

St Anthony of Padua

Presbytery: Cadley Causeway, Fulwood, Preston PR2 3RX
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Priest: Fr. Peter Draper. (Tel: 725193)
Deacon (retired): Rev. Tom Butler

Sunday Masses: 6.00pm (Saturday Vigil), 9.30am.
Weekday Mass: Mon-Wed, Fri: 9.15am. (Thurs 9.15am at Holy Family)
Confessions: 5.30—5.50pm

Annexe: 725544 Social Centre: 735963 Primary school: 726621
Playgroup/Preschool 07963 700591 Covenant Books: 07396 796969

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The holy ground is the ground beneath your feet

'According to Luke, great crowds stream into the desert to hear John's fire-and-brimstone preaching. What attracts them? The first clue lies in the question they ask John at the conclusion of his sermon. "What should we do?" This is a question we ask when we've come to the ends of ourselves, when our cherished defences are down, when our lives are splitting at the seams. It's what we ask when we're weary, bored, disillusioned or desperate. "What should we do?" What do the crowds think such a fringe character will say in answer to their question? The answer John gives them is so radical we stand in danger of missing it: "You should go home." Go home to your families, your neighbours, your vocations, your colleagues. Stop fleeing. Stop insisting that God is far away from the nitty-gritty of your particular life. Instead of waiting for a holy 'some day' that will never come, inhabit the stuff of your life as deeply and as generously as you can right now. Share now. Be merciful now. Do justice now. Inhabit your life, no matter how plain, how obscure, how unglamorous, how routine. Why? Because the holy ground that matters most is the ground beneath your feet.' [1]

'John did not tell any of them to go and be something different. Instead he called them to be who they are but in a different way. He did not tell the tax collectors to go find an honest living. He asked of them honest tax collecting. He did not tell the soldiers to stop being soldiers but to be soldiers who respected others and understood the danger of power. He called the crowds to remember that their life is bound up in their neighbour's life and there is no room for indifference, complacency, or miserly giving.' [2]

'John concludes his sermon in the wilderness with a harrowing description of the coming Messiah: "His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." How is *this* good news, this portrait of a Jesus who judges, sorts, burns, and gathers us? I believe we squirm at such language because we misconstrue the meaning of judgment. We tend to equate judgment with condemnation, but in fact, to judge something is to see it clearly - to know it as it truly is. In my dictionary, synonyms for judgment include discernment, acuity, sharpness, and perception. What if John is saying that the Messiah who is coming really *sees* us? That he knows us at our very core? Maybe the winnowing fork is an instrument of perceptive love, patiently wielded by the One who discerns in us rich harvests still hidden by chaff. Maybe it is in offering God every aspect of our lives, that we give Him permission to "clear" us — to separate all that's destructive from all that is good, beautiful, and priceless. This is good news.' [1]

Adapted: [1] Debi Thomas [2] Michael Marsh

Third Sunday of Advent

Year C

15th December 2024

Missal 71

DIARY and MASS INTENTIONS

for the week beginning Saturday 14th December 2024

Sat 6.00pm	<i>St. Ant</i>	Deceased r & f Russell family	
Sun 9.30am 11.00am	<i>St. Ant H.Family</i>	John McDonagh Maureen Stephenson	Third Sunday of Advent Gaudete
Mon 9.15am 1.00pm	<i>St. Ant St.Ant</i>	Leonard Stevens <i>Funeral Service:</i> Kenneth Baines	
Tue 9.15am	<i>St. Ant</i>	Rev. Robert Horn	
Wed 9.15am	<i>St. Ant</i>	Kathleen Jones	
Thur 9.15am	<i>H.Family</i>	For our parish	
Fri 9.15am	<i>H.Family</i>	Mary Cookson	
Sat 6.00pm	<i>St. Ant</i>	Angela Russell	
Sun 9.30am 11.00am	<i>St. Ant H.Family</i>	Enid & Brian Moran Sr. Margaret Delaney	Fourth Sunday of Advent

Last Weekend: Offertory: £519.62. Attendance: 238 (89 + 149). Thank you for your generosity.

