

FIRST READING

Ecclesiasticus 27:30-28:7

Resentment and anger, these are foul things, and both are found with the sinner. He who exacts vengeance will experience the vengeance of the Lord, who keeps strict account of sin. Forgive your neighbour the hurt he does you, and when you pray, your sins will be forgiven. If a man nurses anger against another, can he then demand compassion from the Lord? Showing no pity for a man like himself, can he then plead for his own sins? Mere creature of flesh, he cherishes resentment; who will forgive him his sins? Remember the last things, and stop hating, remember dissolution and death, and live by the commandments. Remember the commandments, and do not bear your neighbour ill-will; remember the covenant of the Most High, and overlook the offence.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 102

The Lord is compassion and love, slow to anger and rich in mercy.

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| 1. My soul, give thanks to the Lord,
all my being, bless his holy name.
My soul, give thanks to the Lord
and never forget all his blessings. | 3. His wrath will come to an end;
he will not be angry for ever.
He does not treat us according to our sins
nor repay us according to our faults. |
| 2. It is he who forgives all your guilt,
who heals every one of your ills.
who redeems your life from the grave,
who crowns you with love and compassion. | 4. For as the heavens are high above the earth
so strong is his love for those who fear him.
As far as the east is from the west
so far does he remove our sins. |

SECOND READING

Romans 14:7-9

The life and death of each of us has its influence on others; if we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord, so that alive or dead we belong to the Lord. This explains why Christ both died and came to life, it was so that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

**Alleluia. Alleluia! Speak Lord, your servant is listening;
you have the message of eternal life. Alleluia!**

GOSPEL

Matthew 18:21-35

Peter went up to Jesus and said, "Lord, how often must I forgive my brother if he wrongs me? As often as seven times?" Jesus answered, "Not seven, I tell you, but seventy- seven times. And so the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who decided to settle his accounts with his servants. When the reckoning began, they brought him a man who owed ten thousand talents; but he had no means of paying, so the master gave orders that he should be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, to meet the debt. At this, the servant threw himself down at his master's feet. 'Give me time', he said, 'and I will pay the whole sum'. And the master's servant felt so sorry for him that he let him go and cancelled the debt. Now as this servant went out, he happened to meet a fellow servant who owed him one hundred denarii; and he seized him by the throat and began to throttle him. 'Pay what you owe me', he said. His fellow servant fell at his feet and implored him, saying, 'Give me time and I will pay you'. But the other would not agree; on the contrary, he had him thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. His fellow servants were deeply distressed when they saw what happened, and they went to their master and reported the whole affair to him. Then the master sent for him. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I cancelled all that debt of yours when you appealed to me. Were you not bound, then, to have pity on your fellow servant just as I had pity on you?' And in his anger the master handed him over to the torturers till he should pay all his debt.

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St Anthony of Padua

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Rev. Tom Butler (retired - 07853777957)

Sunday Masses: 6.00 (Vigil - Saturday Evening) 9.30am, 5.00pm (Sunday Morning)
Weekday Mass: Mon-Wed, Fri: 9.15am. (Thurs 9.15am at Holy Family)
Confessions: on request

Annexe: 725544 **Social Centre:** 735963 **Primary school:** 726621
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70x7 = Infinity

In Scripture, numbers usually point beyond a numerical value to a symbolic significance. The number seven is one of the most significant in the Bible. Scholars say it denotes completeness or wholeness and 70x7 = Infinity. In today's gospel reading Jesus is telling us that forgiveness is not a quantifiable event. It is a quality; a way of being, a way of living, a way of loving, a way of relating, a way of thinking and seeing. It is nothing less than the way of Christ. If we are to follow Christ then it must become our way as well. It is infinite compassion. There are no limits to his forgiveness. C.S. Lewis writes, "Everyone says forgiveness is a lovely idea, until there is something to forgive". When we look at our lives we will find broken promises, hurt feelings, betrayals, harsh words, physical and emotional wounds. Beneath the pain, the wounds, the losses, and the memories lies the question of forgiveness. Forgiveness does not originate in us. It begins with God. We do not choose to forgive. We only choose to share the forgiveness we have already received. The merciless servant was tortured when he refused to forgive his fellow servant. An unforgiving spirit creates its own suffering. It builds up walls of bitterness and resentment and there is no escape until we come to forgive. Jack Kornfield reminds us that "if your compassion does not include yourself, it is incomplete." Forgiving others begins by "having compassion for all those unwanted parts of ourselves." (Pema Chodron) Forgiveness also extends to reality itself: to forgive it for being so broken, a mixture of good and bad. We can only surrender to the mystery of that paradox by trustfully allowing God to lovingly hold together the opposites within us, within our neighbour and even our enemy, and within reality itself. After being imprisoned in South Africa for 27 years for his protest of apartheid, Nelson Mandela said "As I walked out the door toward the gate that would lead to my freedom, I knew if I didn't leave my bitterness and hatred behind, I'd still be in prison." Forgiveness creates space for new life.

(Adapted from various sources inc Michael Marsh, Richard Rohr)

Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

13th September 2020

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DIARY AND MASS INTENTIONS

for the week beginning Saturday 12th September 2020

Sat 6.00pm	<i>St. Ant</i>	Joan Penney	
Sun 9.30am	<i>St. Ant</i>	Kevin O'Neill	<i>24th Sunday of the Year</i>
11.00am	<i>H. Family</i>	For our parish	
5.00pm	<i>St. Ant</i>	Tom & Marie Hooper	
Mon 9.15am	<i>St. Ant</i>	Regina LaValle	<i>Feast: Exaltation of the Cross</i>
Tue 9.15am	<i>St. Ant</i>	Norman Mercer	<i>Feast: Our Lady of Sorrows</i>
Wed 9.15am	<i>St. Ant</i>	Joan Anderton	<i>Feast: Ss Cornelius & Cyprian</i>
Thur 9.15am	<i>H. Family</i>	Private Intention	
Fri 9.15am	<i>St. Ant</i>	Donor's Intention	
Sat 6.00pm	<i>St. Ant</i>	for our parish	
Sun 9.30am	<i>St. Ant</i>	Chris & Angie Strickland (25th)	<i>25th Sunday of the Year</i>
11.00am	<i>H. Family</i>	Graham Tyers	
5.00pm	<i>St. Ant</i>	For our parish	<i>Home Mission Sunday</i>

Last Weekend: Attendance 145. (6.00pm 56, 9.30am 48, 5.00pm 41) Offertory c.£420.
Thank you for your continued generosity.

BIDDING PRAYERS

In the psalm we pray: "The Lord is compassion and love." We pray that the Church may always live up to this ideal too.

We pray for our troubled world. May the power of God's Spirit help us work together as one family of many nations to help and serve those in greatest need.

We pray for our parish community this Education Sunday. Lockdown reminded us all that education happens at home as well as in schools; helped us to appreciate more than ever the skills and gifts of teachers; We ask God to bless all those in education.

We pray for all those burdened by debt – individuals as well as nations - especially those who face a long struggle to repay. May God grant decision-makers patience and compassion, so that all may finally be free to flourish. Lord, in your mercy..

We pray for the sick and the housebound of our parish and for those who care for them, particularly: Betty Murphy, Marie Gardner, Bill Embery, Lawrence Dunnagan, John Myerscough and Alice Myerscough, Kathleen Kellett, Chris Goldsmith, Frank Stanton, Joan Green, Carole Adnitt, Frances & Les Farrer.

Pray for those who have died recently: Herbert Rushton, Joan Anderton;

... and for those whose anniversaries are around now: John Sanderson, Thomas Loughran, Ron Carruthers, Norman Mercer, Roy Hull, Lydia Etherington, Regina LaValle, Lilian Iddon. May they rest in peace.

First holy Communions

We are hoping to help the children complete their preparation for their first holy Communion very soon. We cannot have one first holy Communion Day as usual because of the limited capacity in church. Instead we are planning to have three extra Masses on Sunday afternoons. Regrettably this will mean that parishioners cannot be part of this wonderful parish occasion but we have no real option.

We will not be starting next year's first holy Communion preparation until after the New Year when things might be a bit clearer.

School Children at Mass. Happily we have been able to return to our practice of having school-children at Mass on Friday mornings.

Virtual 'Coffee Morn' We have another zoom Coffee Morning today. Log in details: Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87201424952> Meeting ID: 872 0142 4952

Masses received this week: Margaret Watson.

Parish website: Thanks to the work of Fr. John this has now been revived and updated. Archive photographs are now linked. How about recent ones? Are there any items you think should be added? Let us know.

Offertory Counters Thank you to our Offertory Counters for getting back into routine. We count a week in arrears and we ensure social distancing.

Acknowledgement

"I want to thank you and members of your church for the sterling help and assistance they have given in the community. My wife and I live on The Filberts, and both of us have underlying conditions that make us very high risk with Covid 19.

When lockdown started, your people were the first and very early in their offers of help and assistance, and this has allowed us to stay safe throughout. They are also not abandoning us as lockdown is being eased. We have had a lot of contact with P and our lovely "personal shopper" J and can only say what lovely people they are, and a real credit to your church. I am not a religious person, but can only say that whatever goes on at St Anthony's must be good. I have donated £250 to your church funds as a thank you to you all, and am sure it will be used wisely."

September Faith & Justice E-Bulletin

This can be downloaded from <https://tinyurl.com/yyq84etu> Reports and newsletters are available at <http://www.lancasterfaithandjustice.co.uk/newsletter/>

Face coverings must be worn in places of worship (as well as other public places). If you have forgotten to bring a mask we can let you have one.

There are some circumstances, for health, age or equality reasons, where people are not expected to wear face coverings. Please be mindful and respectful of such circumstances, noting that some people are less able to wear face coverings, and that the reasons for this may not be visible to others.

- Priests in the sanctuary do not need to wear face coverings during Mass, except when distributing holy communion, provided they are at least two metre distance. Similarly Readers do not need to wear face coverings when proclaiming the scriptures.

Baptisms We can now celebrate baptisms though there are some restrictions and we are limited to 30 people and masks will have to be worn.

Catholic Voice—a new issue if our Diocesan Newspaper has been published but again it is only available online. You can access it via our parish website.