

Feast Days this Week:

Tuesday: Dedication of the Lateran Basilica

Wednesday: St Leo the Great

Thursday: St Martin of Tours

Friday: St Josaphat

Saturday: The Blessed Virgin Mary

Cycle of Prayer for the Autumn of Ordinary Time: We pray for: the harvest and care of creation; students and teachers; the spreading of the Gospel; justice and peace; prisoners and dependants; victims of war on Remembrance Day (14 Nov); and young people on Christ the King (21 Nov).

Parishioners Who Are Unwell: If you would like the parish to pray for someone, please email news@stfrancisgoosnargh.org.uk or ring Father Sony on 01772 865229 for inclusion 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.

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 24 October: Attendance 47 | Collection £112.00 World Mission Sunday £14.10

REPAIRS TO CHURCH ROOF – UPDATE

It is now almost three years since a major structural problem was identified in the church roof. During that time negotiations between our Diocesan buildings representative and the firm of architects that managed the project to repair the roof back in 2009, have been ongoing. Despite all efforts to reach an amicable settlement with the architect, a satisfactory resolution has not been found. With this in mind the Diocesan solicitors were instructed on 4 November, to begin legal proceedings against the company. Papers have now been sent to counsel so that a case can be prepared on behalf of the parish. It is unfortunate that we have had to go to litigation but the problem with the roof has gone on for too long and our Diocesan representatives feel that we have a good case to put before the court. Further updates will be given as and when available.

Parish Property Group

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**

THIRTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

7 November 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 John Edward Wilkinson.

Every Tuesday there will be a mass at Hill Chapel at 9.30am.

There will be a Requiem Mass for **Margaret (Bunty) Banks** on Thursday 18 November at 11am. *Eternal rest give unto her O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her. May she rest in peace. Amen.*

The **Mass for Deceased Deanery Clergy** is on Tuesday 16 November. All are invited to attend the cathedral mass at 12.15pm. There is no 9.30am mass at Hill Chapel on Tuesday 16 November.

Please pray for all those whose anniversaries occur about this time, especially Elizabeth Shorrock. *May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen.* Please also remember in your prayers Margaret (Bunty) Banks, who died recently. *Eternal rest give unto her O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her. May she rest in peace. Amen.*

The **November envelopes** are now available at the back of church if anyone would like a deceased friend or relative remembered during November. If you would like to enrol a loved one on the Parish November Mass List, they will have Mass offered for them. If you are not currently attending Mass, there will be mass offering envelopes in a plastic folder in the grotto to the right of the church door, which can then be put through the presbytery letterbox.

SAFETY RULES FOR MASS

- * **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 newsletter on entry and **take it away when you leave**.
- * **Please wear a mask** as you go up the aisle to communion and remove the mask before you 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.

HELPING LOCAL FAMILIES

From next week – and until the end of January – we will resume our collection for the food bank in Ingol, Preston. If you do wish to donate any food items, tins or packets – please leave in the marked box at the back of church. Your support really does help to make a difference to nearby struggling families.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

As a young boy I always looked forward to Bonfire Night. Although not nearly as exciting, or sophisticated, as the present day community bonfires and firework displays, the small bonfire that my dad assembled at the bottom of the garden using bits and bobs of old wood, was a real treat for my older sister and I. Dad usually bought a small box of either ‘Standard’ or ‘Lion’ brand fireworks and set them off, one at a time, whilst we twirled our sparklers trying to make all sorts of interesting shapes with the sparks. We ate toffee

apples, treacle toffee and finished the evening off with a huge helping of meat and potato pie! However, one thing our bonfire didn’t have was a ‘Guy’. My mum told us, in no uncertain terms, that because Guy Fawkes was a Catholic, we should not celebrate his demise by burning an effigy of him on our bonfire! As an eight-year-old, I really didn’t understand her reasoning but now I tend to have more sympathy with her.

Guy Fawkes was born in April 1570 in York. His parents were Protestants but during his teenage years but, despite the penal laws forbidding Catholic worship, Guy converted to Catholicism. When he was 21, he left England to join the Spanish Catholic Army and fought in the Eighty Years War. During his time in the Army, he adopted the Italian version of his name and became known as Guido. He also became an expert in using gunpowder. When King James I took the throne upon Queen Elizabeth’s death in 1603, many Catholics were optimistic that he would repeal the penal laws and support the Catholic faith. However, despite his wife, Anne, being a convert to Catholicism, and his mother, Mary Queen of Scots, Elizabeth’s Catholic arch-rival prior to being executed, it soon became clear that James did not support religious tolerance for Catholics. In 1604 he publicly condemned Catholicism as a superstition, ordered all Catholic priests to leave England and expressed concern that the number of Catholics was increasing. He also largely continued with the repressive policies of his predecessor, such as fines for those refusing to attend Protestant services.

