

Feast Days this Week:

Today: Day for Seafarers

Tuesday: St Henry

Wednesday: St Camillus of Lellis

Thursday: St Bonaventure

Friday: Our Lady of Mount Carmel

Saturday: The Blessed Virgin Mary

Your prayers are requested for parishioner **Frank O'Donnell** who died recently. His funeral mass will take place at 11am on 14 July.

Please also prayer for **Pat and Harry Turner**, the internment of whose ashes will take place on 18 July.

Cycle of Prayer:

We pray for: a deeper understanding between Christians and Jews; for human life; for those who suffer persecution, oppression and denial of human rights; for Europe, especially on St Benedict (11 July), St Bridget (23 July) and St Teresa Benedicta (9Aug); and for seafarers on Sea Sunday (11 July).

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 27 June – attendance: 53 | collection: £160.50

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**

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

11 July 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 Bob Barron.

Please pray for all those whose anniversaries occur about this time, especially Fr Joseph Hothersall and Fr Michael Lakeland. *May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen.*

Our **First Communion Celebration** took place last Sunday in church. Nine children received the sacrament during a lovely service led by newly ordained priest, Father Stuart Chapple. **Please remember the children and Father Chapple in your prayers.** A very big thank you to Mary Doran for guiding the children through their journey of preparation and for all her hard work in making it a special time for them. Huge thanks also go to Maria, Bernadette and Angela who acted as stewards and cleaned church in between masses, to

Joan Marshall and Miss Deakin for helping the service go smoothly, and to Louise Coupe and Kath Smyth for providing lovely music.

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.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

This week I continue my brief look into the history of the Religious Orders of Nuns that had once thrived in the Preston area. Many of you will be familiar with the sisters of ‘The Order of The Holy Child Jesus’, whose presence in our town spanned 162 years and ended in October 2016, when it had just two sisters working in the community. At the time, Sister Judith Lancaster, SHCJ, said, “It is with sadness that we close our last community house here, but we are confident that the practice of loyal and robust Catholicism, which we are proud to have been associated with, will continue to flourish in Preston.”

The Society of Jesus was founded in 1846 at the request of Pope Gregory XVI, when he asked Cornelia Connelly to establish a congregation of women religious in the Catholic Church in Derby. Within a very short period, Cornelia and three postulants assisted at their first Mass as a religious community, and the Society’s members have lived out Cornelia’s vision, to “meet the wants of the age”, ever since. The Order arrived in Preston just seven years later when the Jesuits invited the Society to take responsibility

for the parish schools. Five sisters arrived, setting up home in St Ignatius’ Square. More sisters arrived the following year and between them they taught in all three Jesuit parishes – St Ignatius’, St Wilfrid’s and the then newly established St Walburge’s. In the 1850s Preston was developing rapidly, the population had increased fourteen-fold in the previous 60 years. Work, for the vast majority, was in one of the 87 mills that the town boasted and living conditions were grim in the extreme. The children in the schools had first-hand knowledge of destitution, unemployment, homelessness and hunger. So, the sisters, alongside their teaching, tried to respond to the social and spiritual needs of whole families. They contributed food and other material help, and set up night schools, and Sunday schools, that taught much more than the catechism and were involved in every aspect of parish life.

In 1875 the Society bought their house in Winckley Square and opened a school for ‘young ladies’ with about 50 pupils, half of whom were boarders. As well as this, linking Winckley Square with the parish schools, they accommodated and trained pupil teachers. Like the parish schools, Winckley Square flourished, providing, as Cornelia Connelly intended, an education that helped students to “grow strong in faith and lead fully human lives”. For more than a century, as the town expanded, sisters took responsibility for school after school in the newly founded parishes: the Sacred Heart, the English Martyrs, St Joseph’s, St Mary Magdalene in Penwortham, St Anthony’s Cadley, St Bernard’s Lea, as well as in the long-established St Mary’s in Friargate. Later they also taught in the Catholic secondary modern and comprehensive schools.

By the middle of the twentieth century, the number of Holy Child sisters in the town had considerably decreased and lay people assumed the headships of the schools. The small number of sisters who remained moved first to East Cliff and then to St Austin’s Place where they continued to participate in the life of the parish much as the earliest sisters had done. Although the sisters are no longer in Preston, the Society’s ministry continues across four continents, working collaboratively with others in educational, spiritual, pastoral, social justice, and healthcare ministries. Its mission – *‘to rejoice in God’s presence and to help people believe that God lives and acts in them and in our world.’*

The contribution made by the sisters of the Order of The Holy Child Jesus to Catholic education and parish life in Preston cannot be overestimated!

Mike Bryan

First reading**Amos 7:12-15***Go, shepherd, and prophesy to my people Israel*

Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, said to Amos, ‘Go away, seer;’ get back to the land of Judah; earn your bread there, do your prophesying there. We want no more prophesying in Bethel; this is the royal sanctuary, the national temple.’ ‘I was no prophet, neither did I belong to any of the brotherhoods of prophets,’ Amos replied to Amaziah ‘I was a shepherd, and looked after sycamores: but it was the Lord who took me from herding the flock, and the Lord who said, “Go, prophesy to my people Israel.”’

