

Corpus Christi Bolton

Fourth Sunday of Easter/ Good Shepherd Sunday/Vocation
Sunday
3rd May 2020

PRAYERS PLEASE

We pray for all the sick and housebound in our parish, and other relatives and friends.

Bernard Holder, Christopher Scott, Jackie Harte, Moya Fau-Goodwin, Anne Hurst, Colin Spragg, Margaret Padfield,

Lately Dead: John Cranshaw, Emma Thomasson, Eugene O'Neill, Margaret Moss, Patricia O'Hara, Michael Taylor, John Dodgson, Catherine Egan, Larry Bates, David Winstanley

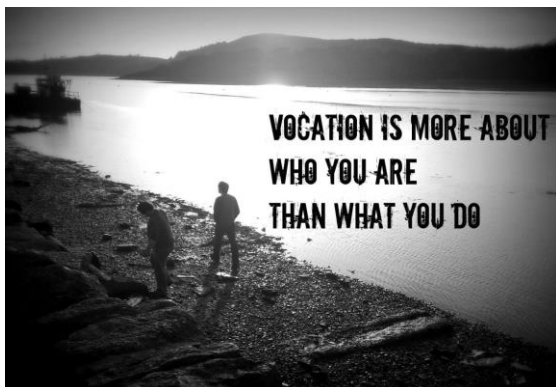
Anniversaries: Thomas and Mary Howarth,

Mass Intentions: David Gracie (BR), David Winstanley (LD), Dorothy Nuttall (Mem)

Let us also pray for the victims of this pandemic, their families and loved ones. Remembering also the key workers who are on the front-line during this current pandemic. We thank them for all they are doing and ask the Lord to keep them safe.

Hope in the future

Let us pray for the people of the parish of Our Lady, Moss Side, and St. Alphonsus, Old Trafford, for Fr. Pat Deegan, their parish priest, for their primary school and Loreto College, for the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition and for the work of Cornerstone.



GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY

This Sunday is traditionally called Good Shepherd Sunday, because of the Gospel references to Jesus as the Good Shepherd. It is also the day of prayer for Vocations to the Priesthood. On this Sunday we hear one of the great I am statements of Jesus from Saint John's Gospel today I am the gate of the sheepfold.

Through Jesus we enter into life and safety, and we go through Jesus, the gate by baptism. This image is implied in all today's readings: the people listening to Peter find this gateway and enter through it: Peter writes to remind us that we have come back to the Good Shepherd, who heals us by his wounds.

The Gospel reading is taken from the tenth chapter of Saint John's Gospel 10: 11-18. Jesus identifies Himself as the "good shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep."

In the early Church, the figure of Christ as the Good Shepherd was a prominent image. This image is seen often in early Christian art. Clearly, it had great meaning for the early Christians since it often appeared, painted or sculpted, in the catacombs and on sarcophagi and baptismal fonts. Clearly, our ancestors in the Christian faith were moved by this image

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of Jesus. These effigies by the first generations of Christians show us that the image of Christ as the Good Shepherd was an image of faith that touched their hearts in a special way.

Jesus reveals an aspect of the Good Shepherd's love that had not been revealed in the Old Testament when He said that a good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. These words were confirmed during Christ's passion. Jesus laid down His life on the cross. He did so with love and He did so freely.

In this Sunday's Gospel, Our Lord says: This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own. Jesus offered Himself up on the cross to redeem humanity, to save every individual person. He did so with love, in union with His Father's love for us.

Vocation Sunday

Because each year this Sunday introduces us to Christ as the Good Shepherd, this day is always set aside for special prayer for Vocations, especially to the priesthood. Prayers should be said for vocations today, and this should encourage us to reflect on the mystery of God's call to service.

Let us pray for vocations to the priesthood in our Diocese of Salford; that the voice of the Spirit may be heard amidst the clamour of our modern world.

Let us pray for students for the priesthood; that they may grow in closeness to Christ the Good Shepherd, as they prepare to give themselves in service of God's people.

What is a vocation?

The literal meaning of the word vocation is a "call." It comes from the Latin word "vocare": to call. However, a vocation is more than an ordinary call.

A vocation is a call from God, and anyone who has felt God's call knows that the process is anything but simple. While most people think of a vocation as what they are called to do in life, it is important to understand that the first and most important call from God, is a call to be holy. We are all called through our Baptism to share in Christ's mission to be like him.

