

## **Our first 50 years: 1977**

Living in a time of pandemic, we forget that infectious disease has often been a problem. On 25<sup>th</sup> January 1977, the school logbook reports that 46 children absent with measles – around a quarter of the entire school. The outbreak only merits one mention in the logbook. There were plenty of other problems being sorted out that year, especially niggles and issues with the school building. But the work continued. On 9<sup>th</sup> March all staff attended an evening lecture on confession and on 6<sup>th</sup> October there was a meeting of parents and the catechetical team to discuss the children's religious life in school and at home. It's an important sign of how our church, school and home life have always worked together to hand on our faith to children. And the school continued to grow: in September the first Deputy Head, Mr H. F. Doran, began his work, also teaching Junior 4. 1977 is remembered nationally as the year of the Queen's Silver Jubilee. On 20<sup>th</sup> June the children lined Garstang Road as the Queen passed by, visiting Preston as part of her Jubilee Tour. A silver birch tree was planted in the school grounds, every child received a 'Jubilee Crown', and a jubilee party was held in school on 1<sup>st</sup> July, attended by Mayor and Mayoress of Preston, Councillor and Mrs Joseph Hood. A memorable year in the life of our school, parish and the wider country.

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## **Today's Readings**

In today's first reading we hear a prophecy from Micah, declaring that the Messiah ("the one who is to rule over Israel") would be born in Bethlehem. This is the very text the scribes quoted to the wise men when they visited King Herod, looking for the new-born King. Hearing this prophecy today invites us to prepare our hearts for a renewed encounter with the Babe of Bethlehem. The second reading focusses on the obedience of Christ, who came into the world desiring only to do the will of His Father. In the Gospel, we hear the beautiful story of the Visitation. Mary, carrying Jesus in her womb, visits her cousin Elizabeth and spends three months with her, until John the Baptist is born. John leaps for joy at the presence of the unborn Christ. The scene is set for the birth of our Saviour.

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## MASSES THIS WEEK

**Office: Psalter week 4; Sundays: year C; Weekdays: of Advent**

The first Mass each day is livestreamed 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)	<b>FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b>	People of the Parish
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup>	9:30am		Veronica Judge RIP
	11:30am		Eileen Horan RIP
	6pm		Ann O'Brien RIP
Monday	9:15am	20 <sup>th</sup> December	Michael Dignan RIP
Tuesday	7pm	21 <sup>st</sup> December	Rose Metcalf RIP
Wednesday	9:15am	22 <sup>nd</sup> December	John and Nicola
Thursday	9:15am	23 <sup>rd</sup> December	Ints Gerard and Marie Troy
Friday	<b>10am</b>	24 <sup>th</sup> December	Thanksgiving for a house
	5:30pm	<b>THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD</b>	Jeff Poole RIP
	7:30pm		Thomas Wilson RIP
Saturday	Midnight		People of the Parish
	10am		People of the Holy Land
	11:30am	For the lapsed	
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup>	9:30am	<b>The Holy Family</b>	People of the Parish
	11:30am		Oastler family

**LATELY DEAD:** Please pray for **Gill Melling, Deacon John Kilshaw, Joseph Lumatz** and all who have died recently.

**SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:** Wednesday 5-6pm, Father Andrew will be available for confessions in the chapel, in preparation for Christmas.

**ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT:** Monday-Thursday 5pm-6pm. The church is also open this week for private prayer on Monday (10am-6pm), Tuesday (9am-7pm), Wednesday (12noon-6pm) and Thursday (10am-6pm).

**ROSARY:** After 9:15am Mass Monday, Wednesday and Thursday.

**ANNIVERSARIES:** Samuel Teehan, Rose Metcalf, Jim Donnelly, Catherine Walker, Philip Salthouse, Bishop Brian Foley, Yolande Schofield, Richard Burkhardt.

**POPE'S PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR DECEMBER:** Let us pray for catechists, summoned to announce the Word of God: may they be its witnesses, with courage and creativity and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

**CHRISTMAS MASSES:** Mass will be celebrated on Christmas Eve at 5:30pm and 7:30pm, then at Midnight and at 10am and 11:30am on Christmas Day. Booking is not required for any Masses. See back page and check online for latest updates.

