

Feast Days This Week:

Monday: St Peter Damian

Tuesday: The Chair of St Peter the Apostle

Wednesday: St Polycarp

Saturday: The Blessed Virgin Mary

The Feast of the Chair of St Peter commemorates Christ's choosing Peter to sit in his place as the servant-authority of the whole Church. Jesus told Peter that "you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church." It is with this pastoral responsibility given him that the Pope shepherds Christ's flock.

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; for the unemployed (27 Feb)

Attendance and Collection:

6 February: Attendance 54 | Collection £158.00

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 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

Goosnargh, Preston PR3 2FJ

Telephone: 01772 865229

Clergy: Father Sony Joseph Kadamthodu

www.stfrancisgoosnargh.org.uk

Email (for newsletter items only):

news@stfrancisgoosnargh.org.uk

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

SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

20 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 Jack Ashton.

There will be no mass at Hill Chapel this coming Tuesday because Father Sony is away on his annual retreat. Please remember Father in your prayers during his retreat.

On Ash Wednesday, 2 March, there will be Mass at Hill Chapel at 9.30am and at St Mary's, Claughton, at 7.30pm.

Please pray for all those whose anniversaries occur about this time, especially Annie Bennett. *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.

* Please **sanitise your hands** on entry.

* **Please wear a mask** when entering and leaving church and when receiving Holy Communion. Masks can be removed while sitting in your bench.

Many thanks for your co-operation.

Synod Gatherings

Many thanks to all who have attended and responded to the Synod gatherings. Could any outstanding survey forms please be returned to church. 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

Last year Pope Francis issued certain updates to his landmark 2015 Encyclical on the environment, *Laudato Si* or 'On care for our Common Home'. *Laudato Si* means 'Praise be to you', and is taken from the first line of a canticle by St Francis that praises God with all of His creation. Normally, papal documents are addressed to bishops or the lay faithful but, similar to St John XXIII's *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth), Pope Francis addresses this message to all people. His goal: 'I urgently appeal, then, for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. We need a

conversation that includes everyone, since the environment challenge, we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all.'

Pope Francis also has a very striking call to conversion for those in the Church as well, and, in particular, to those who turn a 'blind eye' to the problem of global warming and the destruction of many natural habitats across the globe. He writes:

'The ecological crisis is also a summons to profound interior conversion. It must be said that some committed and prayerful Christians, with the excuse of realism and pragmatism, tend to ridicule expressions of concern for the environment. Others are passive; they choose not to change their habits and thus become inconsistent. So, what they all need is an 'ecological conversion', whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them. Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience.'

Laudato Si is a worldwide wake-up call to help humanity understand the destruction that man is rendering to the environment and his fellow man. While addressing the environment directly, the document's scope is broader in many ways as it looks at not only man's impacts on the environment, but also the many philosophical, theological, cultural, and political causes that threaten the relationships of man to nature and man to each other in various circumstances.

The document is in many ways the epitome of Pope Francis. It is an unexpected topic. It presents Gospel truths, and it provides a challenge for every believer (and non-believers, too). It urges us to play our part in doing everything possible to conserve and protect our local and global environment, and to pray for an end to political unrest, the wilful destruction of the world's natural resources and the tragic human consequences that follow.

I recommend that you read the full Encyclical which is available on the Vatican Website.

Mike Bryan

Stainer's Crucifixion

Preston Orpheus Choir are organising a 'come and sing' Stainer's 'Crucifixion' on Saturday 19 March at St Leonard's church, Marshalls Brow, Penwortham, Preston, PR1 9JA. An afternoon workshop from 2.30 to 5.30pm, followed by an evening performance at 7.00pm. Singers £10, audience £5. More details (including a singer's registration form) on the website: www.prestonorpheuschoir.org.

READINGS

First reading

1 Samuel 26:2,7-9,11-13,22-23

Do not lift your hand against the Lord's anointed

Saul set off and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, accompanied by three thousand men chosen from Israel to search for David in the wilderness of Ziph.

In the dark David and Abishai made their way towards the force, where they found Saul lying asleep inside the camp, his spear stuck in the ground beside his head, with Abner and the troops lying round him.

Then Abishai said to David, 'Today God has put your enemy in your power; so now let me pin him to the ground with his own spear. Just one stroke! I will not need to strike him twice.' David answered Abishai, 'Do not kill him, for who can lift his hand against the Lord's anointed and be without guilt? The Lord forbid that I should raise my hand against the Lord's anointed! But now take the spear beside his head and the pitcher of water and let us go away.' David took the spear and the pitcher of water from beside Saul's head, and they made off. No one saw, no one knew, no one woke up; they were all asleep, for a deep sleep from the Lord had fallen on them.

David crossed to the other side and halted on the top of the mountain a long way off; there was a wide space between them. He called out, 'Here is the king's spear. Let one of the soldiers come across and take it. The Lord repays everyone for his uprightness and loyalty. Today the Lord put you in my power, but I would not raise my hand against the Lord's anointed.'