How is it different to a career or a profession?

Your vocation is not the same as your career or profession. However, there is an overlap between a vocation and a profession.

A career or a profession is something that you have in order to support yourself and to contribute in some way to the good of society. Obviously, you don't need to believe in God to choose a career or a profession. When we talk about vocation, we are bringing God into our plans. We no longer just ask ourselves 'what do I want to do with my life?' but rather 'What is God asking of me?' A vocation is not something that you can readily change like you can with a profession or a career.

The Call to Holiness

This distinction between a call to holiness and a call to a specific vocation - single person, married life, consecrated life or ordained ministry - is important.

The universal call to holiness is rooted in our baptism. It is a call to know, love and serve the Lord. It invites us into a deeper relationship with God. We should feel a growing desire to love God and to love our neighbour. We come to understand that there is meaning in our lives and a purpose for our existence. God has called us all to do some "definite purpose" for him. It is part of the adventure of our lives as friends of Christ, to work out what that particular purpose is to be. It can take a long time to work out what God's plan for us is, so we should not worry if it is not blatantly obvious what it is, and

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therefore allow ourselves plenty of time pray and reflect about it might be.

The universal call to holiness is an ongoing conversion experience. It continually opens our eyes to a fresh awareness of God's loving presence in our lives. It keeps inviting us to turn toward God by aiming to make God's will, our own will.

A willingness to do God's will is built on two pillars. We have to believe that God loves us more than we love ourselves and that God wants our happiness more than we want it.

In other words, we have to believe that God knows more than we do about what will make us truly happy. We are to trust that God's will for us is our only chance to find true and lasting happiness.

Do you know anybody interested in the Priesthood or religious life? please contact:

Fr David Featherstone, Vocations Promoter
david.feathersone@dioceseofsalford.org.uk

Fr John Hitchen, Vocations Director

john.hitchen@dioceseofsalford.org.uk

SUNDAY REFECTION WITH THANKS TO DAVID
FRANK

Acts 2: 14, 36-41 Psalm 22 1 Peter 2: 20-25
John 10; 1-10

One of the features of the current situation is the leadership shown by the government in the face of the crisis that confronts us. The dignity and humanity of our leaders gives us a sense of hope in the future, rarely have we heard political leaders appealing to us in quite this way. They have brought a unity to our nation: we are prepared to sacrifice our way of life in order to achieve victory over this dreadful illness. In a way they have become shepherds of the people!

Shepherds are a continuous theme throughout the Old Testament. Abraham, Moses and David were all shepherds, caring for the flock and keeping them safe. They came to

represent those whose only concern was for the care of the people of God, to lead them and bring them safely through the storms that threatened them. In time the image became linked to the religious leaders of Israel and their hold upon the people, leading them, not in the way of the Lord, but towards a rigid adherence to the Law, They imposed great burdens on the common people and those at the lowest level became the outcasts, the poor, the humble shepherd.

When Jesus was born, trumpets did not sound in the halls of power but on the hillsides where the shepherd lay, keeping their sheep.

John weaves the words of Jesus into an examination of the role of a true leader of the people. He speaks of someone who cares for every last one of His sheep, one who knows each one and whose voice they hear and listen to. A true shepherd, not a hired man, one who works out of love, not out for personal gain; the one who never deserts His sheep, the people of God, when tragedy strikes, and they are scattered.

When Jesus is teaching a basic truth, He begins His words with the phrase "I tell you most solemnly" Today we hear those words addressed to the leaders of Israel, they are both words of condemnation and consolation. He speaks of the gate where all must seek entry, it is a narrow gate and the gatekeeper is Christ. Many will try to enter but only those who the shepherd recognises as worthy may pass through. Jesus holds the gate to eternal life, if we are true to Him and listen to His voice, then, in all our troubles, He will be there with His rod and His staff, protecting us, leading us home

David Frank

This Newsletter is sponsored by
HOWARTH'S FUNERAL SERVICE
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O MARY WE CROWN THEE WITH BLOSSOMS
TODAY



AS WE NOW ENTER MAY THE MONTH
DEDICATED TO OUR LADY HERE IS A LETTER
FROM POPE FRANCIS IN MAY

Pope Francis gives us 2 prayers to say at the end of the rosary in a letter written on the Feast of St Mark to all the faithful throughout the world.

