



Our Lady and St Gerard's Lostock Hall

News and Views

October – The Month of the Holy Rosary

The Church dedicates the month of October to the Holy Rosary, one of the most cherished prayers in the Catholic tradition. During this month, we are invited to turn to the Blessed Virgin Mary and to reflect more deeply on the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ through the mysteries of the Rosary.

The Rosary is often described as a simple prayer, yet it is a profound way of growing closer to Christ. As we pray its familiar prayers, we are led to meditate on the key events of the Gospel and to see more clearly the love and mercy of God at work in our lives.

A prayer for October

Our Lady of the Rosary, pray for us. Help us to ponder the mysteries of Christ with faith and love, to trust in God's plan for our lives, and to follow your Son more closely each day. Amen.

Issue No 705 October 2026



Our Lady of the Rosary 7th October

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Walking with the Saints in October

As autumn deepens and the days grow shorter, October invites us to reflect on the richness of God's grace at work in the lives of the saints. Their witness shines like a light along our path, showing us that holiness is possible in every age and every circumstance. Whether through prayer, service, courage, or faithful discipleship, the saints of October encourage us to draw closer to Christ.

We begin the month with St Thérèse of the Child Jesus (1 October), whose "little way" of trust and love has inspired countless Christians. Thérèse reminds us that great holiness is often found in small acts of love offered faithfully each day.

We then honour St Bruno (6 October), founder of the Carthusian Order. His life of silence, prayer, and contemplation teaches us the value of making space for God amid the busyness of life.

On 9 October, we remember St John Henry Newman, whose search for truth led him to a profound faith and service to the Church. His witness reminds us of the importance of following our conscience and allowing God's grace to guide our minds and hearts.

The Church commemorates St Denis and Companions (10 October), martyrs who remained faithful to Christ despite persecution. Their courage challenges us to remain steadfast in our own witness to the Gospel.

On 12 October, we honour St Wilfrid, a great bishop and missionary who worked tirelessly for the growth and unity of the Church in England. His example encourages us to be builders of faith and communion.

The next day brings the feast of St Edward the Confessor (13 October), remembered for his holiness, generosity, and devotion to God. Edward shows us how faith can shape both public responsibility and personal character.

On 14 October, we celebrate St Callistus I, pope and martyr. His leadership during difficult times reminds us of God's mercy and the importance of reconciliation within the Church.

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The following day we honour St Teresa of Avila (15 October), a great reformer and Doctor of the Church. Her deep life of prayer encourages us to cultivate an intimate friendship with Christ and to persevere in the spiritual life.

On 16 October, we remember St Hedwig, known for her charity and care for the poor. Her life teaches us that Christian generosity is a practical expression of God's love.

The next day we celebrate St Ignatius of Antioch (17 October), an early bishop and martyr whose letters continue to strengthen the faith of Christians today. His unwavering devotion to Christ inspires us to remain faithful whatever challenges we face.

On 19 October, we commemorate St John de Brébeuf and Companions, missionaries and martyrs who dedicated their lives to proclaiming the Gospel. Their witness reminds us of the missionary calling shared by all Christians.

The Church honours St John Paul II (22 October), whose ministry touched millions throughout the world. His call to "be not afraid" continues to encourage us to place our trust in Christ and to live our faith boldly.

On 23 October, we remember St John of Capistrano, a preacher and reformer whose dedication to renewing Christian life reminds us of the power of faithful witness and perseverance.

The following day we celebrate St Anthony Mary Claret (24 October), bishop and missionary. His zeal for evangelisation encourages us to share the joy of the Gospel with courage and enthusiasm.

On 26 October, we honour St Chad and St Cedd, beloved saints of the English Church. Their missionary work, simplicity of life, and pastoral care continue to inspire Christians throughout these lands.



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Towards the end of the month we celebrate Sts Simon and Jude (28 October), Apostles of the Lord. Their faithful service reminds us that every disciple has a unique vocation within God's plan and that Christ calls ordinary people to extraordinary mission.

