

St Mary and St Michael's Catholic Church
GARSTANG AND CALDER VALE

A Parish of the Lancaster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trustees Registered Charity, no.234331
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28th / 29th November 2015

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Today's gospel uses apocalyptic language and concepts which can have the effect of making us extremely uneasy, or the opposite effect of communicating that this text is really irrelevant. Both are probably literalist readings. The world of the apocalypse proposes with baroque symbolism an interpretation of the times we live in and speaks of the choices and consequences before us. For Luke, the nearness of the end is not only a time for warning, but a time for confident hope: liberation is at hand. At the same time it is possible to miss the peculiar quality of these last days and miss the opportunity of life and salvation. He lists two kinds of things that hinder: an insensitivity born of a sensuous lifestyle and, more broadly, the (legitimate) cares of life.

The same issue comes up in Paul, the relationship between what we are and what we should do. Because we are loved by God we are enabled to live a different sort of life. Very often we do not ask the simple religious question: "What does God desire of me?" It is an interesting question, and the answer may not always coincide with "What does the Church expect of me?" Hopefully there will be some overlap.

Moralising tends to be de-energising. What we need to take from today's readings is encouragement to strive towards what is noble and good, both as human beings and believers.

D'arcy

New items and information

Bishop Michael has written a pastoral letter to be read out at all Masses this weekend. If you would like to take home a souvenir copy, you will find them at the back of church on salmon-coloured paper.

St Vincent de Paul Society – there will be a special collection for the SVP next weekend.

Monthly Coffee Morning – This will take place next Wednesday, 2nd December, from 10 am – 12 noon in the Plessington Chapel. This will be our Christmas gathering as we will not meet again until January. The infant children from our school will come and entertain us with carols. *Please come for tea, coffee, cake, and fun!*

Next Sunday, during the 10 am Mass, we will have the Rite of Acceptance – This is the first of the Rites of Initiation of Christian Adults (RCIA). The people of the parish will be asked if they will accept Drew Thompson as a firm candidate to become a member of the Catholic Church, and Hester Platt, who has requested that she be confirmed into the Catholic Church. It is very important that Drew and Hester know that they have the prayers and support of the people of our parish.

Hummingbirds annual Christmas Fair, Sunday 6th December from 11 am until 1 pm in Castle Lane Community Centre. There will be Cake, Craft and plant stalls, Chocolate Tombola and Adult Tombola, Lucky dip and Christmas Crafts for Children. Father Christmas will make an appearance at 12.30 pm and of course our Christmas raffle with great prizes to be won. £1 entry and receive a free Mulled wine or tea/coffee. *We hope to see you there!* Raffle tickets will be on sale after the 6 pm and 10 am Masses this weekend.

This weekend is the First Sunday of Advent – There will be a collection for the Poor Missions Fund.

SVP Christmas Party 12th December – Have you decided how *you* can help – food, transport, washing up, hosting (chatting to others – or pouring tea)? Awaiting your offers: Helen Forshaw (603944 – evenings) or Philippa Catterall (602797)

Do you ever shop on line? – If so, you can help Hummingbirds by going through: easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/hummingbirdsgarstang/. If you are interested, there are explanatory leaflets at the back of church.

Dates for your Diary – Saturday, 12th December, there will be an Advent Penitential Service here at SS Mary & Michael's, at 10.15 am. **Thursday, 17th December**, come and join people from all over Lancashire in "Lancashire Sings Christmas" in conjunction with BBC Radio Lancashire, in Booth's Café, Garstang, 7 pm – 8 pm.

Did you know...a group of CAFOD supporters took the Pope's message on climate change to the heart of government this week, when they handed in our petition signed by 40,000 Catholics calling on David Cameron to show leadership at the UN climate talks next week? The petition, which is part of a global campaign supported by over half a million Catholics worldwide, is inspired by Pope Francis' call in *Laudato Si'* to care for the Earth, our common home, and to protect all of those suffering from extreme and unreliable weather intensified by climate change.

'My Day by Day' booklets for Advent have been sent to school for distribution to the children, both Juniors and Infants. If your child does not attend SS Mary & Michael's School, but you would like a copy, there are spares available from the back of church.

Society for the Protection of Unborn Children is holding its first-ever SPUC Lune Valley outdoor Christmas Carol Singing event which will take place on Saturday 19th December in Market Square Lancaster (in

Prisoners' Sunday – We have received a letter from **Pact** thanking us for the £114.15 we collected and sent to them.