Letter of His Holiness Pope Francis to the Faithful for the Month of May 2020.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The month of May is approaching, a time when the People of God express with particular intensity their love and devotion for the Blessed Virgin Mary.

It is traditional in this month to pray the Rosary at home within the family. The restrictions of the pandemic have made us come to appreciate all the more this “family” aspect, also from a spiritual point of view.

For this reason, I want to encourage everyone to rediscover the beauty of praying the Rosary at home in the month of May.

This can be done either as a group or individually; you can decide according to your own situations, making the most of both opportunities. The key to doing this is always simplicity, and it is easy also on the internet to find good models of prayers to follow.

I am also providing two prayers to Our Lady that you can recite at the end of the Rosary, and that I myself will pray in the month of May, in spiritual union with all of you. I include them with this letter so that they are available to everyone.

Dear brothers and sisters, contemplating the face of Christ with the heart of Mary our Mother will make us even more united as a spiritual family and will help us overcome this time of trial. I keep all of you in my prayers, especially those suffering most greatly, and I ask you, please, to pray for me. I thank you, and with great affection I send you my blessing.

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 25 April 2020

Feast of Saint Mark the Evangelist

Pope Francis

FIRST PRAYER

O Mary, You shine continuously on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope. We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick, who, at the foot of the cross, were united with Jesus’ suffering, and persevered in your faith.

“Protectress of the Roman people”, you know our needs, and we know that you will provide, so that, as at Cana in Galilee,

joy and celebration may return after this time of trial.

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Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform ourselves to the will of the Father and to do what Jesus tells us. For he took upon himself our suffering, and burdened himself with our sorrows to bring us, through the cross, to the joy of the Resurrection. Amen.

We fly to your protection, O Holy Mother of God; Do not despise our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us always from every danger, O Glorious and Blessed Virgin.

SECOND PRAYER

“We fly to your protection, O Holy Mother of God”.

In the present tragic situation, when the whole world is prey to suffering and anxiety, we fly to you, Mother of God and our Mother, and seek refuge under your protection.

Virgin Mary, turn your merciful eyes towards us amid this coronavirus pandemic. Comfort those who are distraught and mourn their loved ones who have died, and at times are buried in a way that grieves them deeply. Be close to those who are concerned for their loved ones who are sick and who, in order to prevent the spread of the disease, cannot be close to them. Fill with hope those who are troubled by the uncertainty of the future and the consequences for the economy and employment.

Mother of God and our Mother, pray for us to God, the Father of mercies, that this great suffering may end and that hope and peace may dawn anew. Plead with your divine Son, as you did at Cana, so that the families of the sick and the victims be comforted, and their hearts be opened to confidence and trust.

Protect those doctors, nurses, health workers and volunteers who are on the front line of this emergency, and are risking their lives to save others. Support their heroic effort and grant them strength, generosity and continued health.

Be close to those who assist the sick night and day, and to priests who, in their pastoral concern and fidelity to the Gospel, are trying to help and support everyone.

Blessed Virgin, illumine the minds of men and women engaged in scientific research, that they may find effective solutions to overcome this virus.

Support national leaders, that with wisdom, solicitude and generosity, they may come to the aid of those lacking the basic necessities of life and may devise social and economic solutions inspired by farsightedness and solidarity.

Mary Most Holy, stir our consciences, so that the enormous funds invested in developing and stockpiling arms will instead be spent on promoting effective research on how to prevent similar tragedies from occurring in the future.

Beloved Mother, help us realize that we are all members of one great family and to recognize the bond that unites us, so that, in a spirit of fraternity and solidarity, we can help to alleviate countless situations of poverty and need. Make us strong in faith, persevering in service, constant in prayer.

Mary, Consolation of the afflicted, embrace all your children in distress and pray that God will stretch out his all-powerful hand and free us from this terrible pandemic, so that life can serenely resume its normal course.

To you, who shine on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope, do we entrust ourselves, O Clement, O Loving, O Sweet Virgin Mary.
Amen.

200 CLUB POSTPONED

While we are currently in lockdown, due to the pandemic, it has been decided to postpone the 200 Club

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Church Services Online:

www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/covid-19-online-resources

www.vatican.va

www.churchservices.tv

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION

Paul Brennan and Mary Durkin have both been running regular meditation sessions until we had to close the Churches.

