

Sunday of the Year

4 July 2010

The Mother of all Gods?

In an attempt to shock, someone once said that all we know about God is that she is black. The one sure thing we can say about God is that he/she does not fit into a box. God is greater than anything we can ever imagine or understand.

In today's liturgy Isaiah uses feminine imagery to describe how God deals with the chosen people. And so God says that "she" will be like a mother to us, consoling us when we are sad, fondling us in her lap and suckling us at her breasts when we are in need of sustenance.

Of course, God is just God. God's not a man; not a woman; not something in between. God transcends, goes beyond, gender. But thinking of God in terms of a mother as well as a father allows us to glimpse God in an entirely new light. It means that we can suddenly appreciate the tender, life-giving, nursing side to God. These feminine attributes remind us that there is no part of our lives that God is absent from, and nothing that God is unconcerned about.

Living as we do in a scientific age, we tend to think that we can dissect everything and find out exactly how it works before putting it back together again. Then we can use it when we want it. This approach

sometimes affects the way people think about God.

The have a Jack-in-the-Box God that can be kept with the lid shut and brought out by undoing the catch when we can't solve the problem ourselves and need a bit of divine help.

However, God is much too big to fit in the box and much too clever to be tamed by our attempts to tie him/her down to neat categories. Anyone who has ever read the scriptures will know that time and time again God acts in precisely the opposite way to how we humans think he/she should. God picks the very people whom everyone else discounts on the first ballot; God grants victory to the underdog; God confounds the proud with the humility of the meek, and turns up in circumstances where we wouldn't expect God to be.

Today Isaiah reminds us that God is bigger than us and we cannot pretend to have God taped. If we let our minds be stretched by thinking of God as both a mother and a father then we get twice as much God for our money!



Clergy: Father John Hindley
St Marie's Presbytery
Almond Brook Road
Standish, Wigan, WN6 0TB
Telephone: 01257 423291

Serving the Parishes of:

St Marie of the Annunciation
Standish

www.stmariesstandish.co.uk

St Bernadette Shevington
www.stbernadetteshevington.org.uk

Parish Office at St Marie's:

Open 9.00 am to 12 noon

Monday - Friday

jointparishes@gmail.com

Baptisms: By prior arrangement.
Information available from Fr John after weekend Masses. All baptisms take place during Mass. St Bernadette's first Sunday and St Marie's third Sunday of the month.

Confessions:

St Bernadette's: Sun 9.10-9.20 am.

St Marie's: Wed 6.30 - 6.50 pm.

Or by request.

Funerals and Marriages: By arrangement.

Mass Requests: Please place in an envelope and hand in to the Sacristy or to the Parish Office at St Marie's. Please indicate which church you would prefer, if any. If you would like a particular day please request early.

Visits to sick and housebound: Please inform Fr John if you know of parishioners who are sick or housebound and would like to receive Holy Communion.

Hospital Visits: If you wish to see a priest please let the hospital staff know.

Repository: Open at the back of church after each weekend Mass for greeting cards for most occasions, small gifts, prayer books, etc.

Newsletter Notices: Please e-mail to jointparishes@gmail.com or hand in to the Parish Office by Thursday morning.

The Grapevine: If anyone has any ideas or items for submission to the magazine please e-mail

stbernadettesgrapevine@gmail.com

St Marie's Hall: All bookings for hall usage should be made in advance with the Parish Office during office hours.

Liverpool Roman Catholic
Archdiocesan Trustees Incorporated.
A registered charity. Number 232709.

Mass Intentions this week

Day	Church	Time	Intention
14th Sunday of the Year			At her breast will nurslings be carried and fondled in her lap. Like a son comforted by his mother will I comfort you. <i>(Isaiah 66:12-13)</i>
Saturday	St Bernadette's	5.30 pm	People of the Parish
	St Marie's	7.00 pm	Margaret Ann Calderbank and Derek Wynne
Sunday	St Bernadette's	9.30 am	Magrath Family
	St Marie's	11.00 am	Eric White
Monday	St Marie's	9.15 am	Arthur Almond
Tuesday	St Bernadette's	9.15 am	Kathleen Johnson
Wednesday	St Marie's	7.00 pm	John & Robin Hindley
	St Bernadette's	9.15 am	Vincent McGarry
Thursday	St Marie's	11.00 am	Funeral Service: Jean Walton
	St Marie's	9.15 am	Eucharistic Service
15th Sunday of the Year			Which of these three, do you think, proved himself a neighbour to the man who fell into the brigands' hands? <i>(Luke 10:36)</i>
Saturday	St Bernadette's	5.30 pm	Annie Baybutt
	St Marie's	7.00 pm	Arthur Thompson
Sunday	St Bernadette's	9.30 am	Irene Kelly
	St Marie's	11.00 am	People of the Parish

This weekend:

Sunday after 11.00 am Mass: **Tea and coffee** in the Church Hall.

This week:

Monday: The **Alzheimer's Society** invites you for morning coffee at Shevington Methodist Hall from 10.30 am until 1.30 pm, to help them raise awareness of dementia and to raise vital funds.

