



Holy Trinity WATERHEAD

**Suggested
donation
50p**

March 2023

holytrinitywaterhead.co.uk

Services at Holy Trinity Church

Sunday 11:00 am Parish Worship
Wednesday 7:00 pm Family Communion

Baptisms and marriages by arrangement with the Vicar.

Please submit items for the April 2022 magazine by March. You can e-mail files to paulmonk111@gmail.com

People at Holy Trinity Church

Vicar

The Revd Dr Paul Monk
St Barnabas' Vicarage, Arundel Street, Oldham OL4 1NL
T: (0161) 624 7708 and E: paulmonk111@gmail.com

Assistant Curate

The Revd Denise Owen (Vicar of St Thomas' Church Moorside)
Tel: (0161) 652 0292 and E: therevd.dowen@yahoo.co.uk

Wardens

Val Crane (0161) 628 4977
John Wolstencroft (0161) 620 2401

Readers

Ruth Lees (emeritus) (0161) 624 0777
Lucie Reilly (07880) 861 751

Administrator	Sarah Gura	(07843) 178 762
Church Secretary	Zoe Liles	(07765) 963 899
Church Treasurer	Vicky Heaton	(07906) 077 058
Gift-aid Secretary	Vicky Heaton	(07906) 077 058
Parish Hall Manager	Daniel Reilly	(07788) 860 764
Rainbows	Sarah Wilson and Natalie Morris	
Brownies	Val Lees and Moira Belcher	
Guides	Karen and Lisa Cannon	
Beavers and Cubs	Lee Thompson	(07907) 907 354
Scouts	Mark Dickinson	(07976) 666 512

Everywhere I see unmistakable signs of growth. I see spring flowers in my garden and, as I look at the trees, the once-bare branches overhead display thousands of tiny buds. Even the verges beside the roads are proof positive that spring is nearly here.

In just the same way, I see signs of growth in the church. There is a sense of purpose and optimism in the air. I see tiny shoots of hope and love peeping into view. Just as the warmth of the sun melts the snow and allows bulbs to grow, so I see the Spirit of God allowing our hearts to grow. And there is a tangible sense that these small-scale signs of change will lead to bigger and more glorious displays of God's love and power and glory. Even the building is looking fresher and new.

It's an exciting time, as we wait in anticipation. I look at the shoots in the garden and wonder what colour the flower will take, and at the same time I see signs of God in people, in situations, in relationships, and I wonder how God will use them to promote his Kingdom. What a privilege to see God in action in this way!

The miracle of growth is so amazing that it's wise to remember how vulnerable such small beginnings can be. The shoots could be killed: the heavy frost of a single night can kill the growth achieved during a whole month. In the same way, we can easily to destroy the wonderful signs of God's presence in the Church: we can refuse the demands of his overwhelming love. We can refuse to accept the challenge of accepting his promises. We can live as we did before we heard of God's grace. We can refuse to believe that growth and change is even possible.

So as you look at the crocuses and snowdrops, the hellebore and the leaf buds, remember to look also at the way God's Kingdom is breaking into new life all around us. And remember, too, that we must be people who by gentle nurturing enhance that growth, and promote the newness we see everywhere.

A final thought: perhaps any Lenten discipline we choose to adopt could explicitly aim to promote all this growth?

Wishing you every blessing within the wonder of God's love:

PAUL

Loving does not necessarily mean liking. But it still is loving, yes—totally, completely, utterly. Take the key of wisdom and unlock your own heart. Then let people in one by one. Listen to them, with full attention, with all your mind, heart, body and soul, unto exhaustion. And look!—the exhaustion will be lifted, and you will be able to listen still more. Yes, love must be communicated person to person; otherwise it will not be effective.

Catherine de Hueck Doherty

Bible readings for March

Sunday 5 March

Second Sunday of Lent

First: Genesis 12:1–4a

Epistle: Romans 4:1–5, 13–17

Gospel: John 3:1–17

Sunday 12 March

Third Sunday of Lent

First: Exodus 17:1–7

Epistle: Romans 5:1–11

Gospel: John 4:5–42

Sunday 19 March

Mothering Sunday

First: 1 Samuel 16:1–13

Epistle: Ephesians 5:8–14

Gospel: John 9

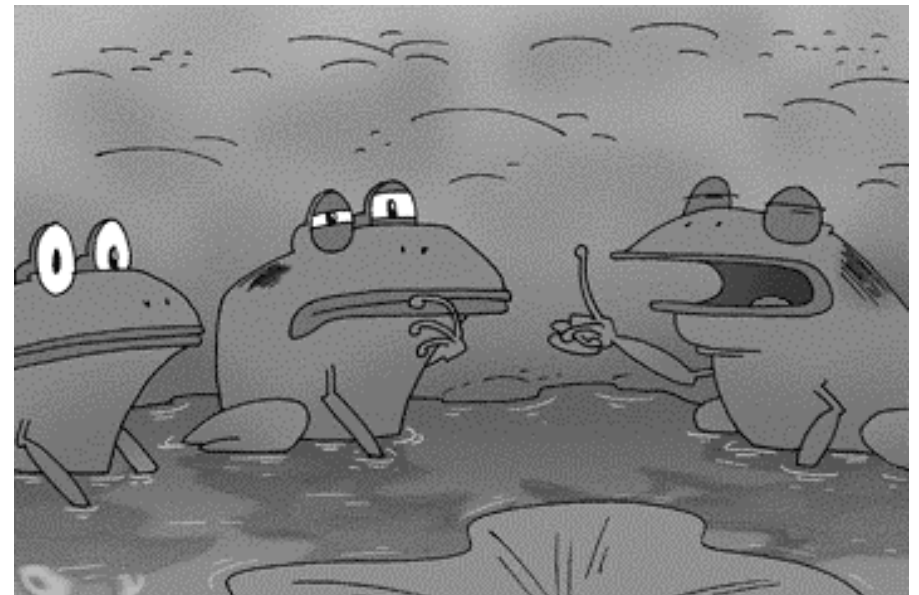
Sunday 26 March

Passion Sunday

First: Ezekiel 37:1–14

Epistle: Romans 8:6–11

Gospel: John 11:1–45



**'Flies are the substance of things hoped for; the
tasty evidence of things not green!'**

(with sincere apologies to Hebrews 11:1)

Have you ever wondered why we have different readings each week in a church service and, if so, who chooses them?