Paul writes: - For those who go to Church most Sundays, the sudden and complete shutdown of the Churches in respect of the Coronavirus pandemic must have come as a shock- for some, an enormous shock; and the clergy, like everyone else, are working on imaginative ways that they can offer support within these constraints.

So, what can do at home on our own to feel we are still part of a worshipping community? Well, one possibility perhaps surprising and initially unfamiliar, is to try Christian meditation. Far from being strange, 'foreign' custom, simple form of meditation has been part of the Christian tradition right back in the early centuries, and even to Jesus Himself. It just got rather lost in recent times. For the last 50 years or so, the tradition has been revived, and there is now a World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM)- ecumenical, and with a strong presence in the UK.

WCCM recommends a short time of meditation- about 20 minutes -twice a day. The short version of 'How to mediate' is below; but as long as you have internet access, it's best to go to the website: either (for the UK)

<http://www.christianmediation.org.uk> or <http://www.wccm.org> There is a great deal of help, resources and information on these websites.

As they say, meditating is 'simple but not easy'. But with practice and perseverance it

will bring rewards, and perhaps a new dimension to your spiritual life. It's for everyone- young (including children), old, new Christians and (really!) old hands, and those whose links to 'church' are at best tenuous.

How to meditate

Sit down. Sit still with your back straight. Close your eyes lightly. Then interiorly, silently begin to recite a single word - a prayer word or mantra. We recommend the ancient Christian prayer-word "Maranatha".

Say it as four equal syllables. Breathe normally and give your full attention to the word as you say it, silently, gently, faithfully and - above all - simply.

The essence of meditation is simplicity. Stay with the same word during the whole meditation and in each meditation day to day. Don't visualise but listen to the word, as you say it. Let go of all thoughts (even good thoughts), images and other words. Don't fight your distractions: let them go by saying your word faithfully, gently and attentively and returning to it as soon as you realise you have stopped saying it or when your attention wanders.

Meditate twice a day, morning and evening, for between 20 and 30 minutes. It may take a time to develop this discipline and the support of a tradition and community is always helpful.

(Maranatha is a Syriac word meaning Our Lord comes)

CARITAS SUNDAY GRATITUDE

'Mark Wiggin and the team at Caritas Diocese of Salford send their sincere thanks for the £585.18 raised at this year's Caritas Sunday at Corpus Christi. We are humbled by the support behind our mission to help those in need in our communities. Please be assured that the funds raised will be put to great use across the Diocese of Salford as we respond to

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local people in need. If you require any more
information please check our website
www.caritassalford.org.uk

ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION



Act of
Spiritual
Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are
present in the Most Holy
Sacrament. I love You above
all things, and I desire to
receive You into my soul.
Since I cannot at this moment
receive You sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into
my heart. I embrace You as if
You were already there and
unite myself wholly to
You. Never permit me to be
separated from You. Amen.

SPECIAL PRAYER INTENTIONS

In these sad times, let us continue to
pray for all those affected by the Corona
virus; may those who are affected be
healed quickly and may those who are
living in isolation know the support and
love which surrounds them.

We pray for doctors, nurses, carers,
scientists and all who are working so
hard, to be given the strength and the
courage they need to respond to this
crisis. We pray that the spread of will
soon be brought under control.

And finally let us commend to the Father,
the souls of the lately departed that they
may enjoy eternal rest and their families
may be consoled by the Lord and,
throughout this time of tribulation, grant
that we may all find comfort in your
merciful love.

LETTER FROM THE BISHOPS OF
ENGLAND AND WALES 1ST May 2020

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The radiance of the risen Lord shines
upon us. At a time when so many
shadows are cast into our lives, and upon
our world, the light of the resurrection
shines forever to renew and restore our
hope.

In the words of our Holy Father, Pope
Francis: "In the midst of isolation when
we are suffering from a lack of
tenderness and chances to meet up, and
we experience the loss of so many things,
let us once again listen to the
proclamation that saves us: he is risen
and is living by our side." (27 March 2020)

The impact of COVID-19, both nationally
and internationally, has been immense.
So much of what we take for granted has
changed. Our health and physical
interaction, our capacity to travel and
gather, have all been affected. There is
uncertainty in our future, especially with
work and the country's economy. As we
know, very sadly, large numbers of
people have died because of the
coronavirus, and others have been or
remain seriously ill. Keyworkers, not
least in the National Health Service and
care sectors, are serving selflessly to
sustain the life of our nation. Our hearts
and prayers go out to everyone who is
suffering because of COVID-19, and to all
those battling to overcome its effects.
May those who have died rest in peace
and those who are bereaved find
comfort.

