

 <h2 style="display: inline;">1st Sunday of Lent (A)</h2> 		
<h3>Mass Times and Intentions</h3> <p>Divine Office – Psalter Week 2</p>		
Saturday 21 st February	5.30pm	Fr Dave Melly
Sunday 22 nd February	11.00am	Peter Heaps (Anniversary)
Tuesday 24 th February	9.30am	William and Harriet Ross
Wednesday 25 th February	7.00pm	Holy Souls
Thursday 26 th February	9.30am	John Paget
Saturday 28 th February	5.30pm	People of the Parish
Sunday 1 st March	11.00am	Susan Barrow

Sunday Liturgy

Proper of the Mass

Penitential Rite	Form A	p. 8
Profession of Faith	Apostles'	p. 12
Preface	Temptation	p. 71
Eucharistic Prayer	Prayer 2	p. 25

The Holy Father's Prayer Intention for February



For children with incurable diseases. Let us pray that children suffering from incurable diseases and their families receive the necessary medical care and support, never losing strength and hope.

February is the month of the Holy Family. "By his obedience to Mary and Joseph, as well as by his humble work in the long years at Nazareth, Jesus gives us the example of holiness in the daily life of family and work." *From the Catechism of the Catholic Church, 564.*



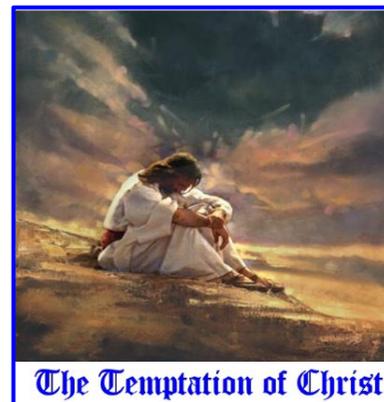
The Roman Catholic Parish of
Our Lady Help of Christians
 Portico Lane, Prescott, L34 2QT

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1st Sunday of Lent (A)

22nd February 2026



The Temptation of Christ

Our Gospel this Sunday sees Jesus being led into the desert. The desert in Jewish history was very important as when God freed and saved the People of Israel from slavery in Egypt, they spent forty years in the desert. They wandered and sometimes got lost as they tried to find their way to the Promised Land. This was not an easy journey for them. At times they lost faith in each other and in God - they forgot the promise that God made with them; 'I will be your God and you will be my people.'

As they made their way through the desert, many would have stopped travelling and settled near the closest oasis. Others would have joined other tribes and religions that they met along the way. When they

were at their lowest, they made a statue of a golden calf and began to worship it. They had forgotten where they had come from, what God had done for them and had lost sight of where God was leading them.

In St Matthew's Gospel, the desert marks the beginning of Jesus' battle with Satan - the ultimate test was to be Jesus' final hours on the cross. It is no surprise that we begin Lent with Jesus in the desert. Like his ancestors, he too is tried, tested and tempted. However, Jesus refused to give up or give in so quickly or so easily. In a similar way, our Lenten observances are only a beginning, a preparation for and a reinforcement of our ongoing struggle to resist the temptations we face in our lives - as we begin our own Lenten journey, we need to recall and remember that we are not setting out on this journey on our own. When we are tempted, we need to follow the example of Jesus. He did not rely on his own strength but turned to God and asked for help.

We need to realise that like Jesus, we too need God's help, support, guidance and protection. Whenever we feel tired or ready to give up or give in, we need to turn to God for encouragement. We know that God will be with us during Lent as God was with Jesus when he was in the desert. God will never leave us alone.



Offertory Collection/Donations

If you do not have any cash you can donate by scanning this QR code with a smart phone.

The Season of Lent

The Season of Lent is a wonderful season of penance and spiritual renewal that prepares us to celebrate the great feast of the Lord's Death and Resurrection at Easter. To help us in our preparation the Church encourages us to practice faithfully the disciplines of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. There is no better way to sanctify the season than the frequent celebration of Mass for those who are able.



Stations of the Cross

There will be an opportunity to follow the Way of the Cross during Lent after the 9.30am Mass on Thursdays. We journey with Jesus through his Passion and Death, while looking forward to the glory of the Resurrection.

Bereavement Group

The next meeting of the Bereavement Group will be at 2.00pm this coming Wednesday, 25th February, in the Parish Hall.

