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*Saint Mary's Roman Catholic Church*  
*Catlow Hall Street, Oswaldtwistle*  
*Lancashire*  
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*Parish Priest: Rev Fr. S D O'Brien*  
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**Sunday 13th June 2021 - Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Dear brothers and sisters,

At the start of this month, dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, I offered a reflection on St. John the Beloved disciple who had the privilege to listen to the heart beat of God at the Last Supper. This experience drove him to witness to the world about the Good News of Christ our Lord and his Gospel continues to speak volumes 2000 years later. Last week we read a meditation from Pope Francis who stressed that the Sacred Heart is not just some mere old fashioned sentimental devotion but the tangible reality of God's mercy for each and every one of us. This week's words on the Sacred Heart come not from a Pope or a priest but a husband and son, called Steve Kline, who in his darkest moment felt Jesus' love in a profound way.

"I will rescue them from every place where they were scattered when it was cloudy and dark." Ezekiel 34:12  
God seems to desire me intensely when I feel lost, most distant from Him. When I am hurt and alone, blaming the world and other people for whatever pains me, God presses close. I feel Him. When I am driven by my appetites and temptation, God hovers close. I feel Him. When I am feeling betrayed, back stabbed and in a rage, God gently embraces me. I feel Him. I do not pretend to understand the relationship between pain and God. But these moments demonstrate to me that the relationship is there.

I was 11 or 12 years old. My mom took me by the shoulders and looked into my eyes.  
"Stephen," she said. "God is waiting for you." I do not recall why she said this. All I recall is that she said it. I've never forgotten the moment, even though I think she was wrong. I don't think God waits for me. I think He chases me. And in times when my life is cloudy and dark, He catches me.  
In the terrible summer and fall of 1982, when my wife and father died, He caught me and held me tight. I felt Him. Through bitter days and long nights of grief, there would come moments when I felt deeply and intensely loved. The moments puzzled me back then and I didn't give them much thought. Today I know God was touching me, rescuing me, taking me to a good pasture.

Often I have thought that God is in my life because I seek Him. Today I think that is wrong. Today I think that no matter what I say or do, God will haunt and hunt me down. He's on my trail now. He will chase me without rest until I am caught up in His love and carried home. This is a good thing to know, especially when it is cloudy and dark.

This week when you come to church and you see the statue of the Sacred Heart on the sanctuary, know that it is a reminder of the passionate real love that God has for you, completely, totally and unconditionally. If you still find that hard to believe then just look to the Tabernacle – what more proof does anyone need? 'THIS IS MY BODY, GIVEN TO YOU'.

**Update: Mass Bookings**

Following government procedures and diocesan guidance there IS no longer the need to book for a weekday Mass. However, numbers will still be restricted because of the ongoing pandemic and therefore it will be 'First come, First Serve'. Church will be open 30minutes before each Mass/Liturgy. We are still obliged to continue the Test and Trace system for public health reasons and so stewards will require contact details from those who turn up to church. The dates and times of weekday Masses are:

**10am Wednesday 16th June, Votive Mass of St. Joseph**

**10am Thursday 17th June, Weekday Mass**

**6pm Friday 11th June, Weekday Mass**

### **Weekend Masses**

Due to increasing numbers, especially on a Sunday, people will still need to book for a weekend Mass. This can be done via the parish website [www.saintmarysoswaldtwistle.co.uk](http://www.saintmarysoswaldtwistle.co.uk) or by calling Ursula on a Wednesday between 5pm -6pm on (01254) 232 433. Let's pray that as we move on through summer to autumn more restrictions can be safely lifted. As always, on behalf of all parishioners at St. Mary's, we thank those volunteers who have given up their time to keep church open. Thank you and God Bless.

We publish news and updates from and within the parish [www.saintmarysoswaldtwistle.co.uk](http://www.saintmarysoswaldtwistle.co.uk)

### **Eco Thought of the Week, Sunday 13th June.**

A man throws seed on the land. Night and day, while he sleeps, when he is awake, the seed is sprouting and growing; how, he does not know. Of its own accord the land produces first the shoot, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. How can we celebrate the beauty and creativity of nature and resolve to play our part in God's ongoing creation?

