

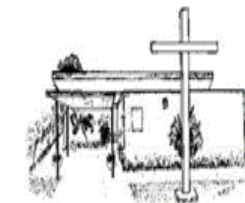
**A Pastoral Letter on Re-starting in Lent** (To be read at all Masses on the First Sunday of Lent, 6th March 2022)

My dear brothers and sisters, Christ's victory over the temptations in the wilderness is recounted at the beginning of every Lent. In each temptation, the Devil proposesto Our Lord a seemingly easier path to accomplish His mission than the Sacrifice of the Cross and His total self-giving in the Eucharist. Turning the desert's stones into free food, seizing political power or becoming a spectacle to entertain the crowds might momentarily win applause, but will notsave humanity. These temptations are recounted because we can be tempted to seek deceptively easier paths in our Christian lives and in the mission of the Church. It is why we need this Lenten time of conversion so we may truly "worship the Lord our God and serve Him alone". (i) This year, in our parishes we are re-starting in adverse conditions and with diminished resources. We are deeply concerned for the Ukrainian people and the peace of the world as the shadow of war has fallen over Europe. At such a moment, I want us to be sure of the inexhaustible resources of faith and grace given us. As Saint Paul reminded the beleaguered faithful in Rome, by relying on the Name of the Lord we will never lack all we need. (ii) Diminished we might be, as we emerge from a pandemic, yet we can never doubt from our Baptism, that we have been sustained by every grace, above all, the supreme gift of the Holy Eucharist. Thanksgiving must surely be our starting point, in recognition of all we have received in the life of the Church. Thanksgiving is the characteristic of Christian prayer. (iii) I was especially struck by the words of the last testament of the saintly Pope Paul VI, who constantly repeated "Lord, I thank you." Pope Paul asked, how can we ever thank the Lord sufficiently for the gift of life and the still higher gift of faith and grace. So many graces, so many mercies, so many examples given us. Above all, Saint Paul VI insisted we must give thanks that we have been brought into the life of the Catholic Church where all the means of grace and salvation are found. (iv) Pastoral Letter on Re-starting in Lent - March 6th 2022 2 The people of Macclesfield will this year give thanks for 200 years of renewed Catholic mission in their district. As we look back with them to the founding generation of our Diocese, we recall how "few in number"(v) they were and lacking in material resources; yet they knew the gifts of faith and grace were their true riches. As Saint John Vianney reflected, we might see ourselves as poor when vast riches of grace have been given us in prayer, in the Sacrament of Penance and, above all, in the Eucharist. The Cure of Ars compared us to someone dying of thirst beside an immense river of fresh water. If only we would reach out, he said, yet we fail to see! Lent is an invitation to recognise God's grace and the very presence of Christ Himself is now within our reach. This Sunday, we pray for the Ukrainian people and for the peace of the world in response to Pope Francis's call to draw upon the spiritual resources of Lent to overcome "the madness of war". (vi) The Holy Father has echoed the call of Our Lady at Fatima who entrusted this same message to poor children, amid the carnage and destruction of the First World War. The children of Fatima, two of whom have been declared among the Saints by Pope Francis, (vii) had no human means to end a war, yet recognised the power of prayer, of receiving and adoring the Eucharist, of offering the small sacrifices of each day with great love. This Lent invites us to take up these same means as we intercede for peace and unite our prayer and penance to the practical help we offer to the suffering. In the great re-start of Lent, let us recognise the gifts and graces which mark our Christian lives; above all the supreme gift of the Sacrifice and Sacrament of the Altar. Let us return to the Altar and the Tabernacle of our parishes in the joyful recognition of faith and prayer, and wherever possible in prolonged Eucharistic Adoration. This is surely the best place for us to start anew.

United with you in this prayer, + Mark Bishop of Shrewsbury Cf. Mt. 4: 10; Lk. 4:8 ii Cf. Rom. 10: 13 iii Cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church 2637 iv Cf. The Second Vatican Council Unitatis Redintegratio No.3 v Dt. 26:28 vi Cf. General Audience, Wednesday 23rd February 2022 vii Cf. Saint Jacinta and Saint Francisco Canonised by Pope Francis in May 2017

**Newsletter for the Parishes of Our Lady and the Apostles, St. Ambrose and St. Vincent de Paul**

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 Parish Priest: Fr. Martin Onuoha Email: [frifeanyimom@yahoo.com](mailto:frifeanyimom@yahoo.com)  
 Deacon: Rev. Moses Ibeh



