

Parish of St Mary, Middlewich & St Margaret Ward, Holmes Chapel

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Fourth Sunday of Easter, 3rd May 2020

Sunday	3rd May	10.30am	Francis Holbrook b'day
Monday	4th May	9.00am	Special Int. EJ <i>The English Martyrs</i>
Tuesday	5th May	9.00am	Wickham Family
Wednesday	6th May	4.00pm 7.30pm	Requiem Mass for James Lyons Paul Gary Upton Anniv.
Thursday	7th May	9.00am	NHS & Care Workers
Friday	8th May	9.00am	Lisa Marie Barraclough, b'day
Sunday	10th May	10.30am	Frank & Vilma Holbrook, Silver Wedd Anniv.

Sacrament of Reconciliation : On request in extreme need
Sacrament of Baptism On hold until further notice.

Please Pray for

ALL who are sick at home and in hospital: Stephen Grey, Margaret McCallum, Sara O'Brien, Jamie Connor, John Bomford, Nathan Carter, Larry Porter, Gillian Robinson, Tim Bradbury, Roy Yearsley, Peter Hannon, Stan Rosiak, Sadie Everard, Alex Randall Jenny Ogden, John Evans, Shirley Gaskell, Joan Upton, Karen Potts, Fr Pat Munroe, Mary Morris, Michael McCluskey, Jan D, Margaret Scarlett, Angela Kitchen, Fr Paul Hughes, Deacon Philip White, Martin Armit, Emily Wickham, Fr Jim McGrath, Ursula Finn, Elaine Trower, Glyn Maddock,



ALL who have died recently, especially James Lyons, Veronica Barrett & Helen Wickham

ALL whose anniversaries occur at this time: Louis Bernard Battersby, Michael Sinclair, Philip O'Sullivan, Elsie Kettle, James Cannon, Lilian Frances Jordan, Frank Twiss, Philip Gallery, Mike O'Hare snr., Anne Ford, Bridget Jennings, Catherine McNeela, Thomas Cregg, John Duffy, Michael Callaghan, Eugeniusz Rebisz, Ernest Oldfield, Jessie Duffy, Annie Griffiths, Rev Eugene Anthony Pinnington, Rt Rev Joseph Gray

CAFOD launched its coronavirus emergency appeal on 30 April. The effects of coronavirus on developing countries where CAFOD works are likely to be devastating. Families without enough to eat and without access to clean water and healthcare are particularly vulnerable to coronavirus. The poorest and most marginalised communities will be pushed further into poverty. Your prayers and gifts are needed now more than ever to help protect the lives of those in poor communities. While we are not able to hold physical collections in our church, you can donate as individuals at cafod.org.uk/coronavirusappeal

ONLINE MARRIAGE COURSES

Yet another night in? Make yourselves comfortable on the sofa after the children are in bed; a kind of a date-night. Sign up for FREE to explore the MARRIAGE COURSE by the team that created the Alpha Course. A 7-week programme designed to help couples invest in their relationship and build a strong marriage. htb.org/marriage. Also, Care for the Family offers 4 sessions. THE MARRIAGE SESSIONS www.careforthefamily.org.uk/themarriage sessions

Dear Parishioners,

It is becoming increasingly obvious that it will be some considerable time before our parish life returns to "normal". Whilst we are all missing the support of our parish family, we are very aware of the power of prayer to unite us, as we pray for the physical safety and mental strength we all need at this time. As this Easter season continues, let us remain confident in our faith.

Fr Peter will be saying Mass privately in the church at the normal times so please join him in spiritual communion. Masses will be offered for the intentions requested on specific dates. Any new requests for Masses should be put through the presbytery door. Fr Peter will put our daily Mass on St Mary's RC Parish Middlewich Facebook page. He will also put Exposition on there on Monday evening 7.00-7.30pm. You can also follow us on @stmarysparishmiddlewich. Thank you those who are tuning in and sending appreciative comments, it helps to make celebrating Mass alone a little less strange. There are various other ways to participate in Holy Mass. There will be live streams available from Shrewsbury Cathedral (details at <http://www.dioceseofshrewsbury.org/about-us/live-masses>) Wythenshawe: <http://wythcc.co.uk/> and in our own deanery at St Alban's Macclesfield www.stalbanmacc.org.uk/stalbanslivestream.html, also from several other parishes in the diocese. Go to <https://cafod.org.uk/Education/Children-s-liturgy> for a **virtual children's liturgy each week**. Cafod also provide weekly learning resources if you follow the schools/youth tab on the site. You can also read all the prayers and scriptures for daily Mass at: www.magnificat.com/free and the scriptures for Mass at: www.universalis.com/mass. Other useful sites: The National Catholic Shrine to Our Lady at Walsingham has a full broadcast schedule – including Mass, Rosary, Vespers, Exposition, Mass in Latin and even some talks. Visit its [Livestream area](http://www.livestreamarea.com). The producers of the Magnificat have kindly provided [complimentary access to its online version](http://www.livestreamarea.com) to help people follow the Mass and pray from home. The website, www.ChurchPaper.co.uk, contains over 600 editions of the many newspapers.

If anyone requires the Sacrament of the Sick, please ring the presbytery. It is not permitted to take communion to the sick, except in danger of death.

If you are aware of any elderly or self-isolating people who need help with shopping or picking up prescriptions please ring the presbytery as we have a list of volunteers who can help.

Thank you those who have put collection envelopes through the presbytery door. Easter Offerings amounted to £940, which is wonderful in these circumstances. It means Fr Peter can continue to pay himself for the next three months! If you have not received your envelopes you can put offerings in a plain envelope and write your number or name on it. If you have received your envelopes and wish to continue giving, but are not able to get the envelopes to us, please ring and let us know. If you wish to change to giving by standing order, either permanently or during the "no public Mass era," please see the information below. Thank you those who have already done this.

We would also ask that those of you who are able, continue to donate items for the Food Bank, as there will be more clients needing help as the crisis continues. Whilst church is not open, please use the collection points at supermarkets

Please pray for our Parish Community and for those affected by this pandemic and do not be downcast. Remember, "Jesus is risen, he is risen indeed, Alleluia"
Fr Peter, Deacon Tony, Deacon Chris

Online giving to the Parish

For those Parishioners who normally give in the collection at Mass and wish to help the Parish at this time, an online donation page to allow you to donate to the Parish has been added to the Parish website. Please be aware that a minimum donation of £5 is requested if giving in this way. You can also Gift Aid your donation to help the Parish further. If you want to Gift Aid your donation, please tick the box shown on the screen even if you have previously completed a Gift Aid Declaration form in favour of the Parish for regular giving made by Offertory Envelope or Standing Order. Thank you for your support.

If you wish to set up a Standing Order either permanently or in order to continue to make your regular Offertory giving to the Parish during the period when Mass is not being celebrated in public, please contact Ken Worthington on 01606 737070

What's most stunning about this painting is how far van der Weyden has been able to take the new realism; and how brilliant he is at using the new oil paints that have enabled this new movement in art. Because it's the oils that allow him to depict the emotion on the faces of the characters as impressively, and movingly, as he does.



ALWAYS HOPE

One of the things I most cherish about this painting, which is one of my all-time favourite works, is the way van der Weyden has echoed Christ's dead face in his mother's fainting one; Mary's grief is as central to the scene as her son's death, and I love that acknowledgement of the depth of a mother's loss. She has died with him. Van der Weyden understands her pain; he understands the pain of the others ranged around; and no artist has ever more comprehensively conveyed that pain to his viewer. In front of this painting, we are in the depths of despair, and it is hard to believe there will ever be a flicker of joy on these faces (or ours) again. And yet... and yet... in just three days' time, the landscape is going to be altered, totally and for ever. And the faces in this painting are so incredibly real that, when you look at them for a long time, you can imagine how they'll light up, when the moment comes and the tomb is found to be empty. The work is a reminder to us all that, however terrible our grief, however desperate our sorrow, there is always hope – and not merely the hope of something a little better, but the hope of something totally transformative, and utterly life-changing.

Mass text

ENTRANCE ANTIIPHON

The merciful love of the Lord fills the earth; by the word of the Lord the heavens were made, alleluia.

FIRST READING Acts 2:14. 36-41

PSALM Psalm 22

RESPONSE **The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.**

Or **Alleluia!**

1. The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want. Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose. Near restful waters he leads me, to revive my drooping spirit. **R.**
2. He guides me along the right path; he is true to his name. If I should walk in the valley of darkness no evil would I fear. You are there with your crook and your staff; with these you give me comfort. **R.**
3. You have prepared a banquet for me in the sight of my foes. My head you have anointed with oil; my cup is overflowing. **R.**

4. Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days of my life. In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for ever and ever. **R.**

SECOND READING 1 Peter 2:20-25

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia! I am the good shepherd, says the Lord; I know my own sheep and my own know me. Alleluia!

GOSPEL John 10:1-10

COMMUNION ANTIIPHON

The Good Shepherd has risen, who laid down his life for his sheep and willingly died for his flock, alleluia.

Next Sunday's Readings:

Acts 6:1-7
1 Peter 2:4-9
John 14:1-12

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ROGIER VAN DER WEYDEN, THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS

No painting sums up grief as brutally, as devastatingly, as Rogier van der Weyden's extraordinary masterpiece *The Descent from the Cross*. To me it always seems shocking that it was painted in the fifteenth century: the faces are so real, the tears on the faces are so fresh – still glistening, even – that they take you into the heart of the tragedy, as though it happened yesterday rather than two thousand years ago.

The moment van der Weyden chooses to paint is surely the saddest moment, the most desperate moment, in human history. Christ is dead; the centre of the cross-shaped painting is taken up with his body, which is being carefully lowered down from the cross. His family and friends, huddled at the foot of the cross, are in agony; Mary Magdalene, at the right of the painting, is so distraught that her body is twisting and curling with the pain. The other Mary, Christ's mother, has fainted, and is being tended to on the ground.

But this is more than merely a moment of personal loss. It is the lowest point of the Christian story; the moment when everything hung in the balance. Jesus was dead, as he had said he would be; but would he, could he, rise from being dead? The future looked grim: for the apostles and disciples, hope was at its lowest point. Christ was about to be laid in his tomb – and who, really, can have believed that he really was going to rise out of it?

The painting hangs on a black (what else?) wall at the Prado in Madrid; having been painted when the Flemish van der Weyden was the official painter in Brussels, it later became part of the collection of the Royal Family of Spain, and is today one of its jewels. Originally commissioned by a Belgian crossbow guild, the artist has cleverly shaped Christ's body into a crossbow; there are also, if you look carefully, tiny crossbows in the corners of the work.

Divine images



Joanna Moorhead continues this series looking at religious art.



3 MAY 2020

4TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

YEAR A

DIVINE OFFICE WEEK IV