



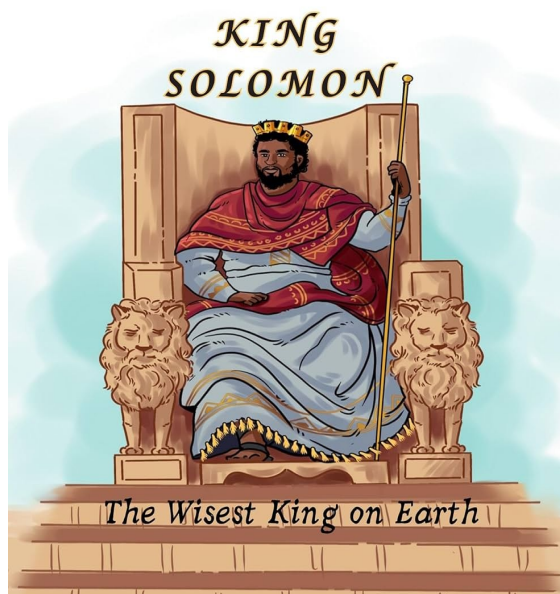
# The Parish of St Mary & St Catherine



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Fr Simon Henry ECLJ GOMLJ BA(Hons) MA

## Sixteenth Sunday of the Year



|                                                              |         |                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------|------------------------------------------|
| Sixteenth Sunday of Year A. 19th July                        | 8.30am  | Mr Morpew & family                       |
|                                                              | 10.30am | Pro Populorum. (People of the Parish)    |
| Monday 20th July: St Apollinaris                             | 9.30am  | Bill Briggs, RIP                         |
| Tuesday 21st July:                                           | 12.30pm | Funeral Service for Patricia Fitzpatrick |
| Wed 22nd July: St Mary Magdalene                             | 9.30am  | Thanksgiving for prayers answered        |
| Thurs 23rd July: St Bridget                                  | 9.30am  | Stuart Gabrielle & Family                |
| Friday 24th July: St Sharbel Maskhlúf                        | 7pm     | <b>NOVENA &amp; BENEDICTION</b>          |
|                                                              |         | Confessions following                    |
| Saturday 25th July: St James                                 | —       | —                                        |
| Seventeenth Sunday of Year A. 26th July                      | 8.30am  | Vincent McDonald                         |
| <i>Ss Joachim &amp; Anne. Day of prayer for Grandparents</i> | 10.30am | Pro Populorum. (People of the Parish)    |

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

**Retiring Collection TODAY for our Priests in Retirement.**

**100 Club: Ros Stuart (21)** *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)

Safer Recruitment and DBS Representative : New appointment pending.

**MISSAL PAGES for today: Page 750.**

Unchanging parts of the Mass in the pink pages. Prayers before Mass, Pg 510. Prayers after Mass, Pg 731.

**NEXT SUNDAY: DAY OF PRAYER FOR GRANDPARENTS & THE ELDERLY ON THE FEAST-DAY OF THE GRANDPARENTS OF JESUS: SS JOACHIM & ANNE.**

Dear brothers and sisters,

Sacred Scripture offers us many examples of men and women whom the Lord called late in life to play a part in his saving plan. We can think of Abraham and Sarah, who, advanced in years, found it hard to believe when God promised them a child. Their childlessness seemed to prevent them from any hope for the future.

Zechariah's reaction to the news of John the Baptist's birth was no different: "How can this be? I am an old man and my wife is advanced in years". Old age, barrenness and physical decline apparently blocked any hope for life and fertility in these men and women. The question that Nicodemus asked Jesus when the Master spoke to him of being "born again" also seems purely rhetorical: "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?". Yet whenever we think that things cannot change, the Lord surprises us with an act of saving power.

