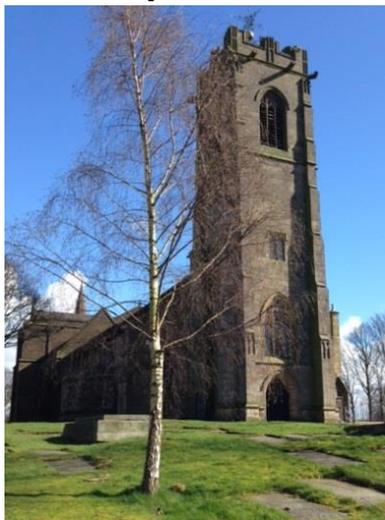


# St Mary's Monthly News

February 2016



## From the Parish Priest

The word Lent comes from the old English for 'spring'. This Lent I pray that we will all spring forward in our faith and that the forty days of Lent will be a time when we deepen our life with God. This year we will be having three **Lent Groups** to help one another get the most out of this holy season. There will be a Lent Group which meets on Tuesday evenings at the Rectory and this year the theme will be 'Growing in the Scriptures'. We will be having a Lent Group on Thursdays after school for children in Years 5 and 6 and this group will watch a series of popular films and will discuss what they teach us about God. There will be a Bible study group which meets during the day on Wednesday's which will look at the Gospel for the coming week. If you have never been to a Lent Group before please think about it this year. The groups are very informal; there will be some material to discuss and a chance to explore our faith. The groups are not intellectual and they require no prior knowledge at all. Lent Groups are a good place to ask questions and to share

experiences that draw us closer to God. In addition there is a **Lent Quiet Morning** on the theme of Mary on February 20<sup>th</sup> at the Rectory from 10am till 1pm. In that morning there will be some input, some times of silent prayer, a chance to read and relax and a Eucharist.

We begin the season of Lent with a Eucharist and imposition of ashes on February 10<sup>th</sup>, which is **Ash Wednesday**, at 10am and 730pm. I pray that you will keep a holy Lent and you will arrive at the mystery of Easter with a heart and soul ready to rejoice in the truth of the resurrection.

*With love, Chris (Parish Priest)*

## Mary around the Globe



This month's image of our Patron Saint is from Fátima in Portugal, where a series of apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary were reportedly experienced by three children in 1917. The Roman Catholic Church declared the apparitions "worthy of belief" in 1930 and the coronation of the statue (above) in 1946 drew such large crowds that the entrance to the site had to be barred. Today pilgrimages to Fatima go on all

Free or by Donation

year round, attracting up to a million pilgrims on special occasions.



## Church Action on Poverty Sunday

Sunday 7 February is **Church Action on Poverty Sunday**. This year the focus is on food as a gift from God. At St Mary's we have an opportunity to provide food and other items for those in need through our weekly collections for **Porch Boxes**. Please consider making a special donation on 7 February. More information is at [www.porchboxes.wordpress.com](http://www.porchboxes.wordpress.com) Donation boxes can be found near the Prayer Tree in the Wilton Chapel.

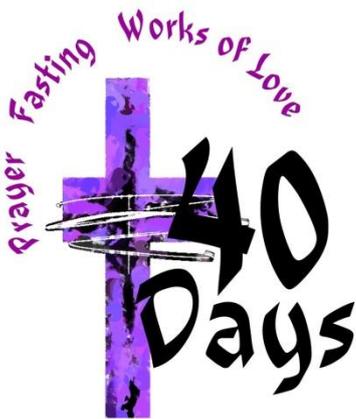
## A Female Bishop in Asia



Bishop Pushpa Lalitha (above), of Nandyal Diocese in the Church of South India (part of the Anglican Communion), is the first woman Bishop in Asia. As a child, Bishop Pushpa was taught by USPG missionaries. In a recent lecture,

the Bishop spoke about the radical love of Jesus: "Jesus came to make us strong and give hope to the hopeless. This radical mission and ministry of Jesus demands us to be the church of the marginalised. Jesus reached out to the Samaritan woman, the Leper, the woman in the house of Simon, the Shepherds, to everyone. Jesus brought them to the centre of society to be his witnesses....So let us continue to pray for God's intervention in our lives. Let us wait on Christ who can transform us so that we become a channel of hope for the people on the margins."

