



# The Parish of St Mary & St Catherine



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Presbytery: St Catherine's, Stanifield Lane, Farington. PR25 4QG. 01772 421174

Fr Simon Henry ECLJ GOMLJ BA(Hons) MA

## Third Sunday of Easter



They recognised Him in the breaking of bread.

Third Sunday of Easter. Year A. 19th April	8.30am	Pro Populorum. (People of the Parish)
	10.30am	Wesley Holmes, RIP
Monday 20th April: Blessed James Finch of Eccleston	9.30am	William Thomas Taylor
Tuesday 21st April: St Anselm	9.30am	Sarah Neville
Wednesday 22nd April: Feria of Easter	9.30am	William & Ellen Haycock
Thursday 23rd April: St George. Protector of England	9.30am	Michael & Ellen Mullney
Friday 24h April: St Adalbert	7pm	Novena & Benediction
		CONFESSIONS FOLLOWING
Saturday 25th April: St Mark, Evangelist	—	—
Fourth Sunday of Easter. Year A. 26th April	8.30am	Pro Populorum. (People of the Parish)
	10.30am	John & William Haycock

**THANK YOU for your Offerings each week.**

**Retiring Collection NEXT week for the Priest's Training Fund.**

**100 Club: Shona Jones (50).** *Please collect your winnings from the sacristy.*

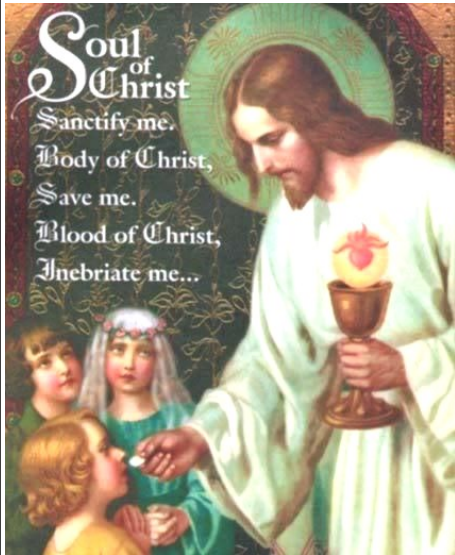
Fr Simon's blog is at **offerimus tibi domine** (where you will also find the Mass times each week)

SAFEGUARDING REPRESENTATIVE: New appointment pending.

**MISSAL PAGES for today: Page 374.**

Unchanging parts of the Mass in the pink pages. Prayers before Mass, Pg 510. Prayers after Mass, Pg 673.

**FIRST CONFESSION & HOLY COMMUNIONS. We begin four weeks of First Holy Communions today.**



**Children, please join Fr Simon in the sacristy before Mass to process in & afterwards in the Social Centre to cut a cake and receive your Certificate.**

Heavenly Father,

We thank You for the precious gift of the Eucharist, and for the joy our children experience in receiving Jesus for the first time.

Lord, as they grow in years, help them to grow also in faith, hope, and love. Place in their hearts a deep longing to meet You each week at the Holy Mass, to listen to Your Word, and to be nourished by Your Body and Blood.

When distractions, busyness, or doubts arise, give them the strength to choose You above all else. Surround them with family, friends, and a parish community who will encourage and inspire them to keep You at the centre of their lives.

May the memory of their First Holy Communion be a light that guides them, and may their love for the Mass burn brightly all their days.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

WHEN ALL THE FIRST COMMUNIONS ARE COMPLETED, THE CHILDREN WILL TAKE PART IN THE MAY PROCESSION, STARTING AT ST MARY'S SCHOOL AND PROCEEDING THROUGH THE CHURCH GROUNDS, ACCOMPANIED BY THE ECCLESTON BRASS BAND AT 3pm ON SUNDAY 10th MAY.

ALSO, ON SUNDAY 7th JUNE, TAKING PART IN A SHORT COPRUS CHRISTI PROCESSION, FOLLOWING THE 10.30am MASS, FINISHING WITH BENEDICTION IN THE SCHOOL GROUNDS.

Another opportunity for them to wear their special clothes and celebrate their First Holy Communion.

**MOBILITY SCOOTER:** There is a second hand mobility scooter available at a very reasonable reduced cost: in good condition, coming via the Mobility Shop in Chorley. If anyone is interested, please contact Michael Thompson, our Parish Assistant.

