

# Third Sunday of the Year

22 January 2012

## Spoil Sport God?

When Jonah had finished preaching to the people of Nineveh they repented and God forgave them. But Jonah was furious and accused God of being lily-livered for not bringing a good old-fashioned disaster on them as a warning to other sinners.

I suspect that we can all sense a bit of Jonah in us. There are times when we think that certain people should be made an example of rather than shown clemency. Yet the very first words of Jesus in Mark's gospel show that God wants people not to be damned but to turn back to him: 'Repent and believe the Good News'.

Forgiveness is in many ways the greatest humiliation, for it requires of us that we actually admit we are sinners. Today we are very good at finding excuses for our sin. We talk about compulsive behaviour, diminished responsibility and mitigating circumstances. This might all be true, but it doesn't take away the sin. We are capable of deliberately doing something wrong, and in the depth of our being we know that we regularly do sin.

And Jesus knew it too. Yet strangely he was not so much obsessed with sin as with forgiveness. He urged people to look at themselves squarely, warts and all, and to acknowledge their need to change. This is what real repentance means... change.

If we avoid minimising and evading our sinfulness then we have the opportunity to face the truth and to grow. For the truth sets us free to develop rather than live the life of sapping torment that ignores our behaviour or relativises it by saying 'Well, everyone does it these days'.

Admitting our need for forgiveness breaks the spiritual paralysis. The grace of repentance empowers us to act decisively. We do not deserve the unconditional pardon that God offers, but in Christ we are entitled to it. For when we admit our need of repentance we enable our minds to think clearly once more, to refocus on the truth of the Good News, to lose the heartache that sin always brings with it. Sinful actions ultimately entrap and make life deadly. Repentance offers fresh hope and resurrection.

## Mass Intentions this week

Day	Church	Time	Intention
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the Year	God saw their efforts to renounce their evil behaviour. And God relented: he did not inflict on them the disaster which he had threatened. (Job 3:10)		
Saturday	St Bernadette's	5.30 pm	People of the Parish
	St Marie's	7.00 pm	Tom Leyland (Anniversary)
Sunday	St Bernadette's	9.30 am	Evelyn Johnson (LD)
	St Marie's	11.00 am	Anthony Aspey
Monday	St Marie's	9.15 am	Josie Finch (LD)
Tuesday	St Bernadette's	9.15 am	Safe Journey
Wednesday	St Marie's	7.00 pm	Sheila Burgeen (LD)
Thursday	St Bernadette's	9.15 am	Private Intention (C & G)
Friday	St Marie's	9.15 am	Roy Johnson (Anniversary)
4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Year	His teaching made a deep impression on them, because, unlike the scribes, he taught them with authority. (Mark 1: 22)		
Saturday	St Bernadette's	5.30 pm	Frank Telford (Anniversary)
	St Marie's	7.00 pm	People of the Parish
Sunday	St Bernadette's	9.30 am	Allan Fairhurst
	St Marie's	11.00 am	Tommy Lowton (Anniversary)

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

*Serving the Churches of:*

**St Marie of the Annunciation**  
Standish

[www.stmariesstandish.co.uk](http://www.stmariesstandish.co.uk)

**St Bernadette** Shevington  
[www.stbernadetteshevington.org.uk](http://www.stbernadetteshevington.org.uk)

**Parish Office at St Marie's:**

Open 9.00 am to 12 noon

Monday - Friday

[jointparishes@gmail.com](mailto:jointparishes@gmail.com)

[www.twitter.com/stmstb](http://www.twitter.com/stmstb)

**Baptisms:** By prior arrangement. Information available at weekend Masses. All baptisms take place during Mass. St Bernadette's first Sunday, 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:** Place in an envelope and hand in to the Sacristy or to the Parish Office at St Marie's. Please indicate your preferred church, if any. Please also specify the reason for the intention, i.e. recently deceased, anniversary etc. For a particular day, please request early.

**Visits to sick and housebound:**

Please inform Fr John if you know of sick or housebound parishioners who would like 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.

**Newsletter Notices:** Please e-mail to [jointparishes@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:stbernadettesgrapevine@gmail.com)

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

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### **This weekend:**

Sunday: **Coffee morning** after 9.30 am Mass. Proceeds in aid of the Wigan Lourdes Association.

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

Sunday: **Service of prayer for Christian Unity** at St Wilfrid's Church, Standish at 6.30 pm.

### **This week**

Friday: **Holocaust Memorial Day Commemoration** at the Town Hall, Wigan at 10.30 am.

Friday: Meeting in Shevington Methodist Church at 7.00 pm to plan celebrations for the **Queen's Diamond Jubilee**.

### **Next weekend:**

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

### **Thank you for your offerings**

£1,820.50.

#### **Nugent Care (Crib)**

£117.60. Thank you.

