

BRINDLE St JOSEPH'S

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Third Sunday in Ordinary Time 26th January 2025

(Sunday cycle year C, weekday cycle year 1, psalter week 3)

SUNDAY OF THE WORD OF GOD



“Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing”

Prayer for Sunday of the Word of God

○ Word that shapes our liturgies and litanies, may we see you not as a dusty tome but as a living invitation to an ongoing conversation.
○ God who comes to us in sacred story, may we find our own stories within your pages.
○ Word that illuminates our darkness, may we carry your light into the world.
○ God who speaks into silence, may we rest in the comfort of your voice.
○ Word made flesh who dwells among us, may we sense your presence with us on the road to Emmaus.
And when our hearts burn within us, may we not only hear your Word, but speak it with our lives. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Sat 25 th	10.30am	Dunstan Booth	The Conversion of St Paul (feast)
	6.00pm	For the parish	Third Sunday in Ordinary Time
Sun 26 th	9.30am	Margaret Mary Cowsley	
	11.00am	Baptism: Sophia Louise Firth	
Mon 27 th	No Mass today		Feria
Tue 28 th	9.30am	Gwladys Bullen	St Thomas Aquinas (memorial)
Wed 29 th	9.30am	Ray Jackson	Feria
Thu 30 th	9.30am	Sr Elizabeth (EBC)	Feria
Fri 31 st	9.30am	Holy Souls	St John Bosco (memorial)
Sat 1 st February	10.00am	Confessions	BVM
	10.30am	Abbot's intentions (Blessing of the sick during Mass)	
	6.00pm	For the Parish	The Presentation of the Lord
Sun 2 nd	9.30am	Vera & Joe Proctor and Jamie	

First Saturday of the month: Confessions at 10.00am, Anointing of the sick during 10.30am Mass

This week		Reader		Eucharistic Minister		Bookshop	
Sat 25 th		M Russell		J Hothersall		Not open	
Sun 26 th		L Rigbye		F Fordyce		Not open	
Bidding prayers	L Lomax	Children's Liturgy	C Snape, J Grogan	Collection counters	J & K Slater		
Next week		Reader		Eucharistic Minister		Bookshop	
Sat 1 st February		M Sherry		L Gardner		Not open	
Sun 2 nd		K Slater		J Kitchen		Not open	
Bidding prayers	Fr Raphael	Children's Liturgy	L Worswick, C Curwen	Collection counters	C & K Snape		

Last weekend – attendance: 113, collection £342.50 – thank you!

Readings: Nehemiah 8: 8-4, 5-6, 8-10. 1 Corinthians 12: 12-30. Luke 1: 1-4. 4:14-21.

Today's *Responsorial Psalm* wonderfully links the first reading and the Gospel in its praise of the Law of the Lord with its response: *Your words, O Lord, are spirit and life* taken from *Jn 6:63*, for it is Jesus who completes and fulfils the law in his own being.

In the first reading, the assembly are gathered before the priest Ezra to hear the Word of the Lord and it is with tears of joy that they respond *Amen! Amen!* for they had not long returned from over fifty years of exile from their homeland, their sacred soil, their temple and city which they were rebuilding, and he sends them to celebrate with a feast.

We too gather to hear the word of God: some from the same sacred texts and of course, so much more. We too praise the Lord and repeat our Amen and celebrate.

But with how much enthusiasm and joy ... how many of our responses are heart-felt and not just automatic and unthinking?

May it never be the case for you and me, but perhaps we too need to lose what perhaps we have so long taken for granted, in order to value it all the more - such as those in the Holy Land, after these years of bloodshed, reunited with their families but also with their places of worship, at least, those still standing, as we see in the News.

In the Gospel Jesus, like Ezra, is also proclaiming the Word of the God to a people desperate for a sign that God has not deserted them: *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim Good News*

to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour ... today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.

We may feel cynical about the ceasefire in the middle east: for anger and the desire for retribution and violence will always simmer beneath the surface for many - which is why all should be moved to tears at those words of Jesus.

For, however badly and misguided we are in going about it, surely all people, deep down, seek liberation from the festering resentments brought about by past hurts, relief from poverty both material and spiritual, freedom from oppression and a vision of hope.

In other words, we all seek the peace that can only be found in Jesus.

The people wept as they heard the words of the Law read to them by the priest Ezra.

But then he tells them to go on their way, to eat the fat and drink the sweet wine and not to forget the poor, for this day is holy to the Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.

How much more shouldn't we both weep and rejoice as we hear the words of the *New Law*, Jesus Christ who is among us to bring us what we all desire:

PEACE.

Reflection: *A great means of preserving continual peace and tranquillity of soul is to receive everything from the hands of God, both great and small and in whatever way it comes. (St Dorotheus of Gaza)*

With prayers, Fr. Raphael.