Masses received this week: Mary Cookson, Dr. Sean Bradley, Tony O'Brien, Enid & Brian Moran, Kathleen Jones, Andrew Sugden.

Tea, Coffee, cake etc. is served in the Padua Room after both weekend Masses.

St. Walburge's Annual Christmas Fair - today (Sunday) from 12:30-3:30pm at St. Walburge's Hall on Weston Street. All proceeds to the church restoration fund.

Lancaster Diocesan Directory 2025

Standard copy is £6, ring bound copy is £7. Please put money in the green safe or use the card reader.

PRAYER INTENTIONS

We pray for those who are sick, especially Jo Counsell, Bill Embrey, Marie Morris, Michael Connors, John Mulholland, Deacon Tom Butler, Deacon Michael Dolan, Deacon Jim Maguire, Dorothy Smith;

We pray for those who have died recently: Canon Robert Horn, Sheila Clark, Kenneth Baines;

and those whose anniversaries fall about this time: Deacon John Kilshaw, Frank Wastell, Edward Giddins, Stella Parkinson, Margaret Burscough, Bridget Margaret Curwen, Canon Michael Geoghegan, Barbara May, Edward Rawcliffe, Winifred Shaw, Francis Harris, Jack Shorrock, Christine Eaves, Audrey Morgan, Ernest Lovatt, Malcolm Mullins, Mary Frances Thompson, Howard Marshall, Norman Spicer, Leonard Stevens. May they rest in peace.

ADVENT

TODAY -Sun. 15th Dec: St Anthony's Parish Carol Service in church at 2pm. Followed by a Christmas singalong in the Parish Centre.

Tues. 17th Dec. St Anthony's school Years 5 & 6 Carol Service in church at 6pm
Fri. 20th Dec: St Anthony's Whole School Mass in church at 9.15am

Crib/Nativity sets

Has anyone got a crib/Nativity set that is no longer used? Our school would gratefully receive it. Thank you.

Parish charities 2025

Thank you for all your suggestions. The three most popular nominations are as follows:
Local/national Blood Bikers, Homeless/Salvation Army), Rosemere Cancer
Overseas Aid to Church in Need, Children in Need, Gaza Food Aid (via Red Cross),
Operation Smile (cleft palates)

You can now VOTE for your choices. Voting closes after Mass on Sunday 15 December.

Catholic Voice — a new issue available from church today.

For children

Christmas themed books are available on table at back of church for children to borrow. We will continue to have children's liturgy on during the Christmas holidays. We are grateful to those who lead the children week-by-week throughout the year.

Donating by Card

The card machine is now working properly. Angela and Louise will be on hand again to explain how to use it for anyone who is unsure. Donations can be Gift Aided.

RPHospital Christmas Carol Service

In the hospital chapel, 2pm on 18th December.

100 Years of the Diocese of Lancaster

On 22nd November 1924 Pope Pius XI created the Diocese of Lancaster to care for Catholics in Cumbria & North Lancashire. St Peter's in Lancaster was made a cathedral.

... Diocesan Centenary Ball: Join an evening of dining, dancing, and fellowship as we mark this significant milestone on Friday 3rd January 2025, from 6pm at The Villa, Levens (near Kendal). There is a coach going from Alston Lane so contact Fr. Doyle on 782244 if you want seats. Please visit www.lancastercentenaryball.com or alternatively contact info@lancastercentenaryball.com for further details and ticket reservation.

The Salvation Army Christmas gift collection

Thanks for your generous donations for the Salvation Army Christmas Toy Appeal.

Rosary

We pray the rosary, as Our Lady requested, for World Peace, every Monday and Friday in church, after morning Mass. All are welcome.

The Rosary is said once a month at various churches. Please see dates on the board and take a card with those dates from the table at the back of church.

Messy Church at St Clare's parish hall starting at 1.30pm on 14th December.