#### **White Flower appeal**

£373.76. Thank you.

#### **Bonus Ball**

No.33 - Mavis Ryan - £40.

#### **St Bernadette's Sanctuary Lamp**

Special Intention.

#### **St Marie's Sanctuary Lamp**

For blessings on the 'Walking in the Spirit' course and all parish activities.

### **Recovering and Moving on after Divorce**

The Archdiocesan Pastoral Formation Department is offering a series of six weekly meetings to offer support to Catholics who are divorced or separated or experiencing the breakdown of a long term relationship. Christians of any other denomination, or of none, are very welcome. The groups are small and confidential. There is no charge.

Meetings commence on Monday 20 February, 7.30 pm to 9.00 pm, Aigburth Area, Liverpool 17. Contact Frances on 0151 727 2195.

There is also a one day meeting on Saturday, 18 February for people who would find difficulty in attending the six meetings. This will use some of the material from the full course.

### **Catholic Parliamentary and Public Policy Internships**

For the last nine years, the Catholics Bishops Conference has organised Parliamentary and Public Policy Internships for recently graduated Catholics. This year they are looking to offer eight internships: Five will be placed with Christian MPs at Westminster; two in Public Policy with CAFOD and CARITAS Social Action Network, and one in a media internship at Archbishop's House, Westminster.

All internships will run from September 2012 to July 2013 and include accommodation and subsistence allowances.

Full details and an application form can be found on their website:

<http://www.catholicnews.org.uk/interns>

Completed application forms to be e-mailed to [interns@cbcew.org.uk](mailto:interns@cbcew.org.uk) or posted to Michaela Kelly, Head of HR, 39 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1BX. The closing date is 5.00 pm on 29 February and Assessment days will be 28 and 29 March.

### **Ministry of Reconciliation**

Fr John McLoughlin will be leading a series of three informative talks for all parishes in the Pastoral Area on Tuesdays 7, 14 and 21 February, 7.15 pm to 9.00 pm at St John Rigby Catechetical Centre (St. Richards Parish, Liverpool Road, Skelmersdale), entitled Christ's Ministry of Reconciliation. Free entry, donations welcome. Reconciliation truly is a sacrament for our time!

### **CAFOD**

Thank you to parishioners, pupils of St Bernadette's Primary School and friends who supported the CAFOD Group during 2011. With your help the Group raised £6,077.79, of which £711.94 was gift aided, making a grand total of £6,789.73.

### **Women's World Day of Prayer**

#### **Women's World Day of**

**Prayer** is on Friday, 2 March and the service in Shevington will be at St Bernadette's at 7.30 pm. The parish has been asked to provide the leader, two readers, musicians, refreshments and the speaker. If any parishioner is available and able to help, please contact Krystyna Pilkington, 425347.

### **Children's Liturgy Group**

St Bernadette's Children's Liturgy Group is to hold a 'Come and join us, see what we do and how' event at 17 Newgate Avenue, Appley Bridge on Wednesday 15 February at 7.45 pm for anyone interested in becoming a leader or helper of the Group. Contact Mary B, 253380 or 07790 964846 or e-mail [marybhill@btinternet.com](mailto:marybhill@btinternet.com).

### **Vocations Team meeting**

On Sunday 5 February, the Vocations Team will be holding its monthly discernment meeting at St Mary's Lowe House, St Helens. The meeting begins at 5.00 pm followed by the monthly Youth Alive Mass. This meeting is aimed at young men aged between 13-18. The group allows young men to pray, socialize and learn more about the vocation of the priesthood. If you would like to attend this event or would like more information then please contact Father James Preston on 01942 673753.

### **Church Development Fund**

January results:

**£100** - 331, Mary Higham: **£50** - 54, C Anders: **£50** - 316, P Habashi: **£50** - 463, Brioni Turner: **£40** - 104, I Tennant. Please collect cheques from sacristy. Subs can be paid after each weekend Mass during January at St Marie's. Thank you for your support. New members welcome.

### **Thank you party**

Helpers at St Bernadette's and St Marie's are invited to attend a 'Thank you' party in St Marie's Church Hall on Tuesday, 21 February at 7.30 pm. All helpers are requested to sign the list in the Church porch if they intend to be present.

### **Dates for your diary**

Saturday, 4 February: 'Sing a New Song to the Lord', a meeting of **Children's Liturgy Leaders** preparing to celebrate Lent at LACE 2.00 pm - 5.00 pm. Cost £10. Contact Julie Cassidy, LACE, Croxteth Drive, Liverpool.

Saturday, 11 February: **Soulcare Meditation**, a taste of silence, listening prayer at St Teresa's, Upholland, 10.00 am - 1.00 pm.

Sunday, 19 February: **Songs of Praise** at St Bernadette's at 3.00 pm. All welcome.