### **PARISH PILGRIMAGE TO ROME 2027.**

Thank you to those who came to the meeting last week and others unable to attend who have expressed an interest. We have a group of around 20 interested for a date to be confirmed late September/early October 2027.

Pilgrimage next year 2027 in Rome in the late summer/Autumn (probably late September). Staying in a 3\* hotel in the heart of the *Centro Storico*, the ancient heart of Rome, giving a fascinating glimpse into *La Bella Roma!*

The cost is difficult to be precise at this distance but around £900 for 5 nights is the projected cost.

The price (based on sharing twin rooms) includes the hotel accommodation.

Flights and transfers at either end.

Guided tours each day.

Daily Mass will form part of the schedule.



**CLOCK RESTORATION:** THIS year marks the 150th anniversary of the installation of the clock and bell in the tower.

The clock face is severely weathered, the clock was last renovated in the late 1980's. The company who service the clock and bell have given me us cost for the work - taking it away and refinishing it properly to last for many years. It is a highly specialized job, and if not done properly, the paint will not last. However, with the scaffolding that would be needed, the cost would be around £20,000. One of our parishioners is kindly pursuing a grant from a charity that supports civic projects and our local Parish Council is also considering providing a grant. **We have also had a donation of £5,000 from a parishioner! Thank you!** If anyone has any other ways of accessing funds or if you would like to donate, please do let us know!





**Your Prayers are asked for all the sick, including:** Rosena Stacey, Vivienne Lee, Tom Miller, Paul Casey, Linda Melling, Tilly Gee, Kathleen Ward, Clare Butler, Maureen MacDonald, Louie Baines, Margaret McNiff, Elle Miller, Mark Duncan, Mary Ann Monaghan, Bernard Lawson, Mick Marshall, Carol Parkinson, Margaret Lawler, Catherine Thompson, Pat Fishwick, Stephen Dilworth.

We pray for those who are housebound & for those who love & care for them.  
*Mary conceived without sin - Pray for us who have recourse to thee.*

**JOIN OUR PARISH 100 CLUB: Please take a SIGN UP FORM from the back of church. Numbers still available.**

**The Parish Centre is open during Sunday Masses, where toilets are easily accessible.**



**WORK ON THE PRESBYTERY GARDEN.**



Thank you to everyone who came to help prepare the presbytery garden yesterday.

Here are the before and after photos!

Well, we're not quite there yet but the AI generated image gives some idea, including my 3 cats!

*Fr. Simon*



**REFRESHMENTS AFTER MASS.**

**All are welcome to come in for a cup of tea or coffee after Mass. Come and say hello!**

**IT WOULD BE A GREAT A GREAT ACT OF CHRISTIAN GENEROSITY IF SOME OF THE FIRST COMMUNION PARENTS COULD VOLUNTEER ON THE FIRST FOUR SUNDAYS OF EASTERTIDE AT THE 10.30AM MASS.**

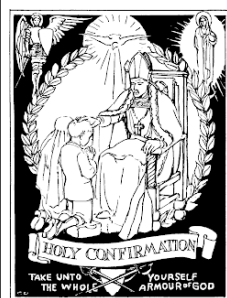
**NOT NECESSARILY ON THE DAY OF YOUR OWN CHILD'S COMMUNION BUT ON ONE OF THE OTHER SUNDAYS.**



**GIFT AID ENVELOPES: PLEASE COLLECT ANY REMAINING SETS OF ENCVELOPES FROM THE BACK OF CHURCH.**

**Act of Spiritual Communion.** My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

*Spiritual communion is a practice that allows us to connect with God and express our longing for His presence, especially during times when we cannot attend Mass or receive the Eucharist. Many saints have emphasized the importance of this prayer, as it fosters a deep spiritual relationship with Christ & helps maintain one's faith and devotion.*



**SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION:** Those in Catholic Schools are now signed up for Confirmations this year. If you are not in a Catholic school but wish to be Confirmed, please speak to Fr Simon as soon as possible.

Confirmations for 80 young people with Archbishop John for our Family of Parishes will take place here at St Mary's on Tuesday 2nd June at 7pm.

