

GARDENING As new life emerges in the natural world, our beautiful grounds need more work to keep them as lovely as they are. Our small team of gardeners need your help. No experience is needed. A sense of humour and working knees would be useful. Meet on Saturday mornings at 10 am.

PHONE AVAILABLE Gigaset c630a cordless phone from the presbytery, now surplus to requirements. Only 5 months old, in good condition other than a slight scuff on the screen. Features: original box, 200 phonebook entries, answering machine 30 mins record time, nuisance call blocker, hands free speakerphone and up to 14 hours talk time between charging. Available for a small donation to church. Contact admin@stfrancisgoosnargh.org.uk

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 25 April – 38: £117.50 (and £16 for the Ecclesiastical Education Fund).

Cycle of Prayer During Easter

We pray for: New members of the church; Right use of the media on Communications Day (16 May); The Church, especially at Pentecost (23 May).

Feast Days this Week: Wednesday – St Pancras, martyr; Thursday – the Ascension of the Lord. Friday – St Matthias, apostle.

Letter and Prayers from Pope Francis: Pope Francis is asking for people to say the rosary in the month of May to bring an end to the pandemic. A letter giving further details and special prayers is available at the back of church.

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**

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

9 May 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 Kathleen Mary Cook and Doreen Ellen March.

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 listen to today's gospel, help us to gain strength from the risen Lord who asks us to love one another as he has loved us. We bring our prayers before our Heavenly Father, knowing that God's love is beyond anything we can ever imagine.

Let us follow the guidance of Pope Francis as he asks us to remember Mary in this month of May and say the rosary at home. May we follow his call to show our love and devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and ask for her help during these difficult times. **Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

We pray for the people of India as they struggle to cope with the devastation caused by Covid. We remember the many families that are left alone and abandoned with unwell family members unable to reach or receive medical care. We pray that they will get the support they so desperately need and keep them in our thoughts and prayers. **Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

With lockdown restrictions continuing to loosen, we pray that the coming together of families, friends and communities is a happy, united and safe union. **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

In this special month of May, dedicated to Our Blessed Lady, I focus this week on one of the most important priests living for the latter part of his life in

Lancashire during the early 19th century. You may not have heard of this man, but you will be very familiar with one of his most famous works. His name was Fr. John Lingard, who, together with William Cobbett, helped to smooth the passage of the Catholic Emancipation Act in England. The son of a Catholic carpenter, Lingard was born in Winchester in 1771, at a time when England was occasionally violently anti-Catholic, and R.C. churches could not legally be built. Mass was still technically illegal although priests were no longer executed but could still be charged with an offence. Catholics could not vote or matriculate into the universities and, theoretically, they could still be subjected to enormous fines. By the time of Lingard's birth, the harsher of these penalties were never enacted. The Catholic Relief Acts were not passed until 1778 and 1791.

Lingard's intellectual talent was identified early, and he was sent to train as a priest at the seminary in Douai, which was French territory before 1789. Due to the increasing violence and anti-clericalism of the French Revolution, Lingard and all his classmates had to flee Douai in 1793. The next eighteen years were spent teaching and ministering in the north of England, mostly near Durham; first at Crook Hall, then at the newly built Ushaw College, which Lingard helped to establish. Terrified by the thought of a life in educational administration, Lingard fled to Hornby in the Lune Valley in 1811. He never looked back and was instrumental in building the church of St Mary's, (which is still a thriving parish within our own diocese of Lancaster). Lingard was accompanied by many and various pets including a cat, a guinea fowl, a tortoise, and his beloved giant poodle named Etna. Lingard happily served his small parish where he wrote historical and theological books, including 'The History of England, from the First Invasion by the Romans to the Accession of Henry VIII'. He had fallen in love with Lancashire, and he begged his superiors not to send him back south. He turned down two bishoprics and an offer to become President of St Patrick's seminary in Maynooth outside Dublin. Pius VII awarded him a triple doctorate in 1821 in recognition of his scholarly excellence, and there was a rumour that Leo XII had secretly made him a Cardinal.

Most people today, if they have heard of Lingard at all, will perhaps recognise the name as the author of the hymn, 'Hail Queen of Heaven, the Ocean Star'. A hymn I certainly remember from my childhood and for singing it frequently during the month of May. Lingard described the hymn as, 'A reminder to trust in Mary, to help choose good over evil, and that without her lighting the way to Christ, it is easy to get lost as we wander through life'. Here's a reminder of the first verse:

Hail, Queen of heaven, the ocean star, guide of the wanderer here below.

Thrown on life's surge, we claim thy care, save us from peril and from woe.

Mother of Christ, Star of the Sea, pray for the wanderer, pray for me.

Lingard stayed in Hornby until his death in 1851.

Mike Bryan

READINGS

First reading

Acts 10:25-26,34-35,44-48

The pagans have received the Holy Spirit just as much as we have

As Peter reached the house Cornelius went out to meet him, knelt at his feet and prostrated himself. But Peter helped him up. 'Stand up,' he said 'I am only a man after all!'

Then Peter addressed them: 'The truth I have now come to realise' he said 'is that God does not have favourites, but that anybody of any nationality who fears God and does what is right is acceptable to him.'

