

## Feast Days This Week:

**Monday:** Sts Cyril and Methodius

**Thursday:** Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order

**Saturday:** The Blessed Virgin Mary

## The Cycle of Prayer (winter; ordinary time):

For peace; For Christian unity; For victims of human trafficking and those who work to combat it; For the sick and those who care for them; For racial justice (Racial Justice Day 13 Feb); For the unemployed (27 Feb)

## Attendance and Collection:

**30 January:** Attendance 64 | Collection £118.00

**Parishioners Who Are Unwell:** If you would like the parish to pray for someone, please email [news@stfrancisgoosnargh.org.uk](mailto: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 Opening Daily:** Church will be open Monday to Friday throughout February (during term time; roughly school hours) for people to call in during the day to say a prayer. It will also be open all day on Saturday, and on Sunday afternoons.



# St Francis Hill Chapel Parish Newsletter

The Hill, Horns Lane

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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**

## SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

**13 February 2022 (Readings: Year C)**

### *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 Joan Gornall.**

Please remember in your prayers the family of Kasper Chesworth. Kasper will be baptised today. We welcome him to the parish family and to the wider family of God.

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

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

### Safety Rules For Mass

Although safety rules have been restricted, we are only a small church and we do want everyone to be kept safe and Covid free while attending Hill Chapel.

- \* **Sanitise hands** on entry.
- \* Please **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 enter and leave church and when receiving Holy Communion.
- \* **At Holy Communion**, please wait until you are guided by the stewards.

### Synod Gatherings – final meeting after Mass today!

Many thanks to all who have attended and responded to the Synod gatherings. The final meeting on Sunday 13 February will be on the theme of Mission. This has been an ideal opportunity for people to come together and to share ideas. Your attendance is very gratefully appreciated. Apart from sending our responses to the dioceses, we will be taking notice of all your views and using these for future planning to ensure that our parish is a thriving one where everyone feels valued and appreciated

**Request from the Gardening Team:** Please could all Christmas arrangements and wreaths be removed from the churchyard before 26 February. On this date the gardening team will remove any that remain as they start working towards preparing for spring. Many thanks.

**Brock Valley Churches Together:** This year, the World Day of Prayer Service will take place on **Friday 4 March at 2pm, hosted by St Mary's Newhouse**. We are part of BVCT and all are invited to go along and represent Hill Chapel at the service.

### From The Archives

On Friday 11 February, the Church celebrated the Feast Day of Our Lady of Lourdes which marks the date that Our Lady first appeared to Bernadette Soubirous in the small village of Lourdes in southern France. Bernadette was born on 7 January 1844. Her parents were very poor, and she was the first of nine children. As a toddler, Bernadette contracted cholera and suffered extreme asthma. Unfortunately, she lived the rest of her life in poor health. On Thursday 11

February 1858, fourteen-year-old Bernadette was sent with her younger sister and a friend to gather firewood, when a very beautiful lady appeared to her above a rose bush in a grotto called Massabielle. The woman wore blue and white and smiled at Bernadette before making the sign of the cross with a rosary of ivory and gold. Bernadette fell to her knees, took out her own rosary and began to pray. Bernadette later described the woman as *uo petito damizelo*, meaning 'a small young lady'. Though her sister and friend claimed they were unable to see her, Bernadette knew what she saw was real. On 18 February, Bernadette said 'the vision' asked her to return to the grotto each day for a fortnight. With each visit, Bernadette saw the Virgin Mary and the period of daily visions became known as *la Quinzaine sacrée*, meaning 'holy fortnight'. On 25 February, Bernadette claimed to have had a life-changing vision. The vision had told her "To drink of the water of the spring, to wash in it and to eat the herb that grew there, as an act of penance". The next day, the grotto's muddy waters had been cleared and fresh clear water flowed. On 2 March, at the thirteenth of the apparitions, Bernadette told her family the lady said, 'a chapel should be built on the site'. During her sixteenth visit, on 25 March, Bernadette claimed to have experienced the vision for over an hour. She said that she had asked the lady her name, but her question was only met with a smile. Bernadette asked again, three more times, and finally the woman said, 'I am the Immaculate Conception.'

Following the miracles, Bernadette asked the local priest to build a chapel at the site of her visions. However, following the construction of the first chapel, Bernadette decided she did not like the attention she was getting and went to the hospice school run by the Sisters of Charity of Nevers, where she was taught to read and write. On 29 July 1866, Bernadette took the religious habit of a postulant and joined the Sisters of Charity at their motherhouse in Nevers. Bernadette spent the rest of her life there working as an infirmiry assistant, and later a sacristan. Sadly, she was diagnosed with tuberculosis of the bone in her right knee and was unable to take part in convent life. She died in the Sainte Croix (Holy Cross) Infirmary of the Convent of Saint Gildard at the age of thirty-five on 16 April 1879, while praying the holy rosary.

St Bernadette was canonised in 1933 by Pope Pius XI. The Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes is now one of the major Catholic pilgrimage sites in the world. Many other chapels and churches have been built around it, including the Basilica of St Pius X, which can accommodate 25,000 people and was dedicated by the future Pope John XXIII when he was the Papal Nuncio to France. To date, almost 7,000 cures have been documented at the waters of Lourdes. The relics of St Bernadette will be brought to England this autumn and will be welcomed in every Cathedral including Lancaster Cathedral. More details nearer the time.