Apart from presumed attendance at Mass, preparations include a PIZZA NIGHT on Wednesday 13th May. An opportunity for the Confirmands to ask questions the Faith and so be better prepared to live it, as they make the commitment of receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation.

And also, on Sunday 17th May, 10.30am an Enrollment Mass where Confirmands are invited to be welcomed by the Christian community of Faith.

**FEAST OF ST GEORGE, PROTECTOR OF ENGLAND.** George died at Lydda in Palestine at some point before Constantine legalized Christianity in AD 313 and was so loved that testimonies of pilgrimages to the site of his martyrdom and churches dedicated in his honor date from shortly after that time. Even Pope Gelasius in 495 wrote a document attesting that he was one of those saints “whose names are justly revered among men, but whose actions are known only to God.” The most famous story, of course, is “St. George and the Dragon.” According to the tradition, a dragon was terrorizing a village called Silene in Libya, demanding tribute of trinkets and livestock, and when the people couldn’t pay, the cruel creature demanded the blood of a princess. The valiant George came to the rescue and slew the dragon. The town and the grateful young lady were saved.

Now, if you are familiar with classical mythology, this all sounds very much like Perseus or Jason and Medea. But, however you slice it, the man, the myth and the legend took on such a life of their own that devotion to St. George spread all over the Christian world. It was said that George made the Sign of the Cross over the dragon before killing it, and the red cross of St. George, taken up by Richard the Lion Heart, became a staple of imagery during the Crusades, and has been the standard of England ever since.

St George is also the only Christian figure, apart from Jesus and Mary, who is venerated in Islam. Many Muslims, especially in Turkey, are devoted to him. They light candles and ask for his intercession, believe in his power to grant miracles, and even celebrate his feast day along with Christians, some even kissing icons of him, which is a miracle in and of itself, as Islam prohibits images of living beings and anything human that could even possibly be associated with the power of God.

Modern rationalism seeks to empty religion of anything supernatural; it seeks to make us materialists concerned only with worldly desires. It traps us in that endless cycle of individualism that divides us against each other for a million reasons. St. George may look from the outside as a mere relic of a superstitious past. But he is most definitely not. He survives as a model for true masculinity, bravely fighting to protect and provide, in an age where manhood is dismissed as being toxic. He remains a sign of the bravery of a prophet in proclaiming true religion against the idolatrous paganism of every age. He remains a force capable of uniting Christians, East and West, Muslims and even nonbelievers, through the shared culture of what it means to be truly human, to seek love and to pursue justice.



This godless age with its technology and hedonism can’t produce any of that. That is why there are so few heroes anymore. Even though we don’t know what the historical George was really like, what we are left with nevertheless teaches us that divine grace can make us saints and that heroes are very much not dead or a thing of history. We need those kinds of people in our lives, and so we welcome St. George among us. He has found us, and maybe it’s because we need him. So let us ask him to pray to God for our needs.

*By Fr Christopher Smith, Pastor of Prince of Peace Catholic Church in South Carolina.*



**PILGRIM HOLIDAY TOP FRANCE. 13th—20th AUGUST 2026. 7 nights in Saint Pierre de Maillé in France.**

An historic area in the heart of France, exploring history and Catholicism, staying in the Villa St Pierre, next to the River Gartempe. Following the meeting we had, there are about 20 people interested in going.

Cost to be £700 per person. Younger children at a discount, travelling at £300 each.

Including transport, flights and most meals (with wine for the meals) and en-suite accommodation, entrance costs to attractions & daily Mass.

TO BOOK YOUR PLACE PLEASE TAKE A FORM FROM THE BACK OF CHURCH & RETURN IT TO FR SIMON, with a non-returnable deposit of £150, to enable the flights to be booked. Cheques made payable to “St Mary’s Parish”

Outward: Departing Manchester Airport Thursday 13th August. Return: from Limoges Airport 20th August.

**Catholic Faith**



**THOSE INTERESTED IN BECOMING A CATHOLIC OR RETURNING TO THE PRACTICE OF THE FAITH?**

**Our meetings for prospective Converts have broadened to include those recently returning to practice of the Faith, who want to learn a little more.**

Our next meeting is at 7pm this Monday 20th April. Even if you did not come to the initial meeting, anyone interested is still welcome. The meeting will be held in the Presbytery (behind the church on the Lourdes Shrine side). Please contact Fr Simon.