In the Bible, God repeatedly demonstrates his providential care by turning to people in their later years. This was the case not only with Abraham, Sarah, Zechariah and Elizabeth, but also with Moses, who was called to set his people free when he was already eighty years old. God thus teaches us that, in his eyes, old age is a time of blessing and grace, and that the elderly are, for him, the first witnesses of hope. St Augustine asks, "What do we mean by old age?" He tells us that God himself answers the question: "Let your strength fail, so that my strength may abide within you, and you can say with the Apostle, 'When I am weak, then I am strong'. The increasing number of elderly people is a sign of the times that we are called to discern, in order to interpret properly this moment of history.

The life of the Church and the world can only be understood in light of the passage of generations. Embracing the elderly helps us to understand that life is more than just the present moment, and should not be wasted in superficial encounters and fleeting relationships. Instead, life is constantly pointing us toward the future. In the book of Genesis, we find the moving episode of the blessing given by the aged Jacob to his grandchildren, the sons of Joseph; his words are an appeal to look to the future with hope, as the time when God's promises will be fulfilled. If it is true that the weakness of the elderly needs the strength of the young, it is equally true that the inexperience of the young needs the witness of the elderly in order to build the future with wisdom. How often our grandparents have been for us examples of faith and devotion, civic virtue and social commitment, memory and perseverance amid trials! The precious legacy that they have handed down to us with hope and love will always be a source of gratitude and a summons to perseverance.

God's fidelity to his promises teaches us that there is a blessedness in old age, an authentic evangelical joy inspiring us to break through the barriers of indifference in which the elderly often find themselves enclosed. Our societies, everywhere in the world, are growing all too accustomed to letting this significant and enriching part of their life be marginalized and forgotten.

Our affection for our loved ones – for the wife or husband with whom we have spent so much of our lives, for our children, for our grandchildren who brighten our days – does not fade when our strength wanes. Indeed, their own affection often revives our energy and brings us hope and comfort.

These signs of living love, which have their roots in God himself, give us courage and remind us that "even if our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day". Especially as we grow older, let us press forward with confidence in the Lord. May we be renewed each day by our encounter with him in prayer and in Holy Mass. Let us lovingly pass on the faith we have lived for so many years, in our families and in our daily encounter with others. May we always praise God for his goodness, cultivate unity with our loved ones, open our hearts to those who are far away and, in particular, to all those in need. In this way, we will be signs of hope, whatever our age.

LEO PP. XIV

*Our statue of St Anne, looking on as Mary teaches Jesus the Scriptures.*



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

Our next meeting is at 7pm this Monday 20th July .



**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.**



**PARISH PILGRIMAGE TO ROME 2027.** Thank you to those who came to the meeting 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.

**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.*



**We have a new Facebook page.** Search Parish of St Mary & St Catherine.

Like & share our posts to get the word out on our great parish & parishioners!

### **REFRESHMENTS AFTER MASS.**

**All are welcome to come in for a cup of tea or coffee after Mass. Just come into the Social Centre opposite the church and say hello!**

**WE STILL NEED EXTRA VOLUNTEERS FOR THE 10.30am MASS.**



**NOVENA & BENEDICTION:** When was the last time you were in church for something other than Mass?



Although the Mass is at the very heart of our lived Faith, Devotions of all sorts are a wonderful way to allow the lord to come to us. Every Friday at 7pm. Confessions following at 7.30pm.

**ALTAR BOYS DAY OUT:** To thank our Servers, we are having a day out THIS Wednesday 22nd July to go Ten-Pin-Bowling. We will celebrate Mass together at 9.30am and go on directly from there.

Anyone interested in joining our Servers Team, please speak to Fr Simon.



