

FIRST READING

2 Chronicles 36:14-16,19-23

All the heads of the priesthood, and the people too, added infidelity to infidelity, copying all the shameful practices of the nations and defiling the Temple that the Lord had consecrated for himself in Jerusalem. The Lord, the God of their ancestors, tirelessly sent them messenger after messenger, since he wished to spare his people and his house. But they ridiculed the messengers of God, they despised his words, they laughed at his prophets, until at last the wrath of the Lord rose so high against his people that there was no further remedy. The enemies burned down the Temple of God, demolished the walls of Jerusalem, set fire to all its palaces, and destroyed everything of value in it. The survivors were deported by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon; they were to serve him and his sons until the king of Persia came to power. This is how the word of the Lord was fulfilled that he spoke through Jeremiah, "Until this land has enjoyed its Sabbath rest, until seventy years have gone by, it will keep sabbath throughout the days of its desolation".

And in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, to fulfil the word of the Lord that was spoken through Jeremiah, the Lord roused the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia to issue a proclamation and to have it publicly displayed throughout his kingdom: "Thus speaks Cyrus king of Persia, 'The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth; he has ordered me to build him a Temple in Jerusalem, in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all his people, may his God be with him! Let him go up.'"

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 136

O let my tongue cleave to my mouth if I remember you not!

By the rivers of Babylon
there we sat and wept;
remembering Zion;
on the poplars that grew there
we hung up our harps.

For it was there that they asked us,
our captors, for songs,
our oppressors, for joy.
'Sing to us,' they said,
'one of Zion's songs.'

O how could we sing
the song of the Lord
on alien soil?
If I forget you, Jerusalem,
let my right hand wither!

O let my tongue
cleave to my mouth
if I remember you not,
if I prize not Jerusalem
above all my joys!

SECOND READING

Ephesians 2:4-10

God loved us with so much love that he was generous with his mercy: when we were dead through our sins, he brought us to life with Christ - it is through grace that you have been saved - and raised us up with him and gave us a place with him in heaven, in Christ Jesus.

This was to show for all ages to come, through his goodness towards us in Christ Jesus, how infinitely rich he is in grace. Because it is by grace that you have been saved, through faith; not by anything of your own, but by a gift from God; not by anything that you have done, so that nobody can claim the credit. We are God's work of art, created in Christ Jesus to live the good life as from the beginning he had meant us to live it.

Glory and praise to you, O Christ! God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son; everyone who believes in him has eternal life. Glory and praise to you, O Christ!

GOSPEL

John 3:14-21

Jesus said to Nicodemus: The Son of Man must be lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him. Yes, God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost but may have eternal life. For God sent his Son into the world not to condemn the world, but so that through him the world might be saved. No one who believes in him will be condemned; but whoever refuses to believe is condemned already, because he has refused to believe in the name of God's only Son. On these grounds in sentence pronounced: that though the light has come into the world men have shown they prefer darkness to the light because their deeds were evil. And indeed, everybody who does wrong hates the light and avoids it, for fear his actions should be exposed; but the man who lives by the truth comes out into the light so that it may be plainly seen that what he does is done in God.

*Scripture readings are reproduced by kind permission of Darton, Longman & Todd,
Responsorial Psalm from The Psalms: A New Translation © The Grail (England) published by Harper Collins*

St Anthony of Padua

Presbytery: Cadley Causeway, Fulwood, Preston PR2 3RX

Tel: 01772 725193 E-mail: parish.priest2@btinternet.com

Or saintanthonyholyfamily@gmail.com

Website: www.stanthony-rc-church-preston.org.uk/

Priests: Fr. Peter Draper, Fr. John Moriarty (Tel: 725193)

Deacons: Rev. John Kilshaw (07759 943667)

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

Playgroup/Preschool 07963 700591

Lancaster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trustees Registered Charity Number 234331



Eternal Life

"God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life." Unfortunately, the phrase *eternal life* is often misinterpreted to mean *life in heaven after you die* — as are *kingdom of God* and its synonym, *kingdom of heaven* — so I think we need to find a better rendering. If eternal life doesn't mean "life after death," what does it mean? Later in John's Gospel, Jesus reduces the phrase simply to *life or life to the full*. Near the end of John's account, Jesus makes a particularly fascinating statement in a prayer, and it is as close as we get to a definition: "This is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent" (John 17:3). So here, eternal life means knowing, and knowing means an interactive relationship with the only true God and with Jesus Christ. [1]

To know and to be known; to love and to be loved: these are our deepest longings. When we are with someone who knows us, 'the eyes of the other receiving me, delighting in me, enjoying me and looking at me — make me feel like *me* and my best me! When we allow ourselves to be perfectly received, to be totally gazed upon by the One who knows everything and receives everything, we are indestructible. From God's side, the gift is total, once and for all and forever. God's face is turned towards us absolutely. It is we who have to learn to return the gaze.' [2] And when we do, we experience eternal life, we 'touch eternity' [3]

"God sent his Son into the world not to condemn the world, but so that through him the world might be saved." The only thing that separates us from God is the *thought* that we are separated from God. That's all. It's all in our head. We can't be separated from God. When we surrender to that reality, allow it, enjoy it, draw upon it — that's what it means to be saved; that's what it means to have eternal life' [2]