Reading the Bible requires time and some skill because it is a huge book, not only in terms of its length but also its scope. We therefore need help when reading it. The portions read aloud on a Sunday represent a highly systematised form of pre-selection.

There are generally three or four readings on a Sunday: Old Testament, then a psalm or part of a psalm, a reading from the New Testament, and finally a portion from one of the four Gospels.

Often the readings are chosen to help explore the nature of the Sunday we are celebrating. Most obviously, the readings at Christmas describe the birth of Jesus and the readings at Easter describe his resurrection. The readings for saints' days generally reflect an aspect of the saint's life, so the readings for biblical saints such as St Peter describe key moments during their earthly lives as preserved in the Bible; readings for more recent saints are chosen to help us understand how and why their lives reflect the Gospel they tried to live. For example, St Benedict helped pioneer monasticism and so the readings set for his day on 11 July recall Jesus telling his disciples to give up their belongings (Luke 18:18–22).

But much of the Church year does not follow either the life of Jesus or his saints in an obvious, systematic way. The longest season in the Church year is usually called 'Trinity' because it starts on Trinity Sunday in May or June and extends through to Kingdom Season, which starts in October. In terms of Bible readings, this season is best regarded as a time to learn the Christian faith, so each Sunday of the Trinity season describes an aspect of Christianity such as God, prayer, grace, atonement, and so on. The readings for a Sunday are chosen to complement each other and (it is to be hoped) enable a mature reflection, so everyone from beginner to long-standing Christian can feed their faith by hearing them.

The lectionary

Choosing readings from the Bible

But who chooses these readings? The Church itself selects them and publishes a kind of diary called a lectionary, which is pronounced 'leck-shun-ary' (the word comes from an old Latin word meaning 'to read').

Some lectionaries look like a slim paperback and operate much like a diary. They list the Bible passage against each day's date. The entries in those lists take the form of abbreviated Bible citations. For example, an entry for Trinity Sunday might say 'Jn 3:1–17' rather than 'The Gospel according to Saint John, chapter 3, verses 1 to 17'.

More complicated lectionaries will reproduce all the readings word for word.

Some Christians want to take part in many services a day. That's why a lectionary usually lists the readings for a variety of services such as Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, and Holy Communion. These services differ in terms of their content but the same underlying principles apply when choosing the readings.

The Church of England lectionary is available online, for example through its website. And the 'Daily Prayer' app can be read from the screen of a phone or tablet. To register, go to:

<https://www.chpublishing.co.uk/apps/daily-prayer>.

**Blessed Lord,
who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning:
help us so to hear them,
to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them
that, through patience, and the comfort of your holy word,
we may embrace and for ever hold fast
the hope of everlasting life,
which you have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.**

The collect for the last Sunday of Trinity ('Bible Sunday')

The Bible is so long that it would be difficult—if not impossible—to memorise all of it. So we subdivide it into small manageable ‘chunks’ of three progressively smaller sizes: we speak of books, chapters and verses. When citing the position of a passage, we first name the book, then the chapter and finally the verse or verses.

Probably one of the most famous verses in the Bible says, ‘God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, Jesus Christ, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.’ It is the sixteenth verse in the third chapter of the Gospel according to St John. We cite this verse as John 3:16.

To actually find this verse, we first find the Gospel of John, perhaps using some form of index. We next find the third chapter and then locate its sixteenth verse.

Several similar conventions exist, so we might write ‘John’ or ‘Jn’, and might write ‘3.16’ with a dot or ‘3:16’ with a colon. And we might enclose the whole thing in brackets, as (John 3:16), but they each mean the same.

But this system isn’t always specific enough. Consider the following verse, which is long and more complicated than usual:

‘I took you from the ends of the earth, from its farthest corners I called you. I said, ‘You are my servant’; I have chosen you and have not rejected you’. (Isaiah 41:9).

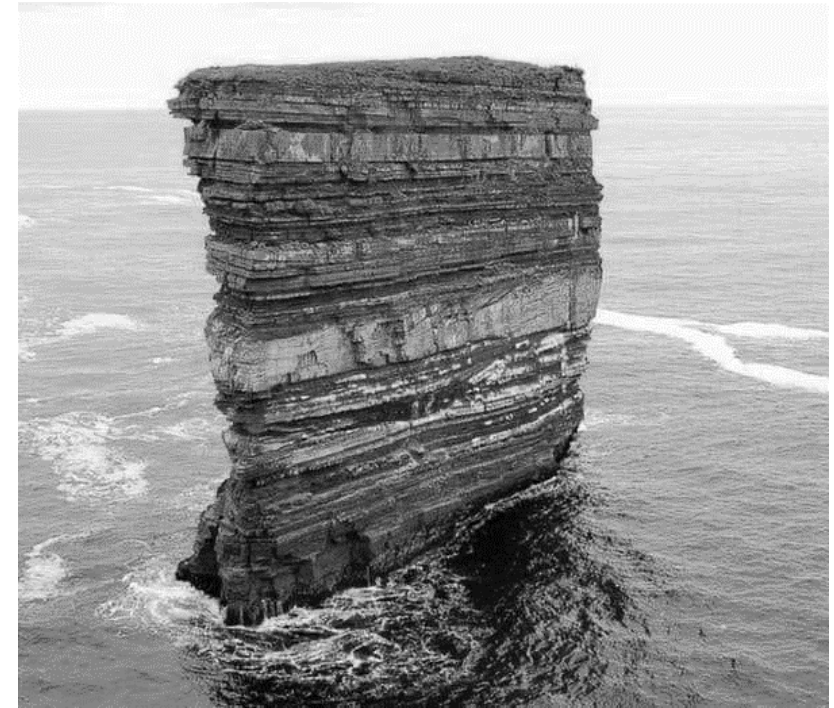
This verse is so long that just citing the book, chapter and verse is probably not likely to give us sufficient precision. For example, we may wish to refer only to the middle bit that says, ‘I said, “You are my servant”.’ In such cases, to further pare down the text, we split the verse into its component parts—in practice, we generally split each portion at the major punctuation marks. We then list the component parts sequentially, as verse 9a, 9b, 9c, and so on:

- | | | |
|---|---|--------------------|
| a. I took you from the ends of the earth, | } | Isaiah 41:9 |
| b. from its farthest corners I called you. | | |
| c. I said, ‘You are my servant’; | | |
| d. I have chosen you and have not rejected you. | | |

so we cite the part of the verse
we wanted as Isaiah 41:9c.

