



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

Second Sunday of the Year



Second Sunday in Year A. 18th January	8.30am	Ray Watkinson
<i>Week of Prayer for Christian Unity</i>	10.30am	Pro Populorum. (People of the Parish)
	3pm	Ecumenical Songs of Praise
Mon 19th January: St Wulstan	9.30am	Rosary
Tuesday 20th Jan: St Sebastian	9.30am	Rosary
Wednesday 21st January: St Agnes	9.30am	Rosary
Thursday 22nd Jan: St Vincent	9.30am	Rosary
Friday 23rd January: Feria	—	— (No public Mass today)
Saturday 24th Jan:	12 noon	Baptism of Allesandro Soprani
Third Sunday in Year A. 25th January	8.30am	Stephen & Lekani Cottam
	10.30am	Pro Populorum. (People of the Parish)

THANK YOU for your Offerings each week.

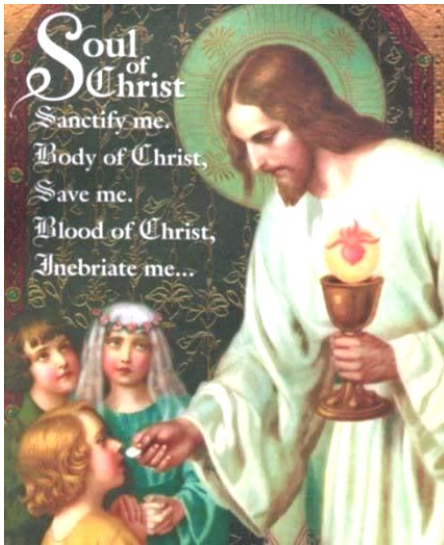
100 Club: The Proctors (58).

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: Page 695.

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



FIRST CONFESSION & HOLY COMMUNIONS.

Our First Communion preparation has begun, with forty or so children taking part. The next session is in the Social Centre **on Wednesday 21st January at 6.30pm.**

Children must sign the "Golden Book" at the back of church.

This is to make a record of their prayers and attendance at Mass for each Sunday until their First Communion as a gift for Jesus. It will be carried up to the altar on the day of their First Communion.

Please note that attendance at Mass & the preparation sessions are a prerequisite of being able to make First Communions in Eastertide of next year. If families are not able to make this commitment, then those children can defer and join the program next time round.



"Those whose names are written in the book of life." Phil 4:3 .

BURN'S NIGHT SUPPPER Saturday 31st January 2026.

A formal evening with a three course meal, including the Haggis, Neeps and Tatties with the piping in of the Haggis. to start and Cranachan as pudding.

Traditional speeches and entertainments. Traditional Scottish dress if you have it!

This will be run with any profits going to the charities of the Order of St Lazarus.

TICKETS NOW AVAILABLE FROM THE BACK OF CHURCH.

Please sign up as you buy a ticket— to assist seating arrangements.

The price is £25 per person, which includes: Three course meal; Wine with the meal; Whisky for the Toasts.

£10 for young people under 16.



ST PATRICK'S NIGHT CÉILIDH Saturday 21st March 2026.

A traditional Irish celebration with Irish Stew and live music to dance to. Suitable for all the family. Further details to follow.



REFRESHMENTS AFTER MASS.

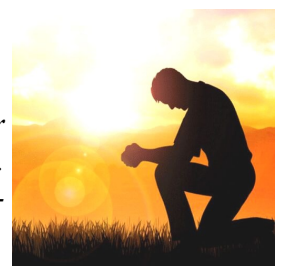
All are welcome to come in for a cup of tea or coffee after Mass. Come and say hello!

WE ARE STILL SHORT OF VOLUNTEERS TO HELP AFTER THE 10.30AM MASS. PLEASE CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING TO HELP US CONTINUE ENABLING US TO MEET ONE ANOTHER AFTER MASS.

NOVENA & BENEDICTION: We have taken a break from our Friday evening Devotions over the Christmas period. As I will be away for two Friday in early January (assisting with a Pilgrimage to Rome for an American group) and after that on a short post-Christmas break, Devotions will resume later in January. *Fr Simon.*

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.





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.

BAPTISM. Through the washing away of Original Sin we welcome into God's Church Allesandro Soprani this week. May the grace of the Sacrament keep them and their family always faithful to the promises they make and enfolded in the Love of God's family.



WELCOME: Fr Simon is away today, assisting with a Pilgrimage to Rome for a group of Americans. Fr Neil Ritchie is with us to celebrate the Sunday Masses; A warm welcome to Fr Neil, who is the Chaplain to Liverpool University.

Last week, instead of daily Mass, the Holy Rosary was prayed in church. Enough people seem to be coming along to make it worthwhile, so that is a practice we can continue when I am away. Thanks to those making that possible. It means that the church will be open at some point most days and provide an opportunity to gather and to pray. Even though you may not be in church each day, the Mass or other Devotions simply taking place represent the making real of God's presence in our midst and call down His grace on all of us. I'm reminded of the custom of people making the sign of the cross whenever they pass a Catholic Church: you may not be physically going in but you honour the Real Presence of Our Lord in the midst of the world.

