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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 1st August 2021
Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear brothers and sisters,

The circular stain glass window above the Chapel of Our Lady of Oswaldtwistle depicts the Immaculate Heart of Mary. As many of you will know the month of August is dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. When we see a statue or picture of the Sacred Heart of Jesus we automatically recall the Lord's love and mercy for all humankind. Images of the Immaculate Heart of Mary remind us of Our Lady's desire to bring all people to her Son. Mothers want the best for their children and our heavenly mother is no exception. Her Immaculate Heart wants us to find real happiness, true joy and eternal peace and she knows that these things can only be found in Jesus Christ her Son.



The Latin inscription at the bottom of our stain glass window of the Immaculate Heart of Mary reads, 'ECCE MATER TUA', which simply translates, 'Behold your Mother'. These words were spoken by Jesus on the way to Calvary in John's Gospel.

***'Seeing his mother and the disciple he loved standing near her, Jesus said to his mother, 'Woman, this is your son.' Then to the disciple he said, 'This is your mother.' And from that moment the disciple made a place for her in his home.'* (Jn 19:26-27)**

Our Lord himself entrusts us, his people the flock of his pasture, to Mary his Mother. He knows that she will love and protect us through thick and thin. He knows the power of her prayers on our behalf. He knows that those who embrace her will be led to him who is The Way, The Truth and The Life.

This August let's offer up our rosaries for all those among our family and friends who may have wandered from the Lord for all kinds of reasons. Let's ask Our Lady's intercession to bring them home so that they too may discover that peace which only Jesus can bring, especially at the Mass.

Masses & Liturgies for the Coming Week...

Monday 2nd August

3pm Wedding of Jessica Beard & Michael Daniels

Wednesday 4th August

9:30am -10:15am Church open for private prayer

Thursday 5th August

10am Votive Mass of Our Lady

Friday 6th August

10:15am Requiem Mass for Angela Haworth RIP

6pm Mass, Feast of The Transfiguration of the Lord

Saturday 7th August

9am -10am Confessions

6:30pm Vigil Mass for Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday 8th August

10am Mass for Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Following guidance from the diocese, we are still strongly encouraged to wear face masks in church and continue with the NHS Test & Trace system. Thank you for continuing to make St. Mary's a safe and prayerful place for the Glory of God.

The Sacrament of Confession & The Holy Rosary

On Saturday 7th August the Sacrament of Confession will be available from 9am – 10am. Those who haven't taken the opportunity to come to Confession during the last year will testify to the safe and prayerful way in which it is celebrated. The Rosary will be publicly prayed in church, by kind volunteers, during Confessions. The intention for each rosary will be that all faithful disciples of the Lord will return to Him in this most merciful Sacrament that He instituted. The invitation is there, the welcome is warm and His forgiveness is REAL! Will you come?

The Covid Vaccine

“Bishop John is urging all adults, who are able to do so, to be vaccinated. Pope Francis has reminded people of the duty to be vaccinated if they are able. The Church is clear that all Catholics can take any of the vaccines on offer with a clear conscience. Even if you are at a low risk of becoming seriously ill, being vaccinated will lower the risk of transmitting the virus to somebody else who might then have a severe reaction or even die. It is particularly important that those in our parishes, clergy and lay-people who visit those who are housebound or otherwise vulnerable are vaccinated.”

Parish Readers

As restrictions are now being eased and parishes around the diocese are adapting to new circumstances I would like to invite both existing readers and potential new readers to contact me. The Word of God is so vital and life giving! It's through the Scriptures that we encounter the Lord and He is able to speak, guide, direct, challenge, affirm and heal us. Readers are so important because through their clarity and voices they transmit the message that God wants us to hear at the Liturgy.

Covid has disturbed many peoples routines and personal circumstances which has meant that one or two existing readers have said they can no longer continue. That is perfectly understandable and I think it is so important nobody feels pressure to continue. The world has changed. If parishioners would like to volunteer to be readers or any existing readers would like to continue then please email me at sean.obrien@dioceseofsalford.org.uk and we can talk about the practicalities.

Extra-ordinary ministers of Holy Communion

We have been blessed over the years with dedicated parishioners who have been chosen by the various parish priests of St. Mary's to be Extra-ordinary ministers of Holy Communion. Their chief and first role is to support the parish priest by visiting the sick who genuinely cannot attend the Holy Mass and bring the Blessed Sacrament to them. That time of praying together in the Real Presence of Jesus in Holy Communion brings such healing and consolation to those who are suffering and housebound.

I am aware that many of our existing Extra-ordinary ministers of Holy Communion have found that personal circumstances and routines have changed since the start of the Covid Pandemic last year. Therefore, without anybody feeling pressure, if those existing parish Extra-ordinary ministers of Holy Communion would like to continue then please do contact me and we can work out safely and correctly the sick visits that need to be undertaken. Email sean.obrien@dioceseofsalford.org.uk Similarly, if people would like to stand down I fully understand and appreciate that things have changed in parish life and nobody should feel under any pressure to continue. Thank you for what you have done for our sick and housebound in the past and may God Bless you.

I'll personally meet with those who wish to continue and go through the new format of safely distributing the Blessed Sacrament to those who are sick. At present there is no need for Extra-ordinary ministers of Holy Communion to assist me at the Mass.

Caritas Bishop's Fund

Caritas is pleased to offer the Caritas Bishop's Fund to parishes and schools to provide immediate support to families or individuals facing a crisis and now also to include food shopping vouchers. (We noted how helpful this was for families in crisis during the recent distribution of the National Lottery grant). Each school or parish may be allocated up to 6 applications per year to this Fund. For more information email: bishopsfund@caritassalford.org.uk

Caritas Summer Appeal

This summer, Caritas Salford will support over 5,000 families experiencing challenges and crisis. They will give practical support to those living in insecure accommodation, help alleviate poverty and provide food packs, shopping vouchers and 'in-crisis' grants to those in need. They will be there for people who need housing support, tenancy assistance and help with applications for benefits and for the high cost of school uniforms.

Gifts by post: If you would like to send a cheque to Caritas send it directly to Caritas Diocese of Salford, Cathedral Centre 3 Ford Street, Salford M3 6DP. Cheques should be made payable to Caritas Diocese of Salford. Please mark your envelope Caritas Summer Appeal and include your full name and address and how you prefer Caritas to be in contact with you.

If you can Gift Aid your donation, it is worth 25% more to Caritas, at no extra cost to you. Tick the box online, or let them know by post with your cheque. Thank you.

Thank you for donating to Caritas today to help children, families and those affected by poverty across the Diocese of Salford.

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

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

Fr. O'Brien