



Our Lady and St Gerard's Lostock Hall

News and Views

**Christmas & New Year
Services**

**Issue No 695 December
2025**

Christmas Eve

The Vigil Mass on Christmas Eve at St Gerard's will be at 5:00 pm with carols from 4:30 pm.

The Vigil Mass at St Mary's Brownedge will be at 7 pm.

There will also be a Midnight Mass at St Mary's with Carols by Candlelight from 11:30 pm.



Image created using easy-peasy AI

Christmas Day

At St Mary's Brownedge the Christmas Day Mass will be at 9:30 am.

At St Gerard's the Mass on Christmas Day will be at 11:00 am.

There will be no other Masses on Christmas Day at either Church.

Boxing Day (The Feast of St Stephen) Mass at both Churches will be at 10 am.

COP 30

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CAFOD, COP 30 and Climate Change



As you all know COP 30 has been taking place during November in Brazil and we have been encouraged to pray that world leaders will address in a creative and positive way the problems that climate change is causing, particularly in developing countries where its effects are disproportionately felt by the world's poorest communities.

A few days ago we listened to a CAFOD webinar from Brazil outlining the situation during the first week of COP 30. Unfortunately, little had been happening in the first few days as it is only during the second week that world leaders really start to negotiate. The hope is that the commitments they made ten years ago in Paris to reduce carbon emissions and keep global warming to 1.5% by 2050 will be seen as essential to prevent the world overheating to dangerous and unacceptable levels. If we continue on our present trajectory this 1.5 % goal is totally unrealistic.

Hopefully during the second week of COP 30 serious commitments will be negotiated to reduce carbon emissions, fossil fuel extraction, and redirect the world from its perilous course.

Part of the remit of Cafod's and other aid agencies such as Caritas International at COP 30 is to pressure world leaders to reduce or cancel the unfair debts of developing countries so that they will be able to afford to take measures to protect their communities from the effects of climate change. If their debts are reduced they will be able to transition to a greener economy. You may remember a few months ago parishioners were asked to sign a global church petition and in July I handed 333 signatures from both parishes into Romero house, the CAFOD headquarters. These were gratefully received and will be used to put pressure on world leaders.

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It is extremely disappointing that such powerful nations like the US, China and India have not sent official delegations to the COP but we can only pray that they will eventually realise how much climate change is going to affect their countries and that we all need to work as one and reduce carbon emissions if our world is going to survive.

In this jubilee year of hope let us remember Pope Francis' words in Laudato Si :

'Climate change is a global problem with grave implications and represents one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day'

Margaret

CAFOD'S Global Day of Action

On November 15th, Michael and I attended an event at St Augustine's church Manchester which was part of CAFOD's participation in the global day of action in support of world leaders at COP 30 calling for ambitious targets to limit climate change. Bishop John of Salford, our diocesan bishop, spoke movingly at this meeting about not losing hope that we can all do something as stewards and guardians of creation!

He talked about the catastrophic climate events that have been wreaking havoc throughout the world in the past week alone. As Christians we have to have hope that Cop 30 will produce a breakthrough.

The bishop expressed disappointment that the United States, India and China had not sent delegations but said that all was not lost in that, despite president Trump's denial that there is a problem with climate change, 35 American states are quietly getting on with embracing green energy and technology.

China, often cited as the reason we can do nothing in the west to change things, is actually producing 100 solar panels every minute!



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He said how important it is that we all work together and do our bit whether it's reusing, recycling, using less energy etc, and he quoted Pope Francis in saying that individually we might only be single drops of rain but that every river, every reservoir, every dam, needs those individual raindrops.



After this talk, and after listening to our partner organisations from Belem, we set off to walk peacefully, alongside many other supporters, to St Peter's Square.

Unfortunately a police presence was needed to escort us as there was a sustained, angry and unwanted counter-demonstration of climate change deniers taking place who seemed to want to disrupt the proceedings!

Despite this, we achieved our goal of highlighting our important message that Cafod has no faith in

fossil fuels and Luce, our jubilee pilgrim of hope mascot, experienced yet another exciting adventure.

Margaret.

CAFOD World Gifts



As you leave church please pick up a CAFOD world gifts card. There are some unusual, thoughtful Christmas gifts you can buy for anyone who perhaps does not really need anything and is difficult to buy for.

You can order online or by phoning 0300 777 0030. In the process of buying these gifts you will be helping those in the developing world who have very little of the things we consider essential.



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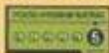
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Gratitude

It's that time of the year again when December brings out the best in folk (or the worst!), this is when the shops are overloaded with Christmas goods and customers are on the lookout for everything chocolatey or sparkly.

This is when I think about gratitude and realise that what we possess already, is probably enough.

Those of us old enough to remember rationing will know that Christmas was a much smaller occasion with a small toy, chocolate coins and a tangerine at the end of the stocking. Simple pleasures which we enjoyed, less work, less expense, less stress.

