

People of the Word: The Bride

Today we come to the end of our journey through the Bible. We consider its last book, Revelation, and in particular the character simply referred to as 'the Bride'.

Revelation opens with St John describing a vision of Jesus. Chapters 2 and 3 contain letters to the seven Churches of Asia Minor. In these letters, the Lord praises some communities for their faithfulness, but also admonishes and warns those who are unfaithful or who have grown lukewarm. This sets the scene for the rest of the book, which is filled with visions of heaven and the end times. Many of these visions appear very strange to us: they are filled with unusual images, fearsome plagues and symbolic numbers. They speak of the end of the world, but also of the reality of persecution the Christians of the time already experienced under the Roman Empire. In many ways, the whole book is an encouragement to commit ourselves wholeheartedly to Christ – to make a clear choice, not to live in a lukewarm way, with one foot in the Church and one in the world. Alongside this, there is the constant encouragement to persevere in faith.

Towards the end of the book the figure of the Bride becomes more prominent. Heaven is the wedding feast of the Lamb – Jesus, who has been sacrificed and yet lives. His Bride is the Church: we will be united with Him in eternal love in heaven. And so, as Scripture ends, we find ourselves in the story. We are the ones who form the Bride of Christ – we are the Church. Throughout our journey we have met so many characters, but the story continues. We are the people of the Word today.

Questions for reflection:

- How fully do I commit myself to Jesus? Am I sometimes lukewarm?
- Do I look forward to being united with Christ in heaven?



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MASSES THIS WEEK

Office: Psalter Week 2; Sundays: Year A; Weekdays: year 2, week 34

Morning Mass is livestreamed each day and will be available for viewing later in the day on our YouTube channel. All information and links at www.saintclares.co.uk

At this time it is not possible to attend Mass in person.

Date	Time	Occasion	Intention/Details
Sunday 22 nd	9:30am	OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE	For those who have died in the last twelve months
Monday	9:30am		Special Intention (SC)
Tuesday	9:30am	Sts Andrew Dung-Lac and companions	Clara Oastler RIP
Wednesday	9:30am		Michael Connolly RIP
Thursday		No public Mass today	
Friday	9:30am		Edmund Starkie RIP
Saturday	9:30am		Ints Michael Massey
Sunday 29 th	9:30am	FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT	People of the Parish

LATELY DEAD: Please pray for **Bernard Harrison, Martin Malone**, and all who have died recently.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: on request. Contact Fr Andrew to arrange.

ROSARY: Prayed after 9:30am Mass, Monday-Friday.

ANNIVERSARIES: Patricia Morris, Michael McCombe, Margaret Fowler, Margaret Panasiewicz, Patricia Barnish, Mary Bond, Peter Butler, Kath Bernie, Jack Wright, Caprise Sherriff.

POPE'S PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR NOVEMBER: We pray that the progress of robotics and artificial intelligence may always serve mankind.

Supporting your parish financially

To avoid use of cash, it is better, if possible, to support the parish using standing order/BACS. Contact us directly for the details. If you don't use online banking, we can send you a mandate which you can fill in and post to your bank. If you have been saving offertory envelopes, these may be pushed through the presbytery letterbox or handed in at the end of Mass. Thank you for supporting our parish.

NATIONAL LOCKDOWN: At this time it is not possible to attend Mass in person. The Mass is livestreamed each day at 9:30am. The church remains open each day for private prayer – for opening times and more information, see the back page.

THURSDAY MASS: Please note, there will be no public (livestreamed) Mass on Thursday this week. On all other days the Mass will be streamed as usual at 9:30am. The church remains open for private prayer every day (see back page).

RED WEDNESDAY: This Wednesday is Red Wednesday, an Aid to the Church in Need initiative to raise awareness of our persecuted brothers and sisters. We are asked to pray for them especially on this day, and to do what we can to support them. Our church will be lit up red each evening this week, along with many other buildings, as a way of raising awareness about this terrible suffering. You can find out more about our parish support for ACN at the end of this newsletter.

NOVEMBER LIST: A box containing all the names submitted for November is in front of the altar throughout this month; they are remembered each day at Mass.

VIRTUAL COFFEE MORNING: After Sunday morning Mass each week, on Zoom – just during the lockdown! Email us if you would like to come.

YOUTH SERVICE COLLECTION: This year the collection for Youth Sunday will be taken online. It supports Castlerigg Manor and the Youth Service, which have suffered greatly this year. If you can help, please visit castleriggmanor.co.uk/nys; you can also send donations to 'Castlerigg Manor, Manor Brow, Keswick, Cumbria CA12 4AR or put your envelopes through the presbytery door.

METANOIA PROJECT are hosting various online events with opportunities for prayer, worship and growing in faith. Visit www.metanoiaproject.co.uk for more.

