

**OUR LADY OF GRACE
PARISH, PRESTWICH**



PRIEST Fr. Benjamin Garba
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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, Jocelyn Roque,

PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR THE DEAD

Recently Deceased: Robert Dluzen, Billy Mitchell, Evelyn Pandolfo, Jim Henderson, Phil Ward, Mary Walsh, Rita Reynolds,
Anniversaries: Margaret Ann Fallon, Kit Hanley, Sr. Margaret Reddy, David Millward, June Doherty, Mike Kennelly, Kitty Sweeney

WISDOM OF THE SAINTS

“Where there is no love, put love and you will draw out love.”

St John of the Cross

“Lent is a period of spiritual combat which we must experience alongside Jesus, using the weapons of prayer, fasting and penance.”

Pope Benedict XVI

“Our Lord does not come down from Heaven every day to stay in a golden ciborium. He comes down to find another Heaven He cherishes infinitely more than the first, the Heaven of our souls, made in His image, living temples of the Most Blessed Trinity.”

St Therese of Lisieux

	Last week's collection was £1136.09	£££	The monthly figure for Standing Orders: £1380.00
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	This week, the Sacred Heart Lamp burns for the sick of our parish.		This week, Our Lady's Lamp burns for Fr Benjamin.
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THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

Sunday 8th March	Holy Masses 9am & 11am
Monday 9th March	Holy Mass 12 noon
Tuesday 10th March	Holy Mass 12 noon
Wednesday 11th March Wednes	Holy Mass 12 noon
Thursday 12th March	Holy Mass 12 noon
Friday 13th March	Holy Mass 12 noon
Saturday 14th March	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament Confessions 11.40am-12.50pm, 4-4.40pm Holy Mass 11am Vigil 5pm

Parish Social Update

Please note the Parish Social originally planned for **Saturday 14th March** will now take place on **Friday 13th March**.

Fairfax Road Full Closure

The road will remain closed at all times, including evenings and weekends until 5pm on Friday 1 May 2026.

Prayer Group

The Prayer Group will next meet on Monday 9th March at 7.00pm in the cottage. All welcome.

CAFOD Lent Fast Day

The total amount given in the Fast Day envelopes so far is £650. We will be collecting the Fast Day envelopes throughout Lent - just put them in with the normal Offertory collection. If you didn't get an envelope, there are spares near the church doors, or you can put a donation in the CAFOD box at the back of the church.

Together, we are supporting people like Rejoice in South Sudan, providing them with practical ways of overcoming the impact of devastating floods. Many thanks.

Book Club

The next Book Club meeting will be this Monday, 9th March, at 2pm in the Cottage. We will be discussing the novel "The Glass Maker" by Tracy Chevalier.

Gift Envelopes

We will be preparing the boxes of offertory gift envelopes for the next tax year quite soon. If you already use the envelopes, you need do nothing a new box will be prepared for you. But if you don't make your offertory donations by bank standing order or using the DONA terminal, perhaps you would think about using the envelope scheme especially if you are a taxpayer. For further details, contact Vin Allerton by phone on 0161 727 3318, by text to 07305 727900 or by email to vinallerton@gmail.com

Thirsting for God

We know the story of St Augustine very well. His life was blighted by sensual pleasure and as he went from pillar to post in search of satisfaction, he found none. In the end, he made a discovery – true satisfaction is found only in God. He said, "You made us for Yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless, unless they rest in You."

The life of the woman in our gospel reading could be likened to that of St. Augustine. She went through traumatic times: she was married to five different men and now the one she was living with wasn't her husband. Her life might have been blighted by the drought and a period of negative experiences. Imagine the village gossips, the backbiting, the taunting, the shame, the social stigma and the isolation she had to go through and endure.

Her coming to fetch water from Jacob's well at noon, the hottest part of the day, was a divine intervention meant not only to quench her physical thirst but also her spiritual thirst and to take away the degradation she faced in life. Upon meeting Jesus, the Living Water, she might have sighed, *God created me in his own image and likeness and I wandered far and wide away from him in search of satisfaction but found none and today, here and now, in this man, I found my thirst quenched, my dignity restored, my frustration and anxieties calmed, my restlessness of spirit quietened.*

Many of us today may face anxious, frustrating and-difficult episodes in our lives which may make us wander away from God in search of meaning. Some have gone after one ideology or another and haven't found true peace and joy. We're spiritually thirsty and hungry. Our hearts are restless. We haven't found the right remedy to quench our thirst and hunger. It is God who can give us true joy and satisfaction. He accepts us as we are and for who we are – warts and all and when we come to Him as we are in sincerity of heart, He doesn't judge us. He's the 'prodigal' Father who forgives His 'prodigal' children.

Let's not give up on ourselves and on God. Let's trust God. We lose nothing but gain everything when we trust in God. Jesus says, "Cut off from me, you can do nothing" (John 15:5). When we surrender ourselves to God, we accept ourselves as we are and become more authentic as the encounter between Jesus and the woman demonstrated.

The Lenten season invites us to be like Jesus – welcoming, accommodating, understanding, loving and kind to everyone. As humans and Christians, we know the challenges of life, we should understand and accept people and not condemn them.

Jesus invites us, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30). May the season of Lent bring us a true encounter with Jesus for our transformation and salvation.