USPG (founded in 1701) is now known as "US", an Anglican mission agency working in partnership with churches around the world to improve health, put children in school, tackle discrimination, nurture leaders, give a voice to women, and much more. See: [www.weareus.org.uk](http://www.weareus.org.uk).



The next event in our **Year of Mary** is a **Lent Quiet Morning** on Saturday 20 February on the theme of Lent with Mary.

*Hail Mary, Mother of Sorrows, at the foot of the Cross you witnessed your Son's total self-giving. Loving God, send us the strength of the Holy Spirit as we draw close to Jesus this Lent.*

## Flowers at St Mary's



Flowers adorn the church and enhance our worship. Contributions towards the cost are always appreciated. If you would like to make a donation to mark a particular occasion, please consult the list of dates at the back of the church. £20 pays for altar flowers or £10 for a pedestal arrangement. For more information contact Elaine Davies (telephone 0161 773 9172)

## Her Majesty The Queen at General Synod



The General Synod of the Church of England had its first meeting after the recent round of elections at the end of last year. On this occasion Her Majesty the Queen addressed Synod on the theme of Christian Unity. Here is an extract from her speech:

*"St. Paul reminds us that all Christians, as ambassadors for Christ, are entrusted with the ministry of reconciliation. Spreading God's word and the onerous but rewarding task of peace-making and conflict resolution are important parts of that ministry. So too is the Church of England's particular vocation to work in partnership with those of other faiths and none, to serve the common good in this land.*

*To this end, I was pleased that one of the first events that Prince Philip and I attended in 2012 to mark my Diamond Jubilee was a gathering of leaders of all faiths, at Lambeth Palace. There are many other examples. The Covenant between the Church of England and the Methodist Church; the recent visit of the Ecumenical Patriarch; the newly created ecumenical community of St Anselm at Lambeth. Each of these serves as a reminder both of the progress already made and of the journey that still lies ahead in the pursuit of Christian unity.*

*Each new Synod inherits from its predecessor the same weighty responsibilities. Collectively, you must continue to draw deeply on your faith, judgement, and life experiences, as well as that precious Anglican tradition of unity in fellowship, to discern the future path of the Church of England. At the beginning of this new Synod, as you put your hand into the hand of God, my prayer is that 'His glorious light may shine ever on our sight, and clothe us round, the while our path illuming'."*

# St Mary's Monthly News

## Diary Dates

**Sunday 7 February** – the Bishop of Bolton will be presiding at the 1030 Eucharist at St Mary's.

**Wednesday 10 February** – Ash Wednesday - Eucharist at 1000 and 1930.

**Tuesday 16 February** - Evening Lent Course starts at 1930 in the Rectory.

**Wednesday 17 February** - Lent Bible Study starts immediately after the 1000 Eucharist.

**Saturday 20 February** – Lent Quiet Morning (Lent with Mary) 1000-1300.

**Thursday 25 February** - Children's Lent Course starts straight after school.

## News from the Parochial Church Council (PCC)

Matters recently discussed by the PCC include:

- The significantly improved financial position of the parish.
- Production of a 'Welcome Pack' for new church members.
- Reviewing the **Monthly News** – the PCC agreed to continue with this publication in the new format.

- Reviewing the effectiveness of the Mission Action Plan for the parish.
- Planning for a Parish Mission, "Going Deeper", the first part of which will take place from 24 April– 1 May 2016.
- Receiving a report from the architect on the state of the church building – this will need to be worked up into an action plan.

