

Dear Parishioners

Many people return to the Church after a period of non-attendance, as they sense a spiritual emptiness in their lives, a space that only God can fill. But many more would probably return if only they knew they were missed and wanted back. Whatever the reason that someone stopped practicing their Catholic faith in the past, they should be assured of a warm welcome on return.

Perhaps the biggest obstacle many face in taking up the practice of their faith again is a feeling of guilt. But this does not come from Christ, who was known for his welcome to sinners. Jesus understands completely, even more than themselves, why they left the Church and why they may like to return.

Difficulties may include sore memories of the Church: a feeling of fear before Confession (better known today as Reconciliation); an argument with a parishioner about crying children; a sermon they took exception to; or it may be issues over gender or teaching on marriage.

Having questions about various aspects of Catholic faith and life is perfectly normal, since faith will always be a challenge to our purely human ways of thinking and acting as also our attempts to talk about God which are always inadequate.

Like any family, the Church can sometimes bruise as well as comfort but the Church is acutely aware today of being far from perfect, especially under the leadership of Pope Francis who lays such stress on forgiveness and reliance on God's grace which we all need if we are to put hurts and failures behind us and go forward with our pilgrim Church in the hope that things will be better.

As Christmas approaches, I ask you to give this page some thought and prayer and then discuss it with a friend or family member who has stopped coming regularly to Mass and invite them to *come home for Christmas*.

Simply assure our friend that no matter what the obstacle or difficulties they are always welcome in Church and able to discuss any matter troubling them with one of the priests.

Don't be afraid to invite them. Remember that God has no messenger other than you.

But do more than simply invite. Returning after an absence can be daunting so accompany them back, at least initially.

Y'all welcome. *Fr John*

Parish of Our Lady of the Valley

Catholic Communities of Clitheroe, Sabden & Dunsop Bridge

Lowergate, Clitheroe, Lancs BB7 1AG

Tel 01200 423307 website: olotv.org.uk

Email: smsj@btinternet.com Parish Priest: Mgr John Corcoran RD

Assistant Priest: Fr Kevin Murphy Pastor Emeritus Mgr John Chaloner

Third Sunday of Advent - 13th December 2015

St Michael & St John's, Clitheroe



Sunday

Mass at 9.30am
followed by Coffee

Monday & Friday

Mass at 9am

Tuesday

Requiem Mass 1.30pm
John McDonald

Wednesday

Requiem Mass 11am
Teresa Tomlinson

Thursday

Mass at 9am & 7.30pm

Saturday 20th December

Eucharistic Service 10.45am Exposition 11am—11.55am
Reconciliation 11am—11.55am First Mass of Sunday- 6pm

St Mary's Church, Sabden

Sunday - Mass at 11am followed by Coffee **Wednesday**—Mass at 9.15am

St Hubert's, Dunsop Bridge

Sunday—Mass at 10am Parish mass Book page 87 Eucharistic Prayer II page 24
Preface 11 of Advent page 66 **Tuesday** —Mass at 9.30am

MASSES RECEIVED THIS WEEK

Alice & Patrick Emerson x 2, Mary Cushion x 2, Joan & Hugh Kelly x 2,
Sr Yvonne Pilarski, Richard Embery, Carol Turner x 4, John McDonald,
Thomas & Marian McCauley, Alf & Ada White, Theresa Tomlinson x2, Helen Addy.

Fr Kevin Kenny, Fr Peter Birmingham, Carol Waterworth, Billy Lambert,
Helen Addy, Vivienne Tingle.

LATELY DEAD

John McDonald, Teeresa Tomlinson

ANNIVERSARIES

Richard Embery, Thomas & Marian McCauley, Alf & Ada White,

OFFERTORY Clitheroe £659.06 Sabden £199.23 S/O £170.48

St Martin hear my prayers

S.V.P. The Society of St Vincent de Paul thank all who contributed to the magnificent Christmas collection last week. A total of £936.14 was contributed by our three churches which is made up of the church collection and cheques sent directly to S.V.P. All this will be given to needy families in our community for Christmas.

LECTIO DIVINA You are invited to join Callum on Wednesday evening at 8pm to learn and experience Lectio Divina, a traditional form of prayer dating back to the early years of the church. Please bring a bible with you.

CAFOD Did you know.....we are called this Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy to be living signs of compassion? Afera Gebremedhine lives with her family in Ethiopia. She used to struggle as a single mother to provide for her family. Thanks to your generosity, which is an act of mercy, Afera was given a cow by CAFOD which gave birth to calves a few months later. Afera's cows produce around eight litres of milk a day, which she uses to make butter to sell at the local market. She says, "I am happy and better today because I can feed my children. "CAFOD's World Gifts are transforming lives! Catalogues are in the church porch.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY Friday 29th January—Jimmy Cricket

MEDAILLE TRUST Gemma Frankland's Skydive for the Medaille Trust on Sunday 22nd November made a total of £1,130.35. A big thank you from Gemma. The Christmas edition of the magazine for the Medaille trust is available in the church porch free of charge.