In May 1604, James’ actions led a handful of Catholic dissidents –Guy Fawkes, Robert Catesby, Tom Wintour, Jack Wright, and Thomas Percy – to rebel against him. The group met at the Duck and Drake Inn in London, where Catesby proposed a plan to blow up the Houses of Parliament with gunpowder. Afterwards, all five men purportedly swore an oath of secrecy upon a prayer book. As Fawkes was an expert in the use of gunpowder, he was chosen to use the alias John Johnson to secure a position serving as caretaker of a cellar – located just below the House of Lords – that the plotters had leased in order to stockpile gunpowder. Under the plan, Fawkes would light a fuse on 5 November 1605, during the opening of a new session of Parliament. James, his eldest son, the House of Lords, and the House of Commons would all be blown sky-high. However, the plotters were somehow betrayed, and Guy was caught red-handed close to the gunpowder with the fuse at his side. He was arrested and, soon afterwards, all the other plotters were discovered and executed along with Guy Fawkes for their actions. These were brutal times and, whilst not condoning plots to blow people sky-high, I can begin to understand my mum’s reasoning behind her ‘No Guy!’ policy.

Mike Bryan

PRAYERS FOR COP26

Please pray for the success of the upcoming UN climate talks in Glasgow, COP26, from 31 October to 12 November. Please pray that world leaders will put the needs of marginalised communities around the world, those most affected by climate change, right at the heart of these climate talks. For more information see cafod.org.uk/COP26

*Loving God, we praise your name with all you have created.
You are present in the whole universe, and in the smallest of creatures.
We acknowledge the responsibilities you have placed upon us as stewards of your creation.
May the Holy Spirit inspire all political leaders at COP26 as they seek to embrace the changes needed to foster a more sustainable society.
Instil in them the courage and gentleness to implement fairer solutions for the poorest and most vulnerable and commit their nations to the care of Our Common Home.
We ask this through Our Lord Jesus Christ your Son. Amen*

ECO TIP OF THE WEEK:



Try to cut out plastic!

Plastic seems to have found its way into every single aspect of our lives. However, giving it up isn't as difficult as you might think – bring a canvas bag with you when you go shopping, buy your fruit and veg loose and stop buying bottled water. We are lucky to be in a part of the world with good quality tap water, no need for plastic bottles. Why not go back to having your milk delivered in glass bottles that can be recycled, besides milk you can get orange juice and apple juice in glass bottles too.

READINGS

First reading

1 Kings 17:10-16

Jar of meal shall not be spent, jug of oil shall not be emptied

Elijah the Prophet went off to Sidon. And when he reached the city gate, there was a widow gathering sticks; addressing her he said, 'Please bring me a little water in a vessel for me to drink.' She was setting off to bring it when he called after her. 'Please' he said 'bring me a scrap of bread in your hand.' 'As the Lord your God lives,' she replied 'I have no baked bread, but only a

handful of meal in a jar and a little oil in a jug; I am just gathering a stick or two to go and prepare this for myself and my son to eat, and then we shall die.' But Elijah said to her, 'Do not be afraid, go and do as you have said; but first make a little scone of it for me and bring it to me, and then make some for yourself and for your son. For thus the Lord speaks, the God of Israel:

"Jar of meal shall not be spent,
jug of oil shall not be emptied,
before the day when the Lord sends
rain on the face of the earth."

The woman went and did as Elijah told her and they ate the food, she, himself and her son. The jar of meal was not spent nor the jug of oil emptied, just as the Lord had foretold through Elijah.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 145(146):7-10

My soul, give praise to the Lord.

It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever,
who is just to those who are oppressed.

It is he who gives bread to the hungry,
the Lord, who sets prisoners free.

My soul, give praise to the Lord.

It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind,
who raises up those who are bowed down.

It is the Lord who loves the just,
the Lord, who protects the stranger.

My soul, give praise to the Lord.

The Lord upholds the widow and orphan
but thwarts the path of the wicked.

The Lord will reign for ever,
Zion's God, from age to age.

My soul, give praise to the Lord.

Second reading

Hebrews 9:24-28

Christ, our high priest, has done away with sin by sacrificing himself

It is not as though Christ had entered a man-made sanctuary which was only modelled on the real one; but it was heaven itself, so that he could appear in the actual presence of God on our behalf. And he does not have to offer himself again and again, like the high priest going into the sanctuary year

after year with the blood that is not his own, or else he would have had to suffer over and over again since the world began. Instead of that, he has made his appearance once and for all, now at the end of the last age, to do away with sin by sacrificing himself. Since men only die once, and after that comes judgement, so Christ, too, offers himself only once to take the faults of many on himself, and when he appears a second time, it will not be to deal with sin but to reward with salvation those who are waiting for him.

Gospel Acclamation

Rv2:10

Alleluia, alleluia!

Even if you have to die, says the Lord,
keep faithful, and I will give you
the crown of life.
Alleluia!