I feel sad when I think of the parishioners who have passed away this year, people that we are used to seeing on Sunday and count them as friends. It will be different this year for their families and friends as endings and losses will change who you have sat round the table. It reminds us to be grateful for who and what we have.

One of my greatest pleasures is to sit round the table with my family and feel the spirit of Christmas.

Gratitude will reframe everything in your life if you let it. Invite gratitude into your life, just be grateful for who you are.

In the words of Meister Eckhart

“If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is THANK YOU,
it will be enough”

Wishing everyone love and peace at Christmas.

Grace Robinson



Elizabeth Samuel Hampers

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Church & Faith-Based Events in December

Preston Worship Night – Crossgate Church

6 December 2025, 17:00–19:00

An evening of gospel music and worship. [happeningnext.com]
A Christmas Festival – St Michael and All Angels Church, Ashton-on-Ribble

A Celtic Christmas – Guild Hall, Preston

7 December 2025, 19:00

Candlelit performance of traditional carols and Celtic melodies.

Prelude to Christmas – St George’s Church

7 December 2025, 17:30–19:00

Chamber orchestra concert with refreshments.

[ticketsource.co.uk]

17 December 2025, 19:00–21:00

Modern twist on traditional carols. [prestonminster.org]

Family Carols – Preston Minster

20 December 2025, 19:30

Festive concert with Preston Concert Band. [allevents.in]

Contemporary Carols – Preston Minster

21 December 2025, 11:00–13:00

Fun, family-friendly carol service. [prestonminster.org]

City Carols – Preston Minster

24 December 2025, 16:00–18:00

Classic candlelit carol service. [prestonminster.org]



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St. Stephen, the First Martyr - Feast Day 26th December

St. Stephen holds a special place in the history of the Church as the first Christian martyr, often called the Protomartyr. His life and witness are recorded in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 6–7), offering one of the earliest examples of courageous faith in the risen Christ.

Early Role in the Church

After the Resurrection, the number of disciples grew rapidly. To assist the Apostles in their ministry, seven men were chosen and ordained as deacons. Stephen was among them, and Scripture describes him as: “A man full of faith and the Holy Spirit” “Full of grace and power”, performing signs and wonders. An eloquent defender of the Gospel. His role as a deacon involved service to the poor, preaching, and assisting the Apostles—making him one of the earliest models of dedicated, charitable ministry.

Stephen’s Witness to the Truth

Stephen’s powerful preaching and wisdom drew the attention of certain leaders who opposed the early Christian movement. False accusations were brought against him, claiming he spoke against the Temple and the Law. Before the Sanhedrin, Stephen delivered a profound speech recounting God’s saving work in Israel’s history and proclaiming Jesus as the fulfillment of God’s promises. His words were bold, fearless, and rooted in deep faith. As he spoke, Scripture says his face appeared “like the face of an angel.”

Martyrdom – The First to Die for Christ



His testimony provoked anger, and Stephen was dragged outside the city and stoned. As he died, he spoke two final prayers, echoing Jesus on the Cross: “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.”



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With these words, Stephen became the Church's first martyr, witnessing to Christ with unwavering love, even forgiving his executioners.

One of the witnesses to Stephen's death was Saul of Tarsus, who later became St. Paul, suggesting that Stephen's courage planted seeds that would later bear great fruit.

Patron of the Guild of St. Stephen and Altar Servers

St. Stephen is the patron of altar servers, deacons, and the Guild of St. Stephen because:

- He served the Church with humility and devotion
- He assisted in the sacred ministry, much like altar servers do today
- He modeled deep love for Christ and the liturgy
- His life showed that service at the altar can lead to courageous witness in daily life

Altar servers look to St. Stephen as a shining example of:

- Reverence
- Faithfulness
- Charity
- Commitment to God

Courage in living out the Gospel

The Other Guild Patrons are Our Lady, Saint Thomas More and Pope Saint Pius X who gave the Guild the Church's highest approval in 1906.



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Monday to Thursday 5 pm—12 am

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Saturday & Sunday 12 pm to 12 am

Gardening in December

Saw a Goldcrest in the garden. The smallest British and Irish bird. They like pines, yew, spruces or other conifers. I also spotted a wren. If you have a half a coconut shell fill it with Bird seed and fat from your Sunday roast, mix and let it cool and watch the queue.

The Aurora Borealis was visible this month but i have yet to seet it! How changeable the weather is, snow in East Lancashire and ice, rain here. What are your thoughts on climate change?



Want more colour in the garden? Hellebore love this time of the year. I spotted Spring Bulbs peeping through!!

LW.

Helleborus Niger 'Christmas Carol'

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Christmas & Seasonal Events

Preston on Ice

22 November 2025 – 4 January 2026

Christmas Lights Switch-On

22 November 2025

Crafty Vintage Christmas Markets – Blackburns Farm

6–7 December 2025, 10:00–16:00

Wrea Green near Lytham.

