

### Our Church Website

Please note our website address is [StFrancis.Goosnargh@lrcd.org.uk](mailto:StFrancis.Goosnargh@lrcd.org.uk) Many thanks to Joseph Jacobs for all his work in creating the new website.

### Attendance and Collection

25th Jan Attendance 92 Collection £327.10

1st Feb Attendance 70 Collection £353.58

8th Feb Attendance 86 Collection £244.00

**People who are Unwell** If you would like the parish to pray for someone, please notify Father Sony on 01772 865229

### Feast Days

Fri- Women's World Day of Prayer - 6th March

Sat – Sts. Perpetua & Felicity

### Is it allowed the novel practice of removing holy water from the stoops during Lent?

In recent years, some Catholic churches have initiated the practice of emptying the holy fountains during Lent, to evoke a sense of the stark desert in which Jesus prayed and fasted for 40 days.

The novel practise of removing of Holy Water from the fountains during the season of Lent is not permitted, in particular, for two reasons:

1. The liturgical legislation in force does not foresee this innovation, which in addition to being 'praeter legem' is contrary to a balanced understanding of the season of Lent, which though truly being a season of penance, is also a season rich in the symbolism of water and baptism, constantly evoked in liturgical texts.
2. The encouragement of the Church that the faithful avail themselves frequently of the sacraments is to be understood to apply also to the season of Lent. The 'fast' and 'abstinence' which the faithful embrace in this season does not extend to abstaining from the sacraments or sacramentals of the Church.

The practice of the Church has been to empty the Holy Water fountains on the days of the Sacred Triduum in preparation of the blessing of the water at the Easter Vigil, and it corresponds to those days on which the Eucharist is not celebrated (i.e., Good Friday and Holy Saturday).

### **Catholic Family Retreat at Castlerigg Manor // March 27-29th // £160-230 per family-**

For the first time since Covid, Castlerigg Manor are bringing back their popular family retreats. There will be streams for different ages and fun activities for everybody including Mass in the evening and time to explore Keswick. For more info >> [castleriggmanor.com](http://castleriggmanor.com) >> events



## St Francis Hill Chapel

The Hill, Horns Lane, Goosnargh  
Preston PR32FJ

Telephone: 01772 865229  
Clergy: Fr Sony Jose Kadamthodu

[StFrancis.Goosnargh@lrcd.org.uk](mailto:StFrancis.Goosnargh@lrcd.org.uk)

Parish Safeguarding Representative –Maria Peel

## Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2nd Sunday of Lent Mass 10.30am

### ***Parish Mission Statement***

*Our Parish, guided by the example of our patron St Francis of Assisi, seeks to be a welcoming Catholic Community by living, sharing and growing in faith. We strive to deepen our own relationship with Christ and meet the needs of others.*

Today's Mass is being offered for **Tom and Rosalind Bolton**

We pray for all who are unwell in our parish especially  
Shirley Walker & Frank Morris,

We remember Brian Joseph Holden, Gerard Knight, Mary Christine Wells, Mary Kathleen Gillow, May Catherine Pole & Lawrence Ibison whose anniversaries occur around this time.

There will be mass on Tuesday morning @ 9.30am with Stations of the Cross @ 9.15am. Confession is available after mass.

Tea & Coffee will be served at the back of church after Sunday mass

### **CAFOD LENT FAMILY FAST DAY – Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February**

Many thanks to all who have returned their Family Fast envelopes today. There are envelopes at the back of church if you did not receive one last week. You can also donate to CAFOD by using the card reader machine – also located at the back of church. Many thanks for your support.

### **Longridge Foodbank Collection**

Anthony Eccles – from Longridge Foodbank collected our food donations last week. He collected 35kg of donations and has asked me to pass on thanks to everyone at St Francis. Their generosity is very much appreciated. We are continuing to collect for Longridge during Lent.

### **The Government VAT Reclaim Scheme.**

Further to my announcement after mass last Sunday, please see below an email I have received from the National Churches Trust regarding the Government's decision to end the VAT reclaim scheme for listed places of worship. Hill Chapel is a Grade 2 listed building and received a VAT refund of just over £40,000 on work carried out during our recent restoration project. Without that funding we would not have been able to complete the work. Please read the information below and, if possible, write to your MP voicing your concerns. Thank You. Mike Bryan

### **From the N.C.T. - Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme closes to new applications**

The Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme was due to end on 31 March 2026, or when funding ran out. Last week, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport confirmed that there is no remaining funding. Churches that were partway through an application for a VAT refund will no longer be able to submit a claim.

We know many of you were relying on the Scheme to help fund your repairs, and that this will be disappointing news. This marks the end of UK-wide Government support for listed places of worship. The new Places of Worship

Renewal Fund has not been set up yet; we are unsure when this will be in place. We hope it will give grants not only for repairs but also the adaptations, alteration and the addition of facilities as the evidence points to this being crucial to help with the long-term sustainability of many churches. However, at present all UK listed places of worship will have to pay a 20% tax on repairs, renovations and maintenance work.

### **What did the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme Government Review find out?**

We have heard from churches like yours how much of a lifeline the Scheme has been; the Government Review has also found it to be effective at making sure repairs were carried out in a timely way and at a higher standard than if the Scheme was not in place. This makes it harder to reconcile the reasons for ending the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme.

The review found out the Scheme offered “good value for money”. Our own research, The House of Good: Health, found that the community support – food banks, mental health support, parent and toddler groups – hosted and run by churches in the UK saved the NHS costs of £8.4 billion a year. The same as employing 230,000 full time nurses. Places of worship are providing a vital safety net for some of the most vulnerable people in the UK – but they cannot do this if their roof is leaking or tower crumbling.

Here at the National Churches Trust, we are doing all we can to raise awareness with MPs and policymakers on how devastating VAT changes are to places of worship.

If you've been affected by the Scheme ending, we recommend you write to your MP and share what this will mean for your church and local community. If you receive a reply, please let us know at [policy@nationalchurchestrust.org](mailto:policy@nationalchurchestrust.org) as this will help us as we also talk to MPs about the issues churches are facing and what they can do to help.

NCT 02/20/26