





# THE PARISH OF SAINT MARY, HALIFAX

Incorporating the churches of St Alban and St Mary

Parish Priest: Rev. Fr Joshua Hilton

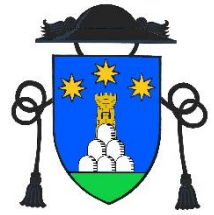
Deacon: Rev. John Walsh

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:

"Peace in the world"



### 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 11 <sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY	6 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time	9:30am 11:00am 4:00pm 6:00pm	St Mary's St Mary's St Mary's St Alban's	Joe Riddeal B'day Ann. Jiana Varghese Thanks. Exams Polish Mass People of the Parish
MONDAY 12 <sup>th</sup>	Feria	No Public Mass		
TUESDAY 13 <sup>th</sup>	Feria	9:30am	St Alban's	Anne Smyth
WEDNESDAY 14 <sup>th</sup>	<b>ASH WEDNESDAY</b>	7:00am 12:15pm 7:00pm	St Mary's St Mary's St Alban's	Agnes Melia Victor Toolan Margaret Fee
THURSDAY 15 <sup>th</sup>	<b>REQUIEM</b>	<b>11:00am</b>	<b>St Mary's</b>	<b>Micheline Kerris</b>
FRIDAY 16 <sup>th</sup>	Lent	9:30am	St Mary's	Armstrong Family Intentions
SATURDAY 17 <sup>th</sup>	Lent	12:15pm	St Mary's	Paul Connolly

### READERS ROTA

THIS SUNDAY		NEXT SUNDAY	
9:30am	Gabrielle Colleran	9:30am	John Greenwood
11:00am	Greg Finn	11:00am	Shaun Sanju
6:00pm	Bernard Corcoran	6:00pm	Richard Siebierski

**PRAYER LIST** Gerard James, David Sutcliffe, Gladys Megson, John Wallis, William Long, Sonya Box, Julie Simpson, Charlotte Fitzpatrick, Peter Smith, Julie Hall, Moya Andrew, Suzanne Peaker, Larry Byrne, 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.

**PLEASE PRAY FOR:** James Grant, Peter Fekete and all who have died recently and Mgr John O'Connor, Fr Vincent Durkin and all those whose anniversaries occur at this time

**MASSES RECEIVED:**  
Kevin & Edith Toolan, John Fitzpatrick, Victor Toolan x2, Simon Whitworth x2, Eileen Coyle, Dominick & Christopher Colleran, Nicholas Wannan, Shelia & Bryan Greenwood, Thomas Ratkowski, Agnes Melia, Winifred Melia, Filip Makula B'day Int, Filip Makula Sr. RIP, Frantisek Balaz

**DEAD LIST MASSES**  
Thankfully we are a parish where the tradition of offering Masses for our loved ones and particular intentions is strong. Due to the volume of Mass offerings and requests for particular dates, I have sent 50 Parish Dead List Masses to a priest who is struggling for intentions. This allows us to help a less fortunate parish and means that the Masses for those names on our dead list are being offered regularly. I will offer the remaining Masses throughout the year.  
Envelopes for Mass intentions are available at the back of church.

**ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY**  
If you require the services of the SVP please call 07512 011 440.  
If anyone would like to donate the Sort Code and Account Number are - 60-60-04 086137  
The next meeting will be on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February at 6pm at St Alban's.

**DEANERY MARRIAGE COURSES**  
These will take place at St Mary's after the 11.00am Sunday Mass (for 1 hour) after Easter over three weekends on 7th April, 14th April and 21st April 2024. All engaged couples intending to marry this year to contact Deacon John Walsh if they wish to attend. Attending a Marriage Course is a mandatory requirement for those intending to marry in the Catholic Church.

**PARISH TRIP TO LIVERPOOL**  
The coach will leave St Mary's at **8:50am 12<sup>th</sup> March** picking up at St Alban's and taking us over to Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral, where we will celebrate Mass at 11am.  
Again, there will be free time for lunch/shopping/sightseeing after Mass and the coach will return to Halifax at about 4pm. Although the coach will take us from the Cathedral to the Royal Albert Dock, please be mindful that the day will involve walking.

