



THE PARISH OF SAINT MARY, HALIFAX

Incorporating the churches of St Alban and St Mary

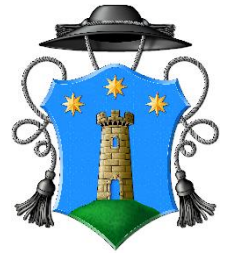
Parish Priest: Rev. Fr Joshua Hilton

Deacons: Rev. John Walsh, Rev. Paul Coates

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HOLY YEAR MASS SCHEDULE AND DEVOTIONS JUBILEE 2025

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:

Private Intention (PC)



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 March is dedicated to: St Joseph

SUNDAY 16 th MARCH	2 nd Sunday of LENT	9:30am 11:00am 6:00pm	St Mary's St Mary's St Alban's	Kathleen Wadsworth Mrs Chrissy Suares People of the Parish
MONDAY 17 th	St Patrick	No Mass		
TUESDAY 18 th	Lent	7:00pm	St Alban's	Peter George Granger (YB)
WEDNESDAY 19 th	St Joseph, Husband of the B.V.M.	9:30am	St Mary's	Michael Child (A)
THURSDAY 20 th	Lent	9:30am 11:00am	St Alban's St Mary's	Joseph Primanath Benediction with School Children
	Funeral Service	1:45pm	St Mary's	Josef Kompus
FRIDAY 21 st Abstain from Meat	Lent	7:00am 7:00pm	St Mary's St Mary's	Intentions of Deacon P. Coates Stations of the Cross & Devotions
SATURDAY 22 nd	Lent	12:15pm 4:00pm	St Mary's St Mary's	Marleen & Donald Jeffcock Polish Mass

READERS ROTA

THIS SUNDAY

9:30am	John Greenwood
11:00am	Wendy Balahura
6:00pm	Judith MacDonald

NEXT SUNDAY

9:30am	Isaac Mellor
11:00am	Andrea Woodward
6:00pm	Frances Millington

PRAYER LIST: Sadie Mills, Tony Hintze Mary Staden Peter Staden, David Stanton, Gerard James, David Sutcliffe, John Wallis, William Long, Julie Simpson, Charlotte Fitzpatrick, Peter Smith, Julie Hall, Larry Byrne, Sonya Box, Kathleen Hannan, Nancy McGrath, Eleanor Foran, Rita Baxendale, Michael McDonnell 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:

Rachel Rouse and Family, Graham Ogilvie (A), Zofia Kulyk (A), Holy Souls

HOLY YEAR STUDY COURSES (NEW COURSE)

As we enter into the season of Lent, a new 5 session course will begin on The Sacraments. This begins this Tuesday 18th of March. 6:00pm in St Alban's parish room. The first session, will be on the Sacrament of Baptism.

FRIDAY'S DURING LENT

This year, **Mass will be at 7:00am each Friday** during Lent. If you struggle to make a Lenten resolution, take this opportunity to commit to attending Mass before you go to work or school. It is a concrete step that will lead to a fruitful and blessed Lent.

Stations of the Cross and devotions to the Holy Wounds will be at 7:00pm in St Mary's

DEANERY DAY OF CONFESSIONS

The clergy of the deanery will hear confession from 9:00am until 4:00pm on Saturday 1st April here in St Mary's. Make sure you go before Easter!

LENTEN ALMS COLLECTION

A reminder that we are collecting money again this year for *Aid to the Church in Need*. Please save the money you are collecting during Lent and bring it to Mass on Maundy Thursday. Given the recent slaughter of Christians in The Congo and Syria, this is more important than ever.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

Our children will make their First Holy Communion this year on Sunday the 8th of June. The preparation for the Sacrament will begin next month. Will any parents of children in Non-Catholic Schools, who wish their children to be enrolled on the course, please speak to me after Mass.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION COURSE

Completing a marriage preparation course is a requirement of those who wish to marry in the Catholic Church. The next course will begin next week. The dates are as follows:

23rd March, 6th April & 13th April.

The meetings will take place at 12:15pm here at St Mary's.

