



# THE PARISH OF SAINT MARY, HALIFAX

Incorporating the churches of St Alban and St Mary

Parish Priest: Rev. Fr Joshua Hilton

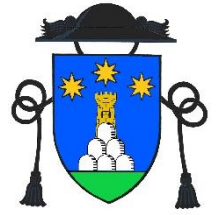
Deacons: Rev. John Walsh, Rev. Paul Coates

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:

Michael Blackburn's  
Intentions



### 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 8 <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	Christopher Colleran Kathleen Hirst Polish Mass People of the Parish
MONDAY 9 <sup>th</sup>	<b>THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION</b>	9:30am <b>11:00am</b>	St Mary's <b>St Mary's</b>	Karen Yates R.I.P. <b>Frank Behan Requiem Mass</b>
TUESDAY 10 <sup>th</sup>	Advent	9:30am NB	St Alban's	Ellen Fabia R.I.P.
WEDNESDAY 11 <sup>th</sup>	Advent	9:30am	St Mary's	Carol, Michael & Winifred Horan
THURSDAY 12 <sup>th</sup>	Advent	No Mass		
FRIDAY 13 <sup>th</sup>	St Lucy Virgin and Martyr	9:30am	St Mary's	Shelia Greenwood
SATURDAY 14 <sup>th</sup>	St John of the Cross	12:15pm	St Mary's	Jim Hargreaves

### READERS ROTA

	THIS SUNDAY		NEXT SUNDAY
9:30am	Rachel Fitzpatrick	9:30am	Lily Hymas
11:00am	Barbara Gregson	11:00am	Greg Finn
6:00pm	Judith MacDonald	6:00pm	Richard Siebierski

**PRAYER LIST:** Sadie Mills, 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.

**PLEASE PRAY FOR:**

Margaret Skelton who has died and for all whose anniversaries occur around this time.

**MASSES RECEIVED:**

Rose Marie Rothery, Danny Micheal, Kathleen & Kenneth Wadsworth

**THE PARISH CHRISTMAS LUNCH**

Starts at 1:00pm today in the Caygill Rooms at the Piece Hall

**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.

**THE SCHOOL CHRISTMAS FAYRE**

Will take place on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> 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

**READERS AT SUNDAY EVENING MASS**

We could do with a few more volunteers to read at the 6pm Mass. If you would be willing to help with this please let me know and we can put you on the rota.

**S.V.P.**

Date of next meeting - Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> January at 6 pm in St Alban's Parish Room

We would like to thank all parishioners for their support throughout the year with our collections of items, our annual cake sale and also for the financial support we receive from many parishioners.

Your money is gratefully received and helps many people throughout the year but especially at Christmas when, amongst other things, we help underprivileged families in our parish - they, and us, are so very humbled by your generosity.

Please note that the appeal for winter clothes for St Augustine's refugees is now ended and, once more, you have been more than generous with your donations.

We wish you a very holy, peaceful and happy Christmas.

**NEWS FROM THE CATHOLIC CLUB**

Every Sunday - Bingo  
Every Monday - Quiz Night

## **RECENT FINANCIAL NEWS**

Last week's loose collection was **£745.60**Total Approx. **£1445.60** (Inc. standing orders & card)

## **FROM YOUR PARISH PRIEST**

As you enter St. Mary's Church, you may have noticed a shiny new holy water dispenser in the narthex (the porch). This addition allows you to bring your own bottles and help yourself to this important sacramental. My hope is that this initiative not only offers convenience but also encourages you to incorporate holy water into your daily spiritual life. What is holy water then? Holy water is blessed by the priest, invoking God's grace through the virtue of Christ's baptism. The Church possesses the profound ability to impart sacramental grace, and holy water, as a sacramental, receives its power through the prayer and authority of the Church. Sacramentals are sacred signs instituted by the Church that resemble the sacraments and signify spiritual effects. They serve as reminders of the grace we receive through the sacraments and help prepare us to accept the actual graces bestowed by the Holy Spirit.

When we bless ourselves with holy water, we do not wear it like a medal or a crucifix; rather, it serves as a reminder of our baptismal sanctification, marking us as children of God. It is an opportunity to seek His forgiveness for our sins, reflect on the purifying effects of water, and ask for His protection from evil. Sacramentals, such as holy water, the Sign of the Cross, or wearing a miraculous medal, are simple yet powerful aids that help us consecrate our daily lives to God and foster a more sacrament-focused existence as we navigate our daily routines.

The use of holy water has deep roots in Scripture. In the Old Testament, Leviticus outlines purification rituals involving water, and we see the Israelites blessing their homes and belongings with water in the Book of Numbers. Early Christians also recognised the significance of holy water; around A.D. 130, Pope Alexander wrote in an Apostolic Constitution: "We bless salt and water for the people, that all who may be sprinkled therewith may be cleansed and sanctified."

The most vital property of holy water is its power to dispel evil and guard against the devil and his minions. This power does not arise from magic; rather, blessed water invites God into a space, making that place holy—set apart for divine purpose. If you haven't yet taken the opportunity to bless your home with holy water, now is the perfect time. Your home, as a domestic church, deserves spiritual protection. You can sprinkle holy water in your home yourself, or I would be happy to bless your house at your invitation. Many parents bless items their children regularly use, such as bicycles and school books, with holy water. Consider using holy water to pray and make the Sign of the Cross over your spouse and children before bedtime. This practice fosters family bonding and deepens your connection to God. Keeping a bottle of holy water by the bedside can facilitate this beautiful tradition.

Here's a simple prayer you can use when applying holy water, especially when blessing yourself with the Sign of the Cross: "By this holy water and by Your Precious Blood, wash away all my sins, O Lord. Amen." While this is a suggested prayer, feel free to express your intentions as you see fit. The essential elements are making the Sign of the Cross and saying the words aloud: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." You might also consider praying an Our Father or the St. Michael Prayer as you use holy water.

Next time you visit the church, please bring a small bottle with you to fill with holy water. I am confident you will experience its powerful effects in your life.

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