**Mike Bryan**

## READINGS

### First reading

Jeremiah 17:5-8

*A blessing on the man who puts his trust in the Lord*

The Lord says this:

‘A curse on the man who puts his trust in man,  
who relies on things of flesh,  
whose heart turns from the Lord.

He is like dry scrub in the wastelands:

if good comes, he has no eyes for it,

he settles in the parched places of the wilderness,  
a salt land, uninhabited.

‘A blessing on the man who puts his trust in the Lord,  
with the Lord for his hope.

He is like a tree by the waterside

that thrusts its roots to the stream:

when the heat comes it feels no alarm,

its foliage stays green;

it has no worries in a year of drought,

and never ceases to bear fruit.’

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### Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 1:1-4,6

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### Second reading

1 Corinthians 15:12,16-20

*If Christ has not been raised, you are still in your sins*

If Christ raised from the dead is what has been preached, how can some of you be saying that there is no resurrection of the dead? For if the dead are not raised, Christ has not been raised, and if Christ has not been raised, you are still in your sins. And what is more serious, all who have died in Christ have perished. If our hope in Christ has been for this life only, we are the most unfortunate of all people.

But Christ has in fact been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of all who have fallen asleep.

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## Gospel Acclamation

Mt11:25

Alleluia, alleluia!

Blessed are you, Father,

Lord of heaven and earth,

for revealing the mysteries of the kingdom  
to mere children.

Alleluia!

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### Gospel

Luke 6:17,20-26

*Happy are you who are poor, who are hungry, who weep*

Jesus came down with the Twelve and stopped at a piece of level ground where there was a large gathering of his disciples with a great crowd of people from all parts of Judaea and from Jerusalem and from the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon. Then fixing his eyes on his disciples he said:

‘How happy are you who are poor: yours is the kingdom of God.

Happy you who are hungry now: you shall be satisfied.

Happy you who weep now: you shall laugh.

Happy are you when people hate you, drive you out, abuse you, denounce your name as criminal, on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice when that day comes and dance for joy, for then your reward will be great in heaven. This was the way their ancestors treated the prophets.

‘But alas for you who are rich: you are having your consolation now.

Alas for you who have your fill now: you shall go hungry.

Alas for you who laugh now: you shall mourn and weep.

‘Alas for you when the world speaks well of you! This was the way their ancestors treated the false prophets.’

### HOMILY: 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time 2022

Jeremiah 17:5-8; Psalm 1; 1 Cor 15:12, 16-20; Luke 6:17, 20-26

St Luke, as anyone on the number 51 into Carnforth will tell you, is known as the *scriba mansuetudinis Christi*, “the one who writes of the gentleness of Christ”. If you continue further, on the number 55 to Lancaster, you may find those who will inform you that it was Dante who coined that expression: whether that is true or not I must rely on you to confirm or deny.

Therefore, when St Luke of all people depicts Our Lord as speaking harshly, we must sit up and take notice. Today, in the Sermon on the Plain, Luke

records Jesus delivering a starker version of the Beatitudes than we find in Matthew, and following it up with a corresponding list of woes.

Thus, whereas Matthew describes Jesus speaking of the blessedness of the poor in spirit, according to Luke it is the poor who are said to be blessed, without the addition of the spiritual element. For Matthew, the blessing comes upon those who hunger and thirst for justice, whilst Luke has Our Lord say simply “Blessed are you who hunger now”, seemingly implying a physical, rather than a spiritual hunger. Similarly, Luke is alone in lamenting the prospects of the rich, the well fed, the contented and the popular—those, indeed, whose needs are being satisfied by earthly things.

What are we to make of this? At one level, the Jesus of Luke’s Gospel is confirming the prophecies of Jeremiah and of the first Psalm. He is distinguishing those whose interests and trust are rooted in material things, and who are doomed to disappointment, from those who put their trust in God, and who, as both Jeremiah and the Psalmist declare, are like a tree whose roots reach down to the stream, relying on the ultimately reliable.

So far, so good, we may think. WE put our trust in God: we are all right Jack. But is it really as straightforward as that?

In blessing the poor and the hungry, and warning the rich and the comfortable, Our Lord is shattering any tendency that we may have towards complacency. Very few of us, I suspect, can genuinely claim to be poor, or to go hungry; yet poverty and hunger exist in our world, and even in our own country.

Nor are that poverty and that hunger inevitably people’s own fault, as some would claim. Yes, there are those who have squandered what they had, or who have pursued pleasure to the point of addiction, but that is far from being the whole story. It is very easy for people to lose their homes through redundancy, or marriage breakdown, or sudden illness. Thank God (and Aneurin Bevan) for the National Health Service, which ensures that we shall not be bankrupted by medical bills, as can be the case in poorer, or even in wealthy but less civilised nations, but the loss of income entailed in lengthy illness can have devastating effects.

Furthermore, how many of the homeless have a military background, people whom we were happy to laud as they preserved our security, but whom we ignore when they return, traumatised by their service?

The poor, the hungry, the distressed, are very much part of today’s world, as they were in the days of Our Lord; and, as this Gospel makes clear, we ignore them at our peril. It is not enough to claim that we, at least, have our priorities right: that we put our trust in God, and not in the things of earth, in material well-being. In many ways, we HAVE that material well-being. If we do not put it at the service of others; if we ignore our suffering brothers

and sisters; worse still, if we join the chorus of those who point the finger and declare that it is their own fault, then far from being blessed, we shall hear those words “Alas for you” directed at us.

Lent is looming: it is two and a half weeks away. At the very least, let us commit ourselves to some contribution to the relief of the poor, making that a starting point.