NEWS FROM THE CATHOLIC CLUB

Thursday 20th March. Ladies Night - fashion show by Yorkshire Ladieswear
Friday 28th March - Northern Soul night, £3 admission

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

The next SVP meeting will take place on Monday 24th February at 6pm in St Alban's parish room. New members always welcome.

RECENT FINANCIAL NEWS

Last week's loose collection was **£745.46** Total Approx. **£1525.96** (Inc. standing orders & card)

FROM YOUR PARISH PRIEST

Lent is a season of turning back to God—a time to strip away what weighs us down and seek His mercy. At the heart of this journey lies the Sacrament of Confession, a gift we too often neglect. As your parish priest, I urge you this Lent to approach the sacrament not as a duty (although I do expect you to go!), but as a grace-filled encounter with Christ's love. To understand its power, I want to say a bit about the difference between *contrition* and *attrition*, how God enables us to be truly contrite, and why our Act of Contrition boldly promises, "I will not sin again."

When we prepare for Confession, we examine our conscience, but what moves us to confess? The Church distinguishes two kinds of sorrow for sin: *contrition* and *attrition*. *Contrition*—sometimes called "perfect contrition"—is sorrow born of love for God. We grieve our sins because they offend the One who is all-good, who died for us, whose friendship we cherish above all. It's the pain of a child who's hurt a loving parent, longing to restore that bond. *Attrition*, or "imperfect contrition," stems from less noble motives: fear of hell, shame at being caught out, or dread of punishment. It's real sorrow, but it's more about self-preservation than selfless love. Both can lead us to Confession—*attrition* is enough for absolution when joined to the sacrament—but *contrition* is the gold standard. Why? Because it aligns our hearts with God's, healing us more deeply. Lent, with its focus on Christ's Passion, invites us to move beyond fear toward love. When we gaze at the Cross, we see not just judgment, but a Saviour who bore our sins. This Lent, ask yourself: Is my sorrow rooted in love for Him, or merely in fear for myself? Either way, come to Confession—God meets us where we are—but let's pray for the grace to grow in *contrition*.

Here's the good news: we don't manufacture *contrition* on our own. It's a gift of grace, poured into us by the Holy Spirit. The Catechism teaches that *contrition* "arises from a love by which God is loved above all else" (CCC 1452), and this love isn't our achievement—it's God's work in us. Think of the Prodigal Son: he starts with *attrition*, planning a speech to avoid starvation, but his father's embrace stirs something deeper—a sorrow rooted in love (Luke 15:11-32). So it is with us. In Lent, God floods us with opportunities for grace: Scripture, the Stations of the Cross, fasting, prayer. These stir our hearts, softening them to see sin's cost—not just to us, but to Him. Practically, this means Confession isn't a solo act. Before you come, spend time with Jesus—perhaps at Adoration or with a crucifix in your hand—and ask for *contrition*. Say, "Lord, help me love You more than my sin." He will. I've seen it in the confessional: penitents who arrive anxious and fearful and leave with tears of gratitude, their sorrow transformed by grace. This Lent, trust that God wants to give you this gift. He's not waiting to scold, but to heal.

In the Act of Contrition, we pray, "and with the help of Thy grace, I will not sin again." Notice the boldness: "I will not sin again". It is not good enough to say: "I'll try not to." Why such confidence when we know our weakness? It's not arrogance—it's faith in God's power. The Church teaches that Confession doesn't just forgive; it strengthens. Through absolution, Christ pours sanctifying grace into us, repairing our will and arming us against temptation. Saying "I will not sin again" isn't a prediction of perfection; it's a commitment to rely on Him who makes all things new. Contrast this with "I'll try": it's honest, but timid, leaning on our frail effort rather than God's might. The firmer resolve reflects the sacrament's truth: we're not alone in the fight. In Lent, this matters doubly. As we fast and pray, we're training our wills to choose God over sin, and Confession seals that resolve with grace. Does this mean we'll never fall? No—we're human. But each Confession renews our strength to say "yes" to God. So when you confess this Lent, mean those words. Tell Him, "With Your help, I will not sin again," and step out trusting that He'll carry you forward.

God Bless you all,
Fr Hilton