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Saint Mary's Roman Catholic Church  
Catlow Hall Street, Oswaldtwistle  
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Parish Priest: Rev Fr. S D O'Brien  
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Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear brothers and sisters,

The month of July is traditionally dedicated to The Most Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ. What does that title actually mean? On Thursday at Mass, I used the following story to try to explain.

Sometime ago in America a teenager was involved in a car accident. He needed a blood transfusion but there was no compatible blood type available. All his family were tested but no donor could be found. The teenager had a little brother, who was the last to be tested, and his blood was a perfect match. The family were concerned about asking the little boy to donate his blood as it was such a big and mature decision to make. Eventually when they did approach him, he simply said:

*'Are you saying that for my big brother to get better and play with me again, you'll have to empty all my blood out of my body and put it into his?'*

*'Yes, as long as that's okay with you? It's a very big and grown-up thing to do',* his mum responded.

*'No problem, I love him, of course I'll do it',* said the little boy unhesitatingly.

During the transfusion both brothers were placed next to each other and the little boy was fascinated by the tubes carrying his blood into his big brother's body. The nurse asked him was he okay and he replied:

*'I'm fine. When I die what happens next?'*

*'What do you mean?'* said the nurse quite surprised by the boy's question.

*'Well for my big brother to get better you have to empty all my blood out of my body and put it into him. Because I'm only small I'll have no blood left for me, but I don't mind. As long as it helps him.'*

*'Oh no little one',* said the nurse filled with awe towards the young boy. *'We don't take all your blood and you won't die I promise you. Did you think you would die by giving blood?'*

*'Yeah, but I love my big brother so I wouldn't have minded if I had to say goodbye to everyone, as long as he got better.'*

The little boy did not have to think twice about helping his brother. He loved him and giving up his own blood, which he thought would cause his own death, never dissuaded him. That courage, that conviction, that profound and deep love is only a shadow of the greatest blood transfusion that took place two thousand years ago on Calvary. It was on Good Friday that Our Lord, without thinking twice, shed his blood for us on the Cross. The blood that gave us life and paid the price of our redemption.

The opening prayer for the Mass of The Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ says:

**'O God, who by the Precious Blood of your Only Begotten Son  
have redeemed the whole world,  
preserve in us the work of your mercy,  
so that, ever honouring the mystery of our salvation,  
we may merit to obtain its fruits.'**

Let's continue to pray this prayer throughout July to remind ourselves of Jesus' real love for us, and brothers and sisters I promise you, his love for us is very real and very true! Our Lord shed his blood for us fully knowing that some would continue to reject him in the future, desert him, disown him and manipulate the good news he left to suit their own needs and choices. Despite all this hurt and lukewarmness towards him, Our Lord still freely and passionately went to the Cross.

This month each time you come to the Mass and the priest raises the Chalice containing the Precious Blood, then at that very moment pray for somebody whose heart is far from Jesus. Somebody who has lapsed, walked away or who hasn't really accepted Our Lord into their life. Pray for somebody who finds it difficult to be a disciple, somebody who on the outside ticks the boxes for being a Catholic but on the inside is remote and distant from truly knowing Jesus.

Let's end our meditation with the words of the saints, who by their wisdom, will hopefully draw us deeper into appreciating the mystery of The Most Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ. My favourite quote is St. Augustine of Hippo. He reminds us that as sinners we are not held cheaply in God's eyes, despite our failings and weaknesses, because He has paid the highest prize for our future in Heaven – the very blood of His only begotten Son. Amen to that!

***"Don't hold yourselves cheap,  
seeing that the creator of all things and of you estimates your value so high,  
so dear, that he pours out for you every day  
the most precious blood of his only-begotten Son."***

**St Augustine**

***"Let us fix our gaze on the Blood of Christ and realize how truly precious it is, seeing that it was poured out for our salvation and brought the grace of conversion to the whole world."***

**Pope Clement**

***"Precious Blood, ocean of divine mercy: Flow upon us! Precious Blood, most pure offering: Procure us every grace! Precious Blood, hope and refuge of sinners: Atone for us! Precious Blood, delight of holy souls: Draw us! Amen."***

**St Catherine of Sienna**

### **Update: Mass Bookings**

As of next week (beginning Monday 5<sup>th</sup> July) there will no longer be the need to book a place for Mass. It will be '*First come, First served*' as numbers are still restricted. Worshippers will still need to give their name and contact details to the stewards. I would like to thank Ursula, Czes and all the booking team for their hard work, perseverance and dedication over the last twelve months. It has been much appreciated.

