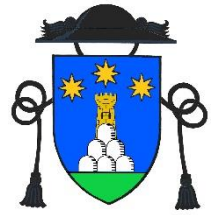




THE PARISH OF SAINT MARY, HALIFAX

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
 T: 01422 352141 E: office.stmary.halifax@dioceseofleeds.org.uk
 Website: www.stmaryshalifax.com
 St Mary's Primary Academy: 01422 362365



MASS SCHEDULE AND DEVOTIONS

Perpetual Novena:

Wednesday after 9:30am
Mass

Holy Rosary:

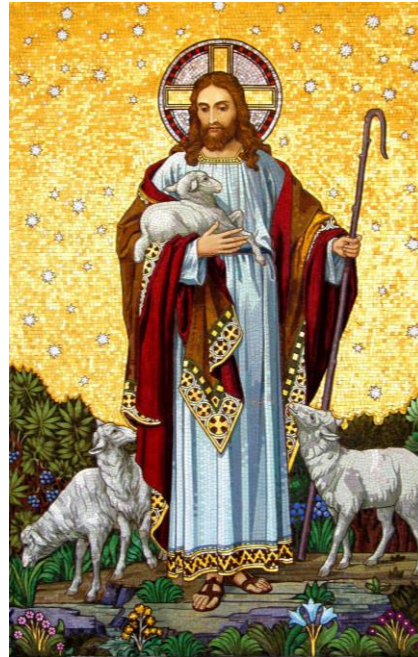
Saturday after 12:15pm
Mass

Devotions to the Sacred Heart:

First Friday of the month
after 9:30am Mass

Our Lady's Lamp this week burns for:

For the intentions of those
who have prayed for Brenda



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 21 st APRIL	4 th Sunday of Easter	9:30am 11:00am 2:00pm 6:00pm	St Mary's St Mary's St Mary's St Alban's	Jacob Nelson Aldona Murskiene & Ariana Murskaite Polish Mass People of the Parish
MONDAY 22 nd	Easter	No Public Mass		
TUESDAY 23 rd	St George	No Public Mass		
WEDNESDAY 24 th	Easter	No Public Mass		
THURSDAY 25 th	St Mark (Evangelist)	9:30am	St Alban's	Paul Gray RIP
FRIDAY 26 th	Easter	9:30am	St Mary's	Denis Smith RIP
SATURDAY 27 th	Easter	12:15pm	St Mary's	Pearl Hiley RIP

READERS ROTA

THIS SUNDAY		NEXT SUNDAY	
9:30am	Rachel Fitzpatrick	9:30am	Isaac Mellor
11:00am	Katarzina Machinu	11:00am	Greg Finn
6:00pm	Richard Siebierski	6:00pm	Paul Coates

PRAYER LIST Frank Behan, Angela Payne, David Stanton, Gerard James, David Sutcliffe, Gladys Megson, John Wallis, William Long, Sonya Box, Julie Simpson, Charlotte Fitzpatrick, Peter Smith, Julie Hall, Larry Byrne, Kathleen Hannan, Nancy McGrath, Eleanor Foran, Rita Baxendale 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 visit can be arranged.

PLEASE PRAY FOR: Fr Gerry Thornton who has died recently and for Fr Thomas Kearns and Fr John Pierce Callanan whose anniversaries occur at this time.

MASSES RECEIVED:

Christopher Blackburn, Wendy Galea, Penny Greenwood Birthday Int. Brenda Biggins Thanksgiving for prayers, Brenda Biggins Int. Mary Stimpson, Betty and Mary Budds, Michael Toolan, Kathleen Ratkowski, Mr & Mrs Frank Matthews, Denis Smyth, Bryan & Shelia Greenwood, Paul Connolly

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

Date of next meeting - Tuesday, 30th April 6 p.m. in St Alban's Parish Room

If you require the services of the SVP please call 07512 011 440.

If anyone would like to support us our bank details are:

Sort Code 60 60 04 Account No 46086137 Account Name CO90901 SS Mary & Alban

BOOK SALE TODAY

After both morning Masses the Ladies Guild will be holding a book sale at the back of St Mary's. The books are from the library in the parish room at St Alban's and are a mixture of religious, novels and nonfiction books. Prices will be 50p for paperbacks and £1 for hardbacks.

EASTER HOUSE BLESSINGS

I will be offering traditional Easter House Blessings with the new Easter water blessed at the Vigil. This can take place any time between Easter Sunday and Ascension Thursday. Please send your details to office.stmary.halifax@dioceseofleeds.org.uk or call the presbytery on 01422 352141 to arrange a mutually convenient time.