CATHOLIC VOICE OF LANCASTER: November edition is available on our website.

CAN YOU HELP MAIRA? Aid to the Church in Need are asking the Prime Minister to grant asylum to Maira Shahbaz, a 14-year old Pakistani Christian girl. Maira was raped, forced to marry and convert, and is now threatened with death. Please sign the petition, which can be found online – it only takes a minute. [Click here to sign.](#)

PRO-LIFE CAMPAIGN: A cross-party group of MPs have come together to bring forward a Bill which would clarify that cleft palate, cleft lip, and club foot are not grounds for abortion in the UK. Please consider writing to your MP to support this Bill. Find out more at www.standupandsmile.org.uk

FOOD BANK CHRISTMAS APPEAL: There is great need especially for tinned meat, potatoes, spaghetti hoops, cordial and treats for children (mince pies with a date past Christmas, tinned sweets/chocolates, selection boxes, tinned biscuits etc). They also hope to provide 500 toys to children whose families use the food bank. Donations are welcome, but **must be made by this Friday**. New toys only please.

Events this week (occasional/one-off events in bold type)

Day	Time	What?	Where?
Every day	Anytime	Food Bank Collection	House Porch
Sunday 22 nd	10:15am	After-Mass tea/coffee	Zoom
	3pm-4pm	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	Church
Mon-Fri	5-6pm	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	Church
Saturday	12-1pm	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	Church
Sunday 29 th	10:15am	After-Mass tea/coffee	Zoom
	3pm-4pm	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	Church

All events marked 'YouTube' are streamed live on our channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/StClaresChurch>

A prayer of spiritual communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

Second National Lockdown

As we enter a second national lockdown, which is expected to be much shorter than the first, let's continue to look out for one another, especially for those who are isolated or have particular needs. If you need help, or know someone who does, please contact us – there are many parishioners who are willing to help out. Don't be stuck and don't suffer in silence!

Public Masses are currently suspended, by order of the government. We continue to livestream the Mass each morning at 9:30am.

After the lockdown, everyone who currently has a place at Mass will be able to resume coming to the same Mass without rebooking.

As the rules stand, we will still be able to open the church for private prayer, for limited periods each day – these are shown in the table above.

Please keep an eye on our website: www.saintclares.co.uk for further information and updates.



Supporting Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) during COVID

Over the last 3 years, St Clare's Parish and St Clare's School have been actively fundraising to support the work of ACN and its efforts to support persecuted Christians. To date, our Parish and our School community has been incredibly generous and together we have raised close to £30,000 for ACN projects in Syria and Iraq. Of course, this year has been, and continues to be, very different. The COVID pandemic has brought difficult and unforeseen challenges for many families in our community. Similarly, the pandemic has brought additional hardships and challenges for many persecuted Christians supported by ACN.



Despite the pandemic, the work of ACN continues. Although we can't gather as a community to actively fundraise, we can continue to support ACN. Below are some ideas which may be of interest.

Advocacy - Stay informed about ACN campaigns as there may be practical ways to support ACN. For example, signing a petition to lobby the UK for political help is often a really important practical way to help this charity. The ACN website provides information on a number of advocacy cases, you can read about them here [Advocacy Support](#)

If you can, please sign the petition to get UK asylum for Maira Shahbaz, a 14 year old Catholic teenager, based in Pakistan, who has been abducted and forced to marry her abductor and abandon her Catholic faith. You can sign the petition here: [Maira Shahbaz Petition](#).



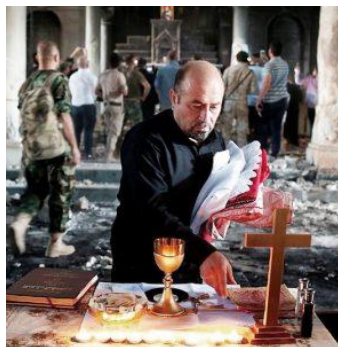
Prayer – Private prayer for the work of ACN and persecuted Christians is another practical way we can support ACN.

You can also request a mass for a loved one. Mass offerings to ACN are a really important source of subsistence for priests working in some of the poorest countries in the world. See here for more information. [Mass Offerings](#).

Financial Support – Donations to ACN are always welcome and these can be made via Fr Andrew. However, shopping on the ACN website is also a great way to provide financial support to ACN. The ACN shop is full of beautiful gifts, cards, music, jewelry and audiobooks as well as toys! So, if you want to buy some christmas cards or gifts online, take a look here. [ACN Shop](#).

Any support you can give is truly appreciated by ACN.

Thank you for taking the time to read this article.



ACN article prepared by Andrea Sinnott, parish ACN rep.