While Peter was still speaking the Holy Spirit came down on all the listeners. Jewish believers who had accompanied Peter were all astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit should be poured out on the pagans too, since they could hear them speaking strange languages and proclaiming the greatness of God. Peter himself then said, 'Could anyone refuse the water of baptism to these people, now they have received the Holy Spirit just as much as we have?' He then gave orders for them to be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ. Afterwards they begged him to stay on for some days.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 97(98):1-4

Second reading

1 John 4:7-10

Let us love one another, since love comes from God

My dear people,
let us love one another
since love comes from God
and everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God.
Anyone who fails to love can never have known God,
because God is love.
God's love for us was revealed
when God sent into the world his only Son
so that we could have life through him;
this is the love I mean:
not our love for God,
but God's love for us when he sent his Son

to be the sacrifice that takes our sins away.

Gospel Acclamation

Jn14:23

Alleluia, alleluia!

Jesus said: 'If anyone loves me he will keep my word,
and my Father will love him,
and we shall come to him.'

Alleluia!

Gospel

John 15:9-17

You are my friends if you do what I command you

Jesus said to his disciples:

'As the Father has loved me,
so I have loved you.

Remain in my love.

If you keep my commandments
you will remain in my love,
just as I have kept my Father's commandments
and remain in his love.

I have told you this

so that my own joy may be in you
and your joy be complete.

This is my commandment:

love one another, as I have loved you.

A man can have no greater love
than to lay down his life for his friends.

You are my friends,

if you do what I command you.

I shall not call you servants any more,
because a servant does not know
his master's business;

I call you friends,

because I have made known to you
everything I have learnt from my Father.

You did not choose me:

no, I chose you;

and I commissioned you
to go out and to bear fruit,
fruit that will last;

and then the Father will give you
anything you ask him in my name.
What I command you
is to love one another.’

HOMILY

You may be familiar with the saying “If you remember the 60s, you weren’t there”. I do, and I wasn’t, at least in the sense implied by that adage: namely, that if you were part of the 60s “scene”, you would have been too far gone on dope and acid to recall it.

I have to confess that the swinging 60s didn’t swing for me. It was the decade of Saturday morning school, O-levels, A-levels, Scholarship exams, and finally adjustment to the mysterious world of university in 1968, the year not only of student revolution, but also of *Humanae Vitae* and its tumultuous aftermath. I shall always be grateful that I had football refereeing to keep me relatively sane.

In the “Summer of Love” I didn’t go to San Francisco with flowers in my hair—though some of you may well have done so. I went to the Co-op Furnishing Dept. to earn some money. Nor, two years later, did I join the allegedly half a million souls who trekked to Woodstock to try to set their souls free, as Joni Mitchell expressed it in her song which one-hit-wonders Matthews Southern Comfort took to the top of the UK charts the following summer. I was back at the Co-op.

Some years later, probably in 1994, the twenty fifth anniversary, I watched a TV documentary about Woodstock, which featured interviews with some of the “beautiful people” who had been there. They were unanimous in their verdict: “we talked a lot about free love, but we have realised that there is no such thing: love is always costly”.

That puts me in mind of the two elderly Jewish ladies who, for some reason, were on the visiting list of the now defunct parish of St. Augustine, Preston, where I did my diaconate placement in the summer of 1975. (It beat working at the Co-op.) One of these ladies commented “Religion is the Lord, and religion is love, and love means sacrifice”.

This old lady had reached the same conclusion, though I suspect by a very different route, as the Woodstock veterans: namely that love is always costly. We can, I feel, leave to one side the theoretically correct, but experientially questionable claim that God’s love is free. It is freely given, but accepting it will inevitably entail sacrifice, and a sharing in the Cross.

If we doubted that, we have it spelt out by Our Lord in His call to mutual love which we have just heard. “No one can show greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” St. John sets this call in the context of the Last Supper, where Jesus has already summoned His friends to mutual service by washing their feet, and from which He will depart to provide the supreme example of sacrificial love by undergoing His passion and death. Jesus’ great commandment is a commandment of love, a love made possible by the sacrificial love of Father and Son through the agency of the Holy Spirit; a love which will always demand sacrifice on our part.

That self-sacrificing love which entails the laying down of our lives must be seen in small things, otherwise we shall not be capable of the greater sacrifice. One thing which I gained from my summers at the Co-op was the memory of a cartoon, one of a number drawn on the wall of the Carpet Sewing Room, all the work of an artistic employee, and all featuring the Peanuts characters of Charles Schultz.

The one which lodged in my mind was a night-time scene, with a crescent moon in the sky, and Snoopy lying on top of his kennel. On the back doorstep of his house stood Charlie Brown, clad in his pyjamas, and holding a glass of water. Underneath was the caption: “Love is bringing someone a glass of water in the middle of the night”.

An anti-climax, isn’t it—bathos? Yet it expresses a profound truth. I have often quoted it in wedding homilies. If we are not prepared to make the small sacrifices of love, we shall never be capable of the greater. And to give a nod to the First Reading: the Holy Spirit has been poured out on us to make us able.