Responsorial Psalm**Psalm 84(85):9-14(Sun15)****Second reading****Ephesians 1:3-14***God chose us in Christ before the world was made*

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all the spiritual blessings of heaven in Christ. Before the world was made, he chose us, chose us in Christ, to be holy and spotless, and to live through love in his presence, determining that we should become his adopted sons, through Jesus Christ for his own kind purposes, to make us praise the glory of his grace, his free gift to us in the Beloved, in whom, through his blood, we gain our freedom, the forgiveness of our sins. Such is the richness of the grace which he has showered on us in all wisdom and insight. He has let us know the mystery of his purpose, the hidden plan he so kindly made in Christ from the beginning to act upon when the times had run their course to the end: that he would bring everything together under Christ, as head, everything in the heavens and everything on earth.

And it is in him that we were claimed as God’s own, chosen from the beginning, under the predetermined plan of the one who guides all things as he decides by his own will; chosen to be, for his greater glory, the people who would put their hopes in Christ before he came. Now you too, in him, have heard the message of the truth and the good news of your salvation, and have believed it; and you too have been stamped with the seal of the Holy Spirit of the Promise, the pledge of our inheritance which brings freedom for those whom God has taken for his own, to make his glory praised.

Gospel Acclamation**cf. Jn6:63,68**

Alleluia, alleluia!

Your words are spirit, Lord, and they are life; you have the message of eternal life.

Alleluia!

Gospel**Mark 6:7-13***Take nothing with you*

Jesus made a tour round the villages, teaching. Then he summoned the Twelve and began to send them out in pairs giving them authority over the unclean spirits. And he instructed them to take nothing for the journey except a staff – no bread, no haversack, no coppers for their purses. They were to wear sandals but, he added, ‘Do not take a spare tunic.’ And he said to them, ‘If you enter a house anywhere, stay there until you leave the district. And if any place does not welcome you and people refuse to listen to you, as you walk away shake off the dust from under your feet as a sign to them.’ So they set off to preach repentance; and they cast out many devils, and anointed many sick people with oil and cured them.

HOMILY 15th Sunday 2021

Amos 7:12-15; Ephesians 1:3-14; Mark 6:7-13

By and large, the Second Reading at Mass tends to receive short shrift. The reason for this is obvious: we tend to focus on the Gospel, as being the most important reading, and the Old Testament reading, being chosen to link in with the Gospel, often features in the homily too. The Second Reading, by contrast, is something of a sore thumb. During Ordinary Time, it simply follows a New Testament Epistle week by week, with no particular relationship with the other readings, and so it finds itself something of an orphan.

Perhaps we can redress the balance a little this week by focusing on the Second Reading, which today takes the form of the first of seven weekly extracts from the Letter of St. Paul to the Church at Ephesus, a large seaport on the coast of Asia Minor, in what is now Turkey. Paul was the founder of that Church, and some scholars suggest that the absence of a more intimate, personal tone may indicate that the letter was written, not by Paul himself, but by one of his followers, but that need not concern us here.

I would like to draw attention to some of the words and phrases of this extract, all of which emphasise God's choice of us, and His love for us, a choice which He has made from all eternity.

The writer begins by underlining our blessedness: "who has blessed us with all the spiritual blessings of heaven in Christ." We are blessed as a people, as members of the Church. Do you think of yourself as blessed, as having received gifts from God, especially spiritual gifts, which draw you closer to Him, and which you can use for the benefit of others?

"Before the world was made, He chose us, chose us in Christ." God has chosen you from all eternity, has loved you with an everlasting love, has made you unique, infinitely precious to Him. Are you aware of being infinitely loved by God, uniquely precious in His sight?

"To be holy and spotless." This is the root of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin. By preserving Mary from all sin from the moment of her conception in her mother's womb, God ensured that His intention should be fulfilled, His intention of creating a people holy and spotless. Mary already is what we are called and destined to be.

"And to live through love in His presence." That is our ultimate aim, but we are already practising it. We are always in the presence of God. Are we always living through love?

"His adopted sons and daughters." Jesus the Christ is the Son of God by nature: God's intention is that we should share that same status by adoption.

How often do you consider the immense love of God, who loves us with the same intensity, the Holy Spirit, with which He loves the only begotten Son? "To make us praise the glory of His grace." Our prayers, such as the Glory be to the Father... and the Gloria at Mass are expressions of praise. Do we always use those prayers in a genuine spirit of praise and thanksgiving? "His free gift to us in the Beloved." Grace is, by definition, free. We do not need to earn God's love or God's grace. He gives it to us freely and liberally. "Through His blood, we gain our freedom." That word "freedom" will recur towards the end of the reading. Do you find faith and life in Christ liberating or constricting? If the latter, there may be a need to re-examine some elements of your faith, and your life among God's people. "Claimed as God's own." The Royal Lancaster Regiment, now incorporated into the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment, was known as the King's Own, giving it a special relationship with the Crown. We, as God's own, have a special relationship with God, in our belonging to Him. "Stamped with the seal of the Holy Spirit." This was done at our baptism, and at our confirmation, where the formula is now "Be sealed with the Holy Spirit". (And woe betide you, in the days of Bishop Brewer, if you did not respond "Amen".) A seal is a mark of ownership: we are owned by God. Choice, seal, freedom, adoption as sons and daughters: the whole tenor of this passage is one of encouragement. We are loved and chosen from all eternity: that should give us the confidence to live in loving service.