### **Salford Interfaith Forum: Faith in the Environment.**

Salford interfaith forum is running an event on zoom. Faith in the Environment is an online conference examining the response of faith communities to the climate crisis, the event will take place on Wed, 23 June 2021 18:30 – 20:00. Bishop John will be speaking at the event alongside, Andrea Passe from Eco Synagogue and the Board of Deputies and Zahid Hussain a Manchester City Councillor and Community Activist. To book please visit [SIFEnviro.eventbrite.co.uk](http://SIFEnviro.eventbrite.co.uk)

### **Welcome Back!**

This weekend Adam Bamber, studying for the priesthood at St. Mary's College, Oscott will be returning again to take up residence in the presbytery during the summer. Let's continue to pray for him and all those who are discerning God's will for them – Priesthood, Diaconate, Marriage, Religious life.

A prayer to St. Joseph for Vocations

Blessed St Joseph,

You listened in the depth of your heart to the call of God for you to participate in his plan for the salvation of the world, you responded with faith to that invitation.

Help me listen for the call of God in my life,  
help me understand what the Holy Spirit is asking of me,  
and help me be open to follow that invitation,  
with courage and a trusting heart.

May your fatherly hand guide me and keep me safe.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The God who Speaks through Mark

As we return to Ordinary Time after Pentecost, the Department for Formation is pleased to offer four online evenings on the Gospel according to Mark.

## **Wednesday 16 June 2021 – The Little People in Mark (with Fr Michael Winstanley SDB)**

The presentation will be from 7.00 to 8.30 pm and will include time for discussion and questions. They are offered free of charge. To reserve a place on one or all the evenings and to receive the Zoom link in advance, please email [formation@dioceseofsalford.org.uk](mailto:formation@dioceseofsalford.org.uk)

### **The Common Good Events.**

There is a new series of four events exploring the common good. The events are a collaboration between the Benedict XVI Centre at St Mary's University, Twickenham; Together for the Common Good; Caritas Social Action Network; and the Centre for Social Justice. They are kindly supported by the CCLA. The first event will be on the subject of "The Common Good: What does it mean?" Philip Booth, Sam Bruce and Jenny Sinclair will be in conversation with Professor Ruth Kelly. It will be held at 6.30-8pm, Tuesday 15 June 2021, online via zoom. For more information visit [www.stmarys.ac.uk/events/2021/06/the-common-good-event](http://www.stmarys.ac.uk/events/2021/06/the-common-good-event) Future events will be held on 13th July, and 29th September and the 16th November (at St Mary's, Putney).

### **Prayers & Thanks**

This week our parish received a generous legacy of £1933.39 from the late Mr. Harold Owen (friend of anony-mouse) who sadly died last year. Harold was well known here at St. Mary's because of his kindness towards many people. As a parish family let's continue to keep our brother in our prayers as well as all his family and friends who miss him.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him.  
May he rest in peace. Amen.

### **Gift Aid and Envelopes**

On behalf of the parish I would like to thank Rob Harrison for all his voluntarily work concerning the gift aid scheme and donation envelopes. Over the next few weeks, as people book to come to the Holy Mass, those who have signed up to the gift aid scheme will receive their envelopes from a steward. In line with GDPR, envelopes can only be given to the individual whose name and address is printed on the box. If you do not contribute to the gift aid scheme but would like a box of donation envelopes then please ask a steward when you come to church. For more information about helping the parish through gift aid you can contact Rob: [giftaid@stmaryoswaldtwistle.org.uk](mailto:giftaid@stmaryoswaldtwistle.org.uk)

### **Miles that Matter**

Caritas is proud to have supporters, staff and volunteers who are walking in solidarity and in the 'virtual' footsteps of so many people who have fled war and conflict and seek a new life on these shores and in Greater Manchester and Lancashire in particular. Miles that Matter is running from 1st May until International Refugee Week in June. If you are interested in finding out more, or wish to participate, please call Rachel Taylor 0161 817 2285 or visit the website [www.caritassalford.org.uk/miles-that-matter](http://www.caritassalford.org.uk/miles-that-matter)