How to divide the Bible into verses

Dún Briste Sea Stack at Downpatrick Head,
Ballycastle, Mayo, Ireland



This gigantic outcrop of rock thrusts up from the cold, angry waters of the Atlantic Ocean. It clearly shows the rock is made up of a series of horizontal layers, one below the next from high in the air to beneath the water.

These layers deposited slowly over a period of about 380 million years as different forms of sand or living thing sank to the floor of a primeval swamp. Stated another way, this rock acts like a colossal diary describing an unimaginable length of time.

This geological diary tells us more. Each of the chemical elements in the countless granules of sand in the rock were created by gigantic pressures deep within a supernova in space at least 10 thousand million years ago.

This lone pillar of rock therefore bears record to the ongoing work of creation. Stated differently, it describes the ongoing work of God, starting at creation and continuing into today.

Ah, Lord God! Behold, you have made the heavens and the earth
by your great power and by your outstretched arm.

There is nothing that is too hard for you.

Jeremiah 32:17

A profitable Lent

Many of us will be giving up something for Lent. If that giving up saves money—we're not buying wine, chocolate or whatever—then we can use the money saved for a good cause.

This year, the church will be collecting money for *Dr Kershaw's Hospice*, which is struggling because of the cost-of-living crisis. We're calling this appeal, 'Jars of grace'.

We're offering two prizes: first, for the best decorated jar and also a separate, different prize for the jar that collects the most for Kershaw's. (A member of the congregation is donating these prizes, so they are not taken out of the money we've collected.)

Lent appeal 2023

Jars of grace

The collection from this year's appeal will go to *Kershaw's Hospice*.

- We will offer a prize to the best decorated jar.
- We will offer a prize to the largest amount collected.

Collection starts from Ash Wednesday 22 February 2023.
Please submit all jars by the end of April. Thank you.

Holy
Trinity
WATERHEAD



From the parish registers

Christian funeral

Thursday 9 February	Irene Wigglesworth, at Oldham Crematorium
Friday 10 February	McDonald Straughan, at St Barnabas Church
Wednesday 15 February	Franziska Green, at Oldham Crematorium
Wednesday 22 February	David Williams, at Oldham Crematorium

Memorial

Sunday 26 February	Maria Dulce Salvador de Oliveira Freitas, in St Barnabas Church
--------------------	--

The garbage bin

Bean tins, egg shells, tea bags, potato peelings,
sodden paper and broken glass
clattered into our garbage bin
which wheezed with surprise
as I stamped my foot on its fly-freckled assortment
in search for more space.
Thankfully, two days later,
the bin was empty:
the fetid debris having been humped off
to a faraway rubbish dump where
dogs pad,
cats wash silently in the sunshine
and sparrows argue among dust and paper.

Jesus,
I come to you tonight
with all the muddled rubbish of my life
feeling so soiled,
so crushed,
sick with myself.
It's been a gruelling day
and the rubbish which I tip and pile and press
on you
has made me feel twenty years older;
has caused me to hate myself for loving myself
more than you;
has resulted in a longing to be more naive
and unaffected instead of
enlightened, cultured and professional
(as I sometimes consider myself to be);
has made me feel wistful of slipping far away
from the public glare into obscure nonentity.
I cry out to you tonight Jesus
because of broken resolutions;
temptations I thought I had the power to play with;
loss of patience when you were alive within me;
help me Lord!
Please help me,
because reeking rubbish is scattered everywhere
in the backyard of my heart
and I feel in such an awful muddle.
I am filled to overflowing Lord -
collect me.

Phil Streeter



On Passion Sunday this year, 26 March, we remember the story of when Jesus raised his friend Lazarus back to life after he died.

Colour this page

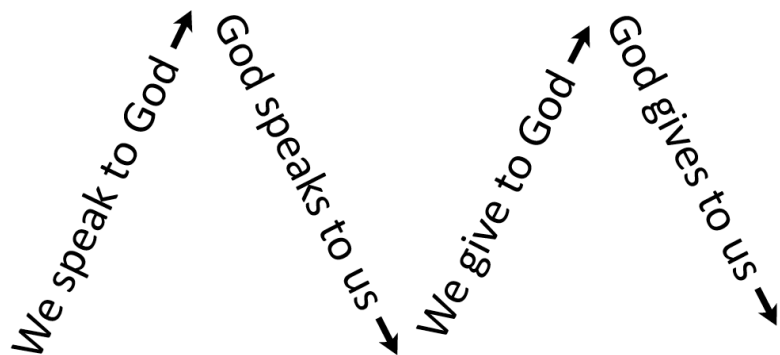
K A U K E Q I N C A R N A T I O N R W E H Y F S
A E W P I Y E A C O M M O N V O C A T I O N P Z
S V E U N N C R R X E C I F I R C A S A E I U T
U A T N X O G R V Z F B G R U S N A X E R M S N
C N C R B C I D E H S G K R C S K J Q I R N A E
I G Q R L L T T O M E A E D C A I Y T P E O C M
C E D I E E G L A M F V L W P O F U H A A I R E
H L G D S D I L L M O O K V Q A A U H O L S A G
R I W F S N C E W S R F S U A L P Y G Y P S M D
I Z O S E Y A H S H A I G K W T O B P P R I E U
S A V S D D X A R V L F F O R L I T A E E M N J
T T S N T X P A C I O S R N D O V O F A S S T T
I I R N R Z Y Q K J S K A T O C W I N S E U A S
A O P B I A E G E U S M S I C C L L R F N S V A
N N R A N G P I R O F I N H N L Y I A C C E I L
I B O P I B E O F U R T U W A T B P P P E J P P
N U P T T P I M S A T R K N Z O S X G I R V U C
I W H I Y G E H H T C I R M D M V L A G N O Y J
T H E S X R Y C K H L E L E G K D R D Y A C C J
A I T M C H U E A Q T E T A N E M U H C E T A C
T M B Y Y E E N Y E E F S G T D E D V Y Z O F J
I K D D T I R I P S Y L O H E H T F O S T F I G
O X S J L U P S A N C T I F Y I N G G R A C E P
N R Y R E T S Y M L A H C S A P S P M Y O I W B

Real presence	Sacrifice	Eucharist	Passover
Gifts of the holy spirit	Confirmation	Sacred chrism	Catechumenate
Saints	Eternal life	Prophet	Salvation
Incarnation	Baptism	Holiness	Common vocation
Christian initiation	Sanctifying grace	Sacrament	Spiritual works of mercy
Corporeal works of mercy	Last judgement	Paschal mystery	Liturgy
Evangelization	Church	Apostles	Kingdom of god
Jesus mission	Blessed trinity		

Can you find these words and names in the grid above?

