



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 the Year



Ss Timothy & Titus, Scriptural Saints of companions of St Paul

Third Sunday in Year A. 25th January	8.30am	Stephen & Lekani Cottam
	10.30am	Pro Populorum. (People of the Parish)
Mon 26th January: Ss Timothy & Titus	9.30am	Alice Proctor, RIP
Tuesday 27th Jan: Feria	9.30am	Bernard & Linda Melling & Family
Wednesday 28th January: St Thomas Aquinas	9.30am	Michael & Rebecca Cottam & Family
Thursday 29th Jan: Feria	9.30am	The Holy Souls
Friday 30th January: Feria	7pm	NOVENA & BENEDICTION
		CONFESSIONS FOLLOWING
Saturday 31st Jan: St John Bosco	—	— (No public Mass today)
Fourth Sunday in Year A. 1st February	8.30am	Bernard Longton, Anniv
	10.30am	Pro Populorum. (People of the Parish)

THANK YOU for your Offerings each week.

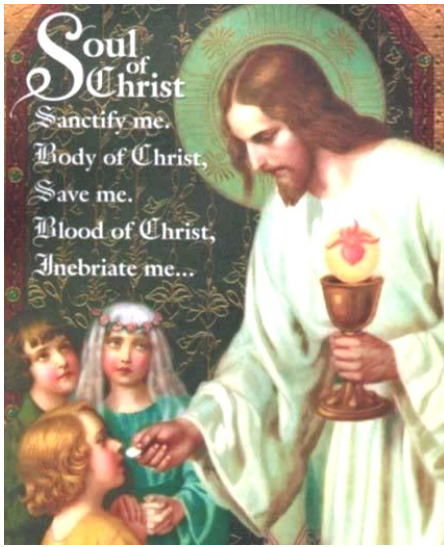
100 Club: Russell Carr (2)

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 698.

Unchanging parts of the Mass in the pink pages. Prayers before Mass, Pg 510. Prayers after Mass, Pg 698.



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 11th February 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 SUPPER THIS 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!

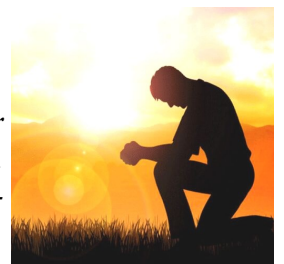
WE ARE STILL SHORT OF VOLUNTEERS TO HELP AFTER THE 10.30AM MASS. PLEASE CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING TO HELP US CONTINUE ENABLING US TO MEET ONE ANOTHER AFTER MASS.

NOVENA & BENEDICTION:

We have taken a break from our Friday evening Devotions over the Christmas period. Devotions will resume this Friday, with Confessions afterwards. *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.

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.

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



SOME THOUGHTS FOR PARISH PILGRIMAGES:

I had a busy but lovely time last week helping to lead a Pilgrimage to Rome. Knowledge of that has prompted some parishioners here to ask if we might make a similar parish pilgrimage. St Catherine's people will remember we went in 2019.

With that in mind over the next weeks we will ascertain whether there might be enough interest to arrange two possible trips.

This year, **August 2026 a Pilgrimage holiday to Saint Pierre de Maillé in France**, where St Catherine's parishioners have visited several times over the years. An historic area in the heart of France, exploring history and Catholicism, staying in the Villa St Pierre. Suitable for families as well, with particular activities like canoeing possible to be built in to the timetable.

Pilgrimage next year 2027 in Rome, again, in the late summer/Autumn. Staying in a 3* hotel in the heart of the *Centro Storico*, the ancient heart of Rome, visiting the famous sites but also some less well-known ones, giving a fascinating glimpse into *La Bella Roma*!

Please note that both of these involve walking the routes, which requires anyone with mobility issues to think carefully about their ability to take part.

Further details and a presentation to follow to see what interest there might be.



MASS IN ST PETER'S BASILICA

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Church of San Salvatore in Onda, Rome,
with St Vincent Pallotti under the altar



ST THOMAS AQUINAS: The Angelic Doctor.