**MASS ON FRIDAY** this week (Christmas Eve) will be at 10am, not at midday.

**MASSES NEXT WEEKEND AND BEYOND:** Next Sunday (Boxing Day) Masses will be celebrated at 9:30am and 11:30am. There will be no evening Mass on Saturday or Sunday next weekend. On the weekdays after Christmas (27<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>) Mass will be celebrated at 10am each day. On New Year's Day Mass will be at 12noon.

**CHRISTMAS FLOWERS:** Donations in memory of loved ones are welcome, in marked envelopes. A list of prayer intentions will be displayed at Christmas.

**CRIB BLESSINGS:** This Tuesday in church at the end of 7pm Mass. Bring your home cribs to the church to be blessed for the coming Christmas season.

**CONFESSIONS:** Extra confessions Wednesday 5-6pm this week.

**COVID SAFETY MEASURES IN CHURCH:** Please be mindful of those who would like to keep a safe distance from others. Face coverings are once again required by law whenever you are in church, unless you are exempt.

**SCHOOL NATIVITIES:** The wonderful nativity plays of Reception class and in Years 1 and 2 are available to watch back on our YouTube channel.

**ST CLARE'S PRIMARY SCHOOL – ACADEMY CONSULTATION:** The Governors of our primary school are exploring the possibility of converting to academy status. Parishioners are included in the consultation. A letter explaining the situation and rationale has been sent out by school; copies available in the narthex.

**ACN PROJECT:** We are working to support the building of a new church/hall in India. One simple way to help is to "buy a brick" (£30 donation). Donations can be made in an envelope (simply marked 'buy a brick').

**DIOCESAN DIRECTORY 2022:** Copies now available in the narthex, price £4.50. Please put money in the wall box marked 'CTS, books etc.'

**EXPLORING PRIESTLY VOCATIONS:** a day for men (aged 18+) who are open to a priestly vocation, without any expectation of commitment. At Our Lady and St Joseph's, Carlisle, on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 10:30am-4pm. For more details contact Canon Luiz Ruscillo (frruscillo@carlislecatholicchurch.org) or speak to Fr Andrew.

**ALTAR SERVERS' RETREAT:** 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> January at Castlerigg Manor, Keswick. For children Year 5-age 16. Details at <https://www.castleriggmanor.co.uk/altarservers>

**FOOD BANK** collection this weekend (18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> December).

**LAST SUNDAY:** At Mass: 343 (figures for individual Masses: 69/94/60/87; NCW 33) Collection: £758.31. Thank you for your presence and your generosity.

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

Day	Time	What?	Where?
Sat/Sun	At Mass	<b>Food Bank Collection</b>	House Porch
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup>	7pm	Anointed/Sent groups (years 7-11)	Parish Hall
	7pm	Journey in Faith Group	Side chapel
Mon-Thurs	5-6pm	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	Church
Tuesday	At 7pm Mass	Blessing of home cribs	Church

### Attending Christmas Masses 2021

#### Christmas Mass times:

Christmas Eve: 5:30pm and 7:30pm; Midnight Mass (at Midnight)

Christmas Day: 10am and 11:30am

Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> December: 9:30am and 11:30am (N.B. no evening Mass today)

Booking is not required for any Masses.

#### Social Distancing and Safety Measures

- Some of the Masses are likely to be busier than a normal Sunday Mass (see below) and therefore social distancing will be reduced. We will space people out as much as possible across the church and the narthex, but all the benches will be available for use at busier Masses.
- Face coverings are required by law, unless you are exempt.
- The church will be well ventilated, minimising the risk of airborne transmission.
- An enhanced cleaning regime remains in place.
- Please do not attend if you feel unwell or if you have been asked to isolate.
- You may wish to consider taking a lateral flow test before attending Mass.

#### How busy will it be?

We expect the 5:30pm Mass to be the busiest Mass, with more people expected than on a (current) typical Sunday. Other Masses are likely to be similar to current attendance on a busy Sunday morning (90-100 people). Even at the busiest Mass, the church should be well below its pre-pandemic capacity (perhaps around 40% full). If you're looking for a quieter Mass, 11:30am is likely to be the least busy, and on Christmas Eve 7:30pm should be quieter than 5:30pm.

#### Which Masses are being streamed?

If you are unable to attend in person, the Masses at 5:30pm, Midnight and 10am are being streamed live.

#### How early should I arrive?

Doors will open 30 minutes before each Mass, apart from the 11:30am Mass on Christmas Day, when doors will be open from 11:10am.

The latest information will be available at [www.saintclares.co.uk](http://www.saintclares.co.uk) during the week.