Wordsearch

Have you ever wondered if our Sunday services have a structure and, if so, what it is? This simple analysis starts with upper-case M, which is the initial letter of **Mass**—one of the words used to describe a service with liturgy, Bible readings, and a Eucharist.



The first half of the service is often called the **liturgy of the Word**. It comprises two main parts, both of which involve speaking or singing:

We speak to God

We sing songs or hymns of praise.

We say sorry to God, using the words of the confession.

The Gloria ('Glory to God in the highest ...').

The Collect (a prayer to God).

God speaks to us

God speaks through readings from his word, the Bible. Usually, there are readings from the Old Testament, from the epistles, and from one of the Gospels.

The sermon: God speaks through the preacher as they seek to explain the Bible readings, and place them in context for us today.

The Creed, which is an inspired form of words describing belief in God.

This way of analysing is somewhat artificial because, for example, prayers to God occur throughout the service, and (hopefully) we remain open to God speaking to us from start to finish.

This way of looking at the structure of a service comes from Fr Gerald O'Mahony SJ, and has been adapted slightly.

The second half of the service is generally called the **liturgy of the sacrament**, which also comprises two parts. Both involve giving:

We give to God

Prayers of intercession

The offertory, when we give God our gifts of money and the gift of food (bread and wine) ready to be blessed.

The prayers of consecration, when the priest prays over the bread and wine, offering them to God.

We pray the Lord's Prayer.

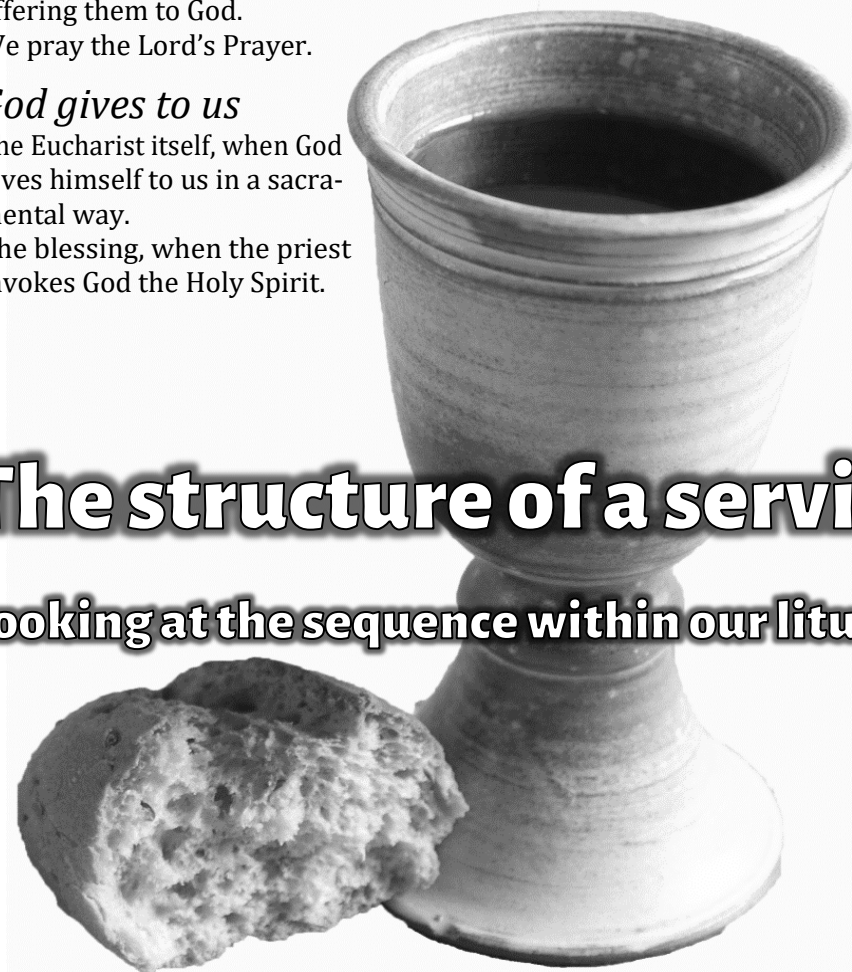
God gives to us

The Eucharist itself, when God gives himself to us in a sacramental way.

The blessing, when the priest invokes God the Holy Spirit.

The structure of a service

Looking at the sequence within our liturgy



Dates for your diary

Sunday 2 April	11:00 am	Palm Sunday	
Monday 3 April	7:00 pm	Holy Monday	Compline
Tuesday 4 April	7:00 pm	Holy Tuesday	Compline
Wednesday 5 April	7:00 pm	Holy Wednesday	Eucharist
Thursday 6 April	7:00 pm	Maundy Thursday	
	9:00 pm	Vigil	until midnight
Friday 7 April	11:00 am	Good Friday	
	12:00	Meditations at the Cross	at Barnabas Church
Sunday 9 April	11:00 am	Easter Day	
Sunday 1 October	11:30 am	Harvest Festival	
Sunday 29 October	4:00 pm	Commemoration of the faithful departed	
Sunday 12 Nov	11:30 am	Remembrance	
Weds 17 December	7:00 pm	Carol Service	includes Tame Valley Brass
Sunday 24 Dec	4:00 pm	Christingles	
Sunday 24 Dec	11:30 pm	Midnight Mass	
Monday 25 Dec	9:30 am	Christmas Day	at Barnabas Church

Stoking the fire of love

The vision of God looks into the heart
to see whether there is some modesty there,
no matter what your words sound like,
because the heart is what matters.
Speech is secondary. The essence is what's real.
So what is secondary matters less.
How long must I keep telling this story?
I want burning, burning:
become intimate with that burning!
Light up a bonfire of love in your soul,
burn up thought and speech!
O Moses, those who know the "right" way are of one kind,
but they whose souls and spirits burn
are of another sort.

