



CATHOLIC PARISH OF ST JOHN PAUL II, ECCLES

Services usually held at: Holy Cross, Patricroft and St Mary's, Eccles
Parish Office: Holy Cross Presbytery, 370 Liverpool Road, Patricroft, M30 8QD

2nd
Sunday
of
Christmas
Morning
Prayer
Week 2

THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH

Are we as good as our word? If we make a promise, will those around us know it's going to happen? Or might they expect an excuse to follow—"we meant to, but..."

Promises are a feature of our lives, from the simplest agreements—we will be available for a Zoom meeting at a particular time, or we will be home before dark; to the enduring promises in the vows we make at Marriage or Ordination. Words seem to have more power when they are expressed before witnesses and, in some contexts, we might even make our promise with a Bible in our hand to give extra power to that word, both in the mind of our hearers who will take us more seriously, and in our own minds as we hear ourselves name the promise before the God of eternity. But why should a book mean so much without our even opening its pages to read?

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please keep the following people kindly in your prayers:

The sick: Peter, Joan, Karen, Kenneth, Katie, Baby Patrick, Kathleen, Pat, Maura, Doreen, Helen, Shirley, Bridget, Sara, Chamina, Tara, Mary, Carole, Phil, Carol, Sarah, John, Vincent de Paul, Alan and Mary, Molly, Anne, Patrick, David, Peter, Kevin, Helen, Lynn, Pam and Derek, Pauline, Shannon, John, Chris, Ann, Patrick, Clifford, Mrs Wood, Frances, Marian, Bridget, Iris, Pauline, Sharon, Fr Mullin, John, Joan, Paul, Peter, Maureen, Pat, Patrick, David, Sister Maureen, Yvonne, Terry, Betty, Kathleen, Colette, Stanley, Win, Catherine, James, Alan, Betty, Evelyn, Elizabeth, Anne, Mary, Joan, Amanda, Pat, Billy, David, Evie, Mary, Chamari, Sheila, Monica, Clare, John, Eileen, Kathleen, Joyce, Margaret, Christine, Jean, Margaret, Deborah, Patrick, Fr Connelly, Jean, Vincent, Maureen, Eleanor, Margaret, Robert, Ken, Catorina, Michaela, Tony, Bernard, Elaine, Ellen, Glenes, Sheila, Caroline, Lynne, Joe, Jackie, Gemma, Sheila, Martin, Joanne, John, Joan, Janice, Bill, John, Kenneth, Vera, Lilly, Gerald, May, Louise, Matthew, Evelyn, Margaret, Anthony, Debbie, Mary, Peter, Theresa, Sylvia, Maureen, Johnny, Robin and Steven, Sister Regina, Nicola, Paul, Nijole, Ken, Stephen, Arthur, Kevin.

Lately Dead: Tommy McDonagh, Monica Johnson, Mary Fagan, Colin Maryan, Marion Griffith, Fr Peter McKie, Thelma Boughton, Tracy Smith, Kathleen Tennant.

Anniversaries: Sushannah Costello, Audrey Crompton, Sheila Hazelting (Birthday Anniversary), Steve Unitt, Eileen Tighe, Daniel Williams, Elaine Murphy, Molly Maher, Vincent McElvenny, Norman Reed, Molly and George Blinkhorn.

Remembrance: Charles, Agnes and Ann Geeney, Marie Payne, Baby Gabriel Preston, Gerard and Herbert Nicholls, Mary and George Sewell, Annie and Fred Whittaker, Barbara, Eileen and Harry Banks, Andrew Tighe, Winifred and Bill Hampton, Brian and Martin Platt, Sean Fanning, John and Monica Potter, Leo and May Melling and family, Winnie and Patrick Roddy, Kevin Martin Smith, Paula McLernon Wilson, Austin and Doris Smith, Edward Davenport, Lavin, Raynor and Curran families.

We also pray: for our troubled world in this great Christmas season, for Melanie and Bren and their unborn child, for world peace, for an end to racism in all its forms and for our schools. We pray for world leaders, for God's guidance and support throughout the Covid-19 crisis and for all those suffering from the disease, for the housebound and those in hospital, nursing and residential homes, for NHS and Care Home workers and for a number of special intentions.

Today's Gospel repeats the wonderful text from Christmas Day, from the Prologue of St John. "In the beginning was the Word." We have the image, in the Book of Genesis, of God "speaking" the Creation into existence—"Let there be... And so it was." Without needing to take the text literally, we learn that God's Word is so much greater than ours. He delivers on all his promises. What he says will come to pass, and the power of that Word leaves us awestruck. How could we ever hope to live up to it? If we were to offend the one with such power, what word might he speak against us, and what defence could we hope to bring? Yes, to hold the Bible in our hand when we make a promise should indeed make us think. But the Prologue goes on.

God's Word is a word of light and life for all people. God sent into the world John the Baptist, with a message not of fear but of eager expectation and hope. He called all who would listen to look for that light and to be filled with hope. We know that John called his hearers to repentance, but it was not to instil a sense of guilt into them but rather to give them the real expectation of a new beginning, of past failings being washed away, of a new visitation by God who will enlighten all things. "The Word was made flesh, he lived among us and we saw his glory, the glory that is his as the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth."

