



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:

Fred Walsh



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 5 th FEBRUARY	5 th Sunday in Ordinary Time	9:30am 11:00am 1:00pm 6:00pm	St Mary's St Mary's St Mary's St Alban's	Joseph Riddeal Peter Carolan Polish Mass People of the Parish
MONDAY 6 th	St Paul Miki and companions	No Public Mass		
TUESDAY 7 th	Feria	7:00pm	St Alban's	Pauline Luniw Int.
WEDNESDAY 8 th	Feria	9:30am	St Mary's	Kim Martin Intentions
THURSDAY 9 th	Feria	9:30am	St Alban's	Bryan Greenwood
FRIDAY 10 th	St Scholastica	9:30am	St Mary's	Wilfred, Winifred & Francis Coates
SATURDAY 11 th	Our Lady of Lourdes	12:15pm	St Mary's	Treena Armstrong & Marcella Lock

READERS ROTA

THIS SUNDAY

NEXT SUNDAY

9:30am	Rachel Fitzpatrick	9:30am	John Greenwood
11:00am	Katarzina Machinu	11:00am	Jovanna Karuna
6:00pm	Mrs Damolo	6:00pm	Judith McDonald

PLEASE PRAY FOR Constanza Casale and all those who have died recently and for Mgr John O'Connor and all those whose anniversaries occur at this time.

PRAYER LIST

David Sutcliffe, Gladys Megson, John Wallis, Millie Haigh, David Murphy, Peter Fekete, William Long, Sonya Box, Julie Simpson, Charlotte Fitzpatrick, Peter Smith, Julie Hall, Moya Andrew, Suzanne Peaker, Larry Byrne, Winnie Whelan, Kathleen Hannan, Nancy McGrath, Eleanor Foran, 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

Marjorie Blackburn, Wendy Gallagher, Terry Budds

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

We will be so grateful for any financial donations that you are able to make. Our account details are: Bank sort Code **60-60-04**; Account number **46086137** Account name - **SS Mary and Alban Halifax**
We have had a request for help from a lady with mobility issues who needs an electric 'riser recliner' chair. If anyone can help us source one, please call the SVP number 07512 011 440.

PARISH LADIES GUILD

On Sunday the 19th February, the 9.30am Mass will be dedicated to all deceased members of our Parish Ladies Guild. If any ladies of our Guild are able to attend, it would be lovely if we could all sit together.

WEDNESDAY ROSARY ZOOM MEETING

The codes to access the Zoom **have changed**. Meeting ID is now 72756957252 Password is: nqht8b

ST MARY'S PRIMARY ACADEMY NEWS

AMAZON WISH LIST

School have set up an Amazon Wish List with a selection of books we would love to have in our school library.

Perhaps you could consider donating a book to our school library to encourage a love of reading for our pupils. The link to order is

<https://amzn.eu/eCK9J0Z>

PARISH BOOK CLUB

If you would be interested in taking up some spiritual reading, why not join the new parish book club? The first book that we will read is "**The Lamb's Supper**" by **Scott Hann**, an exploration of the link between scripture and the Holy Mass. It's a very readable and accessible book and perfect to kick us off. If you would be interested in taking part, you can either pick up your own copy or I can order one for you at the cost of £10. There is a sign-up sheet at the back of church to register your interest in the club and to indicate if you would like a copy to be ordered for you. Our first meeting and discussion will be this **Tuesday 14th of February at 7:30pm in St Alban's church room**, by which point we should have read part one and part two. All very welcome.

BISHOP-ELECT PHILIP MOGER

There will be a second collection today for us to buy a gift for Bishop Moger.

FROM YOUR PARISH PRIEST

You will see in St Mary's that the main altar gates have arrived back from their restoration and are looking as good as new. A very big thank you to those who contributed to the cost of the work, they now look worthy of our very beautiful sanctuary. (The smaller gates for the side chapels will be finished in a few weeks' time). Now that the main gates have returned, can I ask that at the time for Holy Communion, we kneel all the way along the rail, including the gates – they're not just beautiful, they are there to be used – that way we keep things moving nice and smoothly.

At St Mary's we are very blessed to still have our original altar rail and gates, sadly many churches had them smashed out in the 1960's/70's but mercifully this church was sympathetically reordered. So why do we have an altar rail? What is the point of it and what does it tell us? The main function of the rail is to make a clear distinction between the sanctuary and the rest of the church. The sanctuary is the most sacred part of the building and the rail is the maker of the place where heaven meets earth. It is a reminder of the *Holy of Holies* of the temple in Jerusalem, the place where God chose to dwell. During the Mass, when the bread and wine are consecrated, they become the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ – this not symbolic, it is an actual reality. Our Lord is truly present in the Tabernacle and so His dwelling place is marked out clearly by the rail.

In the recent past there has been a misguided understanding that saw the altar rail as a fence between priest and people, something that kept us apart from the action of the Mass – this could not be further from the truth. In the Orthodox and Eastern Catholic churches, the sanctuary is covered entirely either by a screen or curtain, symbolic of the veil between heaven and earth. But in our Latin tradition, the rail is low, it does not obscure our view and is permeable, it has a gate – heaven is within our sight, but on this side of eternity, just slightly out of reach.

At Holy Communion, when we go up to the banquet table (the altar rail) Our Lord comes to us. The altar itself is not a table but a place of sacrifice. The rail is so much more than a divider from the sanctuary, it is actually an extension of the altar – the people's altar. It is the place where we kneel and bring our own sacrifices as we wait to be united in communion with Our Lord and each other.

Christ offers himself through the priest, and we are the very witnesses of this sacrifice when we assist at the Mass. Christ desires us to bring ourselves closer to Him and to actively participate in the Sacrifice of the Mass by making an interior offering of our acts of reparation, our daily struggles, and our prayers for others. We can make our prayers at the Offertory and during the Eucharistic prayer, but also when we present ourselves for Communion. Therefore, going up to the altar rail and receiving our sacrificed Lord at the people's altar is the appropriate and beautiful consummation of our own individual offerings united with that of Christ on the Cross.

We are fortunate indeed to have such a lovely church that speaks to us of these theological realities – the whole purpose of making the church beautiful is to give glory to God and to help us better understand the mysteries in which we participate. Going to Holy Communion is a mystical and sacred moment – let's treat it as such.

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 but not Mass Intentions can be sent to John Coates (07842 066450 or jbcoates@btinternet.com) again by Wednesday evening.

The Parish Safeguarding Representative is Clare O'Neill
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Leeds Diocese Charity Registration No. 249404