

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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Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday of the Word of God

24 January 2021

Liturgies this week

Sat **Mass** May & Tommy Boyle *anniversaries* [AR]

Sun **Mass** Janet Pearson *lately dead*

Mon..... **THE CONVERSION OF ST PAUL** *apostle*
Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity ends

Mass Intentions of James Costain jr [MK]

Tue..... **St Timothy & St Titus** *bishops*

Mass John Steel *lately dead* [ES]

Wed..... **Holocaust Memorial Day**

Mass Michael Hoyle *15th anniversary*

7.00pm **Rosary** *in our homes*

Thu..... **St Thomas Aquinas** *priest, doctor of the Church*

Mass Janet Pearson *lately dead* [SVP]

Fri **Mass** Jim Johnson *lately dead* [ES]

Sat **Mass** In thanksgiving [J]

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sun **Mass** Betty Gornall *RIP*

First Holy Communion 2021

I do not foresee us this year being able to offer anything like a normal programme of preparation. Having consulted our parish catechists, this is what I believe to be possible.

- If parents of children born before September 2013 are willing to prepare their child at home using the resources we recommend, they are welcome to do so, and we will support the parents as best we can.
- At the end of the preparation, we will arrange First Holy Communion for the children in twos and threes, as we did in 2020.
- For First Confession, whether we can have a group liturgy like we did in 2020 will rather depend on the number of children preparing, and the timing. Let's wait and see on this, rather than decide in advance.

Parents: If your child is eligible and you're willing to prepare them for the Sacraments, please let me know by the evening of Sunday 17 February.

Many thanks, and God bless, *Fr Geoffrey*

Closing our churches

Lancashire's Public Health Officer recently appealed that, because of the current risk level of Covid transmission among the community, places of worship do not remain open. I believe that we have a civic responsibility to respond positively to the Health Officer's appeal.

Pray for everyone involved in helping to roll-out the vaccine, so that we'll be able to open again for public worship in safety and with confidence. In the meantime, let's all of us play our part in keeping ourselves and others safe.

God bless, *Fr Geoffrey*

Folk for whom we are praying

Everyone, please take a look through the list of names in our newsletter of people who are ill or infirm. Sometimes names remain on the list of people who are now well recovered, or who were added by someone outwith the parish with whom we no longer have contact.

If you have requested that someone be included, please confirm that you'd still like them to remain on our list, and confirm that they have given their permission. E-mail the parish office, or phone and leave a message.

Thank you, *Fr Geoffrey*.

Faith & Justice newsletter

The latest edition of the newsletter from our diocesan Faith & Justice Commission can be downloaded at: <https://tinyurl.com/yxurca63>.

Reports and newsletters mentioned in this issue are available at: <http://www.lancasterfaithandjustice.co.uk/newsletter/>

Musings from my hermitage

The heart of the Gospel according to Mark is the person of Jesus.

In this Sunday's episode, the disciples respond not to an idea, but to Jesus; they set off, not to pursue abstract truth, but to follow Jesus. In the person of Jesus, God is creating his vision for us, humankind. The event to which the prophets of the Old Testament looked forward is taking shape: "The kingdom of God is close at hand."

But why the reading about Jonah? The Book of Jonah is one of the books of the prophets, and uniquely, it's all story: God wanted Jonah to preach in the metropolis of Nineveh; but Jonah ran off to sea; when the storm blew up, the sailors threw Jonah overboard to calm God's anger; Jonah was swallowed by the sea monster, and spewed onto the beach three days later, which brings us to the episode put before us this Sunday.

"Up. Go to Nineveh." Wiser now, this time Jonah went. He preached God's message in the urban sprawl; and it floored him that people listened. The people of Nineveh, who weren't God's chosen people, believed: they repented, changed; God saw their efforts and didn't destroy them.

The point being? If people who don't believe in the one true God can hear God's message and change, what about me? Hadn't I better see where God deserves a bigger say in my life, my values, the way I think, and talk, and do.

The story of Jonah is still part of God's good news: that in Jesus the Kingdom of God is close at hand. When the prophet John the Baptist was arrested, Jesus began his ministry: This is God's time. Repent. Believe.

Repent — yes, being sorry for what I've done and failed to do. But much more. The Lord's call to repent demands that I re-think my priorities, change my heart and mind to allow God a fuller role in my life and how I live; allow God to shape my values, direct my relationships.

This is God's time. So: what holds me back from responding with all my heart? What do I allow to hinder my relationship with Jesus?

Garstang Parish Draw

Congratulations to our January winners, Jen Richardson and Carol Taylor. If you would like to know more about our Parish Draw contact Trish & Kev O'Hanlon via the parish office.

Specs savers?

A pair of brown tortoise-shell glasses has been found on the path near to the presbytery front door at St Mary & St James. They would have most likely been lost on Sunday 3 January. To reclaim them, please contact Catherine Pickering.

Thank you ...

... from our parish SVP Conference to parishioners for the generous donations which have been received in recent weeks. The money will be used to help local needy people. Your thoughtfulness is much appreciated.

On-line resource from the Dominicans in Ireland

<https://www.associationofcatholicpriests.ie/2021/01/new-year-new-lockdown-new-opportunities-lumen-dominican-centre-online-supports-fill-your-minds/>

Please pray for ...

Those who have died recently. Frank Higham, Sheila Woof.

Those who are ill or infirm. James Costain jr, Barry Robinson, Viktoria Nurse, Elaine Stajniack, Jimmy O'Neill, Berney Murphy, Margaret Walmsley, Ethel Davis, Anne Hunt, John Skillen, Caroline Nurse, Jean Andrews, Keith Jones, Tony Smith, Sarah Preston, Roger Bevins, Margaret Pendleton, Austin Walmsley, Andrew Whipp, Charlie Robinson (3 years old), Simon Crossley, Kevin Horan, Jean Dunne, Teresa Smith, John Cookson, Revd Andrew Shaw, Wendy Seed, Graham Markham (Australia), Colin & Marie Swarbrick, Seamus Martin, Peter Holland, Vin Cahill, Bob Cross, Martina Cople, Dorothy Evans, Christine Cobane, Ian Moran, Nigel Lord, Ewan, Francisca Rainford, Michael Hendry, Kathryn, Lucy & Family, Jessica Holmes & Phoebe.

Those whose anniversary we keep. Belle Metcalf, Thomas Bamber, Hugh Grimaldeston, John Thomas Graham, Teresa Rogerson, Richard Hargreaves, John McArdle, Edwin Curwen, Jeanie Richmond, Ruth Fairey, Tony Waters, Joan Finlay, Robert Edwin Brown, Rev Francis Carr, Alice Winstanley, Robert Tomlinson and Michael McBride.