us both naturally and spiritually, through life and in faith - by the Word spoken into the ups and downs of every day.

You need a ladder to manage ups and downs, don't you? So the shining example that the Holy Family gives, naturally and spiritually, is the ladder of humility. An example given to us by the Word of God today - offered to us by Jesus, Mary and Joseph in the ups and downs of every day.

Look how the Word of God describes the life of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, and the life of their extended family of relatives and friends. Three times St Matthew's Gospel narrates how Joseph is told "Up! Rise." And then three times it tells of how he goes down ... to Egypt, to Galilee, to Nazareth. Hearing she was highly-favoured, Mary had gone up to the hill-country to her cousin and then back down home, on down to Bethlehem to be registered with her house, and away down to Egypt with Joseph and the Child. And Jesus went down to Nazareth and lived under their authority.

Generally, and rightly, we're very good at up and rise and take. At taking up a new job, becoming a parent, or a parish priest: Taking up some role in the parish; a ministry or service. But at going back down, departing or leaving we're not so good. There are not so many Simeons who let go in peace and let new life come when their job is done. Not so many like the Magi, who after coming a long way, depart quietly by another route.

I can say this, now—can't I? - as your spiritual father who is giving up house, church, parish: It's a terrible example not to let go gracefully—it stops the vital example of the family from being holy, it stops it from shining with the truth of the Gospel. The example of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, the example of the family of God's Son, is one that lives by the ladder of humility—that believes that the one who loses his life will find it.

To receive the example of the Holy Family from God's Word and to let it shine in us naturally and spiritually—we have to commit ourselves to the ladder of humility. We have to be as good at letting go and moving on as we are at taking up and serving—To live is to change and to live with God's life demands we change often so that the truth of his Life, Death and Resurrection can be communicated as widely as possible in the human family and pass from generation to generation.