



# THE PARISH OF SAINT MARY, HALIFAX

Incorporating the churches of St Alban and St Mary

Parish Priest: Rev. Fr Joshua Hilton

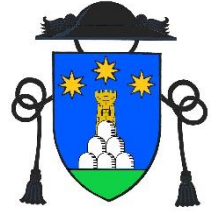
Deacon: Rev. John Walsh

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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:**

**Winnie Whelan RIP**



### 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 10 <sup>th</sup> DECEMBER	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent	9:30am 11:00am 4:00pm 6:00pm	St Mary's St Mary's St Mary's St Alban's	Susan Coates (A) Bernadette Cooke Polish Mass People of the Parish
MONDAY 11 <sup>th</sup>	Advent	No Public Mass		
TUESDAY 12 <sup>th</sup>	Advent	9:30am	St Alban's	Yorkshire Brethren
WEDNESDAY 13 <sup>th</sup>	St Lucy	9:30am	St Mary's	Eddie and Mary Coates
THURSDAY 14 <sup>th</sup>	St John of the Cross	9:30am	St Alban's	Jim Hargreaves (A)
FRIDAY 15 <sup>th</sup>	Advent	9:30am	St Mary's	Winnie Birtwhistle
SATURDAY 16 <sup>th</sup>	Advent	12:15pm	St Mary's	Thanksgiving (JS)

### READERS ROTA

	THIS SUNDAY		NEXT SUNDAY
9:30am	John Greenwood	9:30am	Rachel Fitzpatrick
11:00am	Lettie Damolo	11:00am	Ken Rothery
6:00pm	Bernard Corcoran	6:00pm	Richard Siebierski

**PLEASE PRAY FOR** Willie Shaw, Winnie Whelan and all those who have died recently and for Canon Austin Hewitt and all those whose anniversaries occur at this time.

**PRAYER LIST** Gerard James, Christine Blackburn, David Sutcliffe, Gladys Megson, John Wallis, Peter Fekete, 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.

**MASSES RECEIVED:** Eddie and Mary Coates, Joe Riddeal, Winnie Birtwhistle

**CAROL SERVICE, MULLED WINE & MINCE PIES**

The Parish Carol Service will take place in St Mary's this Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December at 7:00pm. Refreshments of mulled wine and mince pies will be served at the Catholic Club afterwards. Please bring family and friends along to get into the festive spirit and sing the praises of Almighty God.

**ADVENT DAY OF CONFESSIONS**

The Deanery Day of Confessions will take place this Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> of December. Confessions will be heard in St Mary's from 9am until 5pm by the priests of the deanery. Please make good use of this opportunity to avail yourself of the Sacrament before the big day. Additionally, I will be hearing confessions after every Sunday Mass until Christmas.

**ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY** If you require the services of the SVP please call 07512 011 440.

Date of next meeting – This Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December at 6 p.m. in St Alban's Parish Room.  
If anyone would like to donate the Sort Code and Account Number are - 60-60-04 46086137

**WEDNESDAY ROSARY ZOOM CODES**

From 15<sup>th</sup> November the new codes are ID: 724 2604 2240 Password: 9ErJMm

**PARISH LADIES GUILD** Our next meeting is this Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December in the hall at St Alban's church. Beginning with a short carol service outside Tesco express at Free School Lane at 6.30pm (for those who wish), then our annual Torchlight Carol service and readings in the church at 7.15pm followed by our Christmas party in the hall. Please feel free to bring a guest/s, plus a wrapped present to the value of around £1 for our secret Santa (this includes members and non-members, plus £2 each to be paid before the date. We will supply tea, coffee etc. Bring your own alcohol if that's what you prefer.

**PARISH CHRISTMAS RAFFLE PRIZE WINNERS.**

£100 Cash Pink 481 Nuala Smith, Signed FC Halifax Town Shirt Pink 441 Michael Coates, Christmas Hamper Yellow 226 Chris Whiteley, 6 Bottles of Wine Green 531 Marie Sedgwick, 6 Bottles of Wine Pink 661 Randolph, 6<sup>th</sup> Prize - £50 Maypole Inn Green 416 Barbara Lecznar  
Unclaimed prizes are available for collection at St Mary's Church.

