

INGOL FOOD BANK

For many people, life this year is harder than ever. We are continuing our collections for Ingol Food bank in Preston. If you would be able to give any tins or packets of food – please leave them in a carrier bag in the box at the back of church or in the box by the presbytery if church is not open. Many thanks for supporting the needy and vulnerable during these difficult times.

PARISHIONERS WHO ARE UNWELL

If you would like the parish to pray for someone who is currently unwell, please email news@stfrancisgoosnargh.org.uk or ring Father Sony on 01772 865229. It will be then be included in the newsletter. We have an area in church where you can write a prayer intention on a card and hang it up if you prefer it not to go on the parish newsletter.

CHURCH DONATIONS

With many people still unable to attend church we still need to maintain an income for maintenance. There are several ways you can still make your contributions including by cheque or direct debit. For details please go to the church website or contact Tom Smyth on 017722 865689.

Attendance and Collection

Sunday 28 March – 32: £221.00

Cycle of Prayer During Easter

We pray for:

New members of the church

Vocations (25 April)

Human work (St Joseph the Worker) on 1 May

Right use of the media on Communications Day (16 May)

The Church, especially at Pentecost (23 May)

Feast Days this Week

Tuesday – St Martin I, pope and martyr

Friday – St Bernadette Soubirous

Daily Mass live at 9.30am from St Clare's in Preston can be accessed on their YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/user/StClaresChurch/>



St Francis Hill Chapel Parish Newsletter

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**In case of emergency (and unable to contact Father Sony) please ring
Father Dutton on 01772 782641 or Canon Doyle on 01772 782244**

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER (Day of Divine Mercy)

11 April 2021 (Readings: Year B)

Parish Mission Statement

Our Parish, guided by the example of our patron St Francis of Assisi, seeks to be a welcoming Catholic Community, by living, sharing and growing in faith. We strive to deepen our own relationship with Christ and meet the needs of others.

Mass today is for the people of the parish. Please pray for all those whose anniversaries occur about this time, especially Thomas Bernard Gornall.

Please remember in your prayers **Patricia (Pat) Richardson**, who passed away on the 22 March 2021, aged 87 years. Pat is the loving wife of the late Jack, mother, grandmother and great grandmother. A Requiem mass took place at Alston Lane followed by interment at Hill Chapel on Tuesday 6 April. Pat was a very active parishioner at Hill Chapel along with her husband, Jack. Pat did the flowers and read at Mass. Pat spent her later years at Alston Lane after losing her husband. May she rest in peace.

Church is now open again for Sunday mass at 10.30am. **Please only attend mass if you feel safe to do so. The dispensation for Sunday mass is still in place.**

SAFETY RULES FOR MASS

Stewards will be on duty to ensure that safety procedures are followed. Full details are on our website. Please do read them. **Face masks will need to be worn** as specified by the government.

Please follow these guidelines once entering church:

- * **Sanitise hands** on entry.
- * Please do **keep your distance** – use the high visibility tape on floor as a guide.
- * Place your collection on the collection plate **as you enter**.
- * Please take a mass sheet & newsletter on entry and **take them away when you leave**.
- * At Holy Communion (given in silence):
Please wear a mask as you go up the aisle to communion and remove their mask before they receive the sacrament.
People from upstairs will go first down the right-hand side and return down the opposite aisle to maintain social distancing.
People on the right-hand side will then receive Holy Communion, followed by people on the left-hand side – guided by the stewards.

BIDDING PRAYERS

As we celebrate the Resurrection on this Second Sunday of Easter, send your Holy Spirit into our hearts so that we may believe more firmly in what we cannot see.

We pray for Pope Francis and all church leaders who do so much to support their parishioners both spiritually and practically. We ask that they in turn will feel supported loved and appreciated. **Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.**

After a turbulent twelve months of the pandemic, which has brought such chaos into people's lives, may the wonder of Christ's resurrection bring peace and hope to all the many who have experienced loneliness, job losses, illness and bereavement during this time. **Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

We pray for true and enduring peace in our families, in our friendships and worldwide. May the glory of the Risen Christ bring the gifts of peace and reconciliation to all situations of aggression, hatred and separation. **Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

We give thanks for your never-ending presence in our lives. May your love and compassion be constantly with us as we face the week ahead, through Christ our Lord, Amen.