Thomas was born in the castle of Roccasecca in the old county of the Kingdom of Sicily, which is now known as the Lazio region of Italy, in 1225. His parents were well-off, but as the youngest son Thomas was expected to enter the monastery. At 5-years-old, Thomas began his education at Monte Cassino, where he remained until the military conflict between Emperor Frederick II and Pope Gregory IX reached the abbey. He was then transferred and enrolled at the studium generale in Naples.

It is believed that Thomas was introduced to his philosophical influences - Aristotle, Averroes, and Maimonides - at the university, where he also met John of St. Julian, a Dominican preacher, who influenced him to join the recently founded Dominican Order. When Thomas' family learned of his decision, his mother Theodora arranged for him to be moved to Paris. When Thomas was travelling to Rome, his brothers captured him and returned him to their parents at the castle of Monte San Giovanni Campano. Thomas was held captive in the castle for one year as his family tried to keep him from joining the Dominican Order. In the year he was held, Thomas tutored his sisters and communicated with members of the Dominican Order. In an effort to change Thomas' mind, two of his brothers hired a prostitute to seduce him, but legends claim Thomas drove her off with a fire iron. That night, two angels appeared to him in a dream and strengthened his resolve to remain celibate. When Theodora realized she could not sway her son, she tried to preserve the family name by arranging for his escape through a window. She believed a secret escape was better than appearing to accept his decision. Following his escape in 1244, Thomas turned to Naples, then to Rome and met the Master General of the Dominican Order, Johannes von Wildeshausen.

The next year, Thomas went to study at the Faculty of the Arts at the University of Paris, where he is believed to have met Dominican scholar Albertus Magnus, the Chair of Theology at the College of St. James. In 1248, Thomas chose to follow Magnus to the new studium generale at Cologne rather than accepting Pope Innocent IV's offer to appoint him abbot of Monte Cassino as a Dominican. Though Thomas hesitated, when they reached the university, Magnus appointed him magister studentium. Thomas was quiet and seldom spoke at the university, leading other students to believe he was mentally delayed, but Magnus prophetically said, "You call him the dumb ox, but in his teaching, he will one day produce such a bellowing that it will be heard throughout the world."

Between 1256 to 1259, Thomas spent his tenure writing several books. At the conclusion of his regency, Thomas was in the process of writing one of his most famous works, *Summa contra Gentiles*. In 1259, Thomas completed his first regency and returned to Naples, where he was appointed general preacher. In September 1261, he was asked to lecture in Orvieto, and during his stay he finished *Summa contra Gentiles*. In 1265, Thomas was summoned to Rome to serve as the papal theologian and was later ordered by the Dominican Chapter of Agnani to teach at the *studium conventuale*, which was the first school to teach the full range of philosophical subjects of both moral and natural natures.

While teaching, Thomas wrote his most famous work, *Summa theologiae*, which he believed was particularly useful to beginning students "because a doctor of Catholic truth ought not only to teach the proficient, but to him pertains also to instruct beginners." He continued to write and released several more books until 1268, when he was called to Paris for a second teaching regency. He was named regent master again and stayed until 1272. At the conclusion of his regency, the Dominicans called Thomas to establish a university wherever he wanted with a staff of whomever he wished. He established the university in Naples and took the regent master post.

In 1273 Thomas was seen by the sacristan Domenic of Caserta to be crying and levitating in prayer before an icon of the crucified Christ at the Dominican convent of Naples, in the Chapel of Saint Nicholas. During this prayer, Christ is said to have told him, "You have written well of me, Thomas. What reward would you have for your labour? " Thomas replied, "Nothing but you, Lord." Following this exchange, something happened but Thomas never wrote or spoke of it. He abandoned his routine and, when begged to return to work, replied, "I cannot, because all that I have written seems like straw to me."

In May of 1274, Thomas was called to the Second Council of Lyon, where his works for Pope Urban IV would be presented. While journeying to the meeting, Thomas hit his head on the branch of a fallen tree and fell ill. He was escorted to Monte Cassino to recover, then he set out again. Unfortunately, he became ill once again and stopped at the Cistercian Fossanova Abbey, where the monks cared for him for several days. He received his last rites and prayed, "I receive Thee, ransom of my soul. For love of Thee have I studied and kept vigil, toiled, preached and taught..."

Thomas died on March 7, 1274.