Thank you for keeping us safe but most importantly helping to keep our church open so people can come before the Real Presence of Our Lord in the Tabernacle. God Bless and THANK YOU from all the parishioners at St. Mary's.

### **10am Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> July, Votive Mass of Saint Joseph**

*'The holy example of Jesus Christ who, while upon earth, honoured St. Joseph so highly and was obedient to him during his life should be sufficient to inflame the hearts of all with devotion to this saint.'* quote from St Alphonsus Liguori

### **10am Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> July, Votive Mass of The Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ**

During the First Italian War for Independence in 1849, Pope Pius IX went into exile to Gaeta in central Italy. While the war was raging, it was suggested to him, that he establish a feast to The Most Precious Blood of Jesus to beg God's heavenly help, end the war and bring about peace. The Pope immediately issued a proclamation to establish this feast in honour of the Precious Blood and to remind people of Jesus' most merciful sacrifice on the Cross for our salvation. The war soon ended and the Pope returned to Rome. Pius IX proclaimed that the 1st Sunday in July would be dedicated to the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ. Later, Pope Pius X assigned July 1 as the fixed date of this celebration.

### **6pm Friday 9<sup>th</sup> July, Weekday Mass**

### **Congratulations to Mr & Mrs O'Connor!**

On Friday (2<sup>nd</sup> July) we celebrated the wedding of Natasha Meadowcroft and Dale O'Connor. Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic, numbers were restricted and the liturgy was a lot more simpler, however, it did not take away the prayerfulness and loving faith filled commitment that Natasha & Dale made before God. May the Lord bless them, may Our Lady and St. Joseph always pray for them, and may the angels watch over them and their future family. Amen.

### **Eco Thought of the Week, Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> July**

Each week the Eucharistic Prayer begins with one of a number of Prefaces. In Ordinary Time one such Preface prays:

*"You have laid the foundations of the world  
and have arranged the changing of times and seasons;  
You formed man in your own image*

*and set humanity over the whole world in all its wonder,  
to rule in your name over all you have made  
and for ever praise you in your mighty works,  
through Christ our Lord."*

How have succeeding generations exercised that 'rule' over all creation? How will we do so?

### **Recruiting at the Cathedral Centre.**

#### ***Communication and Marketing Officer (Cathedral).***

An exciting opportunity has arisen to join the Diocese of Salford as a Communications and Marketing Officer to work with the Communications Manager and Cathedral Dean. This role will be key in supporting the Cathedral to tell its story, past, present & future in a busy, dynamic environment. The successful candidate will be responsible for delivering a variety of multimedia communications to assist the Cathedral team in raising awareness of the Cathedral among external audiences while encouraging greater engagement with the Cathedral Community. As a member of the Diocesan Communications Office, the incumbent will also play a part in supporting the team's work around the diocese, its projects, and parishes. Closing date for applications: 12 noon on Friday 16th July 2021.

#### ***Cathedral Campus Estate & Facilities Manager.***

The Diocese of Salford are seeking to recruit a suitability qualified individual to provide leadership and oversee all facilities management aspects of the Cathedral Campus to develop and sustain excellence in all areas. The Cathedral, Cathedral House and Cathedral Centre are of great significance to the Church in Salford and this role will be responsible for delivering the highest standards of safety, hygiene, hospitality and service across this diverse setting through effective facilities management. Closing date for applications: 12 noon on Friday 16th July 2021.

For more information please send them to: [hr@dioceseofsalford.org.uk](mailto:hr@dioceseofsalford.org.uk)

### **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-alongs 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