



# THE PARISH OF SAINT MARY, HALIFAX

Incorporating the churches of St Alban and St Mary

Parish Priest: Rev. Fr Joshua Hilton

Deacon: Rev. John Walsh

Presbytery: Clarence House, 2 Clarence Street, Halifax HX1 5DH

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St Mary's Primary Academy: 01422 362365

## MASS SCHEDULE AND DEVOTIONS

### Perpetual Novena:

Wednesday after 9:30am Mass

### Holy Rosary:

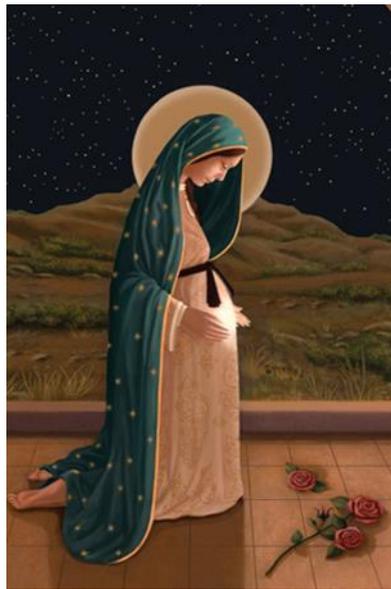
Saturday after 12:15pm Mass

### Devotions to the Sacred Heart:

First Friday of the month after 9:30am Mass

### Our Lady's Lamp this week burns for:

A private intention



### Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament:

Saturday 11:00am – 12:00pm at St Mary's

### Confessions:

Saturday - 11:00am-12:00pm – St Mary's  
Sunday - 5:30pm-6:00pm – St Alban's or on Request

### Marriages and Baptisms by appointment

SUNDAY 4 <sup>th</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent	9:30am 11:00am 1:00pm 6:00pm	St Mary's St Mary's St Mary's St Alban's	Irene and Tomasz Nalepa People of the Parish Polish Mass Peter Hutchinson
MONDAY 5 <sup>th</sup>	Feria	No Public Mass		
TUESDAY 6 <sup>th</sup>	St Nicholas	7:00pm	St Alban's	Domenic and Chris Colleran
WEDNESDAY 7 <sup>th</sup>	St Ambrose	9:30am	St Mary's	2 Children
THURSDAY 8 <sup>th</sup>	<b>THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION</b>	<b>9:30am</b>	<b>St Mary's</b>	Wedding Anniversary BB
FRIDAY 9 <sup>th</sup>	Feria	9:30am 12 Noon	St Mary's St Mary's	Marie Finn Funeral Service for Joan Collins
SATURDAY 10 <sup>th</sup>	Feria	12:15pm	St Mary's	Marjorie and Gordon Ellis

### READERS ROTA

#### THIS SUNDAY

#### NEXT SUNDAY

9:30am	John Greenwood	9:30am	Gabrielle Colleran
11:00am	Wendy Balahura	11:00am	Katarzina Machinu
6:00pm	Bernard Corcoran	6:00pm	Paul Coates

### **CAROL SERVICE AND CHRISTMAS PARTY**

There will be a traditional carol service in St Mary's at 6:30pm on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> of December. This will be followed by a parish Christmas party at the Catholic club, there will be a glass of fizz on arrival and a buffet provided. Christmas jumpers are encouraged. Please spread the word – All welcome.

### **CONFESSIONS**

In addition to the usual times, confessions will be heard after every Sunday Mass during the season of Advent. The Deanery Day of Reconciliation will be on held Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> of December at St Mary's with confessions being heard from 9:00am – 5:00pm.

Make sure you go before Christmas – with all of these opportunities, there's no excuse!

### **BISHOP PHILIP MOGER**

It was announced on Monday in Rome that the Holy Father has appointed Mgr. Philip Moger, a son of this parish, who was of course ordained in St Mary's, as Auxiliary Bishop in the Archdiocese of Southwark. I spoke with Bishop-Elect Moger this week to pass on our congratulations and the assurance of our prayers. I also invited him to return to St Mary's, after his Episcopal Consecration on the 21<sup>st</sup> of February, to celebrate a Mass of thanksgiving here in his home parish, an invitation he has graciously accepted. We keep his Lordship in our prayers and look forward to his visit.

**PLEASE PRAY FOR** Joan Collins and all those who have died recently and for all those whose anniversaries occur at this time.

### **PRAYER LIST**

David Sutcliffe, Gladys Megson, John Wallis, Millie Haigh, David Murphy, Peter Fekete, Fawzia Mohamed, William Long, Sonya Box, Julie Simpson, Charlotte Fitzpatrick, Peter Smith, Julie Hall, Moya Andrew, Suzanne Peaker, Larry Byrne, Eleanor Foran, Winnie Whelan, Kathleen Hannan, Nancy McGrath, Maureen Colleran, Patricia Reynolds and all the sick and housebound of the parish, their families and those who care for them.

