



# CATHOLIC PARISH OF ST JOHN PAUL II, ECCLES

Services held at: Holy Cross, Patricroft and St Mary's, Eccles  
Parish Office: Holy Cross Presbytery, 370 Liverpool Road, Patricroft, M30 8QD

4th  
Sunday  
of Easter

Daily  
Prayer  
Week 4

## GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY

Today's Scriptures speak to us of Jesus as the "Good Shepherd"—a familiar image, though perhaps one which is not always clearly understood. What is a shepherd, in our eyes? Do we think of a peaceful life in the fields, whistling to the ever-obedient dog, surrounded by beautiful countryside and having all the time in the world? Or do we think of the early morning alarms, the hard graft, the concentrated searches for the lost, help for the injured, patience with the unruly, concern to protect against wild animals, and never a moment's rest? Jesus is that kind of "Good Shepherd" who searches for the lost and the stray, bringing them back to the fold by carrying them lovingly on his shoulders.

Perhaps we do not often like to be called "sheep" with that image of helplessness in the face of predators and foolishness in the paths they might follow. But there are times when we do tread such paths, and when circumstances around us take away our self-reliance, and it is good then to know that Jesus, the Risen Lord and our Good Shepherd, is always alongside us.

Of course, Jesus does not search for us against the freewill we have been given—we must always be receptive to his presence and ready to abandon ourselves into the arms that would so readily carry us home—but even when, like unruly sheep, we persist in our foolishness, it is good to remember that Jesus will never give up on us.

Then, as we try to follow the Good Shepherd, we find ourselves called to be more than sheep—to copy the Good Shepherd and become shepherds ourselves, seeking out the needs of those around us and serving as best we are able. This is why Good Shepherd Sunday is also known in the church as "Vocations Sunday" as, whilst praying for vocations to the priesthood and religious life, we each reflect on our own calling. Each one of us has been "called by name" by God in the moment we were baptised. Each one of the children now approaching first Holy Communion has been called by name—with the world before them to discover and fulfil that calling. Let's not just think of the traditional vocations that we might speak of—doctors, nurses, teachers, priests, deacons, nuns, parents to name but a few—rather let us pray that each of the children and, indeed, each one of us, might recognise day by day where God's call may be leading and not be constantly distracted by the desire for wealth and worldly acclaim.

The Good Shepherd is ever-present to us so long as our hearts remain open to his love. Let us go forth wherever he may lead!

## REPORT FROM MPANDULE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Last year's Lent and Easter Challenge raised over £6,000 to support this school in Malawi with school meals for a whole year—a magnificent achievement by you all and by our schools. Please [CLICK HERE](#) to view their "Thank You" report and see how appreciated it all was!

## PRAYER REQUESTS

Please keep the following people kindly in your prayers:

**The sick:** Jackie, Julie Ann, Irene, Josie, Wojciech, Mark, Bernard, William, Marion, Michael, Vincent, Colleen, Peter, Geoff, Jan, Margaret, Pat, Bernard, Danny, Pauline, Joanne, Michael, David, Natallie, Edna, Veronica, Sheila, Stephen, Juliana, Wieslaw.

**Lately Dead:** Doris Julia Au Yeung, Shelagh Connolly, Evelyn Waite, Vera Holt, Robert Merrell, June Harper, Anthony O'Donnell, Sr Lucy Dunne FMSJ, Kathleen Wyrivas, Pauline Weyman, Elizabeth Konamah (Fr Nicholas' sister).

**Anniversaries:** Renee Fernandes-Dougan (Tuesday's Mass), Catherine Hickey, Helen Shannon, Christopher Doyle, Austin Tighe, Olive Pennington, Kevin Fahey, Raymond Evans.

**Remembrance:** Bernard and Jessie Collins, Mary Ferm and family, James Carson, Marie and John Payne, Josephine Doherty, Patrick Joseph Nash, Anthony Nash (Birthday Anniv), Elizabeth and Christopher Doyle, John and Monica Potter, Loduvico, Ludy, Nilo, Mamerta and Porferio Sudoy, Crecenciano, Pasencia, Victoriano, Decederio, Rogelio, Rodolfo Sr and Martizano Jalea, Mario Sr, Gloria and Joseph Diamante, Sheila and George Devlin, Mary Gribbin (Easter Remembrance).

**We also pray:** for Monica and Maciej (married recently at St Mary's), for the Diamante Family in thanksgiving for blessings received, for Pope Leo's visit to Africa, for the people of Iran, Lebanon and all the Middle East, and the people of Ukraine and all those affected by the wars there, for other countries suffering unrest, for migrants and refugees, for children suffering from poverty, for the victims of modern slavery, for the success of the Diocesan and Universal Synods, for Michael Wheeler, Rebecca Long-Bailey and all who serve us in Westminster, for peace all around the world, for an end to racism in all its forms. We pray for Fr Stanto and the Syro-Malabar Mission of St Euphrasia based at St Mary's, and for each of our schools. We pray for all world leaders, for God's guidance and support throughout these troubled times, for the housebound and those in hospital, nursing and residential homes, for NHS and Care Home workers, and for a number of special intentions.