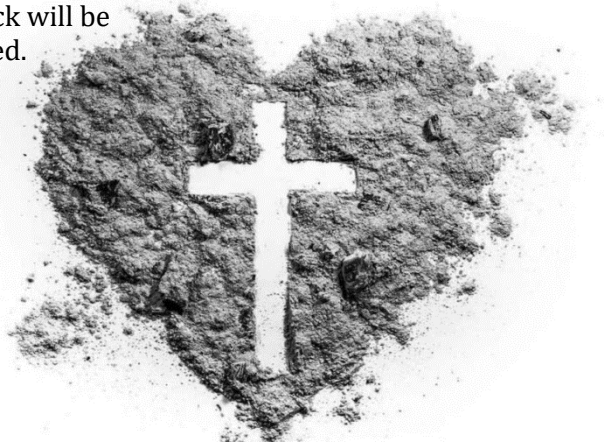
Rumi

Preaching themes this Lent

This year, it has been decided to preach over Lent using a series of inter-connected themes. They are:

1. **Lent and the Bible**
2. **Lent and personal holiness**
3. **Lent and the Church**
4. **Lent and our families (for Mothering Sunday)**
5. **Lent and identifying with Christ (for Passion Sunday)**
6. **Lent and the social Gospel (for Palm Sunday)**
7. **Easter Day—the culmination of a good Lent**

This is a new venture, so
your feedback will be
greatly valued.
Thank you.



**Lent is a time of going very deeply into ourselves.
What is it that stands between us and God?
Between us and our brothers and sisters?
Between us and life, the life of the Spirit?
Whatever it is,
let us relentlessly tear it out, without a moment's
hesitation.**

Catherine de Huerk Doherty

A blessing

The world is too beautiful for anything but love:
May your eye be so blessed you see God in everyone;
Your ears, so you hear the cry of the poor;
May your hands be so blessed
that everything you touch is a sacrament;
Your lips, so that you speak nothing but the truth with love;
May your feet be so blessed you run
to those who need you.
And may your heart be so opened,
so set on fire, that your love,
your love, changes everything.
And the blessing God the Almighty,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
Be with you now and remain with you always.
Amen.

Catherine de Hueck Doherty was born on 15 August 1896 to wealthy parents in Russia. She was baptised into the Russian Orthodox Church and her upbringing was immersed in the riches of Orthodoxy.

At the age of 15, Catherine married her first cousin, Boris de Hueck. Soon afterward, at the outbreak of World War I, she served as a nurse at the front, and was horrified at what she experienced. She returned to Russia and the Russian Revolution occurred not long afterward. She only just escaped (with her husband) to Finland. They served with the Allied army in Murmansk and were evacuated to England in 1919, but immigrated to Toronto, where Catherine gave birth to a son.

The family grew prosperous but her marriage failed. She became dissatisfied with a materialistic life and began to feel the promptings of a deeper call. A key event occurred when she read Matthew 19:21, 'Arise! Go, sell all you possess ... take up your cross and follow me.' And so, in 1932, with the blessing of her bishop, she gave away all her possessions and went to live in the slums of Toronto. Others, attracted by her radical gospel witness, came to join her, and *Friendship House* was born. She begged food and clothing, and organised activities for local youths.

Catherine's first marriage was annulled and she remarried in 1943. She and her new husband Eddie later took vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Many years later, Eddie was ordained into one of the ancient denominations of the Middle East.

Her new marriage and monastic-sounding vows brought great stability, which helped her to discern a bigger vision. But this new vision caused disagreements between her and the staff at *Friendship House*. She grew to believe its vision was too modest, although it already comprised a shelter for the homeless, meals for the hungry, recreation and books for the local young, and a newspaper to make known the social teachings of the Church. She now wanted more.

In 1938 Catherine initiated an interracial project in Harlem, New York, living with and serving the African-Americans. This work soon expanded into other cities such as Chicago, Washington, D.C., and Portland, Oregon. She lectured and taught widely at this time, so that *Friendship House* became very well known in the US Church, though this inevitably brought with it attendant pressures and commitments.

Some friends, such as the young Thomas Merton, recognised in her the power of the Holy Spirit and an unwavering fidelity to Christ's Church, but others were frightened by her Russian bluntness. Yet others simply could not grasp the largeness of her vision, especially because her experience of the ways of God were so foreign to them. Catherine

left after a painful difference of opinion over the nature of the project.

Catherine and Eddie withdrew to Ontario in Canada: they thought of retiring but God had other ideas, and a project based on *Madonna House* developed. At the main house, guests share the life of the community, learning a Christian family spirit and how to incarnate the Gospel in everyday life. It proved to be the most lasting and most fruitful phase of Catherine's work.

The community grew to become a vision of the Gospel lived out in everyday life. Its website describes the vision as, 'Offering an experience of Gospel life to guests who come to participate fully in the community life. In the Madonna House way of life are the seeds of a new Civilization of Love.' Today, Madonna House numbers over 200 members, with foundations around the world.

Catherine de Hueck Doherty died in Ontario on 14 December 1985, at the age of 89. Her books have never been out of print since.

For more information, go to:

<https://publications.madonnahouse.org/collections/catherine-doherty>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catherine_Doherty



Catherine de Hueck Doherty



These twin images show sunlight passing through the light of a fountain in Italy, located in L'Aquila. The water is ordinary but mere light has transformed it into a thing of pure magic, of flowing gold.

Faith does something very similar: it takes everyday things and, by allowing God to illuminate them and pass through them, we see them with the maker's trademark glory streaming from Heaven toward us.

This insight demonstrates why a key task of a true Christian is to look for God and the way He transforms things, looking for beauty and goodness as ways of finding Him.

