

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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5th / 6th March 2016
FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT
JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY



There are three things that only a priest can do: celebrate Mass, anoint the sick, and hear confessions. As a priest, I have always tried to celebrate these Sacraments especially well. My own experience of the way that some priests celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation has often saddened me.

When I was a student at London University, I had been a priest for seven years. I used to go to confession to a priest in Kensington who celebrated the Sacrament with me in a very profound way. One day I went to the presbytery to see this priest for confession and he wasn't in. The priest who opened the door said that he would hear my confession. I felt I had no choice but to say yes. I went with him into a parlour where there was a screen and a kneeler like we have in the Plessington Chapel. I used to sit at a large table in the middle of the room with the priest next to me. On this occasion, the priest who had answered the door went and sat behind the screen. I said to him that I usually sat at the table. He ignored me and stayed at the screen. I tried again to ask him to sit next to me. Again he ignored me. By this time I was really angry with him, and all the things I had planned to share in the Sacrament went out of my head. I got up and knelt behind the screen. As I made my confession, reverting to my childhood shopping list, I was fuming inside. I came away, thinking very unkind things about the priest, needing to go to confession again!

When I celebrate the Sacrament of God's Forgiveness with people, I always try first of all to make them feel welcome, as the father in Jesus' parable welcomed back his son. I greet warmly the person who has come to confession. I try to make the person feel as if they had come to really be with Jesus, perhaps beside the sea of Galilee, and that as they make their confession, they actually encounter Jesus.

This Sacrament is a meeting with Jesus who welcomes sinners. There is nothing that Jesus doesn't know about us; there is nothing that he hasn't heard thousands of times before – and the priest is similar – he has heard it all before. If you come and confess the identical things that you confessed last time, that is real – most people do the same. The Lord just waits for you to come to confession; he wants you to know how much he loves you.

New items and information

Gift Aid Coordinator including envelope scheme organiser Colin Swarbrick has fulfilled this role faithfully and efficiently for many years. We owe him a great debt of gratitude. Thank you, Colin. We need to find someone who could take on this very important role. Could you help. Please contact Fr. David or D'arcy.

This weekend we have a Chivuna & CAFOD Cake Stall for Mothers' Day. Please support us.

Stations of the Cross – Next Friday, 11th March, at 7.00 pm, followed by individual confessions at 7.30 pm.

Lent Service of Reconciliation – this will be held next Saturday, 12th March, at 10.15 am.

Roof Fund – We have received an anonymous donation of £1,000 towards our Roof Fund. Thank you very much for your kindness.

FREE to all our Readers

Now that we have got your attention, please read on!

In these days of B.O.G.O.F. and half-priced sofas etc, we have felt obliged to move with the times and make an offer which we hope parishioners will find irresistible.

The holder of the Parish Purse Strings has reluctantly agreed to offer **FREE** membership for admission to the Old Codgers Grounds Maintenance Team (O.C.G.M.T.) for one year only.

Young Codgers (ie, under 65s) are also urgently needed, and as an extra incentive will be offered an additional 25% discount on the free membership fee.

Membership will entitle the holder to **FREE** use of the sit-on mower and all mowing and gardening equipment (within the church boundaries). How can you possibly turn down this offer?

Over the past few years, we have referred to passages from the Gospels, used poetry, and even enlisted the help of Tom Jones to whet peoples' appetites; nevertheless, the number of members of the O.C.G.M.T. continues to dwindle.

If you can afford just, say, three hours per month to help to keep the churchyard and its surrounds in reasonable order, please come and join us. Come and work as a member of a team. You may even enjoy it! For more information, please contact either D'arcy on 603 090 or Peter Brown on 605 205.

Parish Draw – Subscriptions for the next year will be collected soon. More details next week.

We have had a thank-you letter from Irene Booth, addressed to everyone who sent her get-well cards and get-well wishes; she says it helped her in her recovery.

Did you know... Fairtrade Fortnight this year runs from 29th February – 13th March? CAFOD is co-founder of the Fairtrade Foundation. As Martin Luther King famously said, 'before you finish eating breakfast in the morning, you've depended on more than half the world'. Fairtrade is a simple way to make a difference by thinking carefully about our everyday choices. It's about better prices, decent working conditions, local sustainability, and fair terms of trade for small-scale farmers. We are all part of the global food system – which means we have the power to change it. Choosing Fairtrade products is one of the ways we can help to tackle poverty.