PRIEST TRAINING FUND

Today is Good Shepherd Sunday, the day throughout the whole world when the church prays for vocations to the priesthood and for those already in training for Holy Orders. There will be a second collection next Sunday to support this vital work in our diocese.

CENTENARY OF THE DEDICATION OF THE CATHEDRAL JULY 2024

On Thursday 18th July at 11.30am, together with the Priests, Deacons, Religious and Lay Faithful, Bishop Stock will celebrate a Solemn Pontifical Mass at the Cathedral Church of St Anne, the Mother Church of the Diocese of Leeds, to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Cathedral's Dedication.

RECENT FINANCIAL NEWS

Last week's loose collection was **£1,142** Total Approx. **£1,649.75**

Standing orders for March totalled **£2,031**

PARISH LADIES GUILD QUIZ

A big thank you to everyone who contributed in any way in making the Parish Ladies Guild quiz a huge success. Total profit after expenses was £818.60

Unclaimed raffle prizes: Yellow 91-95, Green 371-375, Green 316-320, Yellow 281-235, White 446-450, Yellow 196-200

If any of these tickets are yours, then please phone 07790681770

FROM YOUR PARISH PRIEST

I don't know if you'll have seen yet, the new series on the BBC of 'Pilgrimage', with this latest instalment entitled: *The Road Through North Wales*. If you haven't seen this programme before, the concept is simple, a group of (so-called) celebrities embark together on a pilgrimage to one of Europe's holy sites along famous and well established routes. Previous series have included journeys to Santiago de Compostela and Rome. All of the 'celebrities' come from a mixture of different faiths and backgrounds and aim to see if the experience of pilgrimage will awaken any sort of spirituality within them or reconnect them to their beliefs. This new series takes a group on foot across north Wales along the 220km Pilgrim's Way. The route begins near St Winefride's Well and ends at Bardsey Island, on the tip of the Llyn Peninsula. Fabled as the 'Island of 20,000 saints', Bardsey was once a popular destination for early Celtic monks, who believed it to be the end of the world.

I find these programmes absolutely fascinating to watch but at the same time also slightly depressing. The religious knowledge and literacy of the 'celebrities' is often shockingly poor, with one participant in this year's pilgrimage (who was schooled at Eton!) utterly astounded to learn that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed a historical figure and not a mythical character. The same person commented at the end of the pilgrimage that the experience made him less interested in thinking about God and more interested in self-development and finding self-fulfilment.

As we mark *Vocations Sunday* today, there is so much to be hopeful about, with the number of priests in the world at last count being around 407,872. But watching 'Pilgrimage' the other night, really brought home to me how much of a challenge we face in this part of the world. It is harder than ever, today, for young people to discern the voice of the Lord in their lives not only because there are so many distractions and draws on their attention but because the modern way of thinking about life and our purpose is so drastically disconnected from what has gone before. What was clear in the programme was that although all of the 'celebrities' seemed like thoroughly nice and decent people, they were at one level all deeply selfish and self-centred. They constantly spoke about themselves, their goals and priorities, their opinions and attitudes and most of all, were desperate to confirm themselves as the centre of their own universe.

This way of looking at life, based on self-belief is all-pervasive these days and is ultimately the antithesis of the Gospel message and what it is to be a Christian. The way that Jesus shows us, is not the path of self-promotion but of humility and of service to our brothers and sisters. "Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life" and "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." People have forgotten that the measure of how full and happy our lives are depends on how open we are to God and His will. As St Augustine famously wrote "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you." This is why Catholicism is so out-of-step and counter cultural at this time, because in order to live out our faith in its fullest expression, we must learn to constantly die to self.

The reason that so many dismiss the idea of a vocation to the priesthood today is their perception that it is a 'difficult life' and one of 'self-sacrifice', which of course on many levels it is. But exactly the same could be said of any marriage or of family life. The sacrifices that the priesthood entails are as nothing compared to the joy, fulfilment, comfort and love that we experience as clergy from the people that we serve and from the Church that we give our lives to. It is in giving of ourselves that we receive and, in all walks of life, that by placing God and others before ourselves and looking outwards, rather than inwards, that lasting joy, contentment and fulfilment are found.

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 (07792147620 psr.coneill@dioceseofleeds.org.uk)
Leeds Diocese Charity Registration No. 249404