**6TH MARCH 2022. FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT**

You can join us via this Live Stream link: <https://www.churchservices.tv/ourladystockport> (for Our Lady's church)  
 OR click on [tinyurl.com/stockportparishes](http://tinyurl.com/stockportparishes) or [Stockport Parishes - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...) (for both St. Vincent's and St. Ambrose')

**MASKS ARE NO LONGER MANDATORY BUT RECOMMENDED. PLEASE USE THE HAND SANITISER.**

Date	Feast	Time	Church	Mass Intention
Sun 6th Mar	<b>THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT</b>  (Blessing of Holy Water & Sacramentals)	5.30pm	<b>Vigil Mass Sat. St Ambrose</b>	Our Parish Family Ukraine and Russian People
		7.00pm	<b>Vigil Mass Sat. Our Lady's</b>	
		9.30am	<b>St Vincent's</b>	Patricia Melson RIP Mary Sheridan & James Patrick Moore RIP
		11.00am	<b>Our Lady's (Mass of Enrolment for 1st Communion)</b>	
Mon 7th Mar	<b>Ferial</b> (Ss Perpetua & Felicity, Mm)	9.30am	<b>St. Ambrose</b>	Maureen Bowker RIP
Tues 8th Mar	<b>Ferial</b> (St John of God, R)	9.30am 12.15	<b>Our Lady's OL-Funeral</b>	Brian Collins RIP Thomas Caveney
Wed 9th-March	<b>Ferial</b> (St Frances of Rome, R)	9.30am	<b>St. Vincent's</b>	Carol Meleroy (Get well)
Thurs 10th Mar	<b>Ferial</b>	9.30am 11.00am 7.00pm	<b>St Ambrose OL- Funeral</b> <b>Our Lady's</b>	Kathleen Meehan RIP Dawn Marie Flanagan Mary Brett RIP
Fri 11th Mar	<b>Ferial</b> (Family Fast Day) DAY OF SPECIAL PRAYER FOR THE NEEDY AND HUNGRY OF THE WORLD	9.30am	<b>St. Vincent's</b>	For the souls of Felisa & Lucy RIP (ann) Stations of the cross. Stations of the cross. Stations of the cross.
		10.15am	<b>St Vincent's</b>	
		7.00pm 7:30pm	<b>Our Lady's</b> <b>St Ambrose</b>	
Sat 12th Mar	<b>Ferial</b>  <b>VIGIL MASS OF SUNDAY</b>	9.30am	<b>Our Lady's</b>	Hugh Mitchell (ann)  Margaret Walker (RIP) Our Parish Family
		5.30pm 7.00pm	<b>Vigil Mass Sat. St Ambrose</b> <b>Vigil Mass Sat. Our Lady's</b>	
Sun 13th Mar	<b>SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT</b>	9.30am 11.00am	<b>St Vincent's</b> <b>Our Lady's</b>	Patricia Melson RIP Przemystaw Janczewski RIP

There is **Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament** every weekday morning from 8:30am to 9:30am.

The **Sacrament of Reconciliation** is available after 9.30am Mass on Saturday morning and by appointment.

*Please pray for those preparing to receive the sacraments.*

**Baptisms:** New Baptism classes will resume in **April 2022**

**First Holy Communion:** Preparatory Classes have now started across our parishes. Please get in touch before it is late. Enrolment Mass will hold at Our Lady's this Sunday, 11am.

**RCIA:** Are you or anyone you know **interested in joining the Catholic Church**, please join us for a brief meeting after the 11am Mass at Our Lady's, this Sunday. God Bless!

**In St. Vincent's:** We remember in our prayers all the intentions on the St. Vincent's Prayer Board. Please add your intentions to the Prayer Board in church and you can see who is in need of our prayers on our website under "Thoughts for the week".

**In Our Lady's:** Allan Stanway, Maureen Brosnahan, Kelly Brosnahan, Zach Tierney, Irene Cox, Lee Abernathy, Janice Cook, Eileen Melia, Annie Topping, Theresa Burrows, Josephine O'Hagan, Denise Corlet, Nora Reade, Tommy Higgins, Marie Kenefick, Eileen Mains, Beryl Collins, Josie Vaughan, Michael Heath, Honora Hague, Victoria Russell, Sophie Mansfield, Vivienne Goostry, John Wynne, Vincent Tracey, Ronald Fury, Veronica Gallagher, Aine O'Callaghan, Mary Murphy, Kathleen Bond, Jordan Harris, Alana Walsh, Jean Egginton, Mary Glindon and Sean O'Callaghan.