Lent Lunches – The next Lent Lunch will be held at Garstang URC next Wednesday, 9th March from 12 noon – 1 pm. All proceeds go to Christian Aid. (Date for the last Lent lunch this year is 16th March.)

Previously Published Items

Lenten Vigil at Cardinal Newman College on Monday 7th March, with the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, from 6.30 pm in the College Chapel, Lark Hill.

Youth Service Lourdes Pilgrimage from 21st – 30th July 2016, promises a great week of faith, service, fun and friendship! For more information, contact the Youth Service – www.castleriggmanor.co.uk; team@castleriggmanor.co.uk; tweet @castleriggmanor; facebook Castlerigg Manor; or telephone 017687 72711. The Youth Service has received a generous subsidy which has enabled them to reduce the cost of the pilgrimage; this is now only £490 per person for coach travel.

Church Shop – URGENT APPEAL – we desperately need more volunteers to help with the church shop after the 10 am Mass on Sunday mornings. It's a simple task and would only require a commitment once every few weeks. Any help would be very much appreciated. If interested, please call Jen on 602 341. *Thank you.*

Traidcraft – Spring Catalogues are now available at the back of church. Traidcraft works to end poverty through trade, and, since we have an account, we receive a discount on orders which we donate to Friends of Chivuna for the clinic. If you can, please consider purchasing fair trade food, gifts, clothing, cards etc, and make a difference to some of the poorest people in the world, whilst raising money for Chivuna. *Helen Spencer.*

Wednesday Word for the weekend Mass of 12th March can be found on yellow paper at the back of church.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Elaine Mary Thomson (Drew's Mum) who died this last week. Her funeral will take place in Scotland. *May she rest in peace.*

Please pray for those whose anniversaries occur at about this time: Mary Ann Smith, Fr. John Conway. *May they rest in peace.*

We ask the Lord to encourage and give health to our sick and disabled parishioners, families and friends, including: Rita Whittaker, Maureen Ingleby, Rod Pearson, Peter Ibison, Marie Corrigan, Jean Parkinson, Ann Wickes, Thomas Lowe (Bert's brother), Ewan (an 11 year old boy undergoing treatment for a brain tumour), 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, Anthonio Dilao, Bernadette O'Neill, Tom Horn, John Ashcroft, Margaret Shepherd, 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 on this sick list have recovered their health, please let us know.)*

Response to the Psalm at 10 am Mass on Sunday:

Mass Times & Intentions, Saturday 5th – Sunday 13th March 2016

Sat	5 th	6.00 pm (Vigil)	Tomas and Ellen Moxham
Sun	6 th	10.00 am	William and Ellen Greenall
Mon	7 th	No Mass	
Tue	8 th	12 noon	Bridget Devitt
Wed	9 th	7.00 pm	Richard Hogarth
Thurs	10 th	9.30 am	Thomas and Eleanor Bolton
Fri	11 th	7.00 pm	(Chivuna Mass) The Ashworth Family
Sat	12 th	9.30 am	LISCF
		6.00 pm (Vigil)	Jane Fleming (Anniversary)
Sun	13 th	10.00 am	Brian and Stella McVey

Devotions and Celebrations this week:

Wed	9 th	6.45 pm	Rosary
Fri	11 th	6.30 pm	Stations of the Cross
Sat	12 th	10.15 am	Service of Reconciliation

Special Days this week:

Mon	7 th	Sts Perpetua and Felicity
Tues	8 th	St John of God
Wed	9 th	St Frances of Rome

Meetings this Week:

Wed	9 th	7.30 pm	Choir Practice
		7.35 pm	Monthly Prayer Group (in dining room)
Thurs	10 th	7.15 pm	Journey in Faith
Fri	11 th	7.30 pm	Friends of Chivuna (preceded by Mass at 7 pm)

Last Week's Attendance:

Sun	28 th Feb	6.00 pm (Vigil)	Adults: 143	Children: 7
		10.00 am	Adults: 127	Children: 36 Total: 313

Monies Received:

Offertory (including Standing Orders): £1,055.81; Shop: not available; Votive Lights: £58.70; Tea Money: £77.50; Donation to Roof Fund: £1,000. *Many thanks to you all.*

Churches Together in Garstang & District

Ecumenical Morning Prayer will be held at 07.45 am each Tuesday in March at Garstang United Reformed Church. Shopper's Service (Pause for Thought) is at 12.15 pm every Thursday, at Garstang Methodist Church, until the end of March; then due to lack of attendance, the Service will cease.