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*Saint Mary's Roman Catholic Church*  
*Catlow Hall Street, Oswaldtwistle*  
*Lancashire*  
*BB53EZ*

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



Sunday 11th July 2021, Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear brothers and sisters,

I'm grateful to Dylan Owen, from the St. Mary's Refugee Resettlement Program, who has written a few words to update us all in regards the groups work and completion.

### **St Mary's Refugee Resettlement Program.**

Just over 3 years ago Pope Francis expressed concern about the humanitarian disaster occurring in Syria where thousands of innocent families were suffering the cruel realities of a brutal civil war. Pope Francis suggested that parishes around the globe could help by supporting and resettling those who had been displaced, who had lost virtually everything they possessed through no fault of their own

Amazingly, our parish stepped up to the plate and initiated our own Refugee Resettlement Program. Of course such a project required financing! We commenced by organizing a series of fund raising events including; 'Big do's and little do's,' The Mega Jumble Sale, a Bake Off Afternoon, projects organized by the children at St Mary's School, writing and producing our own cd of Christian Songs, selling Christmas Stickers, Social Evenings at Franco's Restaurant plus monthly pledges and donations from many of our parish members. Within the year we had raised the required amount to initiate the Community Sponsored Refugee Resettlement programme!

Then on Christmas Eve, 2018 we were given notice of a family who fulfilled all the criteria stipulated by Caritas, the Home Office and United Nations and in late February 2019, on a cold, damp miserable Manchester evening we welcomed the arrival of a Syrian refugee family who had been temporarily living in Lebanon. Adel, Sawsan and their three teenage boys looked so nervous and confused on arrival, however they were massively surprised and extremely appreciative when they arrived at their new home, here in in Oswaldtwistle.

Since their arrival we have made huge progress in helping them in what has been a challenging and demanding resettlement process. The main challenges incidentally were due to the vast and complex UK administrative systems, however, with a touch of patience, bags of humour and an abundance of good will, all issues were successfully resolved.

Sawsan and Adel (mum and dad) in spite of extreme physical and psychological traumas, managed to adapt to life in England and now continue to attend English language lessons and training provided by the Work and Pensions Department and from September the three boys will attend Blackburn College. Two would like to progress towards computer technology whilst the youngest boy has his eye on a future in engineering. What a difference from their experiences in Syria where they had to literally flee for their lives!

Over the past year unfortunately, our level of support has been hindered by the Covid restrictions (although we have continued with telephone calls and text messages, plus a little social distancing). Technically, the project has now reached its completion and the nature of our support will inevitably change. Hopefully we can continue to offer our help and advice, as would 'good neighbours and genuine friends.'

In respect of us as parishioners within St Mary's community, it's fair to say that the project has had a positive impact on many different people in different ways. The initial social activities certainly led to new friendships being forged with us actually meeting those people who were previously just 'familiar faces' in church. Some people have acquired new skills and knowledge in order to meet complex challenges whilst others have been able to utilize existing personal skills and experiences; Health, Education, Housing, Plumbing, Electrics, Carpet laying, fund raising, providing donations of high quality furniture and new carpets etc.... plus other attributes which are far too many to mention. You name it, we did it!

So as the project comes to an 'official end', a huge thank you to all who have been involved; to those who offered time, prayers and goodwill to the success of what has been such a worthwhile endeavour. There is an ancient American Indian proverb that states; 'to fully understand someone, walk a mile in their moccasins.' We hope that our involvement has enabled us to 'walk that mile' and to have a greater understanding of the sufferings resulting from war and violence. Our project has clearly taught us that with faith and determination, it is possible to provide quality driven, realistic and practical help to those families who have experienced the devastating effects of being displaced.

Thank you.

### **Update: Mass Bookings**

As of next week (beginning Monday 5th 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 14th July, Saint Camillus de Lellis, Patron Saint of Health Care Workers**

St. Camillus de Lellis was born in Italy in 1550, became a soldier but turned to ministering to the sick. He was ordained, and founded the Congregation of the Servants of the Sick, which set up hospitals for the poor. He died in 1614, and is the patron of all health care workers. At this Mass we will offer up all those who are carers and give so much to help others.

**10am Thursday 15th July, Saint Bonaventure, Bishop and Doctor**

St. Bonaventure was born in Italy in 1218, became a Franciscan and eventually the Minister General of the Order and Cardinal Bishop of Albano near Rome. He is remembered for his spiritual teaching. He died in 1274.

**6pm Friday 16th July, OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL, Patron of the Diocese of Salford**

The Scriptures speak of the beauty of Mount Carmel, where Elijah defended the faith of Israel. In 1156 A.D hermits settled there and set up the Carmelite Order to lead a contemplative life under the patronage of the Mother of God. Our Lady of Mount Carmel is the principal patron of our diocese of Salford. Let's pray that as part of the diocesan family we may continue to witness to Our Lord Jesus Christ, Mary's son, in our local community.

#### **Eco Thought of the Week, Sunday 11th July**

In Mark's Gospel today Jesus sends out the Twelve, warning them 'to take nothing for the journey except a staff- no bread, no haversack, no coppers for their purses.'

How simply do we journey through life in terms of what we use, what we consume?

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

PA/Senior Administrator - COO Office.

The Diocese of Salford is seeking to recruit a suitably experienced individual to provide office management and oversight of the administration of the COO Office. This role will have responsibility for providing robust administrative and secretarial support to the COO and her team across all areas but particularly in relation to the IT, telephony, and Data Protection. Closing date for applications: 12 noon on Monday 26th July 2021.

#### **Personal Assistant to the Vicars General and the Secretary to the Trustees.**

The Diocese of Salford is seeking to recruit a suitably experienced individual to provide high quality administrative support to the Vicars General and the Secretary to the Trustees to enable them to fulfil their specific roles and wider responsibilities for the governance of the diocese. The role will require regular interaction with a wide and diverse range of individuals and the incumbent must understand that they are an ambassador for the Diocese in all their encounters.

Closing date for applications: 12 noon on Monday 26th July 2021.

#### **Receptionist**

The Cathedral Centre is the office base for diocesan curial staff and houses the Cathedral Bookshop, Café, and conference rooms. A large number and wide variety of visitors, contractors and personnel come to the Cathedral Centre and the wider estate as a whole. The Cathedral House is adjacent to the Centre and houses some of our retired clergy.

Closing date for applications: 12 noon on Monday 26th July 2021.

For more information and application packs, please visit the diocesan website. If you have any queries, questions can be sent 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-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