

The Gospel today is the beginning of a new section in Matthew, called „The Parabolic Discourse“ - a section of parables Jesus tells the crowd, which we will read over the next three weeks. A parable is a story with a hidden meaning: we can easily remember the story, and gradually the true meaning becomes clearer and clearer. Today is a famous example: the Parable of the Sower. In itself it is a story that would easily be understood by Jesus’s audience - people who lived in an agricultural economy. Jesus uses their understanding to make an important teaching about the message he has brought: it is like a seed that is thrown out and received in different ways - the ideal is when the seed finds good soil, and produces a crop that can be seen and harvested: so the ideal listener to the word is one who allows it to lodge in the heart, but also produces a visible result. What is the harvest we should yield, when we have heard the word?

Marriage Matters: *Listen to the person behind the words:* The stony ground is when we are too engrossed in the telly, reading or working on the computer to listen to our partner. The thorny ground is where we disengage with such but not wanting real involvement, suggest a cuppa as a diversion. We are called to be fertile ground by real listening – hold hands, look in each other’s eyes.

Think Vocation: “The word of God does not return to me without carrying out my will.” We need to listen to God speaking to us in the Scriptures, in the silence and stillness of our time dedicated for prayer. Only then can our hearts provide the fertile soil needed to be open to do God’s will and to allow us to use our gifts and talents to make a difference with our lives for the sake of the Kingdom

| This Week | Masses / Services |
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| Sunday – Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time | Sat 6.30pm (Vigil Mass); Sun 9.30am & 11 am Masses (Live-streamed from St Luke’s) |
| Monday – Weekday or St Henry | Live-streamed from St Luke’s each day: Masses at 9am & 6.30pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 10am to 10.30am 5.30pm to 6:00pm Ss Peter & Paul Church Open for Private Prayer & Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 11am to 1pm Only Monday & Saturday this week |
| Tuesday – Weekday or St Camillus of Lellis | |
| Wednesday – St Bonaventure | |
| Thursday – Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Principal Patron of the Diocese (Solemnity) | |
| Friday – Weekday | |
| Saturday – Weekday | |
| Sunday – Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time | Sat 6.30pm (Vigil Mass); Sun 9.30am & 11 am Masses (Live-streamed from St Luke’s) |

Prayer During the Pandemic: O God, our refuge and our shield, even when we walk in the shadow of death you are there at our side. Be with your people in this time of danger: bring strength to the afflicted and protection to those untouched by disease. Give us love and courage that we may trust in your power to save and reach out to all who need our care. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Act 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.

Sick: All those who are suffering from the coronavirus and others who are sick at this time, including Robert Livesey, Nuala Corridan, Michael Kelly, Tomas Cusack, Kay Kimmins, John Ainsworth, Peter Lea, Emily Martin (a sick child), Jimmy Farragher.

Lately Dead: All who have died of the coronavirus and others who have died recently, Eileen Roles, Frank Hinde, Michael Scott, Frank Hines, Barry Bridgen, Nadine Brown, Patrick Hession, Bill Ashton, Maureen Goodwin, Thomas Cosgrove, Fr Arthur Nearey

Masses Received: Nicholas & Rachel (Silver Wedding), Nadine Brown (Lately Dead), Patrick Hession (Lately Dead), Special Intention, Bill Ashton (Lately Dead), Maureen Goodwin (Lately Dead), Fr Arthur Nearey (Lately Dead), Oliver McSharry (Sick)

Diocesan Prayer Cycle: Let us pray for the people of the parish of St Joseph, Reddish, for Fr Philip Caldwell, their parish priest, and for its parish primary school.

Silver Jubilees of Ordination

The diocesan prayer cycle this weekend asks us to pray for the parish of St Joseph, Reddish. Their parish priest, Fr Philip Caldwell, celebrated his 25th anniversary of ordination on 1 July.

Fr James Clarke, parish priest of St Patrick, Collyhurst and Diocesan Chaplain to the Deaf, celebrated his 25th anniversary on 8 July.