**In St. Ambrose's:** June Campbell, Mavis Doggett, Khia Whitehead, Eleanor Loftus, Mary Andrusiak, Carl Stanley, C. Wootton, Mary Sein, Paul Thuoc, Barry Lloyd, Andrew Way, Mary Young, Irene Walker, Veronica Norbury, John Holt, Imelda Judge, Veronica Lane, Joanna Winter, Pat Judge, Paul McClure, Helen Jenkins.

**Recently Departed:** May the souls of Father Peter Ryan, Leonard Jones, Margaret Walker and the souls of all our recently departed rest in peace. **Jim Montgomery.** Please pray for the repose of the soul of Jim Montgomery who attended Mass in the 3 parishes for many years. and passed away on Wed 23rd February. if anyone knew Jim, and would like to know about his funeral, please contact his cousin Dave Hewetson at [davidhewetson@talktalk.net](mailto:davidhewetson@talktalk.net).

#### Anniversaries

Rachel Curran, William D. Griffiths, Thomas Little, Brian Rothwell, Cecilia Carruthers, James Fleming, Brian Smith, Philip Hamilton, Edith Cameron, Shahbaz Bhatti, Louisa Hodson, Bruce F.M Brian, William Gough, Bernard Lohback, Joseph Carley, Florence Welch, Clarence Percival Bradley, Mary Sheridan, Madge Langan.

#### PRAYER FOR SYNOD 2021-23:

**We stand before You, Holy Spirit, as we gather together in Your name. With You alone to guide us, make Yourself at home in our hearts; Teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it. We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder. Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path nor partiality influence our actions. Let us find in You our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life and not stray from the way of truth and what is right. All this we ask of You, who are at work in every place and time, in the communion of the Father and the Son, forever and ever. Amen.**

**LENTEN PRAYER**—Heavenly Father, As we begin the discipline of Lent, protect us in our struggle against evil. Make this season holy by our self-denial, that we may be cleansed from sin, renewed in spirit, ready to celebrate the death and resurrection of Christ our Saviour. Amen.

**Stations of the cross**—every Friday during lent at St Vincent's after 0930 mass, OLATA at 1900hrs and St Ambrose at 1930 hrs. All welcome. If anyone would like to volunteer to lead please come forward so we can make it a truly parish event at each of our parishes.

**Faulty Heating System:** As the presbytery is now completed, the focus, from this week, will be on the church. We should have a warm church once again soon! Fingers crossed! In the meantime, please continue to put extra layers on when coming to Mass at Our Lady's. Thank you for your patience.

**Harrytown Catholic High School Vacancy**—Part-time caretaker—Full details are on the school website – [www.harrytownschool.org](http://www.harrytownschool.org)

**Catering Assistant Vacancy**—St Ambrose College—Term time only 20 hrs/week, 10:15 am—2.15pm Mon—Fri. Closing date 24.3.22 12 mid day. £9.43 per hour. Application form at [www.st-ambrosecollege.org.uk](http://www.st-ambrosecollege.org.uk) Karen Allen, Catering Manager, on 0161 980 2711 for further information.

**Stockport Leaders Lunch** on the 31st March 12:30-2:30pm. Soul City Church, Floor 2, Welkin Mill, Lower Bredbury, SK6 2BH

**Our Lady's Offertory Envelopes:** 'Boxes of envelopes for the year commencing 10 April are now available on the tables at the back of Church. The boxes are, as usual, in alphabetical order. If you are new to our Parish or don't have a box but would like one please telephone or email the Parish Office (details on page 1) with your name, address and phone number and I will contact you. Should you choose to donate by Standing Order or wish to Gift Aid your donation, this can also be arranged. There are leaflets on the table to help you make your decision. If you are no longer a taxpayer please let me know. Thank you all for your continuing support and the generosity you give to YOUR Parish throughout these very difficult times.' Tom Horan.

**Family Fast I** - collection will be on 11th of March

**Last weekend's collections** ( excludes standing orders): **OLATA— £447.43 St Ambrose - £105.42 St Vincent- £184.35** **THANK YOU.**

**Offertory envelopes** can be obtained from the Parish Office or see links for online giving to the Parishes: Please check our websites.

#### Our Lady's News

**The Piety Stall**—is now open for cards and gifts, and a selection of rosary beads.

**Children's Liturgy & 1st Communion Preparation Classes** - will take place during the 11am Mass. Please bring the children to learn and pray with us.