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 102(103):1-4,8,10,12-13

Second reading

1 Corinthians 15:45-49

The first Adam became a living soul; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit

The first man, Adam, as scripture says, became a living soul; but the last Adam has become a life-giving spirit. That is, first the one with the soul, not the spirit, and after that, the one with the spirit. The first man, being from the earth, is earthly by nature; the second man is from heaven. As this earthly man was, so are we on earth; and as the heavenly man is, so are we in

heaven. And we, who have been modelled on the earthly man, will be modelled on the heavenly man.

Gospel Acclamation

cf.Ac16:14

Alleluia, alleluia!

Open our heart, O Lord,
to accept the words of your Son.
Alleluia!

Gospel

Luke 6:27-38

Love your enemies

Jesus said to his disciples: 'I say this to you who are listening: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who treat you badly. To the man who slaps you on one cheek, present the other cheek too; to the man who takes your cloak from you, do not refuse your tunic. Give to everyone who asks you, and do not ask for your property back from the man who robs you. Treat others as you would like them to treat you. If you love those who love you, what thanks can you expect? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what thanks can you expect? For even sinners do that much. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what thanks can you expect? Even sinners lend to sinners to get back the same amount. Instead, love your enemies and do good, and lend without any hope of return. You will have a great reward, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked.

'Be compassionate as your Father is compassionate. Do not judge, and you will not be judged yourselves; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned yourselves; grant pardon, and you will be pardoned. Give, and there will be gifts for you: a full measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap; because the amount you measure out is the amount you will be given back.'

HOMILY: 7th Sunday in Ordinary Time 2022

1 Samuel 26:7-23; Psalm 102; 1 Cor 15:45-49; Luke 6:27-38



Many, many moons ago, when I was based at the Diocesan Residential Youth Centre, the lay members of staff used to claim, tongue in cheek (at least, I think it was tongue in cheek) that I had only one homily, which went “compassion—cum passio—suffering with”. A few years later, on my first Sunday in St Gregory’s, Preston, having spotted one of those former staff members in the congregation, I felt compelled to begin my homily by saying “There is someone in church who believes that I have only one homily. I am now going to prove them right”, because the Gospel on that day cried out for that selfsame homily, as does today’s Gospel.

“Be compassionate, as your Father is compassionate” we are instructed by Jesus. In one sense, the Psalm goes even further, stating not simply that God is compassionate, but that He is COMPASSION—that compassion is an aspect of His very nature.

How can this be? The Psalmist wouldn’t have known it, but God was to reveal Himself as COMPASSION, by becoming one of us in the person of Jesus, thus taking our human nature as His own, undergoing what we undergo, suffering what we suffer. Compassion is one of God’s greatest gifts to us because it is a sharing in His nature, a sharing bestowed on us in the Incarnation, the taking by God of our human nature, with all that this entails.

Sometimes the word “compassion” is devalued by being taken to mean “feeling sorry for”, but it is a far deeper reality than that. The same is true of the Greek equivalent “*sun pathos*” which comes into English as “sympathy” a word which also means “suffering with”, but which is generally reduced to that same concept of “feeling sorry for”—something experienced from outside. Hence, it is usually replaced, when we wish to express that sense of “suffering with”, by “empathy” (*en pathos*) literally “suffering in”.

That is the feeling, and the attitude, which Jesus demands of us. We must put ourselves in the other person’s skin, experience things from his/her point of view, as God, in the person of Jesus, put Himself in our skin, experiencing things from our point of view. If we have an enemy, we must walk in that enemy’s shoes, seeing things, as best we can, from that enemy’s viewpoint, not primarily to give ourselves a strategic advantage, but to understand why they behave as they do, what aspect of our common humanity is driving them.

Can a Ukrainian, indeed can we, be compassionate with Vladimir Putin, take on his skin, his mind, his soul? Can a Northern Ireland nationalist do the same for a committed unionist, and vice versa? This may seem to demand the impossible, yet it is the demand made of us by Jesus, the compassionate God, when He tells us uncompromisingly “Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who treat you badly”. It is a demand which He Himself embodied to the full when He prayed “Father, forgive them,” on behalf of those apparently evil men who were crucifying Him. When He added “for they know not what they do”, Jesus demonstrated that He had entered into their mindset, understood what made them tick, become compassionate with them.

Such an attitude, such a response, is profoundly counter-cultural. You need only skim the internet, or glance at newspaper headlines, to note the venom spewed by so many on those with whom they disagree. If you were to visit certain self-styled Catholic media outlets—which I don’t advise you to do—you would be horrified by the hatred which some of them express for the Holy Father. “No compassion there” you might say, and you would be correct, but here’s the rub: you and I must be compassionate with them, must enter into their minds and hearts to understand what drives them, must do good to them, bless them, pray for them. Is this the most difficult Gospel passage of all? Possibly. Are we obliged to take it seriously? Definitely. Is compassion the most demanding of mindsets? It may be, but it is certainly the most Christ-like, and so, ultimately, the most rewarding.