As we walk with these saints throughout October, may their examples help us grow in prayer, deepen our faith, and strengthen our commitment to Christ. May we learn from their courage, humility, and love, trusting that God's grace is at work in our lives as it was in theirs.

Saints of God, walk with us.

What the Rosary means

The Rosary is much more than the repetition of prayers. It is a form of prayerful meditation that helps us to:

- Grow in our relationship with Jesus
- Learn from Mary's faith, humility, and obedience
- Find peace and comfort in times of difficulty
- Deepen our understanding of the Gospel

Through the Rosary, Mary gently leads us to her Son, encouraging us to place our trust in Him and to follow Him more faithfully.

The Mysteries of the Rosary

The Rosary is centred on four sets of mysteries:

- The Joyful Mysteries reflect on Christ's birth and early life.
- The Luminous Mysteries focus on His public ministry.
- The Sorrowful Mysteries recall His Passion and Death.
- The Glorious Mysteries celebrate His Resurrection and the glory of heaven.

By praying these mysteries regularly, we are invited to see our own lives in the light of Christ's saving work.

The Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary 7 October. This feast reminds us of the power of prayer and of Mary's care for the Church and the whole world.



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Michael Cronin 1953 2026

I'll keep this eulogy short as I'd like to be able to finish it. If I can't, our eldest son Gerard will finish it for me. I know, from all the lovely tributes, cards, masses that we've received, you'll have your own memories of Mick which you can share later in the parochial centre. The family have found great comfort in these so many, many, thanks.

Michael was born at home in Leyland into a small but very loving, happy family. He had an older sister Marie, now in a nursing home but who until a few weeks ago, he was privileged to take Holy Communion to weekly.

He went to St Mary's infant and primary school, passed his eleven plus and ended up with the Jesuits at Preston Catholic College. An extremely intelligent boy he took his O and A levels a year early. He studied French at Warwick university, After gaining a first class honours degree at Warwick, he went on to study an MA in comparative literature at Manchester uni.

He would almost certainly have gone on from there to study for a doctorate but that Christmas, 1975, when we were both at home, we met at a party in Preston. I was in my final year in Leeds studying for an Education degree. We talked all night, probably aided by a fair degree of vodka, and that was it. We went back to our respective unis, met up again in Preston at the end of January and he invited me to a party in Manchester the following weekend. Whilst there, he simply asked me when we were going to get married? Our respective families and friends were astonished at the speed of our relationship and naturally concerned as to how we were going to manage after finishing uni. We of course, had a total conviction that as long as we were together everything would just turn out fine and of course it did.

That autumn Mick got a job in the civil service in London whilst I stayed at home working temporarily as an auxiliary nurse at Whittingham the old asylum. We married at Blessed Sacrament church Preston in June 1977 jubilee weekend!

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We both wanted lots of children and knew there was no way we'd be able to afford a house in London. As luck, or God, would have it, we arrived back from a wet honeymoon in Dublin to a grotty rented flat in Mornington Crescent to find a letter saying Mick had a job interview the following day at South Ribble borough council. We didn't take our coats off just got on the return train to Preston and of course he got the job and stayed there for 27 yrs finishing as Democratic services manager. He then took a sideways move to Penwortham town council where he stayed until he retired 12yrs ago.

After working his notice in London we returned to find we'd nowhere to live. Fortunately, I'd a wonderful 85 yr old grandmother who didn't hesitate to give us a home whilst we got settled. A deeply spiritual woman she loved Mick, possibly because he could converse happily and knowledgeably with her about her daily spiritual reading. John of the Cross, The Imitation of Christ, the Ignatian spiritual exercises, you name it she'd read it as had Mick. After grandma's and pregnant with Lucy we scrapped together a deposit on a small house in Leyland where his beloved parents lived. Sadness soon followed as his mother died shortly after Lucy's birth and by then, pregnant with Katie, we moved to Lostock Hall. Here we've remained and over the years have become more and more involved in the parish community.

