

## Weekly Message from Fr William for the Second Sunday of Lent 2022

Dear People of St Mary's

These weekly messages began with the start of the Covid pandemic and church closures. Purpose – to keep you informed about online mass provision, home support, and other ongoing aspects of parish life during the pandemic. People have said they appreciate the weekly message and hope they will continue. So I'm continuing ☺. I'm also grateful for this new opportunity to send out a weekly message to you.

Last Sunday, across our three Sunday masses, an estimated 80 or 90 parishioners stayed in church after mass to pray with me for the conversion of the Russian security council and its leader. I was a bit blown away by the response to this. I've put the prayers on the website homepage, now with a note giving the reason/motivation for this prayer. This means you can pray this at home any time from the website. We've prayed it once together. But as Jesus says we need to keep praying again and again.

Then he told them a parable about the need to pray continually and never lose heart. 'There was a judge in a certain town' he said 'who had neither fear of God nor respect for man. In the same town there was a widow who kept on coming to him and saying, "I want justice from you against my enemy!" For a long time he refused, but at last he said to himself, "Maybe I have neither fear of God nor respect for man, but since she keeps pestering me I must give this widow her just rights, or she will persist in coming and worry me to death".' And the Lord said 'You notice what the unjust judge has to say? Now will not God see justice done to his chosen who cry to him day and night even when he delays to help them? I promise you, he will see justice done to them, and done speedily. But when the Son of Man comes, will he find any faith on earth?' (Lk 18)

Maybe we should pray it again together as a parish? Let me know what you think.

As mentioned in last Sunday's message, the war in Ukraine is tragically one of many conflicts still on-going in so many places around the world, each with their own urgent humanitarian crisis, many of which have fallen off the mainstream news feeds. Let's keep these in our minds and in our prayers too.

And this Sunday is our annual Lent appeal from CAFOD, the Catholic Agency For Overseas Development. CAFOD now has emergency response programmes in place for Afghanistan and for Ukraine. At the same time it continues its vital work as an agency for long term, strategic development in the poorest and most desperate countries around the world. So this Sunday will be another opportunity to donate to CAFOD, as they keep an oversight of worldwide needs and direct your financial support accordingly.



Second Sunday of Lent, 13 March 2022