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Saint Mary's Roman Catholic Church
Catlow Hall Street, Oswaldtwistle
Lancashire
BB5 3EZ

DIOCESE OF  SALFORD

Parish Priest: Rev. Fr. S D O'Brien
Tel: 01254-232433

Wednesday 28th October 2020
Feast of Saints Simon & Jude, Apostles

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Time is speeding along! November 1st falls this Sunday and Christmas (from today) is only 58 days away! Though the clock continues to tick and time keeps moving forward so does the Coronavirus. Every one of us has been touched by this pandemic in some shape or form. Regularly we hear heart breaking experiences of people whose lives have not only been disrupted but changed forever because of Covid-19. Bereavements, redundancies, isolation, physical and mental health are all key areas that are having devastating effects on peoples lives.

As many of you will know and have witnessed at Mass, over the last fortnight, many of our young parishioners have made their first Confession and received Our Lord in Holy Communion. It has been during the celebration of these Sacraments that I have made mention of Jesus calming the storm. This particular episode in the Gospel, recorded by Saint Mark, is bursting with hope and reminds us that we have not been abandoned by Our Lord. On the contrary, like the disciples He is with us in the same boat experiencing the same storm.



'Then it began to blow a gale and the waves were breaking into the boat so that it was almost swamped. But he [Jesus] was in the stern, his head on the cushion, asleep. They woke him and said to him, 'Master, do you not care? We are going down!' And he woke up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, 'Quiet now! Be calm!' And the wind dropped, and all was calm again. Then he said to them, 'Why are you so frightened? How is it that you have no faith?' They were filled with awe and said to one another, 'Who can this be? Even the wind and sea obey him.'
(Mk 4:37-41)

We all face different storms in life. The ferociousness of their winds, the violence of their waves, the blinding of their lightning and the roar of their thunder can all be very intimidating. Like the disciples in the boat we all at some point echo the same cries and shouts, ‘*Where are you Lord? Do you not Care?*’ Yet as I have reminded our younger parishioners, when we receive Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, Jesus is no longer some spiritual being far removed from our everyday lives, our everyday battles and our everyday storms. No. In Holy Communion he becomes truly present to us and we find ourselves no longer on our own but with a close companion who journeys with us through good times and bad. As we continue to navigate through this Covid-19 storm let us never lose hope that we are alone. We are not!

‘...And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.’ (Mt 28:20)

God’s Blessings!

Let’s pray for all those young people who have made their first Confession and received Our Lord in Holy Communion for the first time: Julia, Maxymilian, Brajoin, Amelia, Maisie, Rita, Harlan, Fankie, Andrew, Ellie May, Rhys and Victoria. May God continue to bless them in their lives as disciples.

November Souls List

November is traditionally that time when, as Roman Catholics, we pray for those who have died. Over the last two years we have had an All Souls box placed in front of the Altar where people have been able to put the names of their deceased loved ones in. This year because of the Covid-19 pandemic, we are going to dedicate a page of our parish website for people to pray for the repose of the souls of those who have died. Throughout the month of November those names will remain on our webpage. If you would like to submit the names of family and friends who have died please see the parish website www.saintmarysoswaldtwistle.co.uk

Parish Online Advent Calendar

Advent is one of my favourite liturgical seasons. There is a sense of expectancy and a feeling of hope which of course is realised in the birth of Our Lord. There has been the idea that we could do a St. Mary’s Parish Advent Calendar. This would involve each day a reflection/prayer/story/memory etc. being posted on the website. What would make this parish advent calendar unique is that each day the prayer/reflection/thought/story etc. would be from you the parishioners. Everybody in our parish family has words and stories of hope to share that could help others during these difficult winter months. Do not worry about spelling or punctuation – you have all put up with my poor grammar for the last eight months most graciously! You may want to write a poem, retell a story, compose a prayer or recall times past at St. Mary’s etc. There is no exact word limit and if you wish you can remain anonymous. If a theme is needed then I would simply say look to the baby born in the manger who brought the world hope and love. Have a think and do email me at sean.obrien@dioceseofsalford.org.uk

God Bless and keep praying
Saints Simon and Jude, pray for us. Amen.
Fr. O’Brien