



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

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



Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2021  
Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear brothers and sisters,

I want to tell you about an event that took place in the 18<sup>th</sup> century just off the Belgium coast. Two Franciscan priests were caught in a storm which resulted not only in them being shipwrecked but cast adrift in the cold waters holding on to the flotsam of their boat. For three days and three nights the two priests prayed to be rescued from the cold, dark and merciless sea. On the third night their prayers were answered. A man appeared from nowhere and guided them to the safety of the shore. The priests were so grateful at the courage and strength shown by the man they asked him his name. He responded that he was Saint Joseph!

You can imagine the two Franciscans initial disbelief at the words of their rescuer and both of them doing a double take! Still in shock the priests asked what could they do to so show their thanks and the simple reply was, *'Honour my Seven Sorrows and Seven Joys on the Seven Sunday's leading up to the 19<sup>th</sup> March.'* The 19<sup>th</sup> March is the Solemnity of St. Joseph.

After their rescue the two priests began to reflect and absorb the momentous events that had taken place. They realised that no human could have rescued them from such a perilous situation at sea. It truly was St. Joseph! A miracle sent by God, to rescue the doomed Franciscans as Joseph had rescued Jesus and Mary from the murderous hands of King Herod. From that time on the devotion of the seven Sunday's leading up to March was practised in the Church. On each Sunday a joy and sorrow of St. Joseph, found in the Bible, is meditated and prayed upon. Like any devotion it allows those who participate in it the opportunity to come closer to the Lord and honours God the Father's work in Joseph, His saint and the protector of the Holy Family. Starting 15 minutes before each of the weekend Masses (Vigil & Sunday) from January 31<sup>st</sup> until March 14<sup>th</sup> this devotion will be prayed in honour of St. Joseph, here at St. Mary's. The humble request underlying this devotional prayer will simply be to help us all, family & friends, in these uncertain times.

***'May he [St. Joseph] take charge of the affair of your salvation.  
Just as he led the Son of God in his travels, may he be your guide on the voyage of this life until  
you arrive at the haven of eternal happiness.'***  
**Blessed William Joseph Chaminade**

### **Other parish devotions for the Year of St. Joseph**

#### ***Petition Box***

In front of the statue of St. Joseph there is now a prayer box. I invite you to place any petitions that you may have in that box the next time you are at church. You may want to ask St. Joseph to pray for a loved one, to intercede for a soul in purgatory, to keep vigil over a friend or family member you have not been able to visit because of the pandemic. Your petition could be for a family going through financial troubles, mental health issues or your prayer to St. Joseph maybe for a person who has lapsed and walked away from Christ and His Church. Whatever your prayer write it at home and then place it in the box before St. Joseph who will always bring your needs to God.

### ***Votive Mass***

Wednesdays, for us as Roman Catholics, is the weekday traditionally given to St. Joseph. Why? Wednesday is halfway between Sunday, the day of Our Lord, and Saturday, the day of Our Lady. It is the mid-point of the week and on any journey pilgrims often become tired midway through. However, just as St. Joseph carried Mary and her unborn child safely to Bethlehem and later on to Egypt, so to his prayers carry us when we are tired or distracted. The practice of a Wednesday Votive Mass in honour of St. Joseph has slowly started to return and each Wednesday in this year dedicated to our spiritual father I too will be offering up this votive Mass (dependant on funerals and obligatory liturgical feasts). If you find yourself tiring in prayer or doubting in faith then come to St. Joseph so that he may bring you closer to his foster Son who said:

***‘Come to me all you who labour and are overburdened and I will give you rest.’***

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

The government has allowed places of worship to remain open during this third national lockdown but we must not become complacent. The diocese have asked us to remind people of the following procedures:

- 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.

### **Rock Salt & Gritters**

The parish grounds still desperately in need of any donations of rock salt/grit. If you are out and about (safely) and come across a bag of rock salt and would like to donate it to St. Mary's then it will be gratefully received. Just leave it by the front door of the presbytery and know a prayer will be offered up for you. Thank you to the person who left a kind offering of rock salt and other things at the front door last week! **It would also be good if we could have a number of people who would be prepared to volunteer their time and services to grit the paths when we do have bad weather. If you can do this then please email [keenannavada@gmail.com](mailto:keenannavada@gmail.com)**

### **Mass Bookings**

To book a place at Mass via our telephone service then please ring (01254) 232 433 on Wednesdays between 5pm – 6pm. To book a place at Mass online please visit the parish website [www.saintmarysowaltdwistle.co.uk](http://www.saintmarysowaltdwistle.co.uk) Sadly, some volunteers have had to return to work and therefore you will only be able to book online during the week (Monday to Friday).

### **Stewards, Cleaners & Gardeners**

If you would like to serve Our Lord as a volunteer steward then please email Jennifer Pickles (St. Mary's Steward Co-ordinator) at: [jennifer.pickles@virginmedia.com](mailto:jennifer.pickles@virginmedia.com) or to volunteer as a cleaner please contact Karen Beard (Parish Housekeeper) at [jakey9998@aol.com](mailto:jakey9998@aol.com). The parish grounds are always crying out for attention. If you could help please contact Navada Keenan (Parish gardens facilitator) at [keenannavada@gmail.com](mailto:keenannavada@gmail.com)

**Parish Christmas Crib Appeal: Update** After the appeal last week we have now received the full £700 to restore the three shepherds and Ox. Thank you to those kind benefactors and an exceptionally generous anonymous donor. I'm going to try and push for the wise men to be done as well! Thank you, God Bless you and know that I have offered up prayers for you.

**Online Prayer.** As you know I completed a diocesan safeguarding course last autumn via the internet on a thing called Zoom. This Zoom allows you to meet interactively and if a parishioner would like to organise and facilitate an event, like the rosary or a bible study group, where we could pray together online I would be very happy for that to happen. You will need to contact the diocesan safeguarding office in regards to appropriate procedure and practice when hosting a Zoom meeting. If you would like to organise this then please email me and I can pass on the safeguarding contact details to you.

### **Prayers for Sacred Heart School**

As many of you will have seen from the parish email and website this week, Mrs Sarah Welch, our parish school headteacher at Sacred Heart School has sadly died. We continue to pray for Sarah, her family and the parish school community of Sacred Heart at this sad and difficult time.

*Eternal Rest grant unto her O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her.  
May she Rest in peace. Amen.*

### **Bishop of Salford**

This weekend the Bishop has asked that we circulate his pastoral letter. You can read the Bishop's words by following the link [www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/pastoral-letter-20/](http://www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/pastoral-letter-20/) or visiting the diocesan website. For those who have the parish letters printed by fellow parishioners, the Bishop's letter will be uploaded on our website early next week.

The Bishop in his letter asks that the diocesan organisation **Caritas Salford** be remembered. If you would like to financially support that charity then please send donations directly to them and not the presbytery:

### **Caritas Diocese of Salford**

**Cathedral Centre, 3, Ford Street, Salford M3 6DP**

Any monies sent through the parish I will automatically assume are for our church St. Mary's.

God Bless and keep praying.

Our Lady of Oswaldtwistle, pray for us.

Saint Joseph, pray for us.

Fr. O'Brien