
Aspects of Lent: Prayer

Prayer is central to our lives, and without it there is no relationship with God. This is true all year round, but in Lent we make a special effort to devote more time and energy to prayer, in this way uniting ourselves with Jesus during His 40 days of prayer and fasting in the wilderness.

In his pastoral letter last week, Bishop Paul reminded us that prayer is not just about asking for the things we need (though, of course, it includes that): rather, it is a yearning for closeness to God, a desire to be with Him, and in some small way, an experience of heaven. The God whom we will see face to face in eternal life is the same God who makes Himself known to us now in prayer.

Prayer is about spending time with God, getting to know Him, deepening our relationship with Him. It is very much like spending time with a friend: it forms and deepens the relationship, so subtly that we don't even notice; and yet, without that time, the relationship would die. Just as, when we spend time with friends, sometimes we share our news and our feelings, and sometimes we listen to them, so it is with the Lord. Prayer involves sharing with God the innermost movements of our hearts, revealing everything to Him and inviting Him in. But it also involves an attentive listening, a desire to hear God speak to us. In today's Gospel, the voice of the Father says very clearly of Jesus: "Listen to Him". If we do, we come to know Him better, and perhaps we, like Peter, James and John, can glimpse a little of the glory of Jesus, whom one day we will see face to face in heaven.

Today's Readings

On the second Sunday of Lent we always hear the Gospel of the Transfiguration. This event took place shortly after Jesus first predicted His death, so taught the disciples that the cross leads to the glory of the resurrection. The first and second readings point us to the fact that God did not spare His own Son, but allowed Him to be sacrificed, so that we could be saved.

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MASSES THIS WEEK

Office: Psalter week 2; Sundays: year B; Weekdays: of Lent

Morning Mass is livestreamed each day and will be available for viewing later in the day on our YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/StClaresChurch>

Date	Time	Occasion	Intention/Details
Saturday	6pm (vigil)*	SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT	John Airey RIP
Sunday 28 th	9:30am*		People of the Parish
	11:30am*		George Oldcorn RIP
	6pm*		Peter Lowe RIP
Monday	9:30am	St David	Ints Mickey Betancurt
Tuesday	9:30am		Donor's Intention (JW)
Wednesday	9:30am		Dec. memb. Meek family
Thursday	9:30am		Patrick Cunningham
Friday	9:30am		Nuala O'Donnell RIP
Saturday	9:30am	THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT	Eric Bamber RIP
	6pm (vigil)*		Peter Sissons RIP
Sunday 7 th	9:30am*		Roger and Florence O'Donnell RIP
	11:30am*		PJ and Nuala Gordon RIP
	6pm*		People of the Parish

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

LATELY DEAD: Please pray for all who have died recently.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: Tuesday 5-6pm this week, Saturday 11am-12noon and on request.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS: Sundays in Lent 3pm in church and live on YouTube.

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

ANNIVERSARIES: Jean Bateson, Isabelle Maxwell, Mary Hurley, Maureen Ford, James Woodruff, Winifred Taylor.

POPE'S PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR MARCH: That we may experience the sacrament of reconciliation with renewed depth, to taste the infinite mercy of God.

FIRST FRIDAY HOLY HOUR: Friday 7-8pm, in church and streamed live on YouTube. Quiet prayer, scripture, reflections and hymns in the Lord's presence.

EXPLORING THE SAN DAMIANO CROSS: Find out more about the history and symbolism of the cross which hangs above our altar, in a new video out now on our YouTube channel, for the beginning of Lent.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS: Sunday afternoons, 3pm in church and live on YouTube. A chance to journey with our Lord on His walk to calvary. This replaces the normal Sunday opening for private prayer.

THE PASSION NARRATIVE IN ST MARK: An online talk exploring St Mark's account of Our Lord's suffering and death. Live on our YouTube channel on Tuesday 9th March at 7:30pm.

CONFESSIONS will also be available this Tuesday, 5-6pm, as well as on Saturday.

EASTER FLOWERS: Donations are welcome, in marked envelopes. Please include the name(s) of anyone you wish to be remember. A list of names will be displayed.

PHILIPPA AND KEITH MILLER have recently moved out of the parish after almost 30 years here. We wish them every blessing for the future. Philippa has asked us to share her contact details: howdymum@yahoo.co.uk; 07962 656855.

CATHOLIC VOICE OF LANCASTER March edition now available in the newsletters section of our website. Includes tributes to Bishop Patrick O'Donoghue.

CAFOD LENT APPEAL: Fast Day envelopes may be returned with the collection this weekend. For those who wish to donate online to support the 'Walk for Water' campaign, CAFOD have set up a JustGiving page for our parish. You can find it here: <https://walk.cafod.org.uk/fundraising/st-clares-lent-walkforwater>

LENT CALENDARS: A couple of online calendars with ideas for Lent: <https://cafod.org.uk/Pray/Lent-calendar>; <https://laudatosilent.org/>

ACN VIRTUAL SUNDAY LUNCH: 21st March. More details to follow. Find out more about the work of Aid to the Church in Need and support them at www.acnuk.org

RWANDA TRUST: The Rwanda Group Trust, a registered & local Catholic charity based in Preston, helps the poorest of the poor in Rwanda. The situation is very serious due to Covid-19 and serious food shortages. Every penny raised in the Lenten appeal will enable families to purchase food and goats. The charity has no paid employees or overheads. Goats cost £30 to purchase in Rwanda. For further information, or to donate, see: www.rwandagrouptrust.blogspot.com; or email rwandagrouptrust.org@gmail.com; or call Michael Donlan (Trustee) 07864 990941.

FAITH AND JUSTICE JOB VACANCY: The Diocese is looking for a part-time faith and justice co-ordinator. See the poster in the narthex for more details.

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

Day	Time	What?	Where?
Every day	Anytime	Food Bank Collection	House Porch
Sunday 28 th	3pm	Stations of the Cross	Church and YouTube
Mon-Fri	5-6pm	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	Church
Friday	7pm	First Friday Holy Hour	Church and YouTube
Saturday	11am-12	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	Church
Sunday 7 th	3pm	Stations of the Cross	Church and YouTube

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 during the lockdown Please pass the details on to anyone who may benefit.

RISE // Online Youth Group - Our first online Youth Group launches on March 11th. It's free of charge and open to anyone in Years 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

Overflow (Online Group for 18-30s) // Connecting young adults. [Sign up...](#)

Youth Mental Health First Aid (online) // We are offering a HUGE reduction on our normal price. Tickets are just £95, for this two day course accredited by MHFA England. Your chance to learn how to spot the warning signs of poor mental health and how you can help. The Mental Health equivalent of learning CPR! [Book...](#)

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