It would've been difficult to remain uninvolved with eight children, seven of them baptised here and all eight making their sacraments here. Three of the girls were married in this church and just recently our youngest, Bessie and her future husband Ben celebrated a Betrothal mass. They'll be married legally in September in London but by early May it became apparent that Mick wouldn't be alive by then and he so wanted to walk our youngest down the aisle which, thanks to father Mark's very meaningful, beautiful and imaginative liturgy he was able to do so.

We've had a lovely, happy, though not always plain sailing 47 years in Lostock hall and indeed when Mick was told on the Monday of Holy Week that he'd a high grade glioma for which there was no realistic treatment with characteristic goodness Mick thanked the neuro oncologist and said he was so grateful for the life he'd had as it had been a life full of blessings.



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Kirsty Thompson, Director and Solicitor, holds The Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners (STEP) qualification and The Association of Lifetime Lawyers accreditation.

We knew then though that Mick would be walking the road to Calvary but perhaps didn't realise just how difficult that road might become.

By the beginning of June, deterioration was rapid and we became more and more dependent on the carers who tended to his physical needs so movingly, to St Catherine's hospice who coordinated his care and the amazing community nurses who came out 24/7 when the pressure on his brain made Mick distressed and agitated.

We were tremendously grateful that in the end he died peacefully at home. I am so thankful for the support all our children gave to their beloved dad and me over those difficult weeks. I'd also like to thank the parish community here St Gerard's and St Mary's who also offered much support. We couldn't bring him anywhere near this church without him being besieged by well wishers just wanting to thank him for the work he'd done in the parish, to tell him how much they missed him and how much they were praying for him.

All his work here, particularly his work as a Eucharistic minister he found an absolute privilege and joy and he loved it passionately. A deeply spiritual man, he modelled everything he did on the words of Jesus. He meditated daily, prayed the office and almost every week another book by a spiritual master would arrive which he devoured quickly.

Politics was also important to him and he cared passionately about peace and justice.

Years ago we took a van load of children to London to march against the Iraq war, Again in London, we marched against Brexit. We've been in Parliament encouraging our local MP's to reinstate a fair aid budget to the developing world. last year we were in Parliament twice, meeting our local MP's, talking to them about debt relief for the world's poorest countries and only last November, we marched with CAFOD in Manchester against climate change. He was also a committed feminist. A gifted poet and wordsmith many of his last poems were about the Women in the gospels.



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His faith was central to his life as was his family. He was immensely proud of all of his children who used to laugh at his constant statement when things got a little heated. 'We love you all unconditionally.'

Certainly the most spiritual, intelligent, thoughtful, and well-read person I ever met, I'm sure he could have had power, status and wealth; he just wasn't interested. He just wanted to serve his God and his church, his family and his community.

I cannot finish without asking you all to pray for him. He begged me not to forget to ask you all to do this. So, in the words of Thomas More to his daughter Meg shortly before he was beheaded:

'You must pray for me and I will pray for you that we may both meet merrily in Heaven!

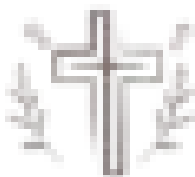
Margaret.

On behalf of all the Cronin family I'd like to thank the community from both our parishes and far beyond for the numerous cards, mass offerings, donations, and messages of support which we received following Mick's sudden death.

It was very moving to see so many people from all walks of life celebrating his requiem mass alongside our family and I can assure you it was greatly appreciated and was, and is, continuing to help us cope with our loss.

Thank you also for all the donations received for Mick's CAFOD candlelight fund and, to date, over £1,200 has been received to help Cafod's vital work in the developing world. That will remain open for some time.

Margaret





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CAFOD Harvest Appeal

As you will know by now CAFOD's latest harvest appeal is concentrating on trying to help communities where there is severe drought to access water. Because of climate

change, numerous families in the developing world are unable to access clean water and grow enough food to feed their families. The knock on effects result in children going to school hungry and unable to concentrate on their studies which severely restricts their life chances resulting in a continuing cycle of poverty. Please give generously to our harvest appeal.

Many thanks once again.

Margaret

What is the Season of Creation?