If you know of anyone in the Parish who is ill or is housebound please let Fr Hilton or Deacon John know so that a visitation can be arranged.

**MASSES RECEIVED:** Joe Riddeal, Wedding Ann BB, Mary Ryan, Jim Hargreaves, Marshal Louie Hores, Christine Littlewood, Peter Carolan, Leo Dolly, Tom Dolly

### **PARISH CHRISTMAS RAFFLE**

Tickets for the Parish Christmas Raffle will be on sale after Sunday Masses from 27th November. There are several hampers to be won this year, including two children's hampers, so don't miss out on buying your tickets. The raffle will be drawn on Friday 16th December at the parish party.

### **PARISH LADIES GUILD**

The Parish Ladies Guild Torchlight Carol Service and Christmas party will be held at St Alban's church on Thursday 8th December at 7pm. Please all remember to bring a torch and a secret Santa wrapped gift to the value of £1. That includes all guests as well. Food will be provided but if you want an alcoholic drink, we ask that you bring your own. New members very welcome.

### **ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY**

Can you help us make someone's Christmas a little bit happier? We are now thinking about our Christmas Appeal. This year, those in our parish who are in need are even more than ever in need and we hope to ease their financial burden by helping them in any way we can. This may entail helping with heating bills, supplying food or clothing or even something as simple as a selection box for children who will get nothing. We will be so grateful for any financial donations that you are able to make. Our account details are shown here:

Bank sort Code **60-60-04**; Account number **46086137** Account name - **SS Mary and Alban Halifax**

Date of next meeting is 6th December at 6 p.m. in St Alban's Parish Room.

### **READERS**

We are fortunate to have a very committed group of parishioners who read at Mass each day. Would you like to join them? I am looking for volunteers to read at Mass on weekdays and Sundays who are happy to be added to the rota. Please speak to me after Mass or drop me an email if you would be willing to help. On **Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> December after the 12:15 Mass** there will be an event for all parish readers comprising of a reflection on this ministry and the Word of God along with a training session to practice our public reading and voice projection. (1pm – 2:30pm)

### **FROM YOUR PARISH PRIEST**

You will probably have seen this week, the headline, reported with glee by the BBC, that Christians are for the first time ever, now in a minority in the UK, with only 49% of the population describing themselves as such. I have to admit that I was initially quite depressed by this news, but not half as depressed as I was to listen to the gloomy and defeatist archbishops and vicars who were then wheeled out to say how this was an inevitability and possibly even a good thing for Britain.

Contrary to popular opinion, however, in the long history of the church, this is nothing new. St Gregory the Great, who became Pope in 590AD wrote that "We are the bringers of death to a sinking people, who we should have been leading to life. Through our sins the people languish because through our neglect they have not been taught how to live. They have become preoccupied with outward affairs. Those entrusted to us abandon God but we keep silent."

Reflecting on these words addressed primarily to the shepherds of the church, I cannot in good conscience keep silent. It seems to me, that these census figures should not be seen as a cause for despair but rather as wakeup call and as an opportunity for rejuvenation. Having written those words, St Gregory oversaw a period of growth and renewal in the life of the church, the impact of which is still being felt today. Rather than responding with pessimism to the challenges that he encountered, St Gregory approached his ministry with the virtues of faith and hope - virtues that we too are called to exercise today.

The Danish philosopher Kierkegaard defined faith as "the passion for the impossible" and that is exactly how we should approach this latest challenge, with passion in the face of adversity. St Gregory the Great's words have resonated powerfully with me and as your shepherd I am not prepared for the pessimism and secularism that seem to have overrun the world and even parts of the church, to have any place in this parish. We are blessed to be part of a lively and active community but these figures should serve as a reminder that there is much work to be done.

Our agenda is not set by the media or the Office for National Statistics but by Christ who has commissioned us to go out and make disciples of all the nations. The leaders of the church, myself included, must bear much of the responsibility for these latest figures but we must also remember, that change and renewal in the church always comes from the bottom up, never the top down. All of us have a duty to put our shoulders to the plough and work for the building up of Christ's Body, the Church. This does not mean walking down Commercial Street wearing a sandwich board but more realistically and more usefully, starting with the members of our own families and those closest to us. A wise old priest of this diocese once remarked, "Bishops don't close churches, lapsed Catholics do" - something that has stayed with me ever since.

There is indeed much work to be done, but I have every confidence that in this small patch of the Lord's vineyard, we will rise to meet this challenge with vigour, optimism and zeal.

God Bless you all  
*Fr Hilton*

Mass Offerings, Notices and News Items for the Parish Bulletin should be given to Fr Hilton or Deacon John by Wednesday evening. Notices and News Items only can be sent to John Coates (07842 066450 or jcoates@btinternet.com) again by Wednesday evening.

The Parish Safeguarding Representative is Clare O'Neill(07792147620 psr.coneill@dioceseofleeds.org.uk)  
Leeds Diocese Charity Registration No. 249404