



# Our Lady and St Gerard's Lostock Hall

## News and Views

Issue No 697 February  
2026

### Our Lady of Lourdes

In 1858 the Immaculate Virgin Mary appeared to Bernadette Soubirous near Lourdes in France, in the grotto of Massabielle. Through the poor child, Mary called sinners to penance, and thereby there arose in the Church a marvellous spirit of prayer and charity, especially in helping the poor and the sick.

### LENT

Lent is early this year with Ash Wednesday being on 18th February, Palm Sunday 29th March and Easter Sunday on 5th April.

Further details hopefully in Next months issue for Easter Services.

### News & Views

The magazine is open to anyone from either Parish to contribute something. Nothing too controversial please and nothing political. All will be considered.



Our Lady of Lourdes 11th February

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ABC

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## **SATURDAY MORNING PICTURES**

### **A Beloved Childhood Tradition of the 1950s & 60s**

### **A Weekly Adventure for Children**

Long before television became common, children across Britain flocked to their local cinemas for Saturday Morning Pictures. For just 6d (2½p), they enjoyed nearly two hours of laughter, music, and adventure — a weekly ritual that shaped childhood memories for an entire generation.

At their height, almost 2,000 cinemas across the UK ran these shows. Even as late as 1971, they still drew around 800,000 **children every week.**

#### **What Filled the Screen**

- Classic cartoons such as Tom & Jerry
- Comedy favourites like Laurel & Hardy
- Thrilling cowboy films
- Cliff-hanger adventure serials, Batman, Robin Hood
- British-made stories from the Children's Film Foundation
- Lively sing-alongs with lyrics projected on the screen

Children didn't just watch — they participated, cheering the heroes, booing the villains, and singing with gusto.

#### **A Community in the Dark**

The atmosphere was unforgettable:

- Cinemas packed with excited, noisy children
- Choc-ice sellers weaving through the aisles
- A determined usher with a torch trying to keep order
- Friends meeting in the queue each week
- A sense of independence and belonging

For many families, it was the only cinema outing of the week — a treasured moment of joy for children.

#### **Local Memories in Lancashire**

ABC and Odeon cinemas across Lancashire hosted the famous "Minors Matinees – Good films, good fun and good fellowship." Many Preston families still recall the thrill of the lights dimming, the curtains opening, and the adventure beginning.

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## **Still not grown up?**

You can still enjoy some of these on the Talking Pictures Channel, it's on Sky, Virgin and Freeview. Saturday morning re-runs are still there now, Robin Hood, William Tell and others.

My sister and I could only go if we traded in the Cornona Bottles at the local shop for the 6d back on the bottles, one of our two local shops used to sign the labels and wouldn't accept any back that didn't have that signature.

And once a year on your birthday you went up to the front and the manager gave you a free pass for the following week, which could be used upstairs or down. Upstairs was normally 9d and out of our league so it was a real treat.

We had two cinemas in those days in the town I lived in Sussex, the Odeon and the Ritz, the Odeon went years ago and is now part of a shopping centre, the Ritz now called the Capital is still there with a smaller Everyman Theatre nearby.

## **Why It Still Matters**

Saturday Morning Pictures remind us of the power of shared stories, community spaces, and the joy of gathering together. In an age of individual screens, this tradition offers a lovely glimpse of how children once experienced wonder — side by side.

The Editor.

## **February 1963: The Big Freeze and the Rise of the Beatles**

February 1963 found Britain still firmly in the grip of the Big Freeze, one of the coldest winters the country had seen in more than two centuries. Snow had been lying since before Christmas, rivers were frozen solid, and many communities were battling icy roads, fuel shortages, and long, dark evenings. Yet even in the midst of this bitter winter, something bright and full of energy was beginning to stir in the world of music.



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Amid the snowdrifts and frozen fields, four young men from Liverpool were rapidly becoming a national sensation. February 1963 was a turning point for The Beatles, marking the moment when their popularity leapt from regional excitement to a wave of enthusiasm that would soon sweep across the whole country.



Early in the month, the band set out on their first national UK tour, supporting teenage star Helen Shapiro. Though not yet the headliners, The Beatles quickly became the act everyone was talking about.

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Their lively performances, tight harmonies, and unmistakable charisma won over audiences from Yorkshire to the south coast, even as many venues struggled with the winter weather.

During this same tour, something quietly historic happened: singer Kenny Lynch became the first artist ever to record a Lennon–McCartney song, choosing their early composition Misery. It was a small but significant sign that the young band were not only performers but gifted songwriters whose music others wanted to sing.

Behind the scenes, February was also a month of intense preparation. The Beatles were travelling, performing, and fitting in radio sessions — all while building towards the release of their first album. Just days earlier, on 11 February, they had recorded most of Please Please Me in a single remarkable session at Abbey Road Studios. The energy of that day would soon burst into the charts and into the hearts of a generation.

Even the harsh winter couldn't stop them. On 15 February, they played the Ritz Ballroom in Birmingham — a show that had been postponed earlier due to blizzards. Fans braved the cold to see them, a sign of the devotion that was beginning to form around the group.



