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

1st Sunday of Advent

Daily Prayer Week 1

WAITING...

A new Church year begins. Our cycle of Scripture comes full circle as once again we listen to the prophet Isaiah calling on God for salvation, and calling on God's people to return to his ways, to be faithful to his love, and to wait, in hope, for his coming. Our word, "Advent," (from the Latin "Adventus"—a coming or arrival) is all about God's coming. But let us not jump forwards too quickly, rushing to celebrate God's arrival without considering first the time of preparation, that "waiting" which is so important.

Some people find it strange that we Christians come time and again to the same festivals and treat them all like something new. Most people do the same, of course, with birthdays and other anniversaries, but it is true that we add another dimension—come Christmas we are not simply celebrating a 2,000-year-old birthday, but rather we are praying for the renewal of a real presence in our hearts of the one who was born (as, later on at Easter, we will pray for the resurrection to be something real and tangible in our hearts and lives too). It never gets "old" because we bring something new to it all every year. We bring another year's life-experience, another list of joys and sorrows which have changed. The story may be the same, but we are not. At Christmas we will call upon the Christ-child to be born anew, with healing and hope, into everything which has affected the person we have become and all that we have experienced in the past year.

With wars and violence all over the news, perhaps our prayers for Advent should begin by asking that we ourselves may grow in peace and diminish in our judgmentalism and our tendencies to hate. Let us prepare to radiate the message we anticipate by using this great season of waiting well, and stepping back just a little from the business of the streets around us. If some see the festivities and the decorations all round us as no more than a sham, let us invite God to cultivate the reality within us. All things are in God's hands, and he can—he will turn all things to good. For now, we pray for his coming with hope and quiet confidence.

ADVENT/CHRISTMAS CHALLENGE 2026

At all our Masses this weekend, as we have become accustomed in Advent and in Lent, we embark upon another challenge!

We aim to raise sufficient funds, (£3.000 total), to make a Christmas Gift to two villages in the developing world of a Community Water Supply (£750 each) and to provide a room for a year with Caritas to help people out of homelessness locally (at £1,500).

Our primary schools are also engaged in this challenge, (after all, they are themselves an important part of the parish), and from next week we will announce a running total of the money collected. If we should raise more than our target, the money will all be shared between Caritas Diocese of Salford and CAFOD.

Your generosity will make such a difference, and put real meaning into the goodwill that Christmas is all about, as we use our Advent season in love and service of our neighbours, where most surely we find the face of Christ himself.

CARITAS ADVENT APPEAL

The statistics we hear about poverty and homelessness can sometimes feel overwhelming—but their story is not inevitable. This World Day of the Poor gives an ideal opportunity to advertise the work of Caritas, Diocese of Salford, and to commend to you their Advent Appeal booklets, available at the back of church. Every donation you give in support of Caritas helps to lift someone out of the poverty trap.

CHILD POVERTY in our SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

Caritas Salford, our diocesan charity, is calling for urgent action after carrying out research with our diocesan schools that have shown a staggering increase in child poverty in our area in recent years. This was the second time our schools have contributed to the survey, and shows a stark picture with many families in our parishes in need of urgent support. You can read more about the findings and discover what changes Caritas is calling for from local and national government too, at: www.caritassalford.org.uk/SchoolPovertySurvey2026

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

13th December after 11.15am Mass, at Holy Cross Hall. Tickets available from the parish office at £5 each, or after all Masses next weekend, and children will be able to have breakfast, see Santa and receive a gift. (Tickets must be purchased in advance, so Santa knows how many gifts to bring!

ADVENT TALKS 2026

Exploring human dignity with Pope Leo in the age of AI. A series of talks at Lancashire Martyrs, Little Hulton, with Mgr Paul Smith and Sr Joan Kerley FMSJ, 10.00am-12.30pm on Tuesdays, beginning Tuesday 24th November. See poster at the back of church.

PIETY SHOPS NOW STOCKED FOR CHRISTMAS

Please check out our piety shops, which are now stocked with Christmas cards and other Christmas goods.

POPE LEO'S INTENTION for this month

"For the proper use of wealth." Pope Leo XIV dedicates his November prayer intention to praying that people may not succumb to the temptation of selfishness, and that wealth may always be put at the service of the common good and in solidarity with those who have less.

