



**OUR LADY OF GRACE
PARISH, PRESTWICH**

PARISH PRIEST Fr. PHILIP CALDWELL

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Prayer Intentions for the Sick

Maureen Holt, Silvana Manto, Christine Rogers, Craig Millward, Anne Holland, David Millward, David Noble, Clare Levy, Roxine Callow, Patrick Hullinson, Barbara Murphy, Florence Ward, Peggy Sugrue, Dale Broom, Jackie Berry, Bernard Holt, Patricia Greene, Bernadette Greene, Henry Marron, and Johnny Falloon.

Prayer Intentions for the Dead

Recently Deceased: Celia Barcia, Francis McManus, Vincent McHenry, Jean Darbershire, Charlie McGinley, Jose Rosos, Jeffrey William Cole, Mary McGrail, Graham Sharp, Peter Hutson.

Anniversaries: John Cullen, John Doherty and Mildred Stansfield.

WISDOM FROM THE SAINTS

“If we had no hope in the Lord, what would we do in this world?”

St Josephine Bakhita

“Ask Christ to help you to become happy. After Christ’s example, I forgive my persecutors and I hope my blood will fall as fruitful rain.”

St Paul Miki



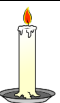
“The present moment is always full of infinite treasure. It contains far more than you can possibly grasp. Faith is the measure of its riches: what you find in the present moment is according to the measure of your faith. Love also is the measure: the more the heart loves, the more it rejoices in what God provides. The will of God presents itself at each moment like an immense ocean that the desire of your heart cannot empty; yet you will drink from that ocean according to your faith and love.”

Jean-Pierre de Caussade

Last Week’s collection was:
£1228.92. Thank you

£££

The monthly figure for
Standing Orders: £1366.00



This week, the Sacred Heart Lamp burns for peace.



This week, Our Lady’s Lamp burns for those suffering with addictions.

**FIFTH SUNDAY
ORDINARY TIME**

Sunday 4th February

Holy Masses 9am & 11am

**Monday 5th February
St Agatha**

Holy Mass 12 noon

Tuesday 6th February

Ss Paul Miki and Companions

Holy Mass 12 noon

Wednesday 7th February

Holy Mass 12 noon

Thursday 8th February

St Josephine Bakhita

Holy Mass 12 noon

Celia Barcia Funeral Service 2pm

Friday 9th February

Holy Mass 12noon

Saturday 10th February

St Scholastica

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

Prayers for the Sick

Please note that if you request a Mass for someone who is sick their name will **not** be automatically included in the sick list printed in the newsletter and read at Sunday Mass. Names are only included in the weekly sick list when a **specific request** is made for this by a family member.

Car Park

The carpark was successfully resurfaced last week. We are now waiting for Heras Ltd to come and restore the sensor for the barrier. When this has been done the barrier will be restored to use—hopefully in time for the closure of the municipal carpark further down Fairfax Road!

Finance Committee

The next meeting of the Parish Finance Committee will be **Thursday 8th February at 7.30pm** in the Presbytery. At this meeting the Committee will review a set of accounts that will then be made available to the whole parish community. It's very important that you are able to see the income and expenditure of the parish and to have a sense of why and how your money is being spent.

Property Committee

The next meeting of the Parish Property Committee will be **Thursday 15th February at 7.30pm** in the Presbytery.

The Book Club

The next meeting of the Group will be held on Monday 12th February at 2pm in the Cottage. We will be discussing *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys, a 1966 prequel to Charlotte Brontë's classic, *Jane Eyre*. New members will be very welcome. For further information contact Vin Allerton 0161 7733318, 07305727900 or vinallerton@gmail.com

Baptism Meeting

The next meeting for those who would like to have their child baptised at Our Lady of Grace is this **Wednesday 7th February at 7.30pm** in the Hall.

Prayer Group

The Prayer Group is due to meet in the Cottage this Monday, 5th February, at 7.00pm.

Merry Melodies Singing Group - Dementia Support

A support group for dementia people and their carers took place this week in the Cottage. The Group will meet every Thursday afternoon, 1-3pm. If you would like more information on the sessions please ring 07521632452.

The Sacrament of the Present Moment

Last week, on my day off, I went home to Bolton. In the morning, I sat on the back step, with a cup of coffee, and looked into the yard:—It was just possible to see the tips of green shoots coming up in the pots. I wished that it was Spring. Classic FM was on the radio and they were advertising a new morning feature: *Last Night—Later*. It's where people ring in to say what they were doing the evening before or what they'll be doing later. It seems we all wish our lives away, to some degree, and that Job is not the only one to sigh: "When will it be day?" or "How slowly evening comes."

Things are different in Mark's Gospel. Everything is at once and straight away. Jesus and the apostles go straight to the house and at once the fever leaves Simon's mother-in-law. "At once" is a favourite phrase of Mark's. You hear it again and again: *At once* the Spirit drove Jesus into the desert, *at once* his disciples got up and followed him. The leper is cured *at once* and when Peter denies Jesus, we hear that, *at once*, the cock crew. In fact, in his short Gospel, Mark uses the phrase *at once* over forty times.

Now, you could say, that the evangelist simply wants a fast-paced, exciting story. But I think there's another reason for this phrase. The whole reason for the Gospel, is that Mark knew that Jesus is alive, risen from the dead, and present to us now. A fact that means that everything Jesus did—all the miracles, sermons and graced-filled encounters—is not locked in the past but happening now, at once, immediately!

The papal preacher, Fr Cantalamessa, once put it this way: "Not only are the words of the Bible spoken and its stories retold at Mass, they're also relived in such a way that what's remembered, becomes real and present: Whatever it was that happened 'at that time' is happening 'at this time' - today." In his Spirit and through his word, the Lord is present to us now.

That's a wonderful thing, a beautiful thing, that in the present moment, we have a sign of the reality of God's life and work in the world. The trouble is, that so often, we miss God's presence because we do not live in the present moment. Rather, we let the past and the future so occupy our minds and fill us with worry, that we squeeze God's presence and God's peace from this moment, now, and from our lives.

The good news is that the Gospel calls us back every time that it's proclaimed—not back to the future or the past—but back to this moment, now, where *at once* the Saviour is present to us—just as he was—with his healing and his peace.