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Major Feast Days and Liturgical Celebrations in December

December 8 – The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary - Solemnity

We honour Mary preserved from original sin from the first moment of her existence. Her purity shows us God's desire to prepare a worthy dwelling for Christ—and invites us to open our lives to God's grace without fear.

December 12 – Our Lady of Guadalupe
Optional Memorial

Mary appears as a mother close to the poor and suffering. Her message of hope reminds us that God draws near to all peoples and cultures.

December 25 – The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)
Solemnity

God becomes one of us. The humblest birth reveals the deepest love—Jesus enters our world to bring light, peace, and salvation.

December 26 – Saint Stephen, the First Martyr
Feast

The first Christian martyr teaches us courage in proclaiming Christ and forgiveness even in suffering, mirroring Jesus' own love.

December 27 – Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist
Feast

The apostle of love invites us to abide in Christ. His Gospel reveals the heart of God and calls us to deeper intimacy with Jesus.

December 28 – The Holy Innocents, Martyrs
Feast

We remember the children killed in Herod's rage. Their innocence reminds us of the dignity of every child and the need to protect all vulnerable life.

**Parish Clergy: Fr Mark Harold (Rural Dean & Parish Priest),
Fr Colin Battell OSB.
Tel: Fr Mark 332050; Fr Colin 321201.**

The Presbytery
17C Brownedge Road
Lostock Hall
Preston
PR5 5AA

Tel: 01772 335387 **Mobile 07442 385553 (9am-3pm)**

In an Emergency please phone either
St Marys Brownedge 335168
St Mary's Leyland 455955
St Catherine's Farrington 421174

Contacts The Primary School 335025
 The Parochial Centre 339459

Weekly Services

Sundays: Saturday Vigil 5:30 p.m.
 Sunday 10:30 a.m.

Weekdays: MASS - Tuesday 9:15 am Thursday 6:30 pm
Services of Word & Holy Communion - Monday 6:30 pm &
 Wednesday at 9:15 am

Reconciliation: Confessions - Saturday 5 pm to 5:15 pm.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament: Monday 18:00 to 18:30

Baptisms - To arrange a Baptism please call the parish office on 01772 335387 between 9—11.45 am. (Mon – Fri). Parents are expected to attend a Baptism Preparation meeting before a Baptism can take place. If people have not been in the practice of attending church regularly, they are asked to attend Mass for a period of six weeks prior to the Baptism to help them to be spiritually prepared for the sacrament and to get into the habit of practicing the Faith.

No Priest! What do we do?

If there is an Emergency and no Priest is available for the weekend Masses, the Eucharistic Ministers, particularly those who have been trained, will perform a Holy Communion Service and this will replace the Mass. Please note that this is Only in an Emergency and there is no time to arrange for another priest or no other is Priest is available.

Marriages

At least six months notification of Marriage is required. Pre-marriage instruction is mandatory and organised by the Diocese.

Please telephone 335387 to arrange Notification and Preparation.
335387 to arrange Notification and Preparation.

Parish Organisations

CONTACT

Advertising	John Corrigan	07759 722309
Altar Servers	David Walker	629701
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CAFOD	Margaret Cronin	336475
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News & Views, Website,	David Walker	629701
Majella Companions		335387
Marriage Registrars	Margaret Cronin	336475
	Ann Quinlan	467306
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Sacred Heart Guild		
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Senior Citizens Organisers		335387

Items for News & Views can be left at the Presbytery or emailed to the editor at newsviews@saintgerards.org.uk

The last day for submissions is the 20th of each month.

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St Mary's Brownedge Live Streaming Times

<https://www.churchservices.tv/bamberbridge>

Sunday	Mass	9:30 am & 6:30 pm
Monday to Friday	Mass	9:30 am
Private Prayer	Tuesday & Thursday	3 pm to 4 pm
Saturday	Mass	7 pm Vigil

7th	Second Sunday of Advent	29th	St Thomas Becket
8 th	The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary	31 st	St Silvester
9 th	St Juan Diego Cuauhtloatzin	1 st Jan	Mary, the Holy Mother of God
12 th	Our Lady fo Guadalupe	2 nd	Ss Dasil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen
13 th	St Lucy	3 rd	The Holy Name of Jesus
14th	Third Sunday of Advent	4th	Second Sunday of Christmas
21st	Fourth Sunday of Advent	6th	The Epiphany - Holy Day of Obligation
24th	Christmas Eve Vigil Mass 5:30 Carols 5 pm	7 th	St Raymond of Penyafort
25th	Christmas Day- Mass 10:30	11th	The Baptism of the Lord
26th	Feast of St Stephen		
27th	St John the Evangelist		
28th	The Holy Family		

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