Fr. Simon

JOIN OUR PARISH 100 CLUB

Thank you to those who have signed up for our 100 Club. We are waiting for all the new applicants to come in and you will then see your Standing Orders coming out of your accounts in the New Year. Please be patient as we digitalize the process and collate all our new members. You will be informed of your numbers in due course.

Please take a SIGN UP FORM from the back of church for a Standing Order or scan the QR Code on the coloured leaflets.

Thanks to David and Grace Barton, who have volunteered to revamp and streamline how the 100 Club functions and help our parish in this way.

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY.

Prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary for England, composed by Cardinal Wiseman.

*O blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God and our most gentle Queen and Mother,
look down in mercy upon England thy "Dowry" and upon us all who greatly hope and trust in thee.*

*By thee it was that Jesus our Saviour and our hope was given unto the world;
and He has given thee to us that we might hope still more.*

*Plead for us thy children, whom thou didst receive and accept at the foot of the Cross,
O sorrowful Mother.*

*Intercede for our separated brethren,
that with us in the one true fold
they may be united to the chief Shepherd,
the Vicar of thy Son.*

*Pray for us all, dear Mother,
that by faith fruitful in good works
we may all deserve to see and praise God,
together with thee, in our heavenly home. Amen.*



I believe a lot of the today's divisions between Catholics and non-Catholics are to a great extent due to a misunderstanding of Catholic teachings and doctrines. I've been told that Bishop Fulton Sheen once said, "If Catholics believed what most non-Catholics think they believe I wouldn't be a Catholic either."

The divisions can be made even worse by a lack of charity and humility, as we dialog with non-Catholics. When the Vatican II called non-Catholic Christians our "separated brethren," did it mean they agreed with their incomplete or erroneous teachings? Of course not. But they were expressing the many things we do have in common with one another. When Pope John Paul II called the Jewish people our "elder brothers," did it mean that it was unnecessary to believe in Jesus Christ? Of course not. But he was expressing our deep appreciation of the heritage and legacy we have received through the Jewish people.

Just as a large number of non-Catholic Christians have misunderstandings of Catholic teachings, so I believe many Catholics have misunderstandings of Catholic teachings on Ecumenism. These misunderstandings can contribute to making the divisions even worse. I believe one way we can eliminate them is to prayerfully ponder what the Church says about Ecumenism. Below are some of these teachings. Let's allow these teachings to speak for themselves. And let's prayerfully pray over them and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the deep truths that are present within them.

From the Second Vatican Council, Decree on Ecumenism: *Christ the Lord founded one Church and one Church only. However, many Christian communions present themselves to men as the true inheritors of Jesus Christ; all indeed profess to be followers of the Lord but differ in mind and go their different ways, as if Christ Himself were divided. Such division openly contradicts the will of Christ, scandalizes the world, and damages the holy cause of preaching the Gospel to every creature.*"

On the other hand, Catholics must gladly acknowledge and esteem the truly Christian endowments from our common heritage, which are to be found among our separated brethren. It is right and salutary to recognize the riches of Christ and virtuous works in the lives of others who are bearing witness to Christ, sometimes even to the shedding of their blood. For God is always wonderful in His works and worthy of all praise. Nor should we forget that anything wrought by the grace of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of our separated brethren can be a help to our own edification. Whatever is truly Christian is never contrary to what genuinely belongs to the faith; indeed, it can always bring a deeper realization of the mystery of Christ and the Church.

There can be no ecumenism worthy of the name without a change of heart. For it is from renewal of the inner life of our minds, from self-denial and an unstinted love that desires of unity take their rise and develop in a mature way. We should therefore pray to the Holy Spirit for the grace to be genuinely self-denying, humble, gentle in the service of others, and to have an attitude of brotherly generosity towards them. . . . All the faithful should remember that the more effort they make to live holier lives according to the Gospel, the better will they further Christian unity and put it into practice. For the closer their union with the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, the more deeply and easily will they be able to grow in mutual brotherly love.

This change of heart and holiness of life, along with public and private prayer for the unity of Christians, should be regarded as the soul of the whole ecumenical movement, and merits the name, 'spiritual ecumenism.

Pope John Paul II details the change of heart needed in his encyclical *Ut Unum Sint*:

"We proceed along the road leading to the conversion of hearts guided by love which is directed to God and, at the same time, to all our brothers and sisters, including those not in full communion with us. Love gives rise to the desire for unity, even in those who have never been aware of the need for it. Love builds communion between individuals and between Communities. If we love one another, we strive to deepen our communion and make it perfect. Love is given to God as the perfect source of communion — the unity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit—that we may draw from that source the strength to build communion between individuals and Communities, or to re-establish it between Christians still divided. Love is the great undercurrent, which gives life and adds vigour to the movement towards unity."

I want to conclude with these words from the Decree on Ecumenism: *All in the Church must preserve unity in essentials. But let all, according to the gifts they have received enjoy a proper freedom, in their various forms of spiritual life and discipline, in their different liturgical rites, and even in their theological elaborations of revealed truth. In all things let charity prevail. If they are true to this course of action, they will be giving ever better expression to the authentic catholicity and apostolicity of the Church.*

O Lord, we pray that all your people would be one as you and the Father are one.