

Parish of St Winefride, Lymm

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Hello again. Many of us are on an emotional roller-coaster as we soar to hopeful heights with news of many of you getting vaccinated, then plunged into the depths by stories of increased numbers of infections and even deaths. ‘Be not solicitous’ said Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount (Douai translation – more memorable than ‘Do not be anxious’.) I thank God for enabling us to have peace of mind. We are called to display the virtues like the early Christians, and that is never easy. When we hear ‘Stay safe’ we can echo with ‘Stay sane’. It is a help to some people that the soccer clubs are doing so well in the north-west. I hope everyone is keeping warm during lockdown, and maybe able to dream a little of holidays and hotels etc.

Again there was only a two-thirds take-up for Mass this weekend, but only half a dozen wanted to come to 9am Mass, so that is cancelled for this week. Most of those six transferred to 5.45pm or 10.30am. It complies with the guidelines, curtailing services when there may be a shortage of stewards or Eucharistic Ministers. We have two services that will be almost full.

By next week I should have full details of the proposed Christian Unity Week virtual programme. Hopefully everyone will at least find some time to pray for the eventual goal of achieving unity between all Christians, and asking God’s guidance and blessing on all who work to this end, especially those good souls in Lymm who work together with such tolerance and patience. The week of prayer begins on Monday 18th January.

For the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, a perfect hymn would be the familiar ‘Here I am, Lord’. John’s gospel describes Jesus calling his disciples. This is anticipated in the first reading which tells the story of the call of the prophet Samuel. In between we have a passage from St Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians, which most people pretend they have never heard. (It contains an ‘F’ word). Our response to the call from God to each of us should be that of Samuel: ‘Speak, Lord, your servant is listening’.

I have offered Mass during the week for the repose of the souls of Sean O’Cleirigh and Margaret Coffey, for Ron Milner and Peter Whitelegg, for the intentions of Michael and Dorcas, and a private intention. I continue to pray for the several parishioners who have tested positive for corona virus, some of whom are in hospital. We ask God to grant them a speedy recovery.

Fr Tony Elder