Mass Times & Intentions, Saturday 28th November – Sunday 6th December 2015

Sat	28 th	6.00 pm (Vigil)	Bill & Nellie Bateson
Sun	29 th	10.00 am	Deceased Members of the Broughton Catholic Charitable Society
Mon	30 th	No Mass	
Tues	1 st Dec	12 noon	Bridie O'Connor
Wed	2 nd	9.30 am	(For Vocations to the Priesthood) Mary Price – Lately Dead
Thurs	3 rd	12 noon	Funeral Mass for Brian Hargreaves
Fri	4 th	9.30 am	In Thanksgiving
Sat	5 th	9.30 am	LISCF
		06.00 pm (Vigil)	Pat McGinn
Sun	6 th	10.00 am	Gerald Whittaker

Devotions and Celebrations this week:

Wed	2 nd	No Rosary	
Fri	4 th	10 - 11 am	Holy Hour for Priestly Vocations
Sat	5 th	10 – 10.30 am	Confessions
Sun	6 th	10.00 am Mass	Rite of Acceptance

Special Days this Week:

Sun	29 th	FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
Mon	30 th	ST ANDREW
Sun	6 th Dec	SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Meetings this Week:

Weds	2 nd	10.00 am	Monthly Coffee Morning
		7.30 pm	Choir Practice
Thurs	3 rd	7.15 pm	Journey in Faith – with enquirers

Last Week's Attendance:

Sat	14 th	6.00 pm (Vigil)	Adults: 128	Children: 6	
Sun	15 th	10.00 am	Adults: 132	Children: 28	Total: 294

Monies Received:

Offertory (including Standing Orders): £1,022.45; Shop: £45; Votive Lights: £48.60; Tea Money: £60; Donation: £25; Interment of Ashes: £110; Youth Sunday (Second Collection): £280. *Many thanks to you all.*

Churches Together in Garstang & District

Ecumenical Morning Prayer will be held at 07.45 am each Tuesday in November at the United Reformed Church, and in December here at SS Mary & Michael's. Shopper's Service (Pause for Thought) is at 12.15 pm every Thursday, at Garstang Methodist Church.

Previously Published Items

First Confessions and First Holy Communions – If you have a child in Year 3 who does *not* attend St Mary & St Michael's School, but whom you would like to be enrolled for our 1st Reconciliation & 1st Holy Communion programme, please let Father David know.

Petition organised by the St Vincent de Paul Society to the House of Commons.

The following is the wording of the Petition. Because time is short (it has to be delivered to Parliament by 7th December), we invite you to sign the Petition over the next two weeks: “*We are gravely concerned about the manner in which all asylum seekers are currently treated in the UK. The 2015/6 Immigration Bill threatens to make those seeking sanctuary even more vulnerable, leaving more families homeless, and further isolating an already marginal group. We believe we have a moral responsibility as Christians to be a voice for those who have no voice, for as Pope Francis reminds us, refugees and asylum seekers are our brothers and sisters. We deeply regret the exclusion of the recommendations of the All Party Parliamentary Inquiry into the Use of Immigration Detention, and we urge the government to reconsider and to adopt these recommendations.*”

SS Mary & Michael 2016 Diaries – Please help yourself to a diary from the back of church – there is no charge. Unfortunately, the Mass times are incorrect.

St Vincent de Paul Society Conference Appeal – Winter is once more upon us, and we again are appealing for bedding and warm clothing for those in need. If you have bedding, winter clothing for men, women and children, then please deposit these items in the box you will find at the back of church from next week. Thank you for your generosity. If you have any queries, please ring Pat on Garstang 605793.

Wednesday Word – To help us prepare for Mass on 6th December, the new copy of the Wednesday Word can be found at the back of church, on yellow paper.

Please pray for Ivy Jade Fairclough, who is being baptised at 11.30 am this Sunday.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Brian Hargreaves, who died last Sunday. His funeral Mass will be held here at SS Mary & Michael's next Thursday, 3rd December, at 12 noon. *May he rest in peace.*

Please pray for those whose anniversaries occur at about this time: Eugenia McCarthy, Maureen Pyke, Margaret Stopforth, Nellie Bateson, William Kelsall, Joseph Smith, Grace Lillian Salles, May Ball, James Aloysius Horn, William Morrison, Robert Bilsborrow, Mary Bilsborrow, Lucy Walsmsley and Richard Noel Bamber. *May they rest in peace.*

We ask the Lord to encourage and give health to our sick and disabled parishioners, families and friends, including: Veronica ‘Ronnie’ Regan, Thomas Lowe (Bert’s brother), Ewan (an 11 year old boy undergoing treatment for a brain tumour), Judith, Phillip, John Fairey, Pat Hickey, Maurice Iddon, Sheila Murphy, Rosemary Davies, Anne Brockbank, Michael McCarthy (living in France), Dorothy Evans, Lucy and Family, Kathryn, Susanne, Jessica Holmes (4 years old with leukaemia), Mark Noblet, Anthonio Dilao, Bernadette O’Neill, Tom Horn, John Ashcroft, Margaret Shepherd, Sharon Hodgson, Christine, Peter Holland, Ian Moran, Tony Winstanley, Alyson, Michael Hendry, Christopher Simpson, Auntie Sophie, Christopher Brown, Simon Thompson, Sheila Cookson, Francisca Rainford and Alison Green. (*When people whose names are placed on this sick list have recovered their health, please let us know.*)