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Saint Mary's Roman Catholic Church
Catlow Hall Street, Oswaldtwistle
Lancashire
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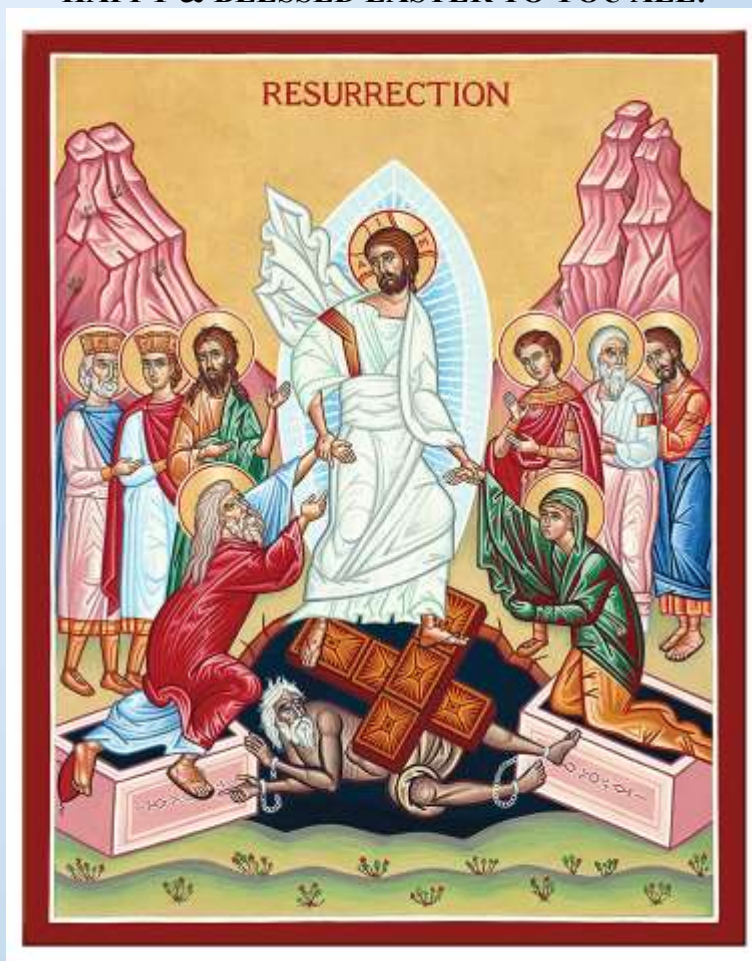
Parish Priest: Rev Fr. S D O'Brien
Tel: 01254-232433



Sunday 4th April 2021
Easter Sunday

Dear brothers and sisters,

**HE IS RISEN ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA!
HAPPY & BLESSED EASTER TO YOU ALL!**



Pope Saint Leo the Great wrote a beautiful meditation about the Resurrection. He described Our Lord as being eager to rise on the third day, not only to fulfil the Scriptures, but also to hasten to console his mother and disciples. He wanted to bring them light in darkness. This darkness flooded the world at the Crucifixion:

'When the sixth hour came there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour'
(Mk 15:33)

A blackness descended upon the disciples. Some scuttled off into the shadows abandoning Jesus after his arrest in the garden. Peter sinned during the night hours when he denied the Lord, as foretold, three times. It was also during the black of evening that Joseph of Arimathaea, with a heavy heart, had to undertake an unenviable task:

'It was now evening, and since it was Preparation Day, there came Joseph of Arimathaea...who bought a shroud, took Jesus down from the cross, wrapped him in the shroud and laid him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a stone against the entrance to the tomb.'
(Mk 15: 42, 46)

Darkness, night, evening and shadows are all words that evoke a sense of despair and hopelessness both physically and psychologically. Before the sun rose on the third day, before the dawn advanced, before the world stirred Christ burst out of the tomb with an explosion of light that could never be dimmed or extinguished. His light would affirm his mother's unwavering faith, His light would bring hope and forgiveness to his disciples, His light would bring healing and eternal life to all those who would choose to believe in him.

***'When Jesus spoke to the people again, he said:
"I am the light of the world;
anyone who follows me will not be walking in the dark;
he will have the light of life."
(Jn 8:12)***

At the great Easter Vigil, we see this contrasting dynamic of light and darkness played out in the liturgy, to draw our hearts and minds into the joy of the Resurrection. The Mass begins in an unlit church. The Paschal Candle is blessed, lit and carried through the church with the priest proclaiming three times, '**Lumen Christi**' (Light of Christ) and the people responding '**Deo Gratias**' (Thank God). The dark church represents the tomb and the flame of the Paschal Candle symbolises the light of Christ. That light which dispels the eternal darkness of death and sin and makes visible the way to eternal life – Jesus Christ Our Lord and Saviour.