**COFFEE MORNINGS AT OUR LADY'S** - 'Our Sunday Coffee Mornings will relaunch after the 11:00am Mass on *Laetare* Sunday 27th March 2022. This date has been chosen because it marks a time of celebration: it will be the Fourth Sunday of Lent - REJOICE SUNDAY! - and this year it is also Mother's Day and marks the start of British Summer Time. I anticipate that the sessions will be weekly - but this will, naturally, depend upon take up. Any variations will be shared through the Newsletter.

Although the Government has removed all restrictions related to Covid [coincidentally the first session falls close to the second anniversary of restrictions being put in place], I would suggest that for our own peace of mind we operate with some caution - details of precautions to be taken are included on the poster displayed in Our Lady's Church. I look forward to seeing you at a Coffee Morning soon' - Ged

**HEALTH AND SAFETY AT OUR LADY'S**—Now that we have health and safety Reps, we are trying to put in place a robust health and safety regime. You will soon be seeing new signs displayed in and around the church. In addition, please note the following: 1. **Risk Assessments**—Please can all parish activity leaders check that their Risk Assessments are adequate and up to date. You can refer to the new Diocesan Health and Safety User Guide in the Parish Office or contact Stephen Lavin at [Lavin.stephen@talk21.com](mailto:Lavin.stephen@talk21.com) for an electronic copy. 2. **Emergency evacuation**— In case of a need to evacuate the church. Get out swiftly and calmly. Stay out. Report to the steward at the Assembly Point by the right hand car park exit gate (by advertising board). Do not attempt to fight fires, if not competent.

#### THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS -

**Counters/Gift Aid/Bankers:-** Tom Horan has decided it is now time to retire. We thank Tom for his committed services to the parish for some decades, for enabling the smooth transition to the new team and for offering to continue with Gift Aid coordination to the end of this financial year. The parish will be forever indebted to him for his incredible services! We welcome and pray for the new team of parishioners who have already commenced this vital role. The plan is to have a rota soon.

**First Sacrament Catechists:-**We thank Claire Monteith and Rachel Wheelan for undertaking the preparation of our children who are not in Catholic Schools for First Forgiveness and First Communion **every Sunday at the 11am Mass.**

**RCIA:-** We thank Magda & Grzegorz Makowski, Pat Mullard and Mike, who have offered to join the team of RCIA Catechists. Fr Martin will have a brief meeting with them after mass this Sunday 6.3.22.

**Health and Safety:-** Once again, we thank Steve Lavin for accepting to be our Health and Safety Representative. We also thank Ian Johnson who has accepted to assist Steve in this role. Ian brings lots of experience as a Health and Safety Officer. Thank you both!

**Singing at the 11am Mass:-** A big thank you to Pat Mullard who now leads the music from the gallery. We encourage other good singers in the congregation to please join Pat and, may be, we could have a small choir.

#### St Ambrose News

**The Piety stall** has some lovely new items including Calendars and Rosary Beads. Please take time to have a look.

**Ian and Denise Carlin** would like our parishioners of St Ambrose to be aware of the recent bereavement of Denise's mother, Margaret Walker, who sadly passed away on Thursday 3 March 2022. Please keep Margaret and the Carlin Family in your prayers at this time.

#### St Vincent's News

**Prayer request** for Rosa Shaw a previous regular attender at St Vincent's who is now very poorly. Your prayers would be gratefully appreciated by the family.

**CAFOD Family Fast** day envelopes will be given out this weekend ready for Family Fast Day on March 11th

**Lenten Book Group** - continues each Monday morning during Lent after 10am Service of Word and Communion

**Rosary** - Veronica Martin will be leading the rosary on Tuesday 8th March at 7pm in church. Please continue to pray for the people of Ukraine

**LAMBS disco** - our monthly get together for those with disabilities returns on Wednesday 9th March at 7-9pm in church. We will be asking for donations of money and some food this Sunday. We also need helpers to set out the chairs after Mass on Wednesday and clear up after the event at 9pm. We still need a regular DJ as Richard Walsh has stepped down after many years of faithful service.

**Stations of the Cross** - every Friday in Lent after 9.30am Mass

**Please send any items for inclusion in the newsletter to the Parish Office by 12 midday on Thursday. Kindly indicate parish of choice for your mass intentions. Bear in mind that dates might not be available.**

*Our Lady and the Apostles, Shaw Heath, Stockport SK3 8BQ St. Ambrose, Adswold Road, Stockport, SK3 3QA, St. Vincent de Paul, 29 Handley Road, Bramhall, Stockport, SK7 3E*

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