

PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR THE SICK

Pope Francis, June Doherty, Caroline Williams, Christine Rogers, David Noble, Patrick Hullinson, Barbara Murphy, Florence Ward, Peggy Sugrue, Della McKernan, Dale Broom, Jackie Berry, Bernard Holt, Patricia Greene, Bernadette Greene, Eileen Butt, Carol Doherty, Frank Colgan, Marian Whyte, Stephen King, Dan McCormack, Joan Eastwood.

PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR THE DEAD

Recently Deceased: Mary McNelly, Eprozine Barboza, John Horan, Claire Connor.

Anniversaries: David Millward, Colum Carr.

WISDOM FROM THE SAINTS

“A saint is a sinner who keeps trying”

St Josemaria Escriva

“There are a lot of things you can give to Jesus in Lent. I don’t like to say “to give up” - because he always gives it back and more”.

Mother Angelica

Lent Recipe

“Never forget that there are really just two recipes to life. The recipe of the cross which starts with the fast and ends with the feast—and the other that Satan concocted which starts with the feast and ends with a headache.”

Archbishop Fulton Sheen



Last Week’s collection was: £1009.38 Thank you

£££

The monthly figure for Standing Orders: £1380.00



This week, the Sacred Heart Lamp burns for the people of our parish.



This week, Our Lady’s Lamp burns for a Special Intention.



OUR LADY OF GRACE PARISH, PRESTWICH

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FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

Sunday 9th March	Holy Masses 9am & 11am
Monday 10th March	Holy Mass 12 noon
Tuesday 11th March	Holy Mass 12 noon
Wednesday 12th March	Holy Mass 12 noon
Thursday 13th March	Holy Mass 12 noon
Friday 14th March	Holy Mass 12 noon
Saturday 15th March	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament Confessions 11.40am-12.50pm, 4-4.40pm Holy Mass 11am Vigil 5pm

Parish Works

Works are scheduled to begin on the church roof, sacristy roof, Sacred Heart Chapel roof, side porch, and to the pinnacles over the main entrance on Tuesday 22nd April. The works should last for a period of 21 weeks. Details of the works and how it will affect us are on the noticeboard at the back. Please familiarise yourself with things there.

St Patrick's Night Celebration

There are a few tickets left for the St Patrick's Night Celebration on Sunday 16th March at 7.30pm. New Silver Dollar will provide the music and there will be a bar and dancing. Tickets are £10 and are available after Mass. Entrance will be by ticket only.

Book Club

The next meeting of the group will be held on Monday 10th March at 2pm in the Cottage. We will be sharing poetry by Seamus Heaney. If you can, please bring 12 copies of your chosen poem. New members will be very welcome. For further information, contact Vin Allerton by phone (0161-773 3318), text (07305 727900) or email (vinallerton@gmail.com). The full programme for 2025 can be seen on the notice board outside church.

St Thérèse & St Gabriel Possenti

You will have noticed that the statue of St Thérèse has been removed from the rear of the church. This is a temporary measure. The Sisters of the Cross and Passion have generously gifted our parish a statue of St Gabriel in memory of Sr Gemma Gabriel and Sr Anthony, Passionist sisters who worked in our parish school for many years. The beautiful marble statue will eventually be installed near the side door but first a plinth needs to be made. This is why the statue of St Thérèse has been removed so that the plinth can be carefully copied.

Lent Devotions

On Friday, we began our **Early Morning 8am School Masses**—There was a very good number of parents and children and parishioners are invited to join the school community for Mass and breakfast each Friday. Every Saturday there is an **Hour of Silent Prayer Before the Blessed Sacrament** which can provide a Lenten opportunity, and after Mass on Fridays there will be **Stations of the Cross**.

Unfortunately there can be no 8am Mass or Stations this Friday.

Full of the Holy Spirit

Let's consider the Holy Spirit this Lent. Week by week, let's be conscious of the part that the Spirit plays in this time. Why the Spirit, week by week?

At Mass on Ash Wednesday we see the simple ingredients of this season set out before us on a table: The dust of the earth in a little pot - the dust from which we and all things were made. The water with which the ash is blessed; the water of life without which nothing on the face of the earth can live; nothing can grow. And the Word of God, the recipe for life that is read from the book. And each one of us is a necessary ingredient, too: We are part of what is being made so we are here and the ash goes on our heads.

But we need to be reminded of the Spirit don't we? We forget the Spirit's part in this process: The Spirit who gradually, step by step, will work with these ingredients and make something beautiful and new. We tend to stand before the simple ingredients of life and only see dust and ashes. In our pride, we concentrate on what we are going to make of this Lent, our recipe for success: what we'll give up, our penance, what we'll do to make a change and start a new life.

We need to be conscious of the presence of the Holy Spirit—because at the back of our minds we know that all our plans are a recipe for disaster if we don't rely on God's help and the essential ingredient of his grace.

So what's the first step on the first Sunday in a recipe for a good Lent? The Gospel's first line holds the key. "At that time: Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days." You take some water, place it in the dust of the desert and let the Spirit take the lead in inspiring a process that will take forty days.

Full of the Spirit, Jesus is not tempted to turn to anything else or to anyone else. No other ingredients, no extra hands: Just the new growth that began with baptism and the dust and ashes of ordinary life. The first step we make in the Spirit is the most important: acceptance of the poverty of our raw materials and our skill—we are dust and in the wilderness it will be dust that we'll return to if we don't take the second step that the Spirit inspires. What is this second step? Well we see it in Jesus—he is led by the Spirit to turn his full face to God—to look neither right nor left.

Next Sunday we will see what the Spirit makes of these ingredients and of one who turns—transfiguration. But we must be patient and not rush the recipe—we must wait for the opportune time. For this week, we need only accept our raw materials in humility and turn for help to the Master-chief.