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**.

RETIRING COLLECTIONS

This week and next: Advent/Christmas challenge begins! (See separate article, left).

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please keep the following people kindly in your prayers:

The sick: Bernard, Julie Ann, Sandra, Kevin, David, Hugh, Veronica, Marlou, Philip, Sarah, Janet, Dave, Michael, Margaret, Colleen, Tayo, Kathleen, John, Monica, Robert, Doreen, Adam, Jackie, Julie Ann, Pauline, Natallie, Edna, Sheila, Juliana.

Lately Dead: Mary Corbett, Peter Dean, Pat Crook, Anne ("Nanny") Kane, Betty Kane, Frank Beckitt (Funeral at St Mary's on Thursday), John Fishwick, Thresiamma Abraham, Maria Teresa "Maite" Pardo, Mary Maguire, Tommy Chinnery (Funeral at St Mary's on Tuesday), Sr Margaret Bernadette Tutti FMSJ, Marie Conlan.

Anniversaries: Norman Helps Snr, Ellen Helps, Jayne Brackenridge, Martin Corcoran, Terry Smith, Sonny Shannon, Patricia Timmins (née Mallinson, Birthday Anniv), Sheila Devlin (Friday's Mass), Lucy Kennedy (Birthday Anniv), Paula McLernon-Wilson, John Ward, Barbara Hampton, Mary Gribbin, Sheila Devlin (Birthday Anniv), Sarah Corcoran, Sunimal, Uljitha, Colin, Matty, Eileen, Ada Serapiglia, Henry Costello.

Remembrance: Mary Ferm.

We also pray: for the poor of our world, for Pope Leo, for the Jewish Community, for the people of Iran, Lebanon and all the Middle East, the people of Ukraine and all those affected by the wars there, for other countries suffering unrest, for the Christians of Nigeria, 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 our local Councillors, 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.

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
Holydays: 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 parish website for further information

Calendar for This Week

	Sat 28th Nov:	6.00pm Mass at Holy Cross (Vigil Mass for Sunday) *
First Sunday of Advent	Sunday 29th:	9.30am Mass at St Mary's 11.15am Mass at Holy Cross 6.30pm Evening Mass at St Mary's (with Fr Stanto)
St Andrew (Apostle)	Monday 30th:	*No Mass in the parish on Mondays* 6.30-8.00pm Youth "Impact" Group at Holy Cross Hall
	Tues 1st Dec:	11.00am Funeral Mass at St Mary's for Tommy Chinnery (to be celebrated by his son, Fr David)—*May he rest in peace*
	Wed 2nd:	9.45am Rosary for world peace, followed by: 10.00am Mass at Holy Cross *
St Francis Xavier	Thursday 3rd:	11.30am Funeral Mass at St Mary's for the late Francis Beckitt—*May he rest in peace*
	Friday 4th:	9.00am Mass at St Patrick's High School with Y9—*All welcome* 6.00pm Quiet Prayer * *(with Confessions available) followed by* 6.30pm Advent Reflection * *and* 7.00pm Benediction and Mass, at Holy Cross *
	Sat 5th:	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) *
Second Sunday of Advent	Sunday 6th:	9.30am Mass at St Mary's 11.15am Mass at Holy Cross 6.30pm Evening Mass at St Mary's (with Fr Stanto)

* *Livestreamed*

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 £1,089.31. 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, (right), if you would like to donate to the parish today.

FUNDRAISING UPDATE

- The parish Christmas fair is on Saturday 12th December at 12.30pm in St Mary's hall. Raffle tickets are on sale after all Masses. Donations can be left at the back of church. If you are able to help on the day can you please let Fran know?
- The Christmas lunch at The Clubhouse, Barton airport is on Wednesday 16th December at 12.00 noon. The cost is £23. Can you please let Fran have your payment by this weekend?

THANK YOU!

Jean would like to thank the parishioners for all the good wishes cards and presents for her special birthday, and also the parish for the beautiful flowers.

CYCLE of PRAYER

This week throughout the diocese we pray for the people of St Mary's parish, Horwich, for Fr Richard Howard, their parish priest, for the parish primary school and for St Joseph's High School.

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!

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
Facebook: @ourparishcommunity
YouTube: www.youtube.com/ParishofStJohnPaulIIEccles/

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
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