



OUR LADY OF GRACE PARISH, PRESTWICH

PARISH PRIEST Fr. PHILIP CALDWELL

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Prayer Intentions for the Sick

Paul Hughes, Ted Jones, Craig Millward, Anne Holland, David Millward, David Noble, Clare Levy, Christine Rogers, Roxine Calow, Patrick Hulinson, 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: Maria Bligh, Ann Morris, Kathleen Davison, Thomas Heneghan, Ruth Espejo Maratas.
Anniversaries: Luke Gilbert, John Gilbert, Paul Gilbert, Richard Cavey, Lilia Cantig Picson.

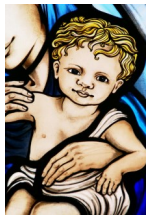
WISDOM FROM THE SAINTS

“No medicine is more valuable, none more efficacious, none better suited to the cure of our ills, than a friend to whom we turn for consolation.”

St Aelred of Rievaulx

“There is no space where God is not: space does not exist apart from Him. Thus he embraces and is embraced by all.”

St Hilary.



“In telling his story, he discovered that he had developed in all sorts of ways. These things that had happened were not large revelations but were rather like the little epiphanies one suffers and enjoys over a morning cup of tea. The next day they feel like they happened to someone else. But if we let them it’s these epiphanies that awaken the soul.”



Last Week’s collection was: £1216.01. Thank you

£££

The monthly figure for Standing Orders: £1366.00

The Crib Offerings this weekend will be sent to Bethlehem Thank you.



This week, the Sacred Heart Lamp burns for a Special Intention.



This week, Our Lady’s Lamp burns for the people of the Holy Land.

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

Sunday 7th January

Holy Masses 9am & 11am

Monday 8th January

Holy Mass 12 noon

Baptism of the Lord

Tuesday 9th January

Holy Mass 12 noon

Wednesday 10th January

Requiem Hilda Sunderland
12 noon

Thursday 11th January

Holy Mass 12 noon

Friday 12th January

Holy Mass 12 noon

St Aelred of Rievaulx

Saturday 13th January

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

Prayer Group

The Prayer Group will meet on Monday 8th January from 7-8pm in the Cottage. All are welcome to attend.

Improvements

This last week, new flooring was put down in the Cottage. In the next few weeks it would be good to get this space re-painted too.

The work on the Ladies toilets in the Hall is now complete and they have been re-plumbed to the sewer, separately. The end toilet has been restored and new hygiene facilities installed in each. This should reduce the cost of constantly unblocking them. Please treat these facilities with care.

The Big Listen

The Big Listen. We have arranged 3 parish meetings for the Big Listen, the first stage of the Salford Diocesan Synod, to be held in early January. If you haven't done so yet, there is one meeting left for you to attend:

- Tuesday evening, 9th January, 7pm to 9pm in the Cottage.

Everyone in the parish – no matter your age, and whether or not you filled in a questionnaire – is welcome to attend one of these meetings.

There is no preparation needed before the meeting, but if you would like further information about the Synod, there are details on the Diocesan website: www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk.

It would help us if you could let us know which meeting you would like to attend; telephone Vin Allerton on 0161-773 3318, text him on 07305 737900 or email him at vinallerton@gmail.com

Baptism Meeting

Please note that there will be no Baptism Meeting in the month of January. The next meeting for those who would like to have their child baptised at Our Lady of Grace is Wednesday 6th February at 7.30pm in the Hall.

Crib Figures

I'm very grateful to Fr George Henwood and the Parish of St Gerard Majella, Bristol for kindly donating a set of crib figures to us. Fr George has overseen the closure of the nearby Holy Cross Parish, Bristol and was pleased that these figures have a good home. The figures that were used here previously were more suitable for children and have been welcomed by Mrs Casey for use at Our Lady of Grace Primary School.

It would be nice to have the new figures restored for next year. If you'd like to sponsor the re-painting of one of the figures please let me know.

Bethlehem Wonder

Those who are wise find their way to *Bet Lehem* today, to Bethlehem: the House of Bread. There, they are nourished with hope and changed to return by a different route.

In the 1930s a devastating famine in Ukraine—the *Holodomor*—killed millions of people. Since then, bread—the staple food of life — has been treated with great respect there. So precious did food become after that time of starvation, that a tradition arose, where, if a piece of bread fell to the ground, it was kissed as it was picked up. I believe this is still a custom today, in Ukraine: to kiss and honour bread that has fallen to the ground. This has a deep resonance with our faith on this solemn feast of the Epiphany.

The Child from heaven is born in a town called House of Bread. He's laid in a feeding trough: a manger. The sign given to us is that He comes as food to a world that is spiritually starving—the Magi have come from the ends of the earth to find him: so profound is our hunger for hope, meaning, peace. “Going into the house—the house of bread—they saw the Child with his mother, Mary and falling to their knees they did Him homage.”

Hope brings us here, to this house of bread, each week, doesn't it? Central to this place is a manger—an altar, a tabernacle, where the One who is our peace reposes and waits for us to find Him. The coming down, the condescension that took place at Bethlehem, happens in another sense at every celebration of Holy Mass: Our Lord comes in the Bread that is His Body—food for a world that is broken by division, violence, fear and mistrust—a world that is starving for meaning and peace. Those who are wise, know this and they come here in hope. We come here in hope.

And, here, we do what the Magi did, what the people of Ukraine learned to do in the Holodomor—at this Epiphany, this Christmas, in faith, we too spiritually kiss the bread that has fallen to the earth for our sake. As we receive, we kiss and honour the Lord Jesus—the Bread of Life born for us. We wonder at the love of God for us, in coming down to us as food: at His condescension to be with us and give us hope and peace.

The meeting of the Baby and the Magi changed them. They weren't the same again, these men. What happened in their hearts, happens in ours. In a moment of recognition nothing changed yet everything changed. In bowing down and kissing the baby, they somehow let go of all their certainties. Tired from their journey—the journey of life—they gave up their wisdom and accepted that here lay the secret of life's mystery: the open arms of a baby; humble surrender and offering. They bowed to this—kissed the baby who had come and went back to life by this way: the Truth and the Life.