



# THE PARISH OF SAINT MARY, HALIFAX

Incorporating the churches of St Alban and St Mary

Parish Priest: Rev. Fr Joshua Hilton

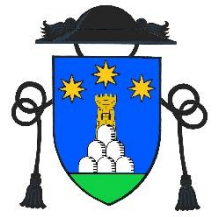
Deacons: Rev. John Walsh, Rev. Paul Coates

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

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Website: [www.stmaryshalifax.com](http://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:

A private intention (PM)



### 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

See the priest after Mass

The month of December is dedicated to: The Immaculate Conception

SUNDAY 1 <sup>st</sup> DECEMBER	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent	9:30am	St Mary's	Kevin Costello
		11:00am	St Mary's	Anne Elizabeth Sampson
		4:00pm	St Mary's	Polish Mass
		6:00pm	St Alban's	People of the Parish
MONDAY 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Advent	No Mass		
TUESDAY 3 <sup>rd</sup>	St Francis Xavier	No Mass		
WEDNESDAY 4 <sup>th</sup>	Advent	9:30am	St Mary's	Andrew Brown
THURSDAY 5 <sup>th</sup>	Advent	No Mass		
FRIDAY 6 <sup>th</sup>	St Nicholas	9:30am	St Mary's	Ramon Espares Sr.
	School Advent Mass	2:15pm	School Hall	Yorkshire Brethren
SATURDAY 7 <sup>th</sup>	St Ambrose	12:15pm	St Mary's	Mrs J. Fawson
	Vigil	4:00pm	St Mary's	Polish Mass

### READERS ROTA

	THIS SUNDAY		NEXT SUNDAY
9:30am	Kieron Green	9:30am	Rachel Fitzpatrick
11:00am	Joe Coneran	11:00am	Barbara Gregson
6:00pm	Richard Siebierski	6:00pm	Judith MacDonald

**PRAYER LIST:** Tony Hintze Mary Staden Peter Staden, 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.

**MASSES RECEIVED:**

Tom Brennan, Cissie & Cecil Wills, Micky Grainey, Marleen & Donald Jeffcock, Deceased Members of the Moska Family, Hannah O'Reilly, Eddie & Mary Coates

**FROM DEACON PAUL**

“My sincere thanks and gratitude to everyone in the parish for their prayers and support during my formation and the ordination day itself. The church looked wonderful due to the efforts of many people and I was amazed to see such large numbers braving the weather to attend. Please keep me in your prayers, just as I will keep you in mine. And I really must give a very special thank you to Father Hilton and Deacon John for their unwavering help and guidance.”

Photographs of Paul's ordination are available to view at:

[www.patricksicephotography.co.uk/blog/paul-coates](http://www.patricksicephotography.co.uk/blog/paul-coates)

**ASSISTED SUICIDE**

Kate Dearden, Labour MP for Halifax – voted in favour of assisted suicide.

**THE PARISH CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE**

Will take place on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> of December at 6:30pm. This will be followed by a buffet in the Catholic Club. Get this in your diary and bring friends and family with you.

**ADVENT DEANERY DAY OF CONFESSIONS**

Confessions will be heard from 9:00am until 4:00pm in St Mary's on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> of December.

**CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES**

NB: Christmas Mass Times will be slightly different this year. Please take away one of the flyers and put it on the fridge. Feel free to take some for friends and family.

**NEW LECTIONARIES**

From today, the translation of the Scriptures that we read at Mass will change and we will begin using the new lectionaries. Thank you again to those who so generously contributed to their purchase. They will be blessed at the 9:30am Mass this morning and put straight to use. They will be on display afterwards for those who wish to have a look.

**NEWS FROM THE CATHOLIC CLUB**

Every Sunday - Bingo  
Every Monday - Quiz Night  
Friday 6th December - Northern Soul Night £3 admission.

**THE SCHOOL CHRISTMAS FAYRE**

Will take place on Thursday 19th December at 3.30pm after school till approx. 5.30pm. Donations of cakes, buns, chocolates, alcoholic bottles, bric-a-brac and toys all needed for our stalls and tombola. All welcome to come and attend and support the school, volunteers also welcome to help out on any of our stalls too. Please contact the PTFA via email: [ptfa@st-marys-halifax.calderdale.sch.uk](mailto:ptfa@st-marys-halifax.calderdale.sch.uk) or contact Joanna Binns (07932 595955) with any queries or if you would like to help

## RECENT FINANCIAL NEWS

Last week's loose collection was **£631.25** Total Approx. **£1308.25** (Inc. standing orders & card)

## FROM YOUR PARISH PRIEST

In the latest bizarre turn of events from the House of Commons, on Wednesday this week, during Prime Minister's Questions, Labour MP Tahir Ali asked Sir Keir Starmer if he would "commit to introducing measures to prohibit the desecration of all religious texts and the prophets of the Abrahamic religions." Effectively, he was asking if the Prime Minister would bring forward laws to make blasphemy a criminal offence. Shockingly, rather than reply with a simple and outright "no", Sir Keir gave a somewhat mealy-mouthed response about condemning Islamophobia in all its forms and described the desecration of religious texts as "awful".

Now, to an extent he is correct, of course the last thing that we would ever wish to do is to insult the sincerely held beliefs of others. That sort of behaviour would not only be unchristian but also simply rude and the height of bad manners. To deliberately cause distress and give gratuitous offence to other people is always wrong. That being said, the notion of making such behaviour illegal is farcical. We need to have the necessary freedom to discuss religion openly and frankly and not to be hindered or silenced by a fear of what the state might think.

*Jesus Christ is God, the Son of the Eternal Father, He is the way the Truth and the Life and there is no other.* Now, presumably, to many people of other faiths, this statement is blasphemy, perhaps even offensive but it is nevertheless the truth and we cannot escape from that, it is the central belief of our religion. This sentiment can never and must never be criminalised not only for our sake, but the sake of people of other faiths who may wish to make similar truth claims about their own religions. And why wouldn't they? The Jews deny that Jesus Christ is the messiah and the Son of God and they are perfectly at liberty to say so. We cannot expect or force people of other faiths to believe the same things that we do, we do not live in a theocracy and nor should we. Freedom of religion is an essential human right.

What this question does raise for us as Catholics, however, is not the rights and wrongs of medieval style blasphemy laws aimed at protecting the quran, but rather our own relationship with the most Holy Name of Jesus. Blasphemy is absolutely not a crime, but it most certainly is a sin and a sin that these days is far too easily brushed off.

We only need turn on the TV, go to the cinema or even just walk around town to hear the Lord's name taken in vain or used as a curse word. This is a direct violation of the second commandment. People often say "I don't mean anything by it" ... but that's exactly what *in vain* means. What if people started using our name as a swear word? Every time they stubbed their toe, they shouted "Oh my John". We would wonder if people needed or wanted something, we would be sick of it. How much more disrespectful is it to call on the name of God, when rather than praying, what we are actually doing is expressing anger or shock or disgust.

St Paul tells us in his letter to the Philippians "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven and on earth, and under the earth and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord". Many of us have gotten out of the habit of bowing our heads at the Holy Name, bring this beautiful tradition back! When you hear the Holy Name of Jesus, make an act of reverence. We cannot be responsible for the behaviour of others, we cannot control what they say, what we are responsible for is our own speech and behaviour. Let us always seek to honour God with our words and love Him in our hearts and never to grieve or offend Him with thoughtless talk.

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 TBC