## TALKS FROM "AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED"

Today we welcome a representative from ACN to all our Masses to speak to us about their life-saving activities. Envelopes will be provided if you would like to donate in support of their work.

## VOCATIONS NEWSLETTER

The latest Vocations Newsletter from our diocesan Vocations Team can be found at the following link:

<https://mailchi.mp/04f36c912832/vocations-october-10600556>

## 24 HOURS WITH THE LORD

Following the success of this event during last year's Jubilee, we will once again be holding 24 hours before the Blessed Sacrament from 6.00pm on Friday 8th May, concluding with Benediction and the regular 6.00pm Vigil Mass at Holy Cross on Saturday 9th May. From next week we will be looking for volunteers to sign up and promise to attend at particular times, to ensure we have two people in church at all times. (Once we have two promised attendees, any number of others can, of course, attend, without any booking needed). If you would like to volunteer for a particular hour, please [CLICK HERE](#) in the online version of the newsletter or contact the parish office. If the time you are available is already booked do, please, come along anyway! All it means is that we already have two people "on duty" in the church at that time.

## MARIAN HALF-HOURS on FRIDAYS OF MAY

To celebrate May, the month of Mary, we will celebrate a Marian (meaning "for Mary") Half Hour at 6.30pm before the evening Mass each Friday of the month. We may recite the Rosary, or there may be other prayers and devotions used. Come along and take part, giving thanks that Mary the mother of God is given to be our mother too.

## Fr BASHOBORA BRING AND BUY SALE...

...for his orphanage in Uganda. It will take place at all Masses on the weekend of the 16th/17th May. Donations of any unwanted gifts and home-made or shop-bought cakes to be sold on the day are very welcome. Your support makes a huge difference to the lives of the Children. Thank you.

## MAY DAY PILGRIMAGE

On **Sunday 10th May**, beginning at 1.00pm, this event at the St John Fisher (Schoenstatt) Shrine in Kearsley will involve Holy Mass and the Crowning of Our Lady in the Schoenstatt Shrine. There will also be a Holy Hour meditation with Divine Mercy prayers, and an opportunity for Group Discussion. The day is scheduled to end at approximately 5:30pm. Children are welcome to attend and Light refreshments will be served, but attendees are also welcome to bring their own food if they wish. We have been invited to take a group from this parish to join the event—please speak to the Parish Office if you would like to join such a group. More details can be found on the noticeboard at the back of each church.

## YOUTH PILGRIMAGE TO LINDISFARNE

Following on from the success of last years pilgrimage to Lindisfarne, the diocese is offering young people in Years 7, 8 and 9 another opportunity to go to Lindisfarne from Friday 22nd May—Sunday 24th May 2026. The cost is £120 which includes travel by coach and full board accommodation. We will be staying on the island at the SVP Camp. For more information or if you have any questions, please contact [youth@dioceseofsalford.org.uk](mailto:youth@dioceseofsalford.org.uk).

## DIOCESAN SYNOD PRAYER

*As we progress through the implementation stages of the Universal and Diocesan Synods, please use the Synod Prayer whenever you can, praying for each other and for the wider Diocesan community:*

Loving Father,  
be with us as we seek new ways  
of being your people in our Diocese.  
May each new day bring us  
closer to your son Jesus,  
as we follow his teaching and  
become disciples of love.  
As we continue our Synodal journey,  
draw us closer to each other.  
May the truth of your Spirit enlighten us.  
Open our hearts, as we listen to each other  
and reach out in love to your people.  
Stay with us, Lord, on our journey. **Amen.**

## BAPTISMS

We pray for Noah, Avarni, Theodore, Petra, Vincent, Amiyah, Ozzi, Emilia, Alexander and Harper who have been baptised in the parish recently.

## USUAL SUNDAY MASS TIMES

**Saturday (Vigil Mass):** 6.00pm at Holy Cross  
**Sunday Morning:** 9.30am at St Mary's  
11.15am at Holy Cross  
*Children's Liturgy at most 11.15am Masses*  
*Refreshments are normally served after 9.30am Mass at St Mary's*  
*and as announced after 11.15am Mass at Holy Cross*  
**Sunday Evening:** 6.30pm at St Mary's  
*The 6.30pm Mass is kept quiet to be autism-friendly*  
**Weekdays:** See Calendar below  
**Holidays:** As announced beforehand

## SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Confessions are *usually* available during Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on Fridays and Saturdays.  
*Please check the calendar below*

## BAPTISMS, WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS

by arrangement  
*At least 6 months' notice is required for weddings, and a time of preparation is also required before Baptism.*  
*Please refer to the website for further information*

# Calendar for This Week

**4th Sunday of Easter** Sat 25th April: 6.00pm Mass at Holy Cross (Vigil Mass for Sunday with Fr Stanto) \*  
Sunday 26th: 9.30am Mass at St Mary's  
11.15am Mass at Holy Cross  
6.30pm Evening Mass at St Mary's  
**\* Livestreamed**

