

People of the Word: Solomon (part 1)

Last week we looked at the psalms, many of which are attributed to King David. Today we move on to his son, Solomon, who succeeded him as king.

Solomon is celebrated especially for his wisdom, something we will explore a little more next week. At the time of Jesus he was also remembered as the king who built the Jerusalem Temple, the great edifice which housed the Ark of God. David was instructed, on account of his sin, not to build a temple, but to amass goods in preparation for the work: it was Solomon who built the Lord's house.

Solomon's reign marked a peak for the kingdom of Israel, which at that time wielded great influence and largely enjoyed a time of peace. But it was not without problems. The Bible records that Solomon had seven hundred wives (1 Kings 11:1), many of whom were foreign women who brought their own religions into Israel, thus drawing people away from the true God. Solomon allowed, and later built, shrines to these false gods, and so proved, despite his earlier wisdom, unfaithful to the Lord. He drove his enemies into exile and used forced labour for some of his activities, and after his death there was division in the kingdom. Although Solomon is remembered as a great and wise king, his reign and his character, like that of his father David, are not unblemished.



Questions for reflection:

- What can I do to make my house a prayerful place, especially at this time?
- Do I remember to avoid all false gods, and worship the true God alone?

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MASSES THIS WEEK

Office: Psalter Week 2; Sundays: Year A; Weekdays: Week 6 of Easter

Important: the church is closed until further notice. Mass and other services are 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
Sunday 17 th May	10am	Sixth Sunday of Easter	Norman and Gwen Hibbert – 60 th Wedding
Monday	10am		People of the Parish
Tuesday	10am		Malcolm Howe RIP
Wednesday	10am		La Sagesse Sisters
Thursday	10am	ASCENSION OF THE LORD	People of the Parish
Friday	10am	St Rita	Peter Rainford RIP
Saturday	10am		Bob Thomson RIP
Sunday 24 th	10am	Seventh Sunday of Easter	Ruby Wedding

LATELY DEAD: Please pray for **Francis Harrison, Margaret Woodruff, Pilar Caton, Lilian McGuire, Patrick Hoyle, Vivian Ball** and all who have died recently.

LITURGY OF THE HOURS: Sung Vespers and Benediction streamed live on our YouTube channel on Sunday at 4:30pm.

ROSARY: Prayed after 10am Mass, Monday-Friday.

ANNIVERSARIES: Jean McCombe, Florence Swift, Martin Elliott, Mary Bernie, Mark Hutchinson, Kathleen Painter, Andrew Keating.

POPE'S PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR MAY: That deacons, faithful in their service to the Word and the poor, may be an invigorating symbol for the entire Church.

Supporting your parish financially during the lockdown

Many people have asked how they can contribute to the parish financially at a time when almost all parish income has dried up. If you are still earning and able to contribute, you can save up offertory envelopes until the lockdown ends. Some people have asked for details of how to donate by standing order/BACS. If you contact us directly we can give the details, if you would like to help in this way. If you don't use online banking, we can send you a mandate which you can fill in and post to your bank. Again, contact us if this would be useful to you. Thank you for thinking of us at this time, but please only contribute if you are able.

Father Andrew's weekly message

Dear Friends,

Last weekend we were all hoping that the Prime Minister would give some idea when we might be able to reopen our churches. Although it wasn't specifically mentioned in his address, the subsequent government guidance told us places of worship would not open before 4th July. The bishops are pushing the government to take spiritual needs seriously and trying to find ways to open the churches for private prayer before that date. In the parish, we are doing everything we can to prepare, and we will be ready to open as soon as we get the green light.

Last week the Parish Council met online to discuss our response to the current situation, asking what more we can do and trying to plan for the weeks and months ahead. We are particularly concerned about parishioners who do not have internet access, and some good ideas were put forward, which we'll try to carry out. We are also looking to try some online social events, including **tea and coffee after Mass via Zoom next Sunday** – send us an email if you'd like to take part.

You may have seen on our website and social media this week some lovely pictures of the children of our parish showing some of the things they have been doing to keep their faith strong during the lockdown. We are so blessed to have such wonderful families in our community and such supportive Catholic schools.

This Thursday we celebrate the **Ascension of the Lord**, which is normally a Holy Day of Obligation. We'll treat it like a Sunday, with hymn sheet online, Mass at 10am and Vespers and Benediction at 4:30pm. The following day we begin our **Pentecost Novena**, asking for a renewal of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the Church. We'll pray this after Mass on each of the nine days until Pentecost Sunday.

On Saturday 30th May, during Pentecost weekend, we plan to have a **Day of Recollection** centred on the Holy Spirit. The timetable will be published next weekend, but in the meantime, we need your help! We are looking for you to **record a short video** (anything from a few seconds to two minutes long) sharing some way in which the Holy Spirit helps you in your life. We then plan to play these during the recollection day. Could you help with this? Don't be shy!

Let's use these days of lockdown as best we can to try to grow closer to the Lord. **James' latest video** gives some great tips for using the lockdown well. Take a look!

Finally this week, **congratulations to Norman and Gwen**, who celebrated their Diamond Wedding anniversary (60 years!) last Thursday. We'll offer the Sunday Mass for them today. As we congratulate them, let's keep them and their family in our prayers. I pray for you all, every day! God bless you. Fr Andrew.

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.

Full Timetable for the Week

All services listed here are streamed live at

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

Sunday 17th May: Sixth Sunday of Easter

Mass: 10am

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament: 4-5pm

Sung Vespers and Benediction: 4:30pm

Daily Timetable – Monday-Friday (and see additional events, below)

Mass: 10am

Rosary: 10:30am

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament: 4-5pm

Saturday:

Mass: 10am

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament: 10:30am-12noon

Sunday 24th May: Seventh Sunday of Easter

Mass: 10am

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament: 4-5pm

Sung Vespers and Benediction: 4:30pm

Also this week

Thursday 21st: Ascension of the Lord. Mass at 10am; sung Vespers 4:30pm

Friday 22nd: Beginning of the Novena to the Holy Spirit (after 10am Mass each day)

Forthcoming Events

30th May: Online Day of Recollection for Pentecost weekend (details next week)

Sunday 31st May: Pentecost Sunday