



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

T: 01422 352141 E: office.stmary.halifax@dioceseofleeds.org.uk

Website: www.stmaryshalifax.com

St Mary's Primary Academy: 01422 362365



HOLY YEAR MASS SCHEDULE AND DEVOTIONS JUBILEE 2025

Children's Liturgy:

Every Sunday 11:00am

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



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 7 th DECEMBER	2 nd Sunday of Advent	9:30am 11:00am 6:00pm	St Mary's St Mary's St Alban's	Tomasz & Irene Nalepa Teresa Wallace (80) People of the Parish
MONDAY 8 th	IMMACULATE CONCEPTION	9:30am	St Mary's	Maria Griffin
	REQUIEM	1:45pm	St Alban's	James Hurst
TUESDAY 9 th	Advent	9:30am	St Alban's	Denis Smyth
WEDNESDAY 10 th	Advent	No Mass		
THURSDAY 11 th	Advent	9:30am	St Alban's	Horan Family
FRIDAY 12 th	Rorate	7:00am	St Mary's	Mary Harding (YB)
SATURDAY 13 th	St Lucy	12:15pm	St Mary's	Marie Finn
	Vigil Mass	4:00pm	St Mary's	Polish Mass

READERS ROTA

THIS SUNDAY		NEXT SUNDAY	
9:30am	Gabrielle Colleran	9:30am	Kieron Green
11:00am	Andrea Woodward	11:00am	Ken Rothery
6:00pm	Judith MacDonald	6:00pm	Rachel Fitzpatrick

PRAYER LIST: Tony Hintze, Mary Staden, Peter Staden, Gerard James, David Sutcliffe, John Wallis, William Long, Julie Simpson, Charlotte Fitzpatrick, Peter Smith, Julie Hall, 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

Wasył and Angelina Boruszenko, Patricia Richards, Timothy Hayes, Alice Williams, Mary McGoldrick, Teresa Iwanowski, John and Annie Stanton, Wanda Leicke, Leslie Maragh, Lawrence Maragh, Angela Payne, Beatrice Amuah, Lily Jane Maragh, Christopher Colleran, Daniel Colleran

CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE

This year's Christmas Carol Service will be held on Thursday **18th December at 7:00pm** in St Mary's. Christmas buffet will follow in the Catholic Club.

RORATE MASSES

This year I will offer *Rorate* Masses at 7:00am on the three Fridays of Advent. A *Rorate* Mass is a traditional votive Mass in honour of Our Blessed Lady, celebrated in the early morning darkness during Advent. The name comes from the first words of the Latin Introit, "*Rorate caeli, desuper*," which translates to "Drop down, ye heavens, from above". It is a candlelight Mass held in a darkened church, with the light of the candles symbolising our waiting for Christ's coming.

PARISH CHRISTMAS RAFFLE

Tickets for the Parish Christmas Raffle are now on sale after Sunday Masses and, once again, there are some great prizes to be won.

PARISH CENSUS

If you have not already completed a parish census form or have recently moved house or changed address, please complete one of the forms at the back of church.

DEANERY DAY OF CONFESSIONS

The clergy of the deanery will once again hear confessions from **9:00am until 4:00pm** in St Mary's on **Saturday 20th of December**. Make the most of this opportunity and go!

LADIES' GUILD NEWS

The next meeting of our PLG will be our annual torchlight carol service and Christmas party to be held at St Alban's church at 7:00pm on Thursday 11th December.

CATHOLIC CLUB NEWS

Friday 12th December - Darts and dominoes night, supper provided.
Saturday 13th December - entertainment by Ethan - male vocalist.
All welcome

RECENT FINANCIAL NEWS

Last week's loose collection was **£747.99** Total Approx. **£1576.49** (Inc. standing orders & card)

ST PAUL'S KING CROSS

For the avoidance of doubt and *especially* for new parishioners arriving from abroad, although the service may look and sound similar to the Mass, St Paul's church at King Cross is a Church of England church and not a Catholic church. Catholics must not receive communion in non-Catholic churches.

FROM YOUR PARISH PRIEST

I spoke briefly towards the end of my sermon last week on the importance of going to Confession before Christmas and it will come as no surprise to you that this is what I'm writing about this week. Advent is a season of expectation, yes, but also of honesty and honesty begins with acknowledging our need for a Redeemer. It's pretty simple really. If we refuse to admit our sins, then we are, in effect, saying we have no need of mercy and if we have no need of mercy, then we have no need of Christmas at all. The Incarnation of Our Lord becomes nothing more than a charming story rather than the rescue mission of God Himself that it actually is. The world around us tries desperately to deny the reality of sin but the Church offers us something infinitely more hopeful. Forgiveness and peace. Christ came into the world precisely because we cannot save ourselves and He continues His saving work through the Sacrament of Confession.

I want to give you something practical. A simple, step by step guide to making a good confession. If you haven't been in a long time, do not be afraid. If you go regularly, use this as a renewed invitation to deeper repentance. But please, for your sake, for the sake of your family and for the sake of your soul, make confession part of your preparation for Christmas.

1. **Examine your conscience honestly.** Set aside a few quiet minutes, reflect on your life and your behaviour. A good examination of conscience can be found here: <https://www.usccb.org/resources/Examination-of-Conscience-Ten-Commandments.pdf>
Don't try to justify, downplay or dramatise anything. Simply name the truth.
2. **Approach the confessional with trust.** Remember, it's Jesus who receives you. The priest is only His instrument. Jesus already knows every sin you have committed anyway, you are not shocking Him. You are simply allowing Him to heal what He already sees with compassion.
3. **Confess your sins clearly and simply.** Begin with: *"Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It has been ___ since my last confession."* List your sins without story telling or excuses. You don't need details, just the sin itself. Nothing you say can ever shock or surprise the priest, he has heard it all before...many times over. Yes - Even the things you think are most embarrassing.
4. **Listen to what the priest says.** Sometimes it will be brief, sometimes it will be more substantial. Receive it as a word from the Lord for you. Even one sentence can be an instrument of grace.
5. **Make the Act of Contrition.** *"O my God, because Thou art so good, I am truly sorry for having sinned against Thee and by the help of Thy grace, I will not sin again. Amen"*.
6. **Receive absolution with faith.** This moment is the very heart of the sacrament. Christ Himself speaks through the priest, "I absolve you..." Grace floods your soul and Your sins are gone forever.
7. **Complete your penance.** Your penance is not a punishment, it is a way of cooperating with the healing God has just begun.
8. **Give thanks to God.** Spend a moment after leaving the confessional thanking God for His mercy and allowing yourself to experience the joy and freedom of forgiveness.

Christmas is the feast of God entering a world that had no room for Him. Let it not be so with us. The surest way to make room for Christ is to cast out everything that does not belong to Him. Fear, pride, resentment, impurity, selfishness, coldness of heart. Confession is the door we open so that the Light of the World may enter in. Go to confession before Christmas. Go because you need a Redeemer. Go because Christ longs to forgive you. Go because Christmas only makes sense when we realise just how desperately we need the One who comes to save us. And when you do, you will discover that true preparation for Christmas is not found in shopping lists or decorations (as lovely as they are) but in a heart made new. A forgiven soul welcomes Christ with freedom and joy, the kind of joy no darkness can ever overcome.

God bless you all,
Fr Hilton