Monday 27th: *No Mass in the parish on Mondays*  
6.30-8.00pm YCW "Impact" Youth Group at Holy Cross Hall—*Newcomers welcome*

Tuesday 28th: 9.45am Rosary for world peace, followed by:  
10.00am Mass at Holy Cross \*

**St Catherine of Siena** Wednesday 29th: 9.45am Rosary for world peace, followed by:  
10.00am Eucharistic Service at Holy Cross \*

Thursday 30th: 9.45am Rosary for world peace, followed by:  
10.00am Mass at Holy Cross with Y3 from Holy Cross & All Saints' School \*

**St Joseph the Worker** Friday 1st May: 9.00am Mass at St Patrick's High School with Y9—*All welcome*  
6.00pm Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament \*/Confessions followed by  
6.30pm Marian Service and  
7.00pm Benediction and Mass, all at Holy Cross \*

**St Athanasius** Saturday 2nd: 11.00am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament (*Confessions available*)  
followed by 12 noon Benediction and Mass, all at St Mary's  
6.00pm Mass at Holy Cross (Vigil Mass for Sunday) \*

**5th Sunday of Easter** Sunday 3rd: 9.30am Mass at St Mary's  
11.15am Mass at Holy Cross  
6.30pm Evening Mass at St Mary's (with Fr Stanto)

Saturday's Vigil Mass will continue to be available on the [Live!](#) page of our website on Sunday and throughout the week, and on our [Facebook Page](#). It can also be viewed live and during the week on our [YouTube channel](#).

## LAST WEEK'S COLLECTION

Thank you for last week's collection of £1,008.62. Last week's "Challenge" total of £3,316.56 is now being greatly increased by donations raised in our schools—we hope to have a final total available for publication in next week's Newsletter. Thank you also to all those who donate to the parish by Standing Order, Direct Debit, [online](#) and via the contactless devices at the back of both Churches. Scan the QR Code, (above), if you would like to donate to the parish today. Thank you, again, for your generosity!



## CYCLE OF PRAYER



This week throughout the diocese we pray for the parish of the Holy Cross and St Helen, Ashton, and for Fr Jude Lemeh, and Fr Joachin Nwaorgi, of the Vincentian Fathers, together with the Missionary Sisters of St Michael the Archangel. We pray for the chaplaincy to Tameside General Hospital, for the parish primary schools and for St Damian's Science College.

## FUNDRAISING UPDATE

- Tickets for the parish afternoon tea to be held on Monday, 4th May from 2.00 to 4.00pm are on sales after all Masses. Ticket price is £5.00.
- The next monthly prize draw will take place on Sunday 3rd May after the 11.15am Mass at Holy Cross. Members are reminded that their subscription must be up to date to be eligible for a prize.

## KEEPING OUR CHILDREN SAFE

Please ensure that your children are supervised to and from the toilet. Please help us to keep them safe at all times. Thank you!

## RETIRING COLLECTIONS

This week: Aid to the Church in Need  
Next week: Ecclesiastical Education Fund (deferred from this week)

## A HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUEST

**The "default" position for kneelers in both churches is DOWN.** If you need to raise them to move into or out of the bench, please ensure they are then lowered immediately. They can cause serious injury to the young and to the elderly if they fall.  
**If you need help to adjust a kneeler, please speak to one of the stewards who will be happy to assist you.**

## PARISH CONTACT DETAILS *(Please note that email addresses below can NOT be copied as links)*

**Parish Priest:** Fr Martin A Collins GTCL  
**Telephone:** 0161 789 4424  
**Mobile:** 07502 633383  
**Email:** martin.collins@dioceseofsalford.org.uk  
or via contact form on the parish website.

**Parish Secretary:** Mrs Marie Twemlow  
**Telephone:** 0161 789 4424 (Mon & Tue, 10am-4pm)  
**Sec. Email:** rosemarie.twemlow@dioceseofsalford.org.uk  
**Newsletter:** newsletter@ourparishcommunity.co.uk

**Parish Website:** [www.ourparishcommunity.co.uk](http://www.ourparishcommunity.co.uk)  
**Facebook:** [@ourparishcommunity](https://www.facebook.com/ourparishcommunity)  
**YouTube:** [www.youtube.com/ParishofStJohnPaulIIIEccles/](https://www.youtube.com/ParishofStJohnPaulIIIEccles/)

**Parish Halls Hire:** Enquiries to Steve Jackson, Hall Manager  
**Telephone:** 07580 571839—*please leave a voicemail*  
**Email:** hall@ourparishcommunity.co.uk

**Holy Cross RC Church**  
370 Liverpool Road  
Patricroft  
M30 8QD

**St Mary's RC Church**  
Oxford Street  
Eccles  
M30 0LU

**Parish Safeguarding Reps:** Marie Twemlow/Anna Raynor/Ged Dale  
**Email:** safeguarding@ourparishcommunity.co.uk

**Schools:**  
Holy Cross and All Saints: 0161 789 4386  
St Gilbert's: 0161 567 9012 (*note, new number*)  
St Mary's: 0161 789 4532  
St Patrick's High School: 0161 921 2300

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*Stay with us, Lord, on our Journey*