The insight also explains why St Paul insists,

Whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

Philippians 4:8–9

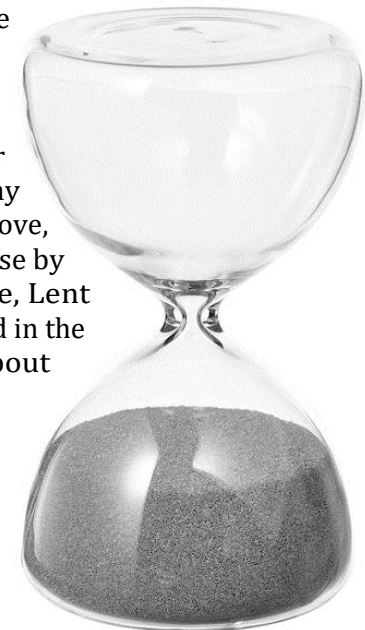
Did you know?

The Spirit sent [Jesus] out into the wilderness, and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him. *Mark 1:12–13*

The number 'forty' occurs extremely widely in the Bible, and almost always concerning a number of days or years, or an age.

There are a great examples: Noah was in the ark during a flood for 40 days (Genesis 7:4); the ritual time to embalm Isaac after his death was 40 days (Genesis 50:3); Isaac was 40 when he married Rebekah (Genesis 25:20) and Esau was 40 when he married Judith (Genesis 26:34); by tradition, Moses was 40 when he fled into the desert; it took 40 years for the chosen people to reach the promised land (Exodus 16:35); Moses waited on Mount Sinai for 40 days before God gave him the Ten Commandments (Exodus 24:15); Joshua was 40 when he spied on Canaan (Joshua 14:7); Jonah told Nineveh to fast for 40 days or it would be overthrown (Jonah 3:4); a very ancient tradition said the time between God creating Adam and Eve and the Fall was 40 days and Jesus ('the Second Adam') fasted in the wilderness for 40 days (Matthew 4:1, Mark 1:12, and Luke 4:2). What's going on?

All languages have oddities and idioms. In English, we have many ways of indicating an approximate (or unknown) length of time, so we might say something 'took ages' or it was 'yonks ago'. At the time the scriptures were being compiled and edited (probably 600–400 BC), the usual way of indicating an approximate or uncertain duration was to say 'forty'. In each of the cases above, we could therefore paraphrase by saying 'about'. For example, Lent remembers when Jesus fasted in the wilderness 'for a time of about forty days'.



The Book of Ruth is named after its central figure, Ruth, who became the great-grandmother of King David and an ancestor of Jesus (Ruth 4:21–22 and Matthew 1:1,5). It is one of only two Biblical books bearing the name of a woman; the other is Esther.

The author of this literary gem focuses on Ruth's selfless devotion to her mother-in-law Naomi (1:16–17; 2:11–12; 3:10; 4:15) and her future husband Boaz's kindness to them both (chapters 2–4). The book seeks to underscore the importance of faithful love among God's kingdom people.

Ruth is a history book, and is placed between Judges and 1 Samuel because it is set 'in the days when the judges judged'. That time was characterised by moral and religious decay, oppression by foreign powers and national disunity. The book describes a rare time of peace between Israel and Moab.

Before the main story commences, we learn of an Israelite family from Bethlehem—Elimelech and his wife Naomi, and their two sons Mahlon and Chilion. They had emigrated to the nearby country of Moab. Elimelech's sons married Moabite women: Mahlon married Ruth and Chilion married Orpah. Elimelech later died.

Naomi's two sons later died in Moab (1:4), maybe following disease or famine because the book tells us the Moabite harvest had failed.

The book starts with Naomi returning to Bethlehem. She told her daughters-in-law to leave her and return to their respective mothers and re-marry. Orpah reluctantly left; but Ruth was defiant, and said to her mother-in-law Naomi, 'Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me' (1:16–17). That a foreigner from Moab shows this amount of love shows the truth that participation in the kingdom of God is decided, not by blood or birth, but by conformity of life to the will of God. Her devotion to Naomi marks her as a true daughter of Israel despite being a gen-

tile; she is therefore a worthy ancestor of David. Furthermore, her place in that ancestry shows that *all* nations will be represented in the kingdom of David's greater Son.

Ruth and Naomi returned to Bethlehem just as the barley harvest was starting. They were by now totally destitute so, in order to support herself and her mother-in-law, Ruth went to the fields to glean. (Leviticus comes to life here, with its injunction to leave part of the harvest for the needy, and with all of its concern and compassion for the underprivileged within society.) By chance, the first field Ruth visited belonged to a local grandee called Boaz. He was kind to Ruth because he knew of her loyalty to her mother-in-law. Later, Ruth told her mother-in-law Naomi of Boaz's kindness, and the way he let her glean in his field through the remainder of the harvest season.

We then learn that Boaz was a close relative of Naomi's husband and legally obliged to marry Mahlon's widow, Ruth, in order to carry on his bloodline. He agreed to do so. Boaz and Ruth then married and had a son, who was named Obed. He was 'the father of Jesse, the father of David' (Ruth 4:13–17), that is, the grandfather of King David.

The book of Ruth is a Hebrew short story told with considerable skill. It is unexcelled in its compactness, vividness, warmth, beauty and effectiveness. Most striking is the contrast between the two main characters, Ruth and Boaz: the one is young, foreign, destitute and a widow, while the other is middle-aged, well-to-do and an Israelite securely established in his home community.

The Book of Ruth

Ruth fact file

AUTHOR The author is unknown. Some Jewish traditions suggest the prophet Samuel, but that idea is unlikely because the mention of David (Ruth 4:17,22) implies a much later date. The Hebrew and literary style suggest the book was written during the period of the monarchy.

PERIOD DESCRIBED The time of the Judges, so 1320s BC.

MAIN THEME How a good and gentile woman became an ancestor of Jesus.

KEY VERSE 1:16–17, Ruth said, 'Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me'

For more information, please visit

<https://www.biblica.com/resources/scholar-notes/niv-study-bible/intro-to-ruth>

<http://biblescripture.net/Ruth.html>

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-story-of-the-book-of-ruth>

By the turn of the last century, the population of Oldham was growing so fast that many local clergy became concerned that their churches would not cope. Help was needed so, in 1907, the Bishop of Manchester appointed a commission to oversee the provision of Churches and pastoral oversight in Oldham.