Tuesday: **Standish Churches Men's Fellowship** Grand Bowling competition at The Boars Head Inn, Standish from 2.00 pm until 5.00 pm. All invited. Ladies welcome. Competition and buffet £10.00. Contact Joe Fairhurst (402185) to confirm attendance and to order the buffet.

Wednesday: **Ladies Section** trip to Chester for the canal cruise. Coach leaves the 'Cross', Market Place, Standish at 10.00 am, then St Marie's at 10.05 am. Tel. Marjorie (424332).

Friday: **Annual Mass in honour of St John Rigby** in Harrock Hall, Wrightington at 7.30 pm. Archbishop Patrick Kelly will preside.

Next Weekend:

Saturday: **St Bernadette's car boot sale** at St Bernadette's School. Donations of good saleable items, tombola prizes etc. may be brought to St Bernadette's Church at Mass times. Help, as always, is welcome on the day. Setting up begins at 7.00 am.

Fr John is attending the Episcopal Ordination of Fr Ralph Heskett as the new bishop of Gibraltar. Bishop Vincent Malone will be saying all Masses.

Second collection at all Masses to support the work of the Apostleship of the Sea.

Sunday after 11.00 am Mass: **Tea and coffee** in the Church Hall.

Thank you for your offerings

St Marie's	£887.96
St Bernadette's	£765.22

Bonus Ball

No.3 - Ken Draper - £21.

At the back of Church.....

- Living Faith booklets for adults and children, July to September 2010.

Sea Sunday

Next Sunday is Sea Sunday when we are invited to remember and pray for seafarers. They are truly strangers on our shores, for their lives and work are hidden from us and yet we depend totally upon them.

The Apostleship of the Sea (AoS) is the official maritime welfare agency of the Catholic Church in Great Britain, which is wholly dependent on voluntary donations to continue its work. Everything AoS does is on behalf of Britain's Catholic community.

There will be a second collection at all Masses on Sea Sunday for the work of AoS, who visit, welcome and support seafarers while they are in port. Please give generously and help AoS make a real difference to the lives of seafarers; their ministry cannot continue without you.

Church Development Fund

Church Development Subs may be paid after Masses this weekend.

Manx Flag

The Manx flag is flying at St Marie's because this is Manx National week, centred around Tynwald Day on 5 July when an open air sitting of the Manx Parliament is held. The three legs symbol is reflected in the island's motto, 'Quocunque Jeceris Stabit': Whichever way you throw it, it stands.

Abortion advertising

If you consider that Marie Stopes abortion advertisements on Channel 4 should not be allowed, please write to The Right Hon Lord Smith of Finsbury, The Advertising Authority, Mid City Place, 771 High Holborn, London, WC1V 6QT.

Pilgrimage to Krakow

Pastoral Area Pilgrimage to Krakow, Poland led by Father James Preston will take place from 9 to 16 October. Cost £765 (based on 30 people. Contact: 0151 422 1772, Weekdays 9.00 am to 3.30 pm. See also notice in Church porch.

Baptisms

We welcome new members to our community this weekend when Ella Louise Green and Ruby Bea Brown are baptised during the 9.30 am Mass. Congratulations!

Questions of faith and liturgy

Q. Why was the feast of Sts. Peter & Paul not transferred to the Sunday?

A. The solemnities of the Lord [Epiphany, Corpus Christi etc] are transferred to the Sunday; other solemnities [Saints Peter & Paul, All Saints etc] are transferred if they occur on a Saturday or Monday, otherwise they are kept on their proper day.

Marriage congratulations

Congratulations to Rachel Cooper and Richard Turner whose wedding will

take place at St Marie's on Saturday 10 July.

Crown Green Bowling

If you would like to learn how to play and enjoy bowls, meet other people like yourself and keep fit and active, try crown green bowling at St Marie's Bowling Green, Standish. Free sessions run by a qualified coach weekly on Wednesdays from 10.30 am until 11.30 am. Contact John Fowler (423550), Dave Woods (400621) or Steve Ashcroft (422690).

Marriage preparation survey

Are you or someone you know getting married in the Catholic Church this year? The Bishops' Committee for Marriage and Family Life are gathering information on marriage preparation in 2010 and want to hear from anyone involved and especially couples to learn more about their experiences. If you can help, please visit www.catholicmarriage.org.uk

Confirmations

Thank you to all those who put so much effort, time and hard work into the Confirmations and the buffet afterwards. It is much appreciated.

Dates for your diary

Monday to Friday, 26 to 30 July: **2010 Living Theology** summer school at Liverpool Hope University. Contact tel. 0151 298 1911 or e-mail: d.reynolds@sfxchuchliverpool.com.

Monday to Friday, 16 to 20 August: **Holiday Club** for children aged 5-11 years, during mornings at St Anne's parish centre, Shevington.

Wednesday, 15 September: **Healing Service** at St James', Orrell. Mass at 7.30 pm. Contact Cath 01942 824365.