Knitters and Stitchers Group

The next meeting of the Portico Knitters and Stitchers first meeting is at 1.00pm this coming **Friday**, 27th February. Look forward to seeing you there.

Lent "Walk With Me" Booklets

The Lent 'Walk With Me' prayer booklets are now available in the shop and porch, priced at £1.50. A very useful resource to help our prayer journey through the Season of Lent.

Minsteracres Retreat/Holiday 2025

Come and enjoy a holiday in a Passionist Retreat House in beautiful Northumberland, Friday 31st July – 6th August 2026. The cost is £625 and includes all meals and travel to and from Northumberland. The coach stays with us, so we can enjoy afternoons out to local villages and places of interest and evenings of family fun. There is a bar. A deposit of £100 secures a place is due by 15th March, the remaining balance is due by the end of June. For more information please ring Karen on 07709603166

Confirmations in 2026

Anyone in Year 8 or above can now register to be Confirmed in 2026. Register: www.liverpoolcalled.co.uk. Anyone who has missed out on the Sacrament of Confirmation in previous years is also welcome to apply.

CAFOD Lent Fast Day

There is a basket at the back of Church for the return of CAFOD Family Fast envelopes and any extra donations to CAFOD. We will keep the collection open during Lent. Thank you for your generosity.

Feast Days This Week

Monday

St Polycarp – He was a disciple of the Apostles, especially of St John the Evangelist, and Bishop of Smyrna, as well as a friend of St Ignatius of Antioch. He was the first generation of Christian leaders after the Apostles, and he fought against some of the heresies that began to spring up after the passing of the Apostles. He went to Rome to confer with Pope St Anecitus about the celebration of Easter. He suffered martyrdom about the year 155 by being stabbed with spears in the city stadium after an attempt to burn him at the stake failed. His writing "Polycarp's Letter to the Philippians" was so esteemed that it was read in the churches of Asia during the lifetime of St Jerome. It still survives, and form part of the writings of those early Christian leaders that the Church refers to as the "Apostolic Fathers" to emphasise their particular closeness to the Apostles.

Tuesday

St John Theristus – He was of Calabrian lineage, born in Sicily in the year 1049. His mother had been captured by the Saracens and brought to Sicily as a slave, But John contrived to escape to Calabria as a child, and there he became a Benedictine monk. He helped to miraculously harvest a large crop ahead of destructive weather, saving the local population from starvation and gaining the title attributed to him. He died in the year 1129.

Wednesday

St Tarasius – Born in the year 730, he was a subject of the Byzantine Empire. He was raised to the highest honour as Consul, and became first secretary to the Emperor Constantine. He was elected Patriarch of Constantinople, and incurred the enmity of the Emperor by his persistent refusal to sanction his divorce from his lawfully married wife. His whole life as a bishop was one of penance and prayer, of efforts to reform his clergy and people, and of charity to the poor. He visited in person all the houses and hospitals in Constantinople so that no needs person might be overlooked in the distribution of alms. He occupied the See of Constantinople for more than twenty one years, and died in the year 806.

Friday

St Gregory of Narek - Gregory was raised in a monastery and eventually entered the Narek Monastery in what is now Turkey, as a monk and lived there for nearly the entirety of his life. As an Armenian monk, Gregory lived humbly and taught at the monastic school. He wrote his prayers in the *encyclopedia of prayer for all nations* in hopes the book would one day guide people of all stations around the world to prayer. He was a leader of the well-developed school of Armenian mysticism at the Monastery. Several miracles and traditions have been traced back to Gregory and he is known as "the watchful angel in human form." Gregory was venerated as a saint by the Armenian Catholic Church and is also recognized as a saint of the Roman Catholic church. On April 12, 2015, Pope Francis officially proclaimed Gregory as a Doctor of the Church.

Saturday

St Oswald - He studied in the household of his uncle, Archbishop Odo of Fleury, France, where he was ordained. He was later made Bishop of Worcester (962), by St. Dunstan. In this office, he worked hard to eliminate abuses and built many monasteries, including the famous abbey of Ramsey in Huntingdonshire. In 972 he became Archbishop of York. In addition to striving to improve the morals of his clergy, this holy man also laboured to increase their theological knowledge. He has been revered ever since as one of the three saints who revived English monasticism.