FROM THE ARCHIVES:

As our schools prepare to reopen after the Easter holiday, I focus this week on the difficulties faced during the last twelve months by students, teachers and parents as our schools, colleges and universities have been closed to many for long periods of time. Teachers have been forced to prepare and present lessons remotely, and children and students have had to adapt to studying from home with the help of their parents. Perhaps one positive feature highlighted by this new way of learning is the importance of schools and families working together as the primary educators of our children.

When I retired from teaching some years ago, I was given a lovely, framed verse as a present from one of my pupils. I still often read it as a reminder of the essential importance of families and schools working together to ensure our children thrive in a happy, caring environment. I share it with you today as a tribute to all teachers and parents who have worked together through the last year:

I dreamed I stood in a studio and watched two sculptors there,
the clay they used was a young child's mind, and they fashioned it with care.
One was a teacher, the tools she used were books and music and art;
one a parent with a guiding hand, and a gentle loving heart.
Day after day the teacher toiled, with a touch that was deft and sure,
while the parent laboured by her side and polished and smoothed it o'er.
And when at last their task was done, they were proud of what they had wrought,
for the things they moulded into the child could never be sold nor bought.
And each agreed they would have failed if they had worked alone, for behind
the parent stood the school, and behind the teacher, the home. (Anon)

Mike Bryan

READINGS

Acts 4:13-21

First reading

We cannot promise to stop proclaiming what we have seen and heard

The rulers, elders and scribes were astonished at the assurance shown by Peter and John, considering they were uneducated laymen; and they recognised them as associates of Jesus; but when they saw the man who had been cured standing by their side, they could find no answer. So they ordered them to stand outside while the Sanhedrin had a private discussion. 'What are we going to do with these men?' they asked. 'It is obvious to everybody in Jerusalem that a miracle has been worked through them in public, and we cannot deny it. But to stop the whole thing spreading any further among the people, let us caution them never to speak to anyone in this name again.'

So they called them in and gave them a warning on no account to make statements or to teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John retorted, 'You must judge whether in God's eyes it is right to listen to you and not to God. We cannot promise to stop proclaiming what we have seen and heard.' The court repeated the warnings and then released them; they could not think of any way to punish them, since all the people were giving glory to God for what had happened.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 117(118):1,14-21

I will thank you, Lord, for you have given answer.

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good,
for his love has no end.
The Lord is my strength and my song;
he was my saviour.
There are shouts of joy and victory
in the tents of the just.

I will thank you, Lord, for you have given answer.

The Lord's right hand has triumphed;
his right hand raised me up.
I shall not die, I shall live
and recount his deeds.

I was punished, I was punished by the Lord,
but not doomed to die.

I will thank you, Lord, for you have given answer.

Open to me the gates of holiness:

I will enter and give thanks.

This is the Lord's own gate
where the just may enter.

I will thank you for you have answered
and you are my saviour.

I will thank you, Lord, for you have given answer.

Sequence

Victimae Paschali Laudes

Christians, to the Paschal Victim

offer sacrifice and praise.

The sheep are ransomed by the Lamb;

and Christ, the undefiled,
hath sinners to his Father reconciled.

Death with life contended:

combat strangely ended!

Life's own Champion, slain,

yet lives to reign.

Tell us, Mary:

say what thou didst see

upon the way.

The tomb the Living did enclose;

I saw Christ's glory as he rose!

The angels there attesting;

shroud with grave-clothes resting.

Christ, my hope, has risen:

he goes before you into Galilee.

That Christ is truly risen

from the dead we know.

Victorious king, thy mercy show!

Gospel Acclamation**Ps117:24**

Alleluia, alleluia!

This day was made by the Lord:

we rejoice and are glad.

Alleluia!