### **Caritas Refugee Week Webinar**

Caritas, with support from Social, is pleased to be hosting their next webinar: Towards An Ever Wider "We" on Tuesday 15 June, 6.30pm to 7.30pm, during this year's International Refugee Week. The webinar takes its title from the published theme chosen by Pope Francis in advance of the 107th World Day of Migrants and Refugees on Sunday 26 September. Responding to the undignified and often unjust process which refugees and asylum seekers currently face from the time of their arrival in the UK, Caritas invites you to be part of a facilitated panel event on the current realities and our practical response. The webinar will include a presentation about how the social teaching of the Catholic Church can lead us to advocate for a future of justice and peace, accelerating the process of working Towards An Ever Wider "We", envisioned by Pope Francis.

Caritas hopes that this webinar will form part of an ongoing dialogue and encourage dynamic collaboration and solidarity, to significantly improve the experience of those who come to the UK seeking to continue their lives in sanctuary and ensuring that no one is left behind. For more information and how to book contact [www.caritassalford.org.uk](http://www.caritassalford.org.uk)

### **Caritas Job Vacancy**

Caritas is looking to hire a bank counsellor to provide a counselling and family support service in schools across the Diocese of Salford according to each school's formal agreement. The position will require working with pupils referred to the Caritas Schools' Service on a variety of issues, providing a non-judgemental, caring and confidential environment for them to work through their problems and difficulties. For more information visit [www.caritassalford.org.uk](http://www.caritassalford.org.uk) or contact Rebecca Anderson on 0161 817 2264 or by email [r.anderson@caritassalford.org.uk](mailto:r.anderson@caritassalford.org.uk)

### **Reopening of Christian Heritage Centre at Stonyhurst**

Theodore House, on the Stonyhurst estate, will be reopening from 11th June, and welcoming groups from 21st June in line with Government de-restrictions. A spacious and comfortable venue for retreats, away-days and conferences for any parish or diocesan group, in uniquely beautiful and historic surroundings and with access to St Peter's church next-door. For more information, please visit [www.theodorehouse.com](http://www.theodorehouse.com) or contact [bookings@christianheritagecentre.com](mailto:bookings@christianheritagecentre.com)

### **Christian Heritage Centre Event - Faith & Reason: A Catholic Integration**

A short, residential summer course exploring the relationship of faith with philosophy, science and culture. Particularly helpful for catechists and teachers fielding commonly-asked questions around Catholicism, besides anyone wanting to deepen their understanding of the Faith. Runs 5th – 8th August. For more info and registration, [www.christianheritagecentre.com/events/faith-and-reason](http://www.christianheritagecentre.com/events/faith-and-reason)

### **Online Parish Events**

Parishioners from different parishes have been organising online rosaries, online sing-a-longs and virtual coffee mornings for their churches. I think this is a wonderful idea as many children and grandchildren have been stepping up to help older family members link up and use computers, mobile phones, i-pads etc. Any parishioner here at St. Mary's who would like to facilitate this has my complete support and I am happy to put them in touch with diocesan safeguarding department so that all correct procedures and online safety protocol can be followed.

### **Covid-19 Health and Safety Reminder**

- Please make sure you are wearing a face mask before you enter the church building. Nobody should be putting a mask on once they are sat down at a pew or in the entrance/foyer near the stewards.
- Please do not remove your mask to speak to a steward or another parishioner in church. This shows a lack of safe respect for others. We all need to care and look out for each other.
- Please wear your mask when you are coming forward to receive Holy Communion. Once, and only once, you are stood before the priest then you can remove your mask. Communion is not a race so please take your time and do not rush. Once you have received the Blessed Sacrament then replace your mask and leave the church building.
- Please do sanitise your hands at the stations provided at both entrances and exits of church.
- Please keep the Two Meter Rule. This new strain of Covid-19 is more easily transmitted therefore it's important that we all keep to this practice.
- Please do not congregate to socialise on church property before or after Mass/Liturgy.

- Please do not come to church if you have Covid-19 symptoms, have tested positive for Covid-19 or are in isolation.

**God Bless and keep praying.  
Our Lady of Oswaldtwistle, pray for us.  
Saint Joseph, pray for us.**

Fr. O'Brien

