
Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity

The octave of prayer for Christian unity (18th-25th January) was first proposed by Fr Paul Wattson, a convert to Catholicism, in 1908. This time of prayer was extended to the whole church by Pope Benedict XV in 1916, and is observed by Christians of many denominations. It's a time when we recall our Lord's prayer at the Last Supper: "May they all be one. Father, may they be one in us, as You are in me and I am in You, so that the world may believe it was You who sent me" (John 17:21). Given that this prayer was made by the Lord on the eve of His death, we can be sure of the importance of working towards greater unity with our Christian brothers and sisters of other denominations, and especially of praying for this cause, adding our voice to the prayer of our Lord.

Today's Readings

Today's first reading tells a little of the story of the prophet Jonah, who was famously swallowed by a whale while attempting to run away from God's plan for him. We hear of how Jonah preached to the people of Nineveh, a great (and presumably proud) city. In response to his preaching, the people, from the greatest to the least, humbled themselves and repented, and therefore avoiding the disaster which would have been the result of their sins. The basic message is clear: repentance makes a difference. When we turn away from sin and back to God, we avoid the sadness, loneliness and destruction that our sins bring. In the Gospel Jesus begins His public preaching with the words, "Repent, and believe the Good News." He too is telling us: turning back to God, believing in Him and trusting Him – this is the way of salvation. It makes a difference when we heed His call. St Paul in the second reading reminds us of the urgency of this work, telling us that "the world as we know it is passing away". This is not a statement that the end of the world will be soon, but rather a perennial truth: everything in this life has its end. The only things that truly last are the things of God.

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MASSES THIS WEEK

Office: Psalter week 3; Sundays: year B; Weekdays: year 1, week 3

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

Date	Time	Occasion	Intention/Details
Saturday	6pm (vigil)*	THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	People of the Parish
Sunday 24 th	9:30am*		Patrick Hoyle RIP and family
	11:30am*		Margaret Kelly RIP
	6pm*		Rose Baines RIP
Monday	9:30am	Conversion of St Paul	Mona Huke RIP
Tuesday	9:30am	Sts Timothy and Titus	Lis Dey RIP
Wednesday	9:30am	St Angela Merici	Company of St Ursula
Thursday	9:30am	St Thomas Aquinas	Joan Burton RIP
Friday	9:30am		Jim Proctor RIP
Saturday	9:30am		Patricia O'Dowd RIP
	6pm (vigil)*	FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	Ints Amanda Bower
Sunday 31 st	9:30am*		People of the Parish
	11:30am*		Thanksgiving
	6pm*		Marie Howson RIP

*** These Masses can only be attended by those who have booked in advance.**

LATELY DEAD: Please pray for **Archbishop Philip Tartaglia** and all who have died recently.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: Saturday 11am-12noon and on request.

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

ANNIVERSARIES: May Walmsley, Jean Davies, Agnes Turner, Mary Gregson, Roy Williamson, Guy Horton, Winifred Fowler, Margaret Livingstone, Margaret Prince, Jean Moizer, Winifred Green, Elizabeth Worden, Margaret Williamson, William Staples, Elizabeth Moore, Bertha Mills.

POPE'S PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR JANUARY: May the Lord give us the grace to live in full fellowship with our brothers and sisters of other religions, praying for one another, open to all.

SUNDAY OF THE WORD OF GOD: This Sunday is set aside each year to remind us of the importance of reading, reflecting on and praying with the Word of God. Let's try to make some extra time this week to read the Bible and pray with it, seeking to listen more clearly to God's voice in our lives.

PRAYERS AND HELP FOR THOSE IN NEED: Please continue to remember in your prayers all those who are suffering greatly at present as a result of the pandemic and everything that accompanies it. Please let us know if you yourself, or someone you know, needs help from the parish.

CHURCH OPENING: Under the current lockdown, the church remains open. We have received new assurances from Public Health England that opening is safe, as long as we all abide by the rules. Please do not mix with others when visiting.

OCTAVE OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY: 18th-25th January. We are invited to pray for deeper unity amongst the followers of Christ and to work, wherever possible, for greater cooperation with Christians of other denominations. The theme for this year is "Abide in my love and you shall bear fruit" (John 15:1-17).

VISITING THE CRIB: The main crib will remain in place up to and including Tuesday 2nd February, the feast of Candlemas. This will give us all, and the wider community, the opportunity to further reflect on the Lord's presence with us.

YOUNG PEOPLE: Although our youth groups can't meet at present, there is online material on the Metanoia Project Facebook page for Seekers, and Zoom sessions taking place for members of the 'Sent' group and for young leaders. Please contact Metanoia Project or Father Andrew for more details. Also see back page for more initiatives, run by the Diocesan Youth Service.

CATHOLIC NEWSPAPERS: From February we will no longer be supplying the Universe/Catholic Times in the parish. These are available to order directly from the publisher (www.thecatholicuniverse.com or 0161 820 5722). It can be posted to you each week. Introductory offers: printed copies for three months - £25; twelve months - £99; or digital copy £55 for twelve months.

FOOD BANK: Donations may be left in the house porchway at any time. Demand is increasing, with over 200 food parcels being distributed each week. There is currently need for: toilet rolls, tinned potatoes, tinned fruit, coffee and soap powder. They also collect used stamps.

THE DRAMA DISPLAYED: A free series of online talks examining the key moments of salvation history, with the aid of great works of art. At 7:30pm every second Thursday, from 14th January to 25th March. For info and registration: <https://christianheritagecentre.com/events/the-drama-displayed/>

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

Day	Time	What?	Where?
Every day	Anytime	Food Bank Collection	House Porch
Sunday 24 th	3pm-4pm	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	Church
Mon-Fri	5-6pm	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	Church
Saturday	11am	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	Church
Sunday 31 st	3pm-4pm	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	Church

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.

Lancaster Diocese Youth Service during lockdown

Our diocesan youth service, based at Castlerigg Manor, is organising various online events to help nourish the faith of young people and for all adults during the new lockdown. Are you interested? Or do you know someone who may be? Please pass the details on to anyone who may enjoy and benefit from these events.

RISE // Online Youth Group - Our first online Youth Group launches on March 11th. It's free of charge and open to anyone in Year 7 to 9. Every other Thursday from 7pm to 8pm. www.castleriggmanor.co.uk/riseonline

Online Study Days for Adults - Our first study day will be on Saturday March 13th. Father Michael Docherty will be talking to us about Salvation History. Tickets £5. 1pm to 5pm. www.castleriggmanor.co.uk/study

ENGAGE // Online Youth Ministry Course - The second run of the ENGAGE course starts on March 16th. The course is aimed at people starting out in Youth Ministry or people who've been around a while and want to learn a little more. Earlybird price £48 until February 10th. www.castleriggmanor.co.uk/engage