Gospel

Mark 12:38-44

This poor widow has put in more than all

In his teaching Jesus said, 'Beware of the scribes who like to walk about in long robes, to be greeted obsequiously in the market squares, to take the front seats in the synagogues and the places of honour at banquets; these are the men who swallow the property of widows, while making a show of lengthy prayers. The more severe will be the sentence they receive.'

He sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the treasury, and many of the rich put in a great deal. A poor widow came and put in two small coins, the equivalent of a penny. Then he called his disciples and said to them, 'I tell you solemnly, this poor widow has put more in than all who have contributed to the treasury; for they have all put in money they had over, but she from the little she had has put in everything she possessed, all she had to live on.'

HOMILY

32nd Sunday 2021 (1Kings 17:10-16; Hebrews 9:24-28; Mark 12:38-44)

I often quote to myself the comment of the author of the Old Testament Book of Ecclesiastes that there is nothing new under the sun. This is usually when I look back through old homilies and discover that the brilliant new insight which I have just had is exactly the same insight which struck me the last time these readings occurred, and the time before that, and so on.

This week though, I have amazed myself. On looking back, I find that I have reached a different conclusion from that in previous homilies on these readings. I decided to begin "It strikes me that the key word from today's readings is 'generosity'". Checking with my own past, I discovered that six years ago I had concluded that the key word was "trust", and that I had approached things from a different angle.

Keep that word "trust" in mind. It is clearly an important concept for both widows whom we encounter today—trust in God and, for the widow in Sidon, trust in God's prophet Elijah—but follow me, if you will, in looking at generosity.

Both widows exhibit complete generosity. The Sidonian widow shares her remaining food with Elijah. Does she believe him when he tells her that her supply will not, after all, run out? Or is she simply showing that self-emptying generosity which is so often the mark of those who have little or nothing, that willingness to share what little remains?

Similarly, the widow in the Gospel is willing to give everything to God, trusting in Him for the future. This is a definite meeting point between generosity and trust.

Where do we come in? Both generosity and trust are demanded of us. How are they demanded, and how do we respond?

Under present circumstances, I think that it is fair to draw examples from international affairs. The developing countries are desperately short of COVID vaccines, and the richer nations are being asked to share, and, in particular to waive patents on the vaccines, so that they may be affordable for the people of the developing world. Some countries, our own included, are showing reluctance, perhaps believing that there may not be enough to go round but being unwilling to reduce the profits of the drug companies. There appears to be a lack of generosity here—there is certainly no trust in God—but it is also a self-defeating attitude since, if the poorer countries cannot protect their people, new variants of the virus will arise which will, in turn, affect the richer nations. We shall find ourselves bitten on the bum!

We could draw similar examples from the area of climate change. Rich nations, companies, and individuals are unwilling to make vital changes for the sake of poorer peoples, but also in fact for their—indeed our—own sakes.

Bringing things to a personal level, we should, indeed must, question ourselves about our own generosity, about our willingness to share, and about our trust in God. How many of us who stood and applauded NHS and care workers are willing to pay more in tax to ensure that those same workers receive proper remuneration, and that our health and care services are better resourced?

And how far am I willing to place myself in God's hands, entrusting my future to Him, while being generous with my material resources, my time, indeed my whole life? Every day, in the course of my prayers, I make two acts of self-surrender to God, one taken from St. Ignatius beginning "Lord Jesus Christ, take all my freedom, my memory, my understanding and my will..." and the other from St. Alphonsus which begins "Lord from this day forward, do with me, and with all that belongs to me, as it shall please thee...". How serious am I, really, in making these prayers?

If you make a Morning Offering, as I hope that you may, entrusting your day and your life to God, how much of that day and that life are you truly giving to Him? Generosity and trust: perhaps they are both key words, for individuals, for communities of whatever sort, and for nations.



One of the subtler risks on the path to holiness comes in trying to quantify our faith. "If I pray x times per day, I am certainly on the path to holiness!" "If I give £x to charity, I must certainly be holier than others!"

In today's gospel, Jesus shows us the folly in this way of thinking. The value of a gift does not depend on its monetary worth, but in the love with which it is given. It is the poor widow who is shown to be the most generous. Noticed only by Jesus, she gives "everything she possessed."

We might ask then whether we also have to give everything that we possess to be good Christians. While Christ does ask this of some (see Mark 10:17-31), the Song of Songs (8:7) tells us that "Were a man to offer all his family wealth to buy love, contempt is all that he would gain." In other words, we are probably asking the wrong question.

Instead, we should think about what our motivations are when we give to others.

The two small coins that the widow gave were an outpouring of love and trust in God, while the gifts of the rich were – we can surmise – acts of duty and 'show.' What the rich gave may not have been bad, in God's eyes what the widow gave was better.

*All-generous God,
grant me the grace to give without counting the cost
and to love with all my being.
Keep me attentive to the needs of others,
knowing that you can multiply whatever little I can put into the treasury.
Amen.*