### **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. 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.

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

**OUTSTANDING BALANCES, INCLUDING LUGGAGE COSTS, PLEASE PAY THESE BY TODAY.** Payable to "St Mary's Parish."

**PLEASE CAN EVERYONE GOING PROVIDE AN EMAIL ADDRESS BY EMAILING THE PARISH ADDRESS.**

**PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR MOBILE PHONE NUMBER TO SET UP AN WHATSAPP GROUP, WHICH IS USEFUL WHILE WE ARE AWAY TO COMMUNICATE.**

**RYANAIR ALSO NOW HAVE A POLICY OF 100% DIGITAL BOARDING PASSES, SO THESE WILL NEED TO BE SENT TO YOUR PHONE.**

### PARISH HELPERS' BARBEQUE: Saturday 8th August. 1pm –4pm.

I'm hoping that we can hold a Barbeque for all parish helpers and their families. It will be a free of charge event to say "Thank You" to all those who are so generous with their time and to celebrate our gifts and our parish together. We can hold it on the lawn in front of the Social Centre with a Bouncy Castle for the kids and your own Parish Priest donning his chef's hat. We can provide some beer, wine, soft drinks & tea and coffee but feel free to bring your own drinks along if you have any special preferences.

And if anyone feels moved to provide any other entertainment, then that would be great. Feel free to offer any suggestions.

If you're wondering if you count as a "Parish "Helper" then if you can ask the question—YES, you do!

Over the months since I've arrived I've been amazed at the generosity of so many who help in so many ways; some who have been sure and steadfast for many years and some who have taken on new roles, great and small, as well as a special mention for those from St Catherine's who have transferred their various skills to our new situation. We are very blest to have a parish where so many do their part, all helping to build up our community in a truly Christian spirit.

There is a list at the back of church to sign up to ascertain numbers for catering purposes.



### CLOCK RESTORATION: THIS year marks the 150th anniversary of the installation of the clock & 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. We have raised some money through parish social events.

We now have parish donations of £10,000. We are still pursuing a grant from a charity that supports civic projects. Euxton Parish Council is offering a very generous grant of £7,000. **So we are now in a position to move ahead.** We are now pursuing a final okay from Heritage bodies. How wonderful that we have been able to gather these funds outside usual parish giving, as we could not have otherwise considered doing this work "*for the permanent public benefaction of the Township of Euxton*", as the commemorative plaque from the original donor, William Ince Anderton, puts it.

**KING SOLOMON:** The first Reading from the Old Testament is often overlooked; sometimes because it would take too long to explain the context. Today we hear of King Solomon. The third and final ruler of the United Kingdom of Israel, reigning during its "Golden Age" from approximately 970 to 931 BC. He was the son of King David and Bathsheba, and he is a foundational figure across Jewish, Christian, and Islamic traditions. Solomon is most famous for his legendary wisdom, immense wealth, and for building the First Temple in Jerusalem.

God appeared to Solomon in a dream and offered him anything he desired. Solomon chose wisdom over wealth or power, so God granted him both. His most famous demonstration of insight involved solving a dispute between two women claiming the same baby by suggesting the infant be cut in half, successfully revealing the true mother by her defensive instinct.

He funded and orchestrated the construction of the First Holy Temple in Jerusalem (also known as Solomon's Temple). This became the central location for Jewish worship and a permanent home for the Ark of the Covenant.

Tradition attributes several prominent books of the Bible to him, including the aphorisms in Proverbs, the philosophical reflections of Ecclesiastes, and the love poetry of the Song of Solomon.

Solomon established massive commercial alliances with powerful neighbors like Egypt and Tyre. His wealth grew so extensive that it drew visitors from all over the world, including the famous visit from the Queen of Sheba.

Despite his wisdom, Solomon's later years were marked by controversy. He amassed an enormous harem consisting of 700 wives and 300 concubines, many of whom were foreign princesses. To appease them, he allowed the worship of foreign deities and built pagan shrines around Jerusalem, violating Mosaic law. Additionally, his massive building projects required heavy taxation and forced labor, which bred deep resentment among the northern tribes of Israel. Following his death, this political and religious instability culminated in a civil war, causing the empire to split into two separate domains: the Kingdom of Israel in the north and the Kingdom of Judah in the south.

Solomon taught in Parables: 3,000 of them recorded in the Book of Wisdom. Our Lord teaches in Parables because he's come to fulfill these types and images in the Old Testament. He is the greater son of David. "One greater than Solomon is here". Our Lord will build New Temple, the Body of Christ, the Church and His Heavenly Kingdom.