The Season of Creation is an annual ecumenical period of prayer and action when Christians around the world focus on caring for God's creation and reflecting on our responsibility to protect the environment.

It runs each year from 1 September, the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, until 4 October, the Feast of St Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology and one of the Church's best-known lovers of nature.

Why does the Church observe it?

The Season of Creation encourages us to recognise that the earth is God's gift and that we are called to be good stewards of it. It is rooted in Scripture's teaching that creation reveals God's glory and that humanity has a responsibility to care for the world and for one another.

Inspired particularly by Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*, Catholics are invited to reflect on how environmental issues affect

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the poor and vulnerable, and how our choices can contribute to a more just and sustainable world.

How is it marked?

Parishes may celebrate the Season of Creation through:

- Special prayers and intentions at Mass
- Prayer services or Holy Hours
- Reflection on Scripture and Laudato Si'
- Community clean-up projects
- Tree planting or gardening initiatives
- Reducing waste and encouraging sustainable living
- Educational talks on caring for creation

A message for all of us

The Season of Creation is not primarily about politics or technology. It is about gratitude, responsibility, and faith. It reminds us that creation is a gift from God, entrusted to our care, and that looking after our common home is part of our Christian vocation.

The Holy Father highlights the links between armed conflict, environmental destruction, and human suffering. War, he argues, creates "a vicious cycle, which destroys ecosystems, contaminates essential resources, such as air and water, and undermines food security. This fuels poverty, inequality, and new social tensions that can contribute to the emergence of further conflicts."

To break this cycle, the Pope Leo suggests that authentic ecological conversion and a peaceful world demand that we "renew our hearts." This inner transformation allows new possibilities to be opened. "What has been used for destruction," he reflects, "can be redirected toward life, toward the care of the poor, the nourishment of the hungry, and the safeguarding of creation."

BLAST FROM THE PAST

I was recently handed what I consider as an “Amateur Historian”, a vital piece of Nostalgia, by a good friend and fellow parishioner of many years.

It was a Tardy St Gerard’s RC church “weekly Bulletin” dated 23rd October 1977, “The Thirtieth Sunday of the Year”. How times have changed in almost 49 years, a long period in our lives but a mere drop in the ocean as regards the Roman Catholic Church.

The previous Sundays offertory amounted to £153.11p (£76.63p in envelopes, £76.48p loose change). The Sunday attendance was 943!

To cater for this ‘astounding’ attendance, there were 4 Sunday masses — 8.30, 9.30, 10.45 and 6.30 in the evening. There were also 2 masses on a Saturday, 9.10 and 5.30 in the evening. Weekday masses were as follows: — Mon 9.10, Tues 9.10, Wed 7.30 in the evening, Thurs 7.30 in the evening and 9.10 on a Friday.

Fr Boniface Hunt OSB was the Parish Priest overseeing everything.

The 300 club was won by the following: —

1st Mrs Brierley, 2nd Mr O’Leary and 3rd Mr O’Leary.

A special prize of £20 (Megabucks in 1977!) was won by Wilf Seddon.

A prayer group met at 3.30 pm in the Presbytery on Sunday. The men’s Guild at 8.00 pm on Monday, again in the Presbytery.

Bingo jackpots were: — £36, £100 and £36.

The Sacred Heart Guild mass was moved to a Thursday due to the Jumble Sale!

A Men’s Games Night had been arranged at St Augustine’s Social Club in Preston (pre Parochial Centre)

While a family Disco for Halloween, run by the Ladies Guild was to take place on Friday Oct 28th, in the Turner Memorial Hall (Pre Concert Room). Donations of cakes and raffle prizes were to be much appreciated.

At that time a survey was being conducted to find out the best time for Evening Mass on weekdays. Finally, the Rosary was said every day in October.

On Thursdays at the Grotto at 7.15pm. On other days, excepting Sundays, the Rosary was said in different houses in the Parish at 8.15pm. Different groups attended, these being SVP, SHG Choir, KSC and BSG.