When the Prime Minister announced the
lockdown, this included places of worship

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and therefore Catholic churches. These measures were put in place to stem the general transmission of the virus. It is right that the Catholic community fulfils its role in contributing to the preservation of life and the common good of society. This must continue until the restrictions applied by the Government are lifted.

None of us would want to be in the situation in which we find ourselves. While the live-streaming of the Mass and other devotions is playing an important part in maintaining the life of faith, there is no substitute for Catholics being able to physically attend and participate in the celebration of the Mass and the other sacraments.

Our faith is expressed powerfully and beautifully though 'seeing, touching, and tasting.' We know that every bishop and every priest recognises the pain of Catholics who, at present, cannot pray in church or receive the sacraments. This weighs heavily on our hearts. We are deeply moved by the Eucharistic yearning expressed by so many members of the faithful. We thank you sincerely for your love for the Lord Jesus, present in the sacraments and supremely so in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The bishops and priests of every diocese are remembering you and your loved ones at Mass each day in our churches as we pray 'in hope of health and well-being.' We thank our priests for this faithfulness to their calling.

As the Government's restrictions are relaxed step by step, we look forward to opening our churches and resuming our liturgical, spiritual, catechetical and

pastoral life step by step. This will also be of service to those beyond the Catholic Church who depend on our charitable activity and outreach through which much goodness is shared by so many volunteers from our communities.

None of us knows, as yet, how or when the lockdown will end. There is likely to be a phased return to travelling and gathering. As a church, we are now planning for this time and our discussions with the statutory public health agencies and Government representatives are ongoing. Together with Catholics across England and Wales we desire the opening of our churches and access to the sacraments. Until then, we are continuing to pray and prepare.

We want to acknowledge with gratitude the service of our fellow bishops and priests, our deacons and religious, our families and lay faithful, together with all our parish and school communities, for the wonderful ways the life of the faith is being nourished at this time, especially in the home. We also pay tribute to the Catholic organisations and networks that are working to support the vulnerable and needy.

On that first Easter day, the disciples were in lockdown and the doors were closed. In their isolation the Lord Jesus came among them and said 'Peace be with you.' May the peace of the risen Lord reign in our hearts and homes as we look forward to the day we can enter church again and gather around the altar to offer together the Sacrifice of Praise.

We unite in asking the intercession of Our Blessed Lady and assure you of our prayers and blessing

Yours devotedly in Christ,

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✠ Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop
of Westminster

✠ Malcolm McMahon OP, Archbishop of
Liverpool

✠ Bernard Longley, Archbishop of
Birmingham

✠ George Stack, Archbishop of Cardiff

✠ John Wilson, Archbishop of
Southwark

**MANY THANKS FOR YOUR PRAYERS AND
SUPPORT**

Many thanks to those who have kindly
made donations to the parish and those
who have taken the opportunity of
setting up standing orders in order to
support the parish during this lockdown.

We appreciate these are very difficult
times. Our parish survives on the
generosity of all our parishioners, we
would invite you to set aside (if you are
able) the amount you would normally
give in your offertory envelopes, and save
them up until Sunday Mass resumes.

Alternatively you can always set up a
Standing Order through your Bank. If you
have any queries regarding this please
contact Chris Molyneux from the Parish
Finance Committee, who has kindly
agreed to assist with enquiries 01204
400472 or 07789816002

And finally you can now make a donation
to Corpus Christi Parish through the
Diocesan website on the following link:-

<https://www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/supporting-your-parish-financially/>

I continue to keep you all in my prayers. When
they changed the Bank Holiday for this coming

week to Friday I thought, at last a Bank Holiday
on my day off, alas we are now in lockdown!!

I hope you can enjoy the VE Day celebrations
this Friday; let's continue to pray for peace in
our troubled world and solidarity among
nations during this time of pandemic.

With every good wish, God Bless

Fr Alf

Guess who?



*Holy Infant's May Queen 1948, our
very own Frances Smith nee
Hodget*

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