That one flame of the Paschal Candle is used to light the rest of the church. It's flame lights other candles that continue to brighten and disperse the shadows of the church building. This liturgical action reflects the reality of what we are called to do as disciples. Our Catholic Faith is rooted firmly in the Resurrection of Our Lord. This is the light we are asked to pass on to others to dispel the darkness of the world and light it up through Jesus Christ.

'Our task as Christians is to proclaim the kingship of Christ, announcing it through what we say and do. Our Lord wants men and women of his own in all walks of life. Some he calls away from society, asking them to give up involvement in the world, so that they remind the rest of us by their example that God exists. To others he entrusts the priestly ministry. But he wants the vast majority to stay right where they are, in all earthly occupations in which they work: the factory, the laboratory, the farm, the trades, the streets of the big cities and the trails of the mountains and proclaim Christ the Light to those around them, those they live with and those they work with.'
St. Josemaria Escivía

This Easter pass on the light of real hope that can only be found in the person of Our Lord Jesus Christ. It is only through him, with him and in him that we can find and know what true life is. Happy Easter and God Bless.

Thank You

A big thank you to all those who have helped in any way, shape or form to make this year's Easter Triduum a prayerful and holy experience. Thank you and God Bless you for your time, gifts and service.

Welcome to the family

At the great Easter Vigil Wesley Davitt will be received into full communion with the Church. The Bishop has given me the faculties to Confirm Wesley at this Holy Mass plus he will also receive the gift of Our Lord in Holy Communion for the first time. Let's keep Wesley and his family in our prayers at this time. If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about the faith then do contact me.

ABC (About Becoming Catholic)

During the last year of lockdowns, social distancing, furloughs and daily life being interrupted many people have found themselves with time to think. To think about the direction of their own lives, to think about the fragility of this world, to think about what happens after death and even daring to contemplate the person of Jesus Christ! If you or somebody you know is contemplating such things then tell them to email me at sean.obrien@dioceseofsalford.org.uk or call the presbytery 01254 232 433 (leaving a voicemail if I don't answer straight away). We are made for the Lord and we will only find real happiness, true purpose and total completeness in adoring and loving Him.

**‘You have made us for Yourself, O Lord,
and our hearts are restless until they rest in You.’
(St. Augustine of Hippo)**

First Holy Communions

We pray this week for Franchesca, Poppy, Georgia, Luke, Faye and Tessa who will be blessed by God through receiving the gift of the Holy Eucharist. Our prayer is that they treasure Our Lord's Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity, in the Blessed Sacrament throughout all their lives, realising it is a privilege and not a right.

Alpha Online

On 13th April, Youth 2000 will begin running the next instalment of Alpha online. We have been amazed at the fruit from our first three Alpha courses. We are inviting parishes across the country to join Youth 2000 by bringing their youth groups or parish groups to Alpha Online. The sessions are organised over Zoom. The evening begins with a welcome from the Youth 2000 team, followed by the watching of the video, and then we go into small group discussions using the Zoom 'Breakout Room' feature; as a parish youth group, you have the option of either having the discussion online in a breakout room.

The Online Alpha Course will run for 9 weeks on Tuesday evenings, starting on Tuesday 13th April, 7:30 - 8:30 pm. For more information or to discuss the course in more detail, please contact Liam at liam.riley@youth2000.org.

Easter - Weekly Eco-Thought for Parishes

Easter Sunday: One of the choices as Second Reading today has St. Paul telling us 'You must know how even a small amount of yeast is enough to leaven all the dough, so get rid of all the old yeast and make yourselves into a completely new batch of bread.' 'A small amount' can make something wonderful and sustaining. What small action can I take, in this season of Easter newness, to care for God's creation?

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.

Caritas Job Vacancies

Social Workers

3, 4 or 5 days per week

Term time only (39 working weeks, 13 non working weeks)

SCP19-26, Qualification Bar at SCP24

We require Social Workers to provide a high quality social work service in schools across the Diocese of Salford. You will work directly with children and young people, their parents, carers and schools in order to further the child's welfare and provide the interventions necessary to enable them to use their learning opportunities to the full.

Closing date: Tuesday, 6 April 2021 at 10:00am

Interview: Tuesday, 13 April 2021

Due to the pandemic interviews will be conducted via Zoom

Bank Counsellors

We require a bank Counsellor to provide a counselling and family support service in schools across the Diocese of Salford according to each school's formal agreement. You will work with pupils referred to the Caritas Schools' Service on a variety of issues, providing a non-judgemental, caring and confidential environment for them to work through their problems and difficulties. For the position you will have experience of individual counselling and Therapeutic / group work with children. You will also be flexible and have competent IT skills. For more details please visit the Salford Diocesan website.

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.

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.saintmarysoswaldtwistle.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).

God Bless and keep praying.

Our Lady of Oswaldtwistle, pray for us.

Saint Joseph, pray for us.

Fr. O'Brien