

## St Mary and St Michael's Catholic Church Garstang and Calder Vale

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23<sup>rd</sup> / 24<sup>th</sup> July 2016

17<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (YEAR C)

### JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY

Today's first reading follows closely on Abraham's welcome to the three strangers we heard last week. When they departed, they went towards Sodom, where they received violent treatment after being welcomed by Lot, Abraham's nephew.

The theme is Prayer of Intercession, or Petition, asking favours from God. (We are told of course, that Prayer of Praise is more pure and unselfish, but the realities of life mean that much of our prayer seems to involve bargaining with God.) Last week we saw Abraham as the generous host (though I do wonder how long that calf dinner took to serve), while today he is the canny desert shepherd at a sheep auction, trying to get the best possible deal out of God, not indeed for himself, but on behalf of others.

God is about to destroy Sodom. Ah, you think, that's because it was a sexually dissolute place, but in fact the great sin of Sodom seems to have been disregard for the Law of Hospitality to Strangers, a central concern in Old Testament morality. Failure in hospitality (as towards Abraham's three visitors) was a serious matter, indicating that the people were mean and ungenerous. Abraham appreciates the sinfulness of the place, but thinks wiping it out is ham-fisted on God's part, and he is prepared to stand up for any possibly innocent people who might live there.

While being full of respect and reverence for God, Abraham is not deterred from pointing out the consequences of an over-hasty reaction, and God is prepared to listen. Abraham pleads that while the city might be rotten, not everyone in it is corrupt. If there are only fifty good men then destroying the city will kill them as well as the guilty. God agrees, and for the sake of the fifty, the city will not be destroyed. Having won the first round, Abraham goes on with a succession of lower figures, and God agrees to all his requests, but even ten just men could not be found in Sodom.

Here we have a fine example of Prayer of Intercession on behalf of others. God is presented as someone who responds, listens and hears our pleading. How often do we think or hear people say "I might as well be talking to the wall"? No; Abraham's (and our) God is taking it all in and responding in love. God is shown as being swayed by a good argument.

Let us remember this Old Testament story, and be persistent in prayer if we want God to do something for us.

*D'arcy*

### New items and information

Thank you to everyone who has been praying for Naomi and Martin Turner (Debbie McCann's sister) Their daughter, Ava Mary, arrived safely last Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> July.

Summer Holiday Quiz. Quiz sheets will be available for £1 at the back of Church or from Helen Spencer, in aid of CAFOD and Chivuna. The prize for the most correct answers will be awarded in September - a small Fairtrade hamper (contains CHOCOLATE!).

Justice Matters Petition – Traidcraft Exchange are running a petition to call on the government to update the law so that large UK companies can be prosecuted for the most serious cases of causing harm abroad. In some cases:

- Lives are destroyed through toxic pollution.
- People are forced out of their homes to make way for new mines and plantations.
- Violence is threatened if people question what is going on.

Felix, who lives with his family in Zambia near a smelting plant owned by a UK-listed company says, "They just get the copper and leave, that's all. They don't care about us..." *Please tick the boxes at the right of the petition form if you **do not** wish to have communications from Traidcraft Exchange in the future.*

Did you know.... Pope Francis has established 1<sup>st</sup> September as the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, encouraging the Catholic community around the world to pray for our common home. The World Day of Prayer is inspired by his landmark encyclical *Laudato Si'*, which calls on "every person living on this planet" to care for our shared earth. Pope Francis calls us all to celebrate this opportune moment "to reaffirm [our] personal vocation to the stewards of creation, to thank God for the wonderful handiwork which he has entrusted to our care, and to implore his help for the protection of creation, as well as his pardon for the sins committed against the world in which we live." He reminds us that we have a responsibility to our earth, to each other and to generations yet to come. See [cafod.org.uk/News/Campaigning-news/World-Day-of-Prayer](http://cafod.org.uk/News/Campaigning-news/World-Day-of-Prayer) for liturgies and prayers to celebrate the World Day of Prayer. Printed below is a poem below "In Union with Creation" which you can pray on 1<sup>st</sup> September, knowing that millions of our brothers and sisters around the world will be joining with us in communion.

CAFOD – We have had a letter from CAFOD thanking us for a further £35 raised as a result of Lent Fast Day. (In addition to the £668.21 raised at the time.)

### Previously Published Items

Parish Pilgrimage to Lourdes 19<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> September 2016 – There are still a few places available on our parish visit to Lourdes in September. The cost is £675 (sharing a room) for seven nights, plus costs for insurance, coach transfer to and from Manchester airport, and two excursions when in Lourdes. Please see poster at the back of church, and if interested contact Jean Andrews (603 802) or Elizabeth Horn (602 024).