## Lent Word Search - Jesus in the Wilderness

**WILDERNESS**  
**TEMPTED**  
**DEVIL**  
**FORTY**  
**STONE**  
**BREAD**  
**ALONE**  
**GLORY**  
**WORSHIP**  
**PARAPET**  
**ANGELS**  
**EXHAUSTED**

S	L	E	G	N	A	L	O	N	E
T	S	D	E	T	P	M	E	T	W
E	Y	E	A	X	F	A	O	L	I
P	T	T	N	E	H	L	I	D	P
A	H	S	R	R	R	V	Y	E	I
R	R	U	E	O	E	B	R	V	H
A	O	A	N	D	F	D	O	L	S
P	W	H	O	G	H	O	L	Y	R
O	Y	X	T	O	R	L	G	I	O
W	T	E	S	T	S	Y	A	D	W

"Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil..." *Read more in Luke Chapter 4*



Christian Aid

**Count Your Blessings**

**During Lent 2016**

During Lent, Christian Aid is inviting Christians to reflect each day on the blessings in our life and to join in giving thanks. The Christian Aid website at [www.christianaid.org.uk/lent](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/lent) includes daily inspirations to give, act and pray for communities in need. Resources for children are also available.



Out of the 80 million Easter eggs sold in this part of the world every year, **The Real Easter Egg** is the only one which has an Easter story booklet in the box, is made of Fairtrade chocolate and makes a donation to charity from its sales. The Real Easter Egg was launched in 2010. To date, we have sold more than one million eggs have been sold, with 750,000 of these sent through the post directly to churches and schools. The Real Easter Egg is now available in some supermarkets and other stores. For more information see [www.realeasteregg.co.uk](http://www.realeasteregg.co.uk)

## Coronation Street filmed recently at St Mary's Rectory



Here Chris is pictured with Daniel Brocklebank who plays "Vicar" Billy Mahew in the long-running Soap.



At the end of January, Chris represented the Bishop of Manchester at the **Holocaust Memorial Day** commemoration held in Radcliffe. This year the theme was "Don't stand by" and was an opportunity to remember the horror and injustices of the Holocaust and to recommit ourselves to living and working in unity with people of all faiths and none.

## Sunday Gospel Readings

### 7 February

0800 Luke 18: 31-43

1030 Luke 9: 28-36

### 14 February

0800 Matthew 4: 1-11

1030 Luke 4: 1-13

### 21 February

0800 Matthew 15: 21-8

1030 Luke 13: 31-end

### 28 February

0800 Luke 11: 14-28

1030 Luke 13: 1-9

Full listings of the lectionary readings used at St Mary's can be accessed on the internet at [almanac.oremus.org](http://almanac.oremus.org)

## Regular worship at St Mary's



### Eucharist

Sunday 0800 & 1030

Wednesday 1000

Thursday 0730 in the Oratory

Friday 0915 in St Mary's School

**Morning Prayer** in the Oratory  
Tuesday Wednesday Friday 0730

*The Oratory is in the Rectory, Church Lane*

## Children are a valued part of our community.

**Junior Church** meets on Sunday at 1030. The Prestwich Mission Partnership **Youth Group** meets on Sunday at 1830. **Uniformed Organisations** meet on weekday evenings. We enjoy a close relationship with our **Parish School**. More information at: [www.stmarysprestwich.org/church-groups](http://www.stmarysprestwich.org/church-groups).



## Contact us

Web: [www.stmarysprestwich.org](http://www.stmarysprestwich.org)

Twitter: [@stmaryprestwich](https://twitter.com/stmaryprestwich)

E: [stmarysprestwich@hotmail.com](mailto:stmarysprestwich@hotmail.com)

Post: St Mary the Virgin, Church Lane, M25 1AN

Parish Priest: Chris Wedge  
telephone 0161 773 2912

Assistant Curate: Jules Mambu  
Church Wardens: Stewart Barnet  
telephone 07950 354445; Julia  
Dutton telephone 07931 293470

## St Mary's parish prayer

Loving Father, we pray your blessing on our parish. Help us to have hearts open to your Holy Spirit. Give us the courage to follow the way of Christ. Strengthen us to be faithful in prayer and loving service. Help us to play our part in building up your Kingdom here and now.

**We welcome contributions** to St Mary's Monthly News by email to [stmarysprestwich@hotmail.com](mailto:stmarysprestwich@hotmail.com)