Gospel**Mark 16:9-15***Go out to the whole world and proclaim the Good News*

Having risen in the morning on the first day of the week, Jesus appeared first to Mary of Magdala from whom he had cast out seven devils. She then went to those who had been his companions, and who were mourning and in tears, and told them. But they did not believe her when they heard her say that he was alive and that she had seen him.

After this, he showed himself under another form to two of them as they were on their way into the country. These went back and told the others, who did not believe them either.

Lastly, he showed himself to the Eleven themselves while they were at table. He reproached them for their incredulity and obstinacy, because they had refused to believe those who had seen him after he had risen. And he said to them, ‘Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News to all creation.’

HOMILY**Second Sunday of Easter 2021****Acts 4:32-35; 1 John 5:1-6; John 20: 19-31**

Has it ever struck you that Easter Sunday morning’s Gospel is truncated, cut short? The Beloved Disciple enters the tomb, “he saw, and he believed”, and that is more or less it, apart from a comment about previous lack of belief. We are left with a cliff hanger: you can imagine “to be continued” appearing across the TV screen.

Why should this be? Why was it decided to leave the Gospel at that point when, only a few verses later, we have the encounter between the Magdalene and the risen Christ?

It was to emphasise the emptiness of the tomb; to focus our attention on the absence of Our Lord’s body. This in its turn was done to underline the physical reality of the resurrection. What the women and, subsequently, the apostles, met was not a wraith or a phantom; it was truly Jesus the Christ, body, blood, soul, and divinity, to borrow a phrase from another context. This physicality is stressed in today’s Gospel. The risen Christ is able to pass through closed and locked doors: nevertheless, His body is substantial, as He demonstrates when He shows the frightened disciples the wounds of His hands and side.

As a matter of interest, why were they frightened? They had been told by the women that Jesus was risen and that they had met Him. Among them was John who, we were told last week, had seen the empty tomb and the grave clothes, “and believed”. Furthermore, they had been told over and over again by Jesus that He would rise from the dead: so why were they still cowering in fear?

It comes down to human nature, doesn’t it? Despite all the talk about “glass half full” and “glass half empty” people, we are by birth, upbringing, and experience, natural pessimists. The promise of resurrection, and even the women’s testimony to the resurrection, was simply too good to be true. Has it ever struck you that we never say “It’s too bad to be true”? We are always willing to believe the worst: to believe the best is so much more difficult. Partly, this is the result of experience: many people seem to undergo more bad times than good. Partly, though, it is also an attitude of mind: we are innately suspicious of good news.

Yet the risen Jesus stands among the ten—as they were at that moment, with Judas gone and Thomas absent—to prove that Good News, which we can write with capital letters, is true, is real: in fact, is the only enduring reality. It is bad news which, ultimately, is the myth. Or perhaps we should say, not the myth—for the wounds of Christ are real enough and are not removed by the resurrection—but ephemeral, passing, temporary. It is the Good News which is lasting, substantial, permanent.

And if that Easter Sunday evening appearance isn’t enough to convince us of this, there is more. Along comes Thomas, whom we can identify with Everyman (or Everyone, as we should probably say) the man on the Clapham omnibus, so beloved of early twentieth century writers; the woman on the No. 51 into Carnforth. He speaks for today’s society when he says

“Prove it”. Scepticism rules the roost today: unless we have been there and brought back the T-shirt, we refuse to believe in anything.

Thomas demands physical evidence, so Jesus returns and says “Right! Give me your finger. There! I have put it into the nail hole. Give me your hand. Can you feel that gaping wound? Is that physical enough for you?”

It is. Thomas accepts the reality which he can see and feel, and then has the courage and the wisdom to go further; to accept the reality which he cannot see and feel, but can now infer, namely that the Risen Lord is God. Thus we have the first affirmation of the divinity of Christ, as Thomas declares “My Lord and my God”.

What about us? As a popular song asked a few years ago. Like me, you may have been brought up to pray Thomas’ words “My Lord and my God” silently at the elevation of Our Lord’s Body and Blood during the Mass. Like Thomas, we can see a physical reality: do we still, like Thomas, have the faith to go further and to proclaim our faith in the divinity and its present reality? Why would we not, as we learn that there is nothing which God gives us which is too good to be true?