This commission proposed that Waterhead Church could create a daughter (or 'Mission') church. Its area of responsibility was formed by carving out a portion from each of the adjacent parishes of St James' Derker and Holy Trinity Waterhead. Waterhead's curate at the time, the Revd T C Holt, was appointed Curate-in-Charge of the new venture.

The daughter church was called 'St Ambrose'. While it was clearly dedicated to St Ambrose of Milan (d. 397), the reasons for this unusual choice of patron remain unclear; it may be relevant that Waterhead's Parishioners' Sidesman at this time was one Ambrose Harrop.

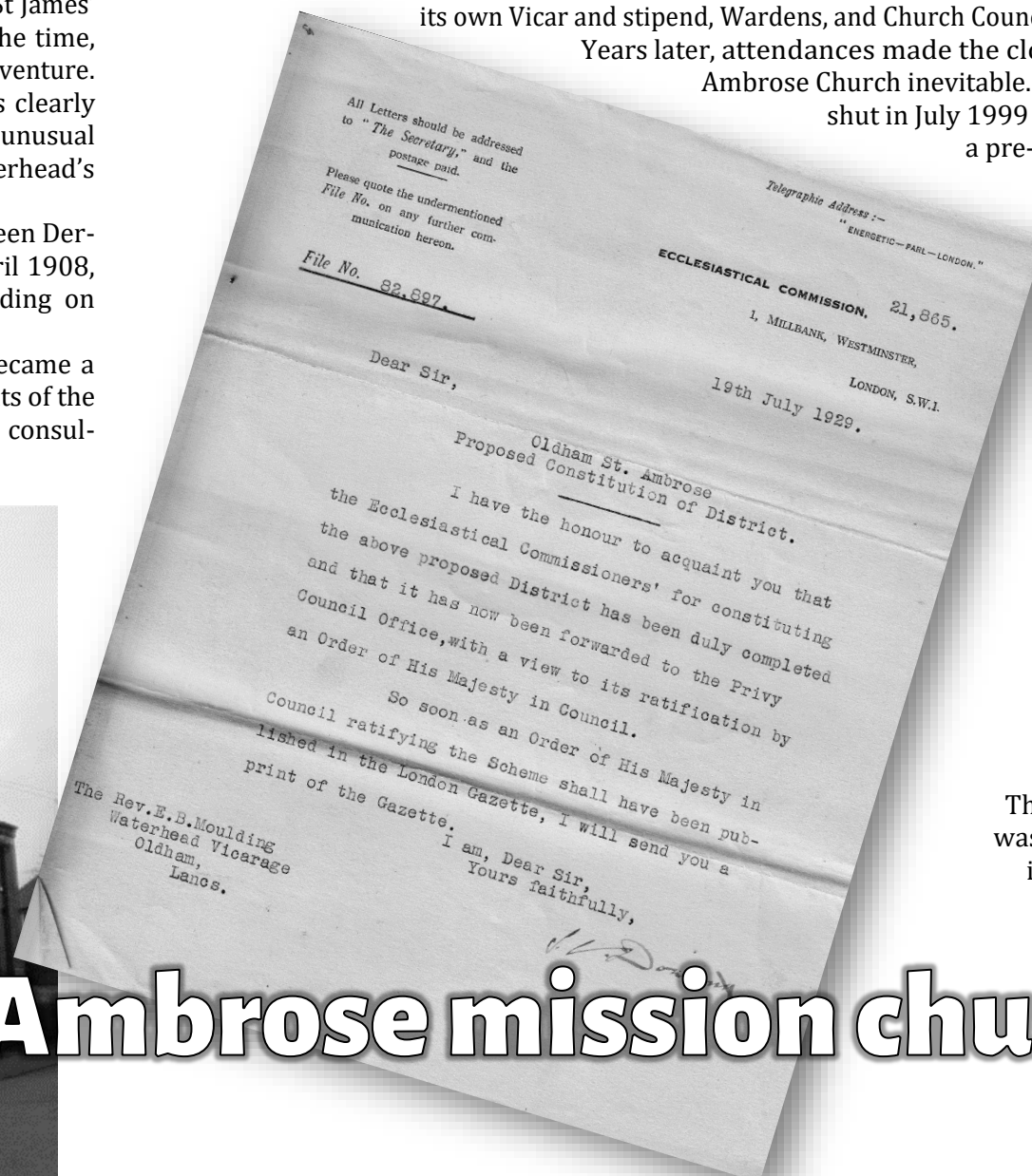
The new building was located on Prince Charlie Street between Derker and Watersheddings. Its corner stone was laid on 25 April 1908, and the Bishop of Manchester formally dedicated the building on 1 February 1909.

St Ambrose was given more autonomy in 1929 when it became a 'conventional district'—an area placed between the incumbents of the parishes in which the district was situated. Those laborious consul-

tations occurred between Waterhead Church as the founding 'parent' and the neighbouring parishes of Derker, Hey, and Moorside; Clarksfield did not acquire autonomy until relatively soon afterwards in 1932, so was not involved.

The letter below was written to the Vicar of Waterhead, the Revd E B Moulding, who was strongly in favour. The authorisation went through the Privy Council in London in July 1929. St Ambrose now had its own Vicar and stipend, Wardens, and Church Council.

Years later, attendances made the closure of St Ambrose Church inevitable. It formally shut in July 1999 and is now a pre-school and nursery.



This correspondence was given to the Vicar in early February.



St Ambrose mission church


140 ASHTON RD / OLDHAM / OL81QT

HEADHUNTERS OLDHAM

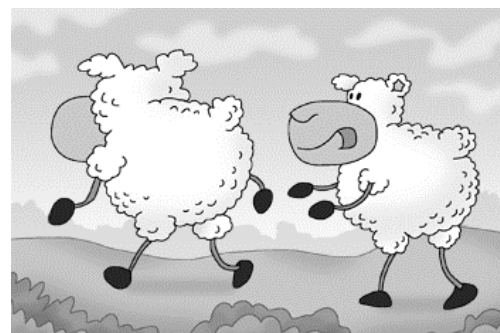
HAIR SALON

Tel: 0161 624 2984

Email: headhuntersoldham@icloud.com

 @headhuntersoldham

 @headhuntersoldham



It's obvious that we have gone
astray. Can we please stop
and ask for directions?

(with sincere apologies to Isaiah 53:6)

ZIG ZAG

T: 0161 620 9162

497 Huddersfield Road
Waterhead, Oldham
OL4 2JG

G BARLOW & SONS LTD

FUNERAL DIRECTORS

Established 1868

Union Street West, Oldham, OL8 1DQ

Telephone (0161) 624 4301

24 hours

Personal attention

Private Chapel of Rest

Funerals completely Furnished

Pre-payment plans available

An independent family business

FREE MEASURE • FREE QUOTATION • FREE FITTING



Harmony BLINDS (Oldham) Ltd

- ✓ **Family Run Business**
- ✓ **Friendly & Reliable**
- ✓ **Made to measure on all types of blinds**
- ✓ **All Blinds Guaranteed**
- ✓ **Large Choice of Fabrics**

Call: 0161 626 9688

Visit our new showroom at Unit 39, The Acorn Centre, Barry Street, Oldham, OL1 3NE

OPEN: Mon – Fri 9.30 - 5.00pm Saturday 09.00 – 1.00pm

www.harmonyblindsoldham.co.uk

Tel: 0161 624 3174

All our breads, pies & cakes are
traditionally homemade &
homebaked in our very
own bakery

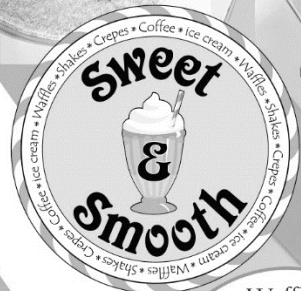
So Fresh... So Tasty... So...
**VILLAGE
MANOR**
Bakery



499-501 Huddersfield
road OL4 2JG

FREE
Deliveries
On orders
over £8

**CELEBRATION
CAKES &
CATERING FOR
ALL EVENTS**



Waffles
Crepes
Shakes
Smoothies
Hot & Cold drinks
Ice Cream
Cookie Dough
Sundaes

Eat in
or
take away

Tel: 07747 441785

Email: sweetandsmooth@outlook.com

499 - 501 Huddersfield Road

OL4 2JG

NICK ACTON

Painter and decorator



Specialising in:

- Interior and exterior painting and decorating
- Coving, dado, and picture-rail fitting
- Hanging all types of wall covering
- Domestic, commercial, industrial

Home: (0161) 287 3290 Mobile: (07811) 343 963
50 Cobden Street, Waterhead, Oldham OL4 2HU

Competitive rates • Free quotations • All work is guaranteed
Fully qualified • 25-year's experience • CSCS registered

ANTONY BOOTH

PLASTERING CONTRACTORS LIMITED

**Domestic and Commercial
Plastering and Re-rendering**

Clean quality : craftsmanship

(07721) 527 850 (daytime)

(0161) 678 1078 (evening)

abp1968@hotmail.co.uk

www.aboothplastering.com



Handyman services

Any job considered: small or large

Electrical • Joinery • Plumbing • Fencing • Decking • Alarms
• CCTV • Security lighting

Call Dale for a free no-obligation visit to quote
(07999) 237 149

I have a dream

I have a dream,
of a world where everyone matters,
everyone is cared for and loved for who they are.
A world where Nature is protected and valued and where we stop
consuming and destroying this world.
Where everyone has enough to eat and water to drink and the poor
and vulnerable are cared for and respected.
Where Governments work for the good of all and there is no
corruption.

Lord, I long to see this world and pray that we as your Church can
make a difference.


That we can bring your Kingdom on this earth,

To fight for that until it comes to its fulfilment when you come again.

Jacqueline Robson




... he descended into hell, which really freaked the locals.


www.hedleyjackson.co.uk

Dip. FD.

FUNERAL DIRECTORS


*A caring, professional and independent family business, serving
families in the Oldham and Rochdale
districts for over 50 years.
Pre-paid plans available*



Member Of
The National
Association
Of Funeral
Directors

Lyon House, 48/52 Rochdale Rd. Shaw, Oldham,
Lanc's. OL2 7SA

Tel: 01706 847422 (24hrs.)



Licensed
Member of The
British Institute
of Funeral
Directors

From the memorial book

- 1 Birthday memories of **Michael John Allen** who died on 8th April 2013. We miss you Michael—Mum Clara and family.
- 3 **Harold Norton** died this day 1992. 'Remembered with Love.'
Mary Gorton died this day 1996 aged 89 years. 'Her life a beautiful memory, Her absence a silent grief.'
- 4 **Dr Ada Shaw, nee Aspinall**, wife of the Vicar, was buried this day, 1958. 'Full of Good Works.'
Esther Wolfenden died this day 1995. Loved and Remembered Always.
- 6 **Gladys Jennie Tattersall** died 1959. Wife of **Frank Harrison Tattersall** who died 21st October 1966.
Robert (Bob) Kirkpatrick born this day 1909, passed to higher service 6th August 1998. 'Rest eternal grant unto him, O Lord.'
- 9 **Clarice Fitton** died this day 1982 aged 82. Former Secretary and Enrolling Member, Mothers' Union.
- 13 **Florence Buckley**, a dearly loved mum, grandma and great grandma. Died this day 1988 in her 90th year. Treasured memories of you Mum. Remembered and loved always. From all her family.
Edith Graham died 2005 aged 89 A dear Mum, Grandma and Great Grandma. Loved and remembered every day.
- 14 **Joseph Flynn** died this day 1989, aged 78 years.
- 15 **Marjorie Connell** died this day 2014 aged 92. Always remembered.
- 23 **George Henry Taylor M.M. (Harry)** died this day 1947. Beloved Husband of **Hannah Elizabeth (Annie)** died April 20th, 1956. Loving parents of Norman and Ivan. Dearly Remembered.
- 25 **Fred Belshaw** died 1989. 'Sleep in Heavenly peace.' Remembered always by daughters Audrey and Joan.

Listen to God's speech in his
wondrous, terrible, gentle,
loving, all-embracing silence.
Catherine de Hueck Doherty



T. Collins & Son Ltd

(Independent Funeral Director)



*24 Hour Dignified Personal
Attention Throughout The Difficult
Time of Bereavement*



Pre-paid Funeral Plans Available



Contact Mr. Darren M. Clark
for more details

151/153 St John Street . Lees . Oldham

Tel: 0161 624 1023