Church Shop – A member of our parish has recently visited Fatima and has brought back some articles which are available for purchase in the church shop.

Wednesday Word for the weekend Mass of 31<sup>st</sup> July can be found on yellow paper at the back of church.

Please pray for the Year 6 children who have left our school to move on to High School, and for Mrs Helen Bisby and Miss Kelly Sagar who have left our school to take up positions elsewhere. May they all be very happy in the schools to which they are going.

**Please pray for those whose anniversaries occur at about this time:** George Grayston, Bill Williams, William Billington, Robert Bilsborrow, Benjamin Gelit, Fred Oxby, Ronnie Johnson, Elizabeth Wardle, Margaret Dickinson and Helen Mary Beale. *May they rest in peace.*

**We ask the Lord to encourage and give health to our sick and disabled parishioners, families and friends, including:** Pat Nickson, Gerard Gough, Bob Cross, Chris O'Connor, Craig Smith, Leo Rabbett, Anne Walmsley, Brian Moss, Jim Winstanley, Fiona Catterall, John Sweeney, Rod Pearson, Peter Ibison, Marie Corrigan, Jean Parkinson, Ann Wicks, Ewan (an 11 year old boy undergoing treatment for a brain tumour), Phillip, John Fairey, Pat Hickey, Sheila Murphy, Rosemary Davies, Michael McCarthy (living in France), Dorothy Evans, Lucy and Family, Kathryn, Susanne, Jessica Holmes, Antonio Dilao, Bernadette O'Neill, 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 the 10 am Mass:**

**A Christian prayer in union with creation**

Father, we praise you with all your creatures.  
They came forth from your all-powerful hand;  
they are yours, filled with your presence and your tender love.

Praise be to you!  
Son of God, Jesus,  
through you all things were made.  
You were formed in the womb of Mary our Mother,  
You became part of this earth,  
and you gazed upon this world with human eyes.  
Today you are alive in every creature  
in your risen glory.

Praise be to you!  
Holy Spirit, by your light  
you guide this world towards the Father's love  
and accompany creation as it groans in travail.  
You also dwell in our hearts  
and you inspire us to do what is good.

Praise be to you!  
Triune Lord,  
wondrous community of infinite love,  
teach us to contemplate you  
in the beauty of the universe,  
for all things speak of you.  
Awaken our praise and thankfulness  
for every being that you have made.  
Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined  
to everything that is.

**Mass Times & Intentions, Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> – Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> July 2016**

Sat	23 <sup>rd</sup>	6.00 pm (Vigil)	A Successful Operation
Sun	24 <sup>th</sup>	10.00 am	Fitzpatrick and Lowe Families
Mon	25 <sup>th</sup>	<b>No Mass</b>	
Tue	26 <sup>th</sup>	<b>7.00 pm (note time)</b>	Brian Hargreaves
Wed	27 <sup>th</sup>	7.00 pm	John Fleming (Birthday Anniversary)
Thurs	28 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am	The Carr Family
Fri	29 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am	L Ronayne & Family
Sat	30 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am	All Our Parishioners
		6.00 pm (Vigil)	Tony Hall (Birthday Remembrance)
Sun	31 <sup>st</sup>	10.00 am	Helen Beale

**Devotions and Celebrations this week:**

Wed	27 <sup>th</sup>	6.45 pm	Rosary
Fri	29 <sup>th</sup>	10 – 10.30 am	Holy Half-hour for Vocations (Exposition)
Sat	30 <sup>th</sup>	10 – 10.30 am	Confessions

**Special Days this week:**

Sun	24 <sup>th</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
Mon	25 <sup>th</sup>	ST JAMES
Tues	26 <sup>th</sup>	St Joachim & St Anne
Fri	29 <sup>th</sup>	St Martha
Sat	30 <sup>th</sup>	St Peter Chrysologus
Sun	31 <sup>st</sup>	EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

**Meetings this Week:**

Wed	27 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	Choir Practice (in church)
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**Last Week's Attendance:**

Sun	17 <sup>th</sup>	6.00 pm (Vigil)	Adults: 130	Children: 9	
		10.00 am	Adults: 113	Children: 20	Total: 272

**Monies Received:**

Offertory (including Standing Orders): £1,003; Votive Lights: £74.50. *Many thanks to you all.*

**Churches Together in Garstang & District**

Ecumenical Morning Prayer will be held at 07.45 am each Tuesday in July at the United Reformed Church.