God spoke that same Word, which made all things in the beginning, to the Virgin Mary, and she said, yes—"Behold the handmaid of the Lord." And so that Word, filled with all the power that created the universe, humbled himself to be born as a human child, to grow and to learn from human parents and human experience what it is like to be a creature like ourselves. He continued to humble himself by allowing his Word to be silenced by rejection, hatred and misunderstanding, and to die at the hands of flawed human authorities. But this is a Word that cannot be silenced, and ultimately it spoke nothing but glory in the Resurrection on Easter Day.

May that humble Word, made flesh in the stable of Bethlehem, take shape once more in our hearts too, and may we learn to speak with the power of the One who gave his life for us, and bring real hope to our world today—to a 2021 filled with grace and truth.

St MARY'S HEATING

We expect a site meeting to take place this week with our consultant and the contractors, and works should commence as soon as possible.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY SHEET

This week's "Look" leaflet for your children can be found [HERE](#) and the "Lord's Day at Home" leaflet to accompany Sunday's Mass can be viewed and downloaded [HERE](#).

THANK YOU...

...to all those who have worked tirelessly to keep the parish going throughout the difficulties of 2020

...to you all for your comments and support during the Covid crisis. We know we get things wrong at times, but it's good to be appreciated for trying!

...for all donations received during this financially difficult time.

And on a personal note—thank you from Fr Martin and his mother (who is still currently shielding at Holy Cross) for the generous cards, gifts and Masses received over Christmas. Your kindness is greatly appreciated.

CURRENT SUNDAY MASS TIMES

Saturday (Vigil Mass): 5.00pm at Holy Cross
Sunday Morning: 9.30 and 11.15 am at Holy Cross
also available online. See details below
Children's Liturgies are currently suspended
Refreshments after Masses are also currently suspended
Weekdays: See Weekday Calendar below
Holydays: As announced beforehand

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Confessions are currently only available
by prior arrangement
and out of doors as Fr Martin cannot meet you face to face

BAPTISMS, WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS

by arrangement
At least 6 months' notice is required for weddings, and
a time of preparation is also required before Baptism.
Please refer to the website for further information

Calendar for Masses this Week—Church Opening in Red

Saturday 2nd Jan: 5.00pm at Holy Cross (Vigil Mass for Sunday) (Livestreamed)
Sunday 3rd: 9.30am at Holy Cross (Recorded Mass available from 9.00am Sunday morning)
11.15am at Holy Cross

Monday 4th: 10.00am at Holy Cross (Livestreamed)

Tuesday 5th: 10.00am at Holy Cross (Livestreamed)

Feast of the Epiphany—Wednesday 6th: { 10.00am at Holy Cross (Livestreamed)
7.00pm at Holy Cross

Thursday 7th: 10.00am at Holy Cross (Livestreamed)

Friday 8th: 7.00pm at Holy Cross (Livestreamed) following a Holy Hour from 6.00pm

Saturday 9th: 12 Noon at Holy Cross behind closed doors following a Holy Hour from 11.00am (Livestreamed ONLY)

A higher quality video of the recording of the Saturday Vigil Mass will be available on our [YouTube channel](#), and on the [Live](#) page of our website from 9.00am the following morning.

**HAPPY
NEW
YEAR!**

CONTACTLESS CARD PAYMENTS

Our new contactless payment machine is up and running at the back of Holy Cross Church. We would ask, please, that your hands are cleansed before and after touching the screen. Donations can be made by simply selecting the amount and then presenting your card on top of the device. Any amount can be selected, and a second screen will invite Gift Aid details (just once) for Gift Aid donors. This screen can simply be closed if you do not wish to Gift Aid your donation by tapping on "No, thanks" at the bottom of the screen.

Two problems have been experienced so far, but both are easily resolved—the device runs on the Android OS, and is quite user-friendly.

- The payment screen has disappeared, leaving an Android Home Screen visible instead.
LIKELY CAUSE: Various possibilities, the most recent being a simple App update.
SOLUTION: Tap on the blue "CollecTin" icon near the centre of the screen, and the payment App will reopen.
- The screen appears frozen on the Gift Aid page.
LIKELY CAUSE: either intentionally or otherwise, the previous user has begun typing on the Gift Aid screen but has given up without completing the process.
SOLUTION: If the keyboard will not disappear by itself, tap the "ENTER" key as often as necessary to reach the end of the screen, at which point the keyboard will disappear and you will be able to tap "No, thanks," after which a brief "Thank you" to the previous user will be displayed, and then the donation screen will be restored.

2nd/3rd January 2021



This week we pray for: the intentions of the parishioners of St. Marie and St Joseph, Bury, and for Fr Bill Foley, their parish priest. We pray for their primary schools, for St Gabriel's High School and for Holy Cross College, as well as the patients, staff and chaplