

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

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Shrewsbury Diocese is a Registered Charity St Mary's School 01606 832164 E mail admin@2ndfebruary.org

Seventh Sunday of Easter, 24th May 2020

Sunday	24th May	10.30am	Lily Costello Anniv.
Monday	25th May	9.00am	Private Int. EJ O.L Help of Christians
Tuesday	26th May	9.00am	David H RIP St Philip Neri
Wednesday	27th May	7.30pm	Lawrence Bratt Anniv. St Augustine of Canterbury
Thursday	28th May	9.00am	Tony Morris Anniv.
Friday	29th May	9.00am	Julie & Family
Sunday	31st May	10.30am	25th Wedding 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, Mary Morris, Michael McCluskey, Jan D, Margaret Scarlett, Fr Paul Hughes, Deacon Philip White, Martin Armitt, Fr Jim McGrath, Ursula Finn, Vincent Fanning



ALL who have died recently.

ALL whose anniversaries occur at this time: John Reynolds, Pearl McGorty, Janet Bishop, Lily Costello, Jenny McIntosh, Robert Swarbrick, Pat Kelly, Maureen Millington, Lawrence Bratt, Tony Morris, Catherine Berry, Emmie Bomford, Thomas Morris, Thomas Muskett, Helen Elvins, Anthony Fallon, Rev Jack McLeish, Rev George Evans, Rev Robert Abbott

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

Pope Francis has asked us to have a special week of reflection from 24th May to mark the 5th anniversary of his Encyclical letter "Laudato Si". The Holy Father says, "In these times of the pandemic, in which we are more aware of the importance of our common home, I hope that all the common reflection and commitment may help to create and strengthen constructive attitudes for the care of creation."

If you wish to donate to Christian Aid, Holmes Chapel Ecumenical C A Group have set up a just giving page www.justgiving.com/fundraising/holmes-chapel-ecumenical-christian-aid-group. You can also donate at <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/CAWeek2020>

Dear Parishioners,

As we see lockdown restrictions starting to ease many people are wondering when we will be able to come back in to church. Cardinal Vincent and other faith leaders are working with the government on this and we hope to hear something soon. It is unlikely though, that we will return to "normal" in the near future but please God we will be able to open the churches for private prayer and eventually Mass & the Sacraments with some restrictions

What has been a great blessing is the way we have come together as a virtual parish. Fr Peter continues to stream Mass every day and Exposition on Monday evenings. Amy is posting Children's Liturgy each week, Ministers of the Word are recording readings for us to hear and so on. You can join us even if you don't have a Facebook account (just ignore or close the sign in box); simply type @stmarysparishmiddlewich in to a search engine. If you need any help please contact Deacon Chris who will try and talk you through it. The care group and clergy will be contacting as many of our more vulnerable parishioners as we can to check if they need anything. Fr Peter has already made some visits, speaking from just outside people's houses. If you know anyone that we can help please let us know.

If anyone would like to be prayed with or receive a blessing please do contact one of the clergy and we can do this on the phone or by video call.

There are also so many resources online now that it's impossible to list them all here but there is plenty to help deepen our spiritual life at this time. We particularly like the series "The Chosen" which can be found online or via app.

Thank you all those who have continued to support us financially, either by envelopes through the door or in the post, by standing order, or the new on-line giving. Thanks to you we are not one of the parishes having to be "rescued" by the Diocese. Thank you also for your on-going support of the Foodbank, Cafod, Christian Aid and Mary's Meals. We can only imagine the situation of the world's poorest communities affected by the pandemic. They need our prayers as well as our help.

Please pray for Cardinal Vincent and other Faith Leaders in their discussions with the Government.

"He lifts up the soul and makes the eyes sparkle; he gives health and life and blessing." Ecclesiasticus (Sirach) 34:20

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.

As a result of a request from Pope Francis, a **Pentecost Sunday National Rosary Rally** has been set up, from 9.00am to 9.00pm across Scotland England and Wales. Our Diocese has been asked to pray a Rosary Hour at 2.00pm and I warmly invite you to take part. Bishop John Keenan will lead a final Rosary at 9pm to which all are invited.

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

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

There is a stillness and an acceptance in these closed eyes and untroubled faces. In part, Michelangelo is reminding us of their life together at an earlier time; the sculpture references not only the passion but also the birth and early life of Christ. Those days when Mary previously held her son – then a sleeping child, rather than a dead man – are brought to mind, and there is a reminder of the continuity of the story, and of the connection between birth and death.

TRANSFORMATION

But there is also a wider link to the absolute kernel of the story, to the absolute kernel of all our stories. Because those faces, both that of Christ and that of Mary, seem oddly unconnected to one another and yet connected to something else – and who else can that be, but God? There is an acceptance, a trust; a belief in something bigger and better, and ultimately in transformation. This is the sacrifice that made and makes redemption possible – it involves pain and suffering, and what could be greater than the loss for a mother of her child? – but contained in the experience of that suffering is the gateway to the liberation and happiness we all strive for, and both Christ and Mary understand that, and have given themselves up to it. We can all learn something from that; in the heart of our abandonment, in the midst of our deepest suffering, is the doorway to future fulfilment.



Mass text

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

O Lord, hear my voice, for I have called to you; of you my heart has spoken: Seek his face; hide not your face from me, alleluia.

FIRST READING Acts 1:12-14

PSALM Psalm 26

RESPONSE **I am sure I shall see the Lord's goodness in the land of the living.**

Or **Alleluia!**

- The Lord is my light and my help; whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life; before whom shall I shrink? **R.**
- There is one thing I ask of the Lord, for this I long,
to live in the house of the Lord,
all the days of my life,
to savour the sweetness of the Lord,
to behold his temple. **R.**

- O Lord, hear my voice when I call; have mercy and answer.
Of you my heart has spoken;
"Seek his face." **R.**

SECOND READING 1 Peter 4:13-16

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**Alleluia, alleluia!
I will not leave you orphans, says the Lord;
I will come back to you, and your hearts will be full of joy.
Alleluia!**

GOSPEL John 17:1-11

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Father, I pray that they may be one as we also are one, alleluia.

Next Sunday's Readings:

Acts 2:1-11
1 Corinthians 12:3-7, 12-13
John 20:19-23

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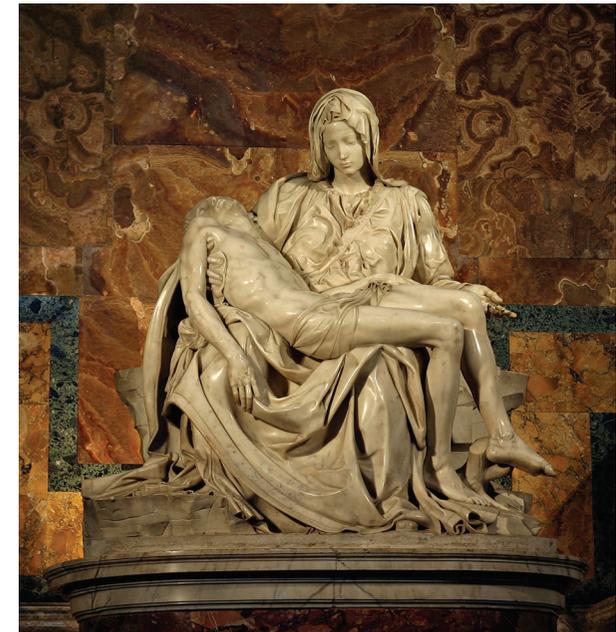
MICHELANGELO, PIETÀ

It's a high bar, but many art historians believe Michelangelo's finest work isn't the awesome ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, or even his sculpture *David*; it's his *Pietà*, a study in a mother's grief that encompasses the whole of the Christ story and manages to unite despair and hope, birth and death, failure and success in one extraordinary piece of marble. That marble stands in its own side chapel in St Peter's Basilica in Rome; these days, following various attempts to damage it over the years, it's behind bulletproof glass. As tourists and pilgrims pour into the cathedral, they tend to make a beeline for it; if you're visiting Rome and want a ringside view, make sure you go first thing in the morning.

The piece was created in 1498–99, having been commissioned from the artist by a French cardinal called Jean de Bilhères, who wanted it to be the monument for his grave. Initially, his tomb in the chapel of St Petronilla was indeed its home; but by 1519 it had been moved to the original St Peter's Basilica, and it was there when it was seen by Giorgio Vasari, the art historian par excellence of the Renaissance. His opinion was that it represented "the ultimate limits of sculpture"; and from this moment on, its place in history was assured.

The sculpture is made of Carrara marble, a white and blue stone from that region of Italy, and it shows Mary cradling the body of her dead son. She is all folds and voluptuousness; to create the scene he wanted, Michelangelo has had to make the Mary figure a lot larger than the Christ figure, to allow the sense that she is bearing his weight and holding his frame.

Her body is almost all veil, robes and skirt; his is unclothed save for his loincloth. Her head is turned down towards him; his is thrown back. But amidst all this contrast, there is one strikingly similar aspect; the faces of both figures are serene, composed and strangely unmoved. Both have their eyes closed; Christ, of course, is dead; Mary is pondering the enormity of what has happened to her son, and to her.



Divine images



Joanna Moorhead continues this series looking at religious art.

24 MAY 2020

7TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

YEAR A

DIVINE OFFICE WEEK III