**GIANNA PROJECT**  
Thank you all for your continuing support of this important project. Once again, could we ask for your help in gathering baby clothes for new-borns up to six month old babies? Also, we are very short of toiletries for the mothers and would appreciate your help.

**THE ANN HOLT TRUST**  
If you are female, single or widowed and have lived in Halifax for at least 5 years then you could be eligible to a quarterly pension from the Ann Holt charity. The trust gives quarterly pensions to women would benefit from a little extra money to support their living needs. More info at back of church.

**PARISH LADIES GUILD**  
On Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April at 7:30pm, the Parish Ladies Guild are hosting a **PARISH QUIZ** at the Catholic Club. This is for all parishioners, their families and friends. Tickets available now.

## **RECENT FINANCIAL NEWS**

Last week's loose collection was: **£717.89**

Thank you to all who have moved over to standing order.

## **FROM YOUR PARISH PRIEST**

This Wednesday is one of the most distinctive days of the Church's calendar. We all like those days where we get something free, whether it's a palm branch or a candle, but this Wednesday everyone is invited to have their face smeared with ash. When you think about it, that doesn't actually sound like a particularly nice thing to receive. Ash has become such a significant sign of the beginning of Lent — but why?

As the priest marks the ash on our foreheads, he gives us an idea, he says, 'Remember thou art dust and to dust thou shalt return.' They're not his own words of course, the priest is quoting God Himself. When Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden, God reminded him of his own mortality. So there's a message here: be careful how you live now, because one day you will face God in judgment.

Remember thou art dust... Therefore, ash. Except ash and dust are not the same thing. We aren't made from ash. Yes the two are similar, but not the same. In the Old Testament, people showed their grief and sorrow by sprinkling dust or ashes on themselves. The King of Nineveh covered himself in sackcloth and ashes to show his repentance when Jonah preached. Job repented covered in dust and ashes too. It's not just a reminder of mortality though: ash is simply unpleasant — like wearing sackcloth. It doesn't do anything in and of itself and therefore, it's not something we want to do instinctively. Covering ourselves in ash serves no practical purpose — we do it because we don't want to. Ash doesn't make us healthier, it doesn't make us happier, it doesn't fulfil any of our natural, animal instincts. It becomes a sign of us choosing to be as God intended us — not giving in to our passions all the time, but choosing our actions through reason and understanding.

All of this then is a prelude to our Lenten fasting, where the same idea applies. You don't see animals fasting in wildlife documentaries. It doesn't make sense. Nature says that you should eat what you can when you can if you want to survive, and animals cannot overcome that nature. We are called to a higher vocation though. We are different from animals. God gives us reason and free will — an ability to choose and control our actions.

We sin by giving in to our instincts rather than doing what we know to be good by the light of reason. So our fasting is a chance to put things right. We put reason in charge of what we eat. We do something that doesn't make practical sense. And that's the point. We're not fasting for any other reason. We're not dieting, we're not trying to be healthy by eating less during Lent. We're giving something up unnecessarily in order to put reason back in command. That way, when our bodies try to get us to behave like animals, our reason will be strong enough to say 'no'. If we can say 'no' to our stomachs when they ask for more food, we'll be able to say 'no' to our bodies, our instincts, our emotions in all other kinds of areas too, that will help us make better choices and be better people.

The end result of all of this must be a growth in charity. If we can give way to other people's opinions more easily, if we're happy doing what God asks us to, instead of trying to reason our way out of it, then we'll find it easier to love God and our neighbour. And that's the point of Lent. Whatever we take on, whatever we give up, ultimately the point is to make us more loving in 40 days' time than we are now.

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](mailto:jbcoates@btinternet.com)) again by Wednesday evening. The Parish Safeguarding Representative is Clare O'Neill (07792147620 [psr.coneill@dioceseofleeds.org.uk](mailto:psr.coneill@dioceseofleeds.org.uk))  
Leeds Diocese Charity Registration No. 249404