

Parish of St Winefride, Lymm

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Hello again and greetings to you all. Chatting about the weather, there comes to mind a picture of the late great Caroline Aherne giving the weather forecast on Portugese TV (in ‘the Fast Show’), standing in front of a map chart with one symbol, a golden sun, and Caroline uttering some unintelligible pseudo Portugese sentences each ending with the word ‘Scorchio’. Those with lovely gardens might be wishing for rain, I know. The rest of us can just enjoy the ‘scorchio’ sunshine.

This coming weekend is the Church’s birthday: the anniversary of that Pentecost festival in Jerusalem when the Holy Spirit came down like tongues of fire on the small group of Jesus’ disciples gathered together in that upper room. They were filled with power and courage, and though it was early morning, they went out and spoke excitedly and enthusiastically about the risen Jesus, to anyone who would listen. We too have received the Holy Spirit, and we can renew our prayers that t Jesus he Spirit of the risen Christ will inspire each of us further with a clearer understanding of what God wants us to do. Jesus called the Holy Spirit ‘the Comforter’, and if it’s comforting we need, then we have the right to expect help from that direction.

Friday 29 May is 52 years since Bobby Charlton scored two goals at Wembley to win the European Cup for Matt Busby. I was there. After the match in the dark I made my way alone back to a convent nursing home in nearby Sudbury-on-the-Hill where I had been given lodgings. Teeming with excitement I beat a tattoo on the doorbell. A Maltese nun answered the door and said ‘You have been to the football match. Who won?’ I told her, and she said with a blank smile: ‘Is that your team? We have had a death. Would you like some Horlicks?’ What a celebration!

You will no doubt have pondered and perhaps been puzzled or even worried by the proposed easing down of restrictions during the Covid19 epidemic. Above all, be careful and keep yourself and other people safe. I personally have had two successful socially distanced games of golf. It felt like getting days off at long last. For other people I know things are more serious. God bless all those who are tending for sick people, or working in shops, or keeping essential services going; may God help and reward those who are doing such generous acts of kindness to those restricted through age or sickness; and particularly may he provide help for those whose source of income has dried up. Students and people with children are still unsure of what is planned. There are plans to let us use churches in July, but under very strict conditions. I will be asking later for volunteer stewards under 70 to help to make sure no one is made to contract the virus through our lack of care.

I have been asked to offer Mass for Ian and June Blythe who have a significant wedding anniversary this weekend (Silver, surely?) and for Fr Jim McGrath who is at home and making progress and 61 years a priest on Sunday. Next week for those following the Mass on line, it is Week Nine in ordinary time, and the daily prayer is from Week I of the psalter. Thanks for the e-mails and phone calls. Please let me know above all if there is anyone who is being forgotten or neglected.

Come holy Ghost, Creator, come!

Fr Tony Elder