CLITHEROE

ROTAS NEXT WEEKEND Saturday—J.Bentley **Reader**—J.Byrne

Eucharistic Ministers B.Worden & M.Preedy **Sunday—Welcoming**—A & J Marsden **Reader** M.Donnolly **Eucharistic Ministers** J.Hall, S.Hall, G.Lambert. **Coffee Rota**—P.Byrne & family. **Little Church**—Allyson Watson

LADIES GROUP PROGRAMME 2016 are now available from the porch

CAROL CONCERT how good is this! Free mince pies and mulled wine + Great Christmas music with The Church Music Group and The Slaidburn Silver Band. Celebrate the coming of Christmas with your Church family in our Parish Hall NEXT Thursday 17th December from 7pm. Entry is free.

JOY TO THE WORLD Ecumenical event Tonight Sun 13th December at Trinity Methodist Church at 6.30pm. A celebration of Christmas featuring Ribbles Valley Choir and Orchestra. Free event that will end around 7.45pm with refreshments. Retiring collection to support refugees through Christian Aid. All Clitheroe churches are involved.

K.S.C. ANNUAL FUN QUIZ Monday 28th December at 7.30pm—doors open 7pm. Admission £1. Please telephone Les Collinson 427029 or Arnold Marsden 427096 if you intend to come—we need to know for ordering suppers. Thank you

JUMBLE SALE K.S.C.Jumble raised £258 for Mary's meals. Like to donate to this charity? the government has promised to match pound for pound until the end of Dec. Place donations on offertory plate marked 'Marys Meals' or give to any K.S.C.member

APF RED BOXES 2016 Calendars now in the church porch —FREE. Also APF Mission boxes are available from the back of church.

BUCKET RAFFLE £80 prize still unclaimed—ticket no 771.

LADIES GROUP Christmas Dinner at The Newdrop on Friday 15th January 2016 3 course meal—cost £25 inc transport. The coach is now fully booked so anyone still wanting to join us for the meal may do so, but will have to make their own way to The Newdrop. Menu's available from Janet, Daphne or from porch.

ADVENT LUNCH this Tuesday December 1st at The United Reformed Church, Castle-gate. Speaker Rev Ian Humphreys at 12.30pm. Soup lunch at approx 1pm. See poster

CHRISTMAS TEA DANCE Wednesday 16th December in our Parish Hall 2pm-5pm. Tickets £7. Contact: Daphne 01200 427912

CHRISTMAS CARD DELIVERIES Help is needed to deliver the Church Christmas Cards again this year which you can find on the table at the front of the Sacristy door. Some people have telephoned with help – they can find their cards in an envelope with their name on the top. The others have been batched up into areas – Take your pick. If they could be delivered before next weekend it would be helpful. Only those parishioners living in Clitheroe or Chatburn will receive a hand delivered one. If you are a family with a child in our Primary School you will receive one via them. Other regular worshippers here at St Michael & St John's, who live in one of the surrounding villages e.g. Barrow, Downham, West Bradford, Rimington, Grindleton etc will be given theirs individually, but it may be next weekend. If by Sunday 20th December you have not received a card then could you write your name and address on the pad that will be provided.

Please note this notice does not apply to Sabden or Dunsop

ADVENT PRAYER & PRAISE WITH MUSIC on Thursday evening 17 Dec after evening mass from 8.10-9.10pm there will be an hour of praise and worship with music, exposition, scripture and silent prayer. Our focus will be Mary, the Mother of Mercy at the start of the Year of Mercy. All are welcome and singers and musicians offering help should contact Fr Kevin. An evening (t.b.a.) will be offered in Sabden.

Christmas Cards, Advent Calendars, Books, Nativities and other Christmas items for sale in the side porch (near the sacristy door). Open after Mass/Service for about 20 minutes on Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Thursday & Friday Please put money in CTS box at the back of church to the right of War the Memorial.

SABDEN

BONUS BALL this weeks winner No 23 McNamara family. There is just one bonus ball left—only £1 a week. Please see Harry Waterworth. tel 01254 823748.

CHRISTMAS FAIR Thanks to all who helped make this event such a great success—a splendid total of £1,391.46 was raised. There are some unclaimed draw prizes. List of winners is on the notice board. Please check and collect prizes from Sacristy after Mass.

CHRISTMAS CARDS are on sale at the back of church

ADVENT REFLECTIONS this Tuesday 15th December at 7.30pm. Please make time to come. The final Advent Prayer & Praise session will be on Tuesday 22 December at 7.30pm. As well as the usual prayer and praise there will be Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and we will end by singing Christmas Carols. This will be led by Fr Kevin

WANTED We are collecting empty glass jars, jams, pickles etc, to use in Church Christmas decorations. If you have any, the bigger the better leave in box in Church porch.

DUNSOP BRIDGE

CONGRATULATIONS to all who organised and supported the hugely successful Bingo and Social night held last Monday evening which raised a splendid £1,439.80