**CHURCH CLEANING FOR CHRISTMAS**

Could you come along and help to clean the church ready for Christmas?  
Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> December after 9:30 Mass is the time.  
Cleaning materials will be provided, all you need is a pair of Marigolds.  
Tea, coffee biscuits and some pleasant conversation will be available!

**CUTTING EDGE THEATRE COMPANY**

The Cutting Edge Theatre Company are hosting a Christmas concert of festive music at St Mary's this Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm. Tickets are available to buy from  
<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cuttingedgetheatreco>  
50% of the proceeds will go towards church funds.

**RECENT FINANCIAL NEWS** - Last week's loose collection was: **£560.88**

Thank you to those who have switched to standing orders.

### **FROM YOUR PARISH PRIEST**

On Friday just gone, we celebrated the great solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This wonderful feast is, as usual, much misunderstood and so this is your annual reminder that the *Immaculate Conception*, does not refer to the virginal conception and birth of Our Lord. That, for obvious reasons, is called the *Virgin Birth*. The Immaculate Conception refers very specifically to a singular grace that God bestowed on Our Lady to enable her to become the mother of His only begotten Son.

What is it then that we celebrate on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December each year? The feast was officially instituted in 1854 by Pope Pius IX, on one of the rare occasions on which a Pope has formally spoken infallibly. This means that the teaching that Mary was conceived without original sin is a dogma of the faith and must be believed by all Catholics. 1854 doesn't seem very long ago in Church terms, but all that Pope Pius was doing, in formalising this doctrine, was clarifying and making official a belief that the earliest Christians had held and had passed down for the best part 2000 years.

I'm afraid that we now have to get a little theological. The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary means that from the moment of her conception, in the womb of St Anne, she was preserved from the effects of original sin, which all other human beings inherit. This special grace was made possible by a singular and decisive act of God by applying the merits of Christ's death and resurrection to Mary in a unique and pre-emptive way. This means, that Our Lady was saved and redeemed by the Passion and Resurrection of her son before she was born. How can that be? Put in a simple way, God exists outside of time and space and can see all that has been and all that will be. (Imagine God standing on the top of a mountain looking down over the road of history spread out below Him. He can see the beginning, middle and end of the road all at the same time in one view, while the people below can only see what is immediately in front of them.) He is therefore able to anticipate Jesus' redemption of the world and in a special way apply this redemption to Mary at her conception. This unique and divine intervention allowed Our Lady to not only be free from sin but also the effects of sin, thus allowing her to be fitting vessel to bare the incarnate Son of God Himself.

This Advent season is a time when we reflect especially on the coming of the Messiah and in a special way, Our Lady's role in enabling this miracle of our salvation. In essence, the Immaculate Conception and these Advent days intertwine their focus on preparation, anticipation and the coming of Christ. Our Lady's sinless conception serves as a symbol of purity and readiness for the birth of Jesus, while Advent invites us to ponder on our own preparation and longing for the saviour.

One of the most wonderful characteristics of God is that nothing in His plans for us will happen unless we agree to work with Him. We are never forced to say 'yes' but we are given everything we need to respond positively to His invitation. So, to help Mary respond to Gabriel with her 'Yes', she was conceived without sin. What can be difficult for us, is to believe that in being baptised we too become exactly like Mary at her conception, free from all sin. As St Paul wrote to the Ephesians: "Before the world was made, He chose us, chose us in Christ, to be holy and spotless, and to live through love in His presence." We will never really know what inner struggles Mary faced throughout her life until we meet her in heaven, but she had complete trust in God whom she loved with all her heart. What Mary teaches us is that every time we say 'yes' to what God asks of us, it will always be for the benefit of the whole of humankind. That's an awesome responsibility and it's ours.

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