This coming week (on 15 July) it will be the turn of Fr Mark Harold, parish priest of St Mary, Bamber Bridge, who was, of course, ordained at Ss Peter and Paul.

We congratulate them and wish them well for many more years of priestly ministry.

Silver Wedding

There was a Mass intention handed in this week for Nicholas & Rachel (no surname provided) who are celebrating their Silver Wedding. We congratulate them and wish them many more happy and fulfilling years of married life.

Prayer for Vocations

Given that we have no ordinations to the priesthood for the diocese this year, it was intended that we would have a Mass in the Cathedral to pray for vocations at around this time of year when ordinations would normally be taking place. The Covid-19 lockdown has put that plan on hold but there is no reason why we can't offer our own private prayers at this time asking God to "provide labourers for his harvest" (Matthew 9:37)

Whilst we are thinking about and praying for vocations, let's remember that it isn't just about priesthood and religious life. We are restoring the Permanent Diaconate in this diocese and there may be men who feel called to that. There will be others whose vocation lies in Marriage or indeed in the single life. Within our parish, there are lots of roles that people could fulfil as their contribution to the life and mission of the Church. The important thing is that we are attentive to the voice of the Lord and that those he is calling to whatever ministry or state of life respond with generosity.

Online Donations & Cheques

If you would like to make an online donation to Our Lady of Hope Parish, it is now possible to do this directly by following a link on our parish website. Please note that all cheques should now be made payable to Our Lady of Hope (not St Luke or Ss Peter & Paul). Thanks.

Hope in the Future

This weekend the final worksheet about the Mass is presented to us, urging us to think about how we are sent out from church with a mission. There is a pastoral message from the bishop and questions for reflection. You can download it from our parish website.

Next Week's Newsletter: Beryl Wakefield

Please send notices before Wednesday
Email: newsletter@ourladyofhope.org.uk

Churches Reopening for Public Worship

As promised, our Parish Advisory and Coordination Team considered this matter in detail at its meeting on 8 July. There was a lot of guidance to take in from the government, the archbishops (nationally) and the diocese. All of this **guidance urges caution and treading carefully** as we take the next steps.

A **paramount principle** in everything we do must be the minimising of risk to the health and life of others. This is everybody's responsibility. It means staying away if you (or a member of your household) have any symptoms or have had contact with those that have. It also means observing all the regular aspects of hygiene, especially the use of hand sanitiser.

Another important aspect is **social distancing of 2m** and this will have an effect on how many people we can allow into church at any time and how they move about the church (with a one-way system).

There is some very detailed guidance about what we can and cannot do during services in church and the need to **keep our time in there to a minimum**. There is also special guidance relating to baptisms, weddings and funerals.

Following advice from Bishop John, our intention is to start by opening up for weekday Masses before opening up for Sunday Masses and, provided we can get everything in place by then, **we hope to begin this from Monday 20 July**. The times and the frequency of Masses has still to be determined.

If we are going to be able to open, then **we need stewards** who can be in attendance and can help to guide and direct those who come to the church. We have a small number of stewards who are helping with the times of private prayer at Ss Peter & Paul but we will need more there when we open for Mass and another team to help at St Luke. There is some (brief) training to undergo, so if you can volunteer as a steward, please get in touch with us as soon as possible so that we can get that training sorted. **If we don't have sufficient stewards then we will not be able to open for anything, so please think very carefully about whether you could volunteer.**

The other thing that we need to begin thinking about now (before we open) is what we ought to do about streaming services once we are open. Clearly the streaming has met a need whilst we've been in lockdown and there will be people who won't be able to get to church in these next weeks and months. So **any suggestions about continuing streaming would be very welcome.**

The above is a brief summary of many pages of guidance. **There will be a more detailed document on our website in the next day or two** and then, once we know we can open, we will publish the times of services and arrangements for attending them. Please pray that this will all go well. *Fr Michael*

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Parish Priest: Canon Michael Cooke VG (resident at St Luke's)

Assistant Priests: Canon David Ryder & Father Mark Paver

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