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But February 1963 wasn't only a month of musical change. It was also a moment of political transition. Following the sudden death of Labour leader Hugh Gaitskell in January, the party elected Harold Wilson as its new leader on 14 February 1963. His election marked the beginning of a new chapter in British politics, one that would shape national debate for years to come.

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By the end of February 1963, as the country waited for spring to break through the ice, The Beatles were already warming the nation with a new sound. Within weeks, Beatlemania would be in full bloom.

### **1963 - Tardy Gate during the Big Freeze**

In response to the excellent recollections of "The Big Freeze in 1963" in the last issue (696) of the 'News and Views', from a local point of view, we had plenty much the same.

I attended Preston Catholic College in Chapel Street, Preston (1960-65) and unlike today we never missed a days learning throughout the Big Freeze. Buses ran (on time!) whether it be Fishwick 111 Service to Fox Street, Preston or the Ribble P20 (later 120) which ran from Jubilee Road to Preston Bus Station via Bamber Bridge and Walton Le Dale. Being only 14 years old,

and other kids relished the conditions, paying little attention to the constant moans and groans from the older members of our families. Years on, I now know why that was of case.

Tardy Gate and Lostock Hall were fortunate in some regards that we were geographically sheltered to some degree by the Irish Sea on our coast, with the Cumberland hills to the North and Pennines to the East.

We still copped it, I don't dispute that, but there wasn't as much disruption as in other parts of the country.

*Elizabeth Samuel Hampers*

— & —

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Before going to school in Preston, I had to negotiate the snowdrifts in Avondale Drive and Browndge Road in order to serve Mass at Tardy St Gerards. Then it was a quick dash (skate) home, breakfast on the hoof and bus to college. Fortunately this was before 1971, when free school milk for over 7 year olds was removed by Margaret Thatcher - Milk Snatcher.

Due to the extreme cold during the Big Freeze, the milk and cream plus the silver top gained an extra inch out of the top of the bottle than usual and every inch of the school radiators were deployed to thaw it out before morning break.

Skating became the national sport, especially for youngsters.

Two favourite spots for this popular activity were Farington Lodges off Church Lane and the large field between Watkin Lane and Todd Lane South, now the site of the Albrighton Estate. The field was notorious for flooding when the River Lostock (Dandy Brook) was deeper due to the weir close to the old spinning company.

Sport took a massive hit, Football, Rugby and Horse racing amongst those to suffer. However, the FA Cup 3rd Round, scheduled for January 5th, 1963, was reduced from 32 ties to a mere 3.

One of these 3, was the game at Deepdale between Preston North End and Sunderland, played in front of an impressive....



Sunderland's Jim Montgomery saves at the foot of a post as Alex Dawson comes roaring in at Deepdale in January 1963. North End lost this third-round FA Cup game 4-1.



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25,917 attendance. Unfortunately, the 'Mackems'. Beat North End 4-1. Preston's next game was 7 weeks later, a 1-0 home win against Southampton (a mere 10,073 crowd). Memories of 1963, some fond, some not.

About 5 months later in better weather, Tardy St Gerards Church's new extension and tower were officially opened on Sunday May 26th, 1963, by the Abbot of Ampleforth, Right Rev Basil Hume (Later Archbishop of Westminster) in front of a full house!

63 years ago, where has the time gone!

**Tony Billington.**

### **Gardening in February**

Rhubarb is showing through. You can 'force it' by excluding the light. But I prefer to leave it alone and wait for my crumble.

I spy Snowdrops. They seem to double in quantity each year. Sweet Voilets appear in February too. Please beware of Toads and Hedgehogs when you drive around as they make their perilous journeys to thier mating grounds.

You could even help them across! I have done this a few times. Saw an advert for wild forest bathing, No thanks! only for the brave. Actually when i read it thoroughly it didn't involve water! it was imersing yourself in nature.

Embracing a slower pace at home. Using your senses noting what you see and smell. Sounds good and it's free.

**LW**

### **Marriage Preparation**

All couples marrying in a Catholic Church in Salford Diocese are obliged to attend a marriage preparation course. This is considered essential by the church to help couples prepare for the huge commitment of life-giving love they are undertaking.



We are aware that most couples getting married today have been living together prior to marriage, many for several years, and they may wonder what they can gain from a preparation course.



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This is a valid point especially when a course may prove quite an expense.

Despite this, the material provided can prove enlightening and valuable and will provide insights and strategies for dealing with any difficulties that may emerge throughout the marriage and help couples deepen their relationship.

Marriage Care delivers different courses to help you prepare for marriage: there are day-long, face-to-face courses, online courses over several evenings, and Focus courses. A certificate of attendance is provided on completion to show your parish priest. Details can be found on their website at [marriagecare.org.uk](http://marriagecare.org.uk).

If you prefer a face-to-face, day-long course, the next one in the local area will be held on Saturday March 14th at Holy Souls church hall Blackburn. We will explore expectations, values, communication, conflict-resolution and getting married in church as well as other relevant topics. You will be given a pack to take away with lots of useful information to help you as you share your future life together. The feedback from previous courses is almost always positive. Don't hesitate to ask Ann Quinlan or Margaret and Michael Cronin for further details.

