

Catholic Parishes of Garstang & Scorton

St Mary & St Michael : Bonds Lane : Garstang PR3 1ZB

St Mary & St James : Snowhill Lane : Scorton PR3 1AY

Revd Geoffrey Steel : 15 Bonds Lane : Garstang PR3 1ZB : 01995-602164

Revd D'Arcy Ryan : retired deacon

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Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Day for Life

21 June 2020

Mass intentions this week

Sunday People of our Parishes

Sundays Year A : Weekdays Year 2 : Liturgy of the Hours Week 4

Monday.....**ST JOHN FISHER** *bishop, martyr*
& **ST THOMAS MORE** *married man, martyr*

Bob Finlayson *lately dead*

Tuesday Ellen Worsley *lately dead* [PC]

Wednesday.....**THE BIRTH OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST**

Carmel Cusack *lately dead* [B]

Thursday.....**Our Lady of Fernyhalgh** *diocesan calendar*

Mary Gavaghan *anniversary* [KM]

Friday Elizabeth Hogarth *RIP*

Saturday Wilfrid & Agnes Garstang *RIP*

Ss Peter & Paul

(Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time)

Sunday People of our Parishes

Opening our churches for individual private prayer

We are now permitted to open our churches for individual private prayer, but under strict criteria.

Thus, whenever church is open there must be two stewards on duty, one of whom must have diocesan safeguarding clearance and none of whom can be in the recognised categories of 'vulnerable' or 'higher risk'. I am very grateful to the folk who have generously offered their service.

Another demand is that the building be fully cleaned after each occasion on which it has been opened. This is particularly onerous, and requires considerable work by volunteers, unless we wish to empty our parishes' bank accounts and pay for it to be done.

I have consulted the Chair of the Parish Council at Scorton and with the Property and Health & Safety Leads in Garstang. Our conclusion is that, under these present criteria, we are not yet able to open our churches for individual private prayer.

Last week's printed newsletter contained a copy of Bishop Paul's letter on the matter, and this is on our parish website. If anyone would like to see the detailed instructions from the Bishops' Conference headquarters, please e-mail me.

Guidelines and instructions to us are still being issued and revised. We continue to work through them and will keep the situation under review.

At this point I would rather conserve parishioners' – your – energy and goodwill for when we can prepare our churches for public worship.

In the meantime, please continue to let me know if you'd like me to light a votive lamp for a particular intention. Also, if you'd like a socially-distanced pastoral chat or Confession, I'm sure we can arrange it.

Thank you for your patience and forbearance, and please pray for right judgement in all of this. *Fr Geoffrey*

Covenant Books – open again

As well as selling Catholic books and Bibles, *Covenant Books* also stock a wide variety of gifts and items suitable for Baptism, Holy Communion & Confirmation. The shop is now open again at Holy Family parish, 34 Whitby Avenue, Ingol PR2 3YP; 01772-735993. Thursday & Friday 10.00am - 4.00pm; Saturday, 10.00am - noon, and after Sunday Mass when this resumes.

Musings from my hermitage ... Fr Geoffrey

After Lent and Easter, Trinity Sunday and the Body & Blood of Christ, this Sunday we resume our journey through the Gospel according to Matthew.

Out of St Matthew's own experience of Jesus, he wants us to feel deeply the power of the risen Christ; he wants us in our turn to be authentic witnesses; to reach out confidently with the good news, to serve from the heart.

Yet the scriptures face us with a stark truth: a Church which is authentic, devoted to bearing witness will also be a suffering Church. We have Christ's assurance that God will guard the message, but that doesn't stop people rejecting the disciples of Jesus, discriminating, persecuting, killing them.

St Matthew was helping the members of his own community to see the oppression they were facing as part of the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection. It's the same challenge each of us faces: to recognise God's grace at work in us even when we're struggling, hurting; to see how God's constantly, faithfully, drawing us into life with Christ.

The people of Matthew's community were oppressed by those outside the Church; and there were divisions and factions within. Individually they faced violence, even death, ... because people found the Gospel unpalatable, too demanding, a threat?

What rejection do we face? You might be someone who struggles hard with the demands of family and job to be able to practise your faith at all. You might work somewhere or be in a school where to be known as a practising Catholic labels you as weird. That might be particularly so for our younger parishioners.

There are people who yearn to believe, but see little sign of God's presence. Or, when things are going reasonably well for folk, who needs God? Complacency, apathy, irrelevance, are all barriers to the Gospel. Then there are all those who've been harmed by the Church, wounded by its ministers. How can we counter all that?

The Gospel invites us to reflect on who we are, personally and as a community of faith: what are we for? who are we for?

Matthew's gospel has this powerful sense of Christ's constant, abiding presence. Our relationship with Christ is a gracious gift from God; and it's not just for our benefit. It's so that in us, other people might come to know Christ, and know themselves to be loved by him.

St Vincent de Paul – *update*

Over the past three months of lockdown the SVP have been continuing to provide help to those in need. Support has ranged from keeping in touch to providing furniture. Money has also been used to assist the food banks at Ingol and Caritas on a regular basis. Any local needs have been responded to as and when requested.

Special thanks to parishioners who have made this work possible. Whilst SVP funds are limited because there have been no regular collections after Mass, we still have money available.

If you would like to make a financial donation please pop it through the presbytery letterbox.

If you need practical help or would just like a chat, or if you know of someone who might (please speak to them first), contact the SVP on their dedicated number: 07535-736975.

Please pray for ...

Those who have died recently. Kathleen Eyre (Scorton), Revd Dr Peter Campbell (retired deacon of the diocese), the mother-in-law of one of our parishioners, John Parkinson (Moor Farm), Bill Campbell (Bowgreave Rise), Christine Cobane (sister-in-law of Tony Clark), Terry Horan (brother-in-law of Tony Clark), Celene Elizabeth McLaughlin.

Those who are ill or infirm. Jean Andrews, Roger Bevins, Vin Cahill, Paul Cain, Eileen Cartner, John Cookson, Martina Copple, Bob Cross, Simon Crossley, Dorothy Evans, Louise Gornall, Michael Hendry, Pat Hickey, Peter Holland, Jessica Holmes & Phoebe, Kevin Horan, Janet Howarth, Keith Jones, Mavis Lee, Nigel Lord, Graham Markham (Australia), Seamus Martin, Ian Moran, Pat Nickson, Caroline Nurse, Matthew Pearson, Margaret Pendleton, Sarah Preston, Francisca Rainford, Charlie Robinson (3 years old), Wendy Seed, Revd Andrew Shaw, a Sick Parishioner, Teresa Smith, Tony Smith, Colin & Marie Swarbrick, Austin Walmsley, Andrew Whipp, Ann Wicks, Louise Williams, Mary Winstanley, Ewan, Kathryn, Lucy & family.

Those whose anniversary we keep. Joseph Barton, Veronica Billington, John Towers, Cyril Baines, Michael Parkinson, Mary Doran, Mary McNicholas, Cathie Cadden, Rev John Joseph Blacoe, Mary Lea, Mary Morley, George Kenyon, Mary Wearden, Elizabeth Hogarth, Agnes Garstang and Margaret Simpson.