Commemorations this week

St Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), Doctor of the Church. Jesus tells us that the greatest commandment is to love God with all our heart, soul and mind and our neighbour as our self. We easily forget the part that 'mind' has to play in loving God.

Thomas Aquinas is an example of a great mind and a huge amount of learning which he spends his life giving back to God through his teachings and writings. He was educated under the Benedictines of Monte Cassino but became a Dominican (Order of Preachers (OP)) at a time when, on the back of Islam, the philosophical writings of the pagan Aristotle (384–322BC) were being discovered in the west and which appeared to contradict some of the teachings of the church.

St Thomas reconciled the two in many of his great works, the most well-known being his *Summa Theologiae* which was, and still is, one of the great text books of the church. He also wrote hymns and liturgies especially devoted to the Blessed Sacrament but in the end, he had a vision in which he saw all that he had learned and written was, as he put it, 'as so much straw' and he wrote not another word.

St John Bosco (1815-1888) A pioneer in educating the poor and founded the Salesian order. Ordained in 1841 in Turin and, influenced by St Joseph Cafasso, began to work to alleviate the plight of boys who came to seek employment in the city. Working in borrowed premises, he provided boys with education, religious instruction and recreation; eventually he headed a large establishment containing a grammar school, a technical school and a church, all built through his efforts. He also achieved a local reputation as a popular preacher. In Turin he and 22 companions founded the Society of St Francis de Sales (the Salesians) in 1859, and before his death it had spread to England, France, Spain and South America. With St Mary Mazzarello he founded the Daughters of Our Lady Help of Christians (Salesian Sisters of Don Bosco) in 1872, a congregation of nuns dedicated to similar work among girls.

WE WELCOME INTO OUR CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY Leo Massaro who was baptised last Sunday.

This Sunday is the **SUNDAY OF THE WORD OF GOD** a day instituted by Pope Francis on the Feast of Saint Jerome in 2019, devoted to the celebration and study of Sacred Scripture. More information at: <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/sunday-of-the-word-of-god/>.

There is a '**FOXTON BOX**' at the back of church for any donations of items such as hats, scarves, toiletries or sleeping bags. They will be taken down to the Foxton Centre on a regular basis. It will make a real difference to peoples' lives and, given that the average age of people without a home or roof is 43 years, you may even begin to help change that.

REGISTRATION FOR CONFIRMATION opened Monday (13th January) until 17th March. More details at: <https://www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/department/pastoral-development/confirmation-programme>.

PLEASE PRAY for those who are sick or housebound including Alan Thompson, Fr Laurence Mayne and Bill Warbrick, as well as for those who have died and whose anniversaries occur about this time.

100 CLUB: The winner for week 7 is number 63, Greg Gorrell.

BRINDLE ST JOSEPH'S PRE-SCHOOL NURSERY – limited places available. Open 8.30am-3.30pm. 15- & 30-hour government funding for 3- & 4-year-olds accepted. All local primary schools served. Contact: 07956242409 or email nursery@st-josephs-hoghton.lancs.sch.uk.

CYCLE OF PRAYER: During Ordinary Time (Winter), i.e. up to Lent, we are asked to pray for: Peace on Earth; Openness to the Word of God; Christian Unity; The Sick and Those Who Care for Them; Victims of Trafficking and Those who Work to Combat it; The Unemployed.

TEA AND COFFEE are served after Mass on Sunday mornings. Please come along – you'll be very welcome.

Bidding prayers for the weekend of 25th & 26th January 2025

Priest: Jesus said the Spirit of God is upon me, because he anointed me to proclaim the good news to the poor.

Reader: We pray for the whole church, that the Spirit of God is upon us, so that we can also proclaim the good news. *Lord, hear us...*

We pray for the Pope, the Cardinals, Bishops, Priests and lay people that they pass on the true word of the Lord. *Lord, hear us...*

We pray for all in the world who are displaced, affected by war, hunger or suffering, that justice will prevail. *Lord, hear us...*

May political leaders lead their people in a balanced way. *Lord, hear us...*

We pray for those whose anniversaries occur at this time and for the recently deceased. *Lord, hear us...*

We pray for all in St Joseph's that we embrace the change that is coming to the governance of our Parish. *Lord, hear us*

We now turn to Our Lady, mother of the church, to help us with our petitions as we say: *Hail Mary...*

Let us now, in a moment of silence, pray for our own needs

Priest: May we proclaim liberty, sight and freedom to those who are oppressed, that they will receive Our Lords favour.

PRAYER FOR THE SICK

Priest: As we thank God for the gift of his Son in Holy Communion, let us remember those of our Parish who are sick or housebound.

All: May the body and blood of your Son, which we now send to them through our Eucharistic Ministers, bring them consolation and peace. We ask this in the name of Jesus, Our Lord. Amen.