### **Caritas**

On a local diocesan level we would normally hold a mandatory parish collection at the end of January for Caritas who provide urgent and tangible help to struggling families in our diocese. As CAFOD family fast day is so early this year we thought that it would be better if we left a few weeks between the collections for CAFOD and Caritas and so both churches will speak about Caritas' vital work on the 21st and 22nd March. An outline of how they make a difference to those struggling with poverty in Greater Manchester and Lancashire will be in the March News and Views.

### **CAFOD**

**Advance warning: CAFOD Family fast day Friday 27th February.**

It's difficult to believe that, having only just put the crib away, we are fast approaching Lent! The shops of course have been displaying Easter Eggs and hot cross buns since early New Year. As one of our daughters commented on seeing this "spring"



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display: ‘ Mum, the kings haven’t even arrived yet! ‘ Frivolity aside, we all know how volatile the world situation is at this present time and how, in many areas of the world, the problem of hunger constantly raises its ugly head. In areas like Zimbabwe rain is scarce, whilst in other areas like South Sudan and Bangladesh there are floods which have destroyed farmland. CAFOD with local partners and experts attempt to work in these different areas building solar-powered water pumps, eco floating gardens, etc to provide positive solutions to these dreadful conditions.

They cannot do any of this work without your financial support so, on the weekend before family fast day, when we try to eat simply to save money so we can give practical help to our less fortunate brothers and sisters throughout the world, a Lenten appeal will take place and envelopes will be distributed for you to return the following week. As always, if you can gift aid, please fill in your details so that CAFOD can increase your donation by twenty-five percent.

This family fast day let’s show love and solidarity by praying, living simply and alms-giving so we can help ensure all families can feed themselves and their children.

### **Metanoia**

A huge thank you to all those from both parishes who have provided warm clothing for the Metanoia project. The response has been amazing.

Many thanks also to the person from St Mary’s (you know who you are) who has already been introduced to the team and has agreed to help with the cooking whenever she can. A parishioner from St Gerard’s is also considering helping with the cooking. To reiterate, Jen has stated that any help with cooking, even on an intermittent basis, will be gratefully received.

Jen can be contacted on 07957566741 or  
Jen@metanoiaproject.co.uk.

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## **I Remember it well!**

The big freeze of 1963, actually started on Christmas Day 1962, we woke up to a bright, crisp morning. John remembers this quite clearly, as a car pulled at their home with a frozen engine needing some water. (Oh, for some antifreeze!)

It was interesting reading last month's article on the big freeze, and yes, for the older generations, it is a touchstone memory. I remember very well all the blocked roads and difficulties for some people walking the icy pavements and trying to go about their daily lives.

Most people went to work on the BBMS or Bamber Bridge Motor Service to foreigners that don't know. I just walked across station rd. from our shop and went to Brownedge High School, which had only opened 3 years earlier. Unlike the editor, I didn't have to travel to get to my place of learning, I could even come home for dinner.

We didn't have a car, so no problem there, my dad had only passed away in the summer of 62 and my mother could not drive, a regret she often mentioned. We had to wait for our John to pass his test before we had a car outside.

But that is not the only thing I remember 1963 for, it's the winter I met my future husband. Our eyes met across a crowded room; he asked me for a dance.... and the rest is history!

I remember vividly queuing up down Theatre Street, wearing my very fashionable white boots, to go into the ABC cinema to watch Dr No. the street was thick with snow.

This lasted till March, but somehow it didn't seem as bad as it does now, as previously said, No schools closed, BBMS and Ribble still running, but not many had cars.

We had staying power, resilience, and nothing was going to beat us

"I'm not stepping out, until the temperature is equal to my age."

**Grace Robinson**

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

The Presbytery  
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   The Parochial Centre 339459

## **Weekly Services**

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

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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.  
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## Parish Organisations

### CONTACT

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

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<b>Monday to Friday</b>	<b>Mass</b>	<b>9:30 am</b>
<b>Private Prayer</b>	<b>Tuesday &amp; Thursday</b>	<b>3 pm to 4 pm</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Mass</b>	<b>7 pm Vigil</b>

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Feb</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Year</b>
2nd	The Presentation of the Lord
3rd	St Ansgar / St Blaise
5th	St Agatha
6th	Ss Paul Miki & Comp
<b>8th</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Year</b>
10th	St Scholastica
<b>11th</b>	<b>Our Lady of Lourdes</b>
14th	Ss Cyril & Methocius
<b>15th</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Year</b>
17th	The Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order
<b>18th</b>	<b>ASH WEDNESDAY</b>
21st	St Peter Damien

22nd	<b>First Sunday of Lent</b>
23rd	St Polycarp
27th	St Gregory of Narek
<b>1st March</b>	<b>Second Sunday of Lent</b>
4th	St Casimar
7th	SS Perpetua & Felicity
<b>8th</b>	<b>Third Sunday of Lent</b>

# Ian Wilde

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• Granite • Marble •

Slate • Nabresina • Yorkstone •

