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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



Friday 25th December 2021
Christmas Eve

Dear brothers and sisters,

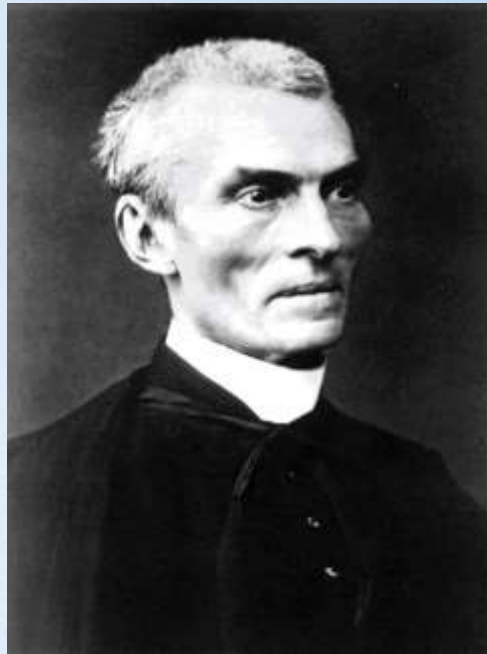
Picture an 'old fashioned' television. The kind before digital, sky plus and satellites. The kind that had the flimsy metal aerial attached to the box similar to the one in the picture below.



It may look dated now but many families scrimped and saved to have these new entertainment machines in the corner of their living rooms. The aerial and its position were crucial to the quality of picture and sound that came through. If the aerial was tilted the wrong way or there was outside interference from the weather then all you could see was a black and white fuzz with loud static crackling noise. The adjustment of the T.V aerial required skill and a great deal of patient perseverance!

There are times in life when our own spiritual aerials have not been pointing in the right direction. Rather than receiving God and being able to focus on our relationship with Jesus Christ the picture that has emerged is one of patchy faith and blurry hope. Over the 18 months we have all been living through uncertain and frustrating times, even now the new year of 2022 is still unclear and fuzzy. Many people have been plagued with understandable worries and genuine concerns. All this 'interference' has caused static and crackling in our lives of faith which in turn has made it difficult to clearly see and hear the Lord. What do we do? How do we resume normal service?

The best spiritual T.V repairman that I can recommend is Saint Peter Julian Eymard. He was a 19th century French priest who established the Blessed Sacrament Fathers and whose words of wisdom are still in print today. Over the last few months I've found myself turning to this saint and asking for his intercession. Saint Peter Julian has repaired and redirected my spiritual aerial back towards Jesus Christ especially in the mystery of the Blessed Sacrament. The following words he penned are perfect for this moment in time with Christmas looming!



‘We must keep in mind that the Holy Eucharist is Jesus Christ, past, present, and future; that the Eucharist is the last development of the Incarnation and mortal life of our Saviour; that in the Eucharist Jesus Christ gives us every grace; that all truths tend to and end in the Eucharist; and that there is nothing more to be added when we have said, “The Eucharist,” since it is Jesus Christ...It is not difficult to find a relation between the birth of Jesus in the stable and His sacramental birth on the altar and in our hearts...Who does not see that the hidden life of Nazareth is continued in the Divine Host of the tabernacle, and that the passion of the Man-God on Calvary is renewed in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at every moment of the day and night, and all over the world?’

(‘The Real Presence’, Saint Pierre Julian Eymard)

Whenever he was on his travels or he could not pray before the Blessed Sacrament, Saint Peter Julian would close his eyes and picture the tabernacle in his own church. This simple practice reminded him of the reality of Jesus’ true and substantial Presence in the world. It was the Blessed Sacrament contained within the tabernacle that reaffirmed Peter Julian Eymard’s faith that Jesus, the Good Shepherd, was not in the clouds above but dwelling amongst his people on earth. Throughout his life Fr. Eymard faced many trials and challenges but it was the love of Christ found in the Eucharist that helped him to have a clear picture of Heaven.

As we approach these days of Christmastide and look towards the New Year I invite you, brothers and sisters, to imitate the prayer of Saint Peter Julian Eymard. Close your eyes and think of the Tabernacle here at St. Mary’s. Picture the red lit sanctuary lamp whose flickering flame reminds us of the Lord’s Presence in our midst. Once you have that visual image talk to Him, the Good Shepherd. Adore Him, give Him Thanks, talk to Him about your worries and concerns and petition Him for your friends and family.

Happy Christmas and have a Blessed and Peaceful New Year!

Masses & Liturgies for the Coming Week...

Friday 24th December

5:30pm Carols around the Crib
6pm Christmas Eve Mass (Family Mass)
8pm Christmas Eve Mass (Simple, quiet & reflective Mass)

Saturday 25th December

9:30am Carols around the Crib
10am Christmas Day Mass (Family Mass)

Sunday 26th December

10am Mass, Feast of the Holy Family

Tuesday 28th December

5pm – 5:50pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament & Confession
6pm Mass, The Holy Innocents, Martyrs (Feast)

Wednesday 29th December

10am Mass, Saint Thomas Beckett, Bishop & Martyr (Feast)

Friday 31st December

10am Christmas Mass
11am Funeral Service of Natalina Yates RIP

Saturday 1st January 2022

6pm The Holy Rosary
6:30pm Vigil Mass for the Second Sunday of Christmas

Sunday 2nd January 2022

9:30am The Holy Rosary
10am Mass for the Second Sunday of Christmas

Under new government directives face masks must now be worn in church.
Thank you for continuing to make St. Mary's a safe and prayerful place for the
Glory of God.

Sanctuary Lamp

This week (25th Dec - 1st Jan 2022) the Sanctuary Lamp is burning in prayer for Wilfrid Parr RIP.

Thank you

Thank you to everyone who has made Christmas unique and prayerful as always at St. Mary's. My personal thanks for all the cards and gifts that have arrived at the front door and sacristy. They are much appreciated.

God Bless and keep praying.

Our Lady of Oswaldtwistle, pray for us.

Saint Joseph, pray for us.

Fr. O'Brien