On reflection, looking back at one of the most significant articles in this piece of nostalgia, namely the weekend Mass attendance of 943, I would hazard a guess that churches, both Roman Catholic and other denominations, will find the plummeting church attendance commonplace since October 1977.

Who knows what the reasons are:

- Pubs, clubs and shops including superstores opening 7 days and longer hours.
- People working 7 days a week.
- Sporting events, both participating or watching.
- People's loss of faith or basically cannot be bothered to attend church.
- People only attending churches for christenings, weddings and funerals. Let's not forget the Annual Christmas Eve Vigil Mass.

Tony Billington

Editor: To put into context the value of money now to then the Bank of England Inflation Calculator equates the sums mentioned in this article to:

£153:11 now £942.41, £100 now £607.03, £20 now £121.41

St Gerard Majella: Marking 300 Years Since His Birth



St Gerard Majella remains one of the Catholic Church's most beloved saints because he embodies holiness lived quietly, humbly, and generously. Three hundred years after his birth, his witness still speaks powerfully to families, expectant mothers, and anyone striving to serve God in the ordinary rhythms of life.

His Life: A Saint Formed by Simplicity and Service

Born in 1726 in Muro Lucano, Italy, Gerard Majella grew up in poverty, shaped by hardship and deep faith. He became a lay brother in the Redemptorists, embracing a life of manual labour, prayer, and obedience. Gerard never preached grand sermons or held high office; instead, he sanctified the everyday:

- Humble service — tailoring, gardening, and practical tasks done with love.
- Compassionate presence — especially to the poor, the sick, and children.
- Deep prayer — his life was marked by Eucharistic devotion and trust in God.
- His holiness was not dramatic; it was consistent, gentle, and quietly transformative.
- Patron of Mothers and Families

Gerard's most famous miracle occurred when he dropped his handkerchief while visiting a family. A young girl returned it, and Gerard told her to keep it — one day she would need it. Years later, during a dangerous childbirth, she remembered the handkerchief. The crisis passed, and both mother and child survived.

This story is why he is honoured as patron of:

- Expectant mothers
- Families
- Children

His intercession is sought worldwide, especially in times of pregnancy, miscarriage, and infant illness.

A Saint Who Suffered Quietly

Gerard's final years were marked by illness and misunderstanding. He faced false accusations with silence and trust, refusing to defend himself so as not to harm others. His obedience and humility during this trial became one of the most admired aspects of his spirituality.

He died on October 16, 1755, aged just 29 — a short life, but one overflowing with grace.

Why He Still Matters 300 Years Later

Gerard's legacy endures because he represents holiness that is accessible:

- Holiness in work — doing small tasks with great love.
- Holiness in family life — supporting parents, children, and the vulnerable.
- Holiness in suffering — responding with trust rather than bitterness.
- Holiness in prayer — living close to God without fanfare.

In an age of noise, pressure, and complexity, Gerard's quiet example feels more relevant than ever.

A Prayer for His Tercentenary

St Gerard Majella, gentle protector of mothers and families, pray for us as we honour your life 300 years after your return to God. Help us to serve with humility, to trust with courage, and to love with the generous heart you showed in every moment of your life.

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Thursday 6:30 pm

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

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament: Monday 6 to 6:30 pm

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

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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.

www.saintgerards.org.uk

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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

6th	St Bruno	22nd	St John Paul II
7th	Our Lady of the Rosary	23rd	St John of Capistano
9th	St John Henry Newman	24th	St Antony Mary Claret
10th	St Denis & Companions	25th	30th Sunday of the Year
11th	28th Sunday of the Year	26th	St Chad and Cedd
12th	St Wilfrid	28th	Sts Simon & Jude
13th	St Edward the Confessor	1st Nov	ALL SAINTS
14th	St Callistus	2nd	ALL SOULS
15th	St Teresa of Calcutta	3rd	St Martin de Porres
16th	St Gerard Majella	4th	St Charles Borromeo
15th	Our Lady fo Sorrows	7th	St Willibrord
17th	St Ignatius of Antioch		
18th	29th Sunday of the Year		
19th	St John De Berfeuf & Companions		

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