

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, Carol Doherty, 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.

PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR THE DEAD

Recently Deceased: Pete McCormack, Paul Foy, Joan Burke, Shirley Ann Bradbury.

Anniversaries: Michael Murphy, Myra Healey, Albert Gilbert, May Duffy, Bridie Heavey, Anthony Richards, Janet Richards, Kenneth Hopkins.

WISDOM OF THE SAINTS


ADVENT HEALING



Let us prepare for Christ in our hearts a dwelling full of patient merits; let us prepare a crib, a cradle ... Let us receive the tiny little Lord in our hearts; may he grow and make progress there, nourished by faith, may he ascend to youth there on the steps of life, and may he exercise the powers that are mentioned in the Gospel. Within us the Lord has a blind man to whom he can give light, a lame man whose step he can restore and bring to the path of truth without stumbling ... What he did in those who were dead he now does in the living. He raises a man to life in the room of his heart.

St Caesarius of Arles

PRAYER GROUP

Will meet in the Cottage on Monday December 1st at 7pm. All Welcome.

	Last Week's collection was: £835.90 Thank you	£££	The monthly figure for Standing Orders: £1380.00
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	The Sacred Heart Lamp will burn for the Holy Souls.		This week, Our Lady's Lamp burns for the staff and children of OLOG Primary School.
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WEEKLY NEWSLETTER 30TH NOVEMBER



OUR LADY OF GRACE PARISH, PRESTWICH

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FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Sunday 30th November	Holy Masses 9am & 11am
Monday 1st December	Holy Mass 12 noon
Tuesday 2nd December	Holy Mass 12 noon
Wednesday 3rd December St Francis Xavier	Holy Mass 12 noon
Thursday 4th December	Holy Mass 12 noon
Friday 5th December	Holy Mass 12 noon
Saturday 6th December	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament Confessions 11.40am-12.50pm, 4-4.40pm Holy Mass 11am Vigil 5pm

Christmas Fair

I'm immensely grateful to all those who assisted with the Parish Fair which took place today. It involves a lot of planning and hard work and is very helpful to our parish finances. Thanks to everyone who planned and helped, baked, donated stuff, came along and contributed. A particular thanks to our Santa of this year who stood in—and to the parents and children of OLOG who donated the bottle tombola and the staff who managed it. If there's anyone I've forgotten: a special thanks to you too!

SVP

Each year in Advent we have had a collection for the Caritas Christmas Dinner. This year we are going to hold that collection for our own newly-developing Society of St Vincent de Paul. In the new year and with the help of new members they are hoping to increase their work with a special emphasis on the needy and underprivileged in our area. An injection of funds would help this work get on the way. On the Third Sunday of Advent, 14th December there will be a second collection for the SVP.

So as to ensure continued help for the Caritas Christmas Dinner Appeal, St Monica's have agreed to hold a collection for them at the Carol Concert they are holding here on

Christmas Concert

On Friday 5th December Besses O'Th' Barn Brass Band will perform a short seasonal concert in church from 7pm. Tickets are £5 and are available after the Masses or from the Presbytery. After the concert there will be a Social in the Hall, refreshments will be available and the Grand Draw for the Christmas Raffle will take place—as well as the 200 Club draws for November, December and the £400 Christmas Bonus. Big Money!

Safeguarding

Salford Diocese is currently undertaking a safeguarding audit of parishes. In our own parish we have many volunteers in roles that require a DBS check. This is up to date and we will soon be undertaking DBS checks for new SVP members. We will then have to register with the Diocese other volunteers who do not require a DBS check. Once again, the Safeguarding team are grateful for your cooperation and support.

Advent Pack

If you didn't get an Advent Pack a few are still available from the Sacristy.

A First Intervention

When I visited Our Lady of Grace school this week, the infant children were returning from a trip to the Post Office - all excited. Not only had they experienced the busy branch, seen all the parcels, and learnt about stamps - they'd sent their letters to Santa! All I want for Christmas was the topic of conversation. Only one little girl asked me if I did Christmas and what I was getting!

Maybe you're thinking it's too early for such questions - Advent hadn't even started then. Perhaps you think it just a bit of nonsense? In fact, every day of last week - the final days of the Church's year - a very focused prayer is made at Mass asking God to make His people ready: Ready to receive the healing remedies that He wants to give us with Love. If you haven't thought of what you want for Christmas yet - God has. He decided long ago what his particular gift to each one of us would be and how to get it to us at just the right time. His gift is absolute healing for us all and He's started on its delivery now: Advent is the process that will make us ready to receive the complete healing that'll be ours at Christmas.

In this joyful, holy season let's, this year, think of healing, then, and do all we can to appreciate God's motives and His methods in sending us His Son. On each of the Sundays let's be part of God's purpose: from His first intervention today, to His diagnosis and assessment next week, to a glimpse of full recovery on the Third Sunday, and the work of rehabilitation that will bring us home for Christmas, on the Fourth.

The first stage of healing is often not pretty is it? - Usually, there's a first intervention that can be more traumatic than the illness itself: the re-setting of a broken bone, the cauterising of a wound, the needle of anaesthetic or the knife of the surgeon. It can all come suddenly and without warning: "We're going to have to open you up," are the words of the Divine Physician at this stage.

While we can't predict their application in our lives, our readings, today, should come as no surprise: Isaiah tells us that God is going to move mountains to make His healing touch of us possible. For this first intervention we need to be awake - at least from inattention. And as the Gospel makes clear: God's first act of healing will be sudden and decisive and we'll not be able to avoid it.

This is why it's important to know God's purpose from the beginning and have an eye to what's going on. At this time children are forever looking for signs of what might be coming their way at Christmas - looking to where their surprises might be stashed. We are God's children and on this First Sunday of Advent we should be looking to His hand for healing.