Adapted: [1] Brian McLaren [2] Richard Rohr [3] Daniel O' Leary

Fourth Sunday in Lent Year B

14th March 2021

Missal page 197

DIARY AND MASS INTENTIONS

for the week beginning Saturday 13th March 2021

Sat 6.00pm	<i>St. Ant</i>	Imelda Salisbury	
Sun 9.30am 11.00am 5.00pm	<i>St. Ant</i> <i>H.Family</i> <i>St. Ant</i>	Mary Teresa Wilson Graham Tyers Private intention	<i>Fourth Sunday in Lent</i> <i>(Laetare)</i>
Mon 9.15am	<i>St. Ant</i>	For our parish	
Tue 9.15am	<i>St. Ant</i>	Winnie Gildea	
Wed 9.15am	<i>St. Ant</i>	Martin Gallagher	<i>Feast: St. Patrick</i>
Thur 9.15am	<i>H.Family</i>	Private Intention	
Fri 1.30pm 6.00pm	<i>St. Ant</i> <i>St. Ant</i>	Funeral Mass: Joan Bleakley	<i>Feast: St. Joseph</i> <i>Stations of the Cross. on zoom</i>
Sat 6.00pm	<i>St. Ant</i>	Margaret Rawcliffe	
Sun 9.30am 11.00am 5.00pm	<i>St. Ant</i> <i>H.Family</i> <i>St. Ant</i>	Joseph Madden For our parish Anthony & Eddie Brown	<i>Fifth Sunday in Lent</i>

Masses received this week: Martin Gallagher, Anthony & Eddie Brown, Alice Mathias, Margaret Rawcliffe, Joseph Madden, family of Joseph Madden, Graham Tyers.

Last Weekend: Attendance 135. (53,50,32.) Offertory £519.20.

Thank you for your continued generosity.

BIDDING PRAYER INTENTIONS

During his recent visit to Iraq Pope Francis reminded us of the Christian conviction that fraternity is more durable than fratricide, that hope is more powerful than hatred, that peace is more powerful than war. And so we pray for the people of Iraq, and also for ourselves that we may always hold fast to that conviction and answer the Lord's call to us to be peacemakers and bringers of reconciliation.

We continue to pray that our Lenten prayer and reflection, fasting and almsgiving will be occasions for renewal, reconciliation and closer unity with Christ, our Saviour.

We pray for all those in need: those who are sick in mind and body, those suffering from coronavirus, those awaiting treatment for other ailments postponed on account of the pandemic, those in distress on account of family or employment difficulties, those separated from loved ones. We ask our Lord to bring them His healing.

We remember in our prayers those of the parish who are suffering ill-health just now, and those who care for them, particularly: Bill Embery, Lawrence Dunnagan, Betty Murphy, John Myerscough, Alice Myerscough, Chris Goldsmith, Frank Stanton, Jo Counsell, Carole Adnitt, Marie Gardner, Joan Green, Les Farrer, Theresa Wilkinson;

those who have died recently: Joan Bleakley, Margaret Rawcliffe, Patricia Heys, **and those whose anniversaries occur around this time:** Percy Howarth, Mr. & Mrs. Harvey, Alice O'Reilly, John Togher, Mary Berry, John Swarbrick, Jean Rogerson, Joan Howarth, Marie Hooper. May they rest in peace.

LENT

Stations of the Cross.

We are not able to have the Stations in church as usual but some members of the parish will present them on Zoom every Friday. 'Doors open' at 5.45. Session starts 6.00pm prompt. Meeting ID: 860 7625 5774 Passcode: 068559

CAFOD Lent Fast Day

Our parish CAFOD Group have produced a video for this: <https://youtu.be/bxWgyBI7svE>

Livestreaming Mass

As well as normal Mass in church we now livestream the 9.30am Sunday Mass from St. Anthony's church. Go to the St. Anthony of Padua YouTube page for the link.

Virtual Coffee Morning

Join your fellow parishioners at the Zoom Coffee Morning at 11.00 am this Sunday Meeting ID: 898 4267 4110 Passcode: 229935

From the Universe Media Group:

"Our overriding mission is to ensure our faithful Catholics are fully and regularly informed about our Catholic faith and have the benefit of the up to date Catholic church's view on the many important issues that exist." If you would like newspapers delivered direct weekly, go to www.thecatholicuniverse.com/ 0161 820 5722. Prices are: 3 months £25, 12 months £99 (digital copies £55)

Offertory envelopes and Gift Aid

Its that time of the year again when we are making out new sets of Offertory envelopes. Please let us know if you have changed address during the past year, or if you don't currently have envelopes and would like some. Put your name and address in the Offertory basket. If you want to start giving by Standing Order please pick up details from the porch. Thank you.

Marie Curie Great Daffodil Appeal

Marie Curie Nurses have been on the front line of the pandemic providing vital care for dying people and their loved ones. At the same time, normal fundraising has been greatly restricted. Helen Sheldon is selling daffodils at Masses this weekend. (donation)

Readers at Mass

Several of our Readers are isolating or not yet back at Mass so we need a few more to supplement the current Readers. Would you consider Reading the Scriptures at Mass? Holy Week and Easter always calls for more Readers too. Have a word with Karen Hardman (01772 464110) or one of the priests. Thank you.

Mass Cards

The Repository at the back of church has been closed since the beginning of lockdown almost a year ago. However we now have a selection of Mass cards available.

Virtual pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

Fr John is joining volunteers and Young Leaders from Metanoia Project on a virtual pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Over the course of Lent they will run, walk and cycle 3,266 miles, the distance from Preston to Jerusalem. Their aim is to raise funds to support Metanoia Project's work in Preston, and you can sponsor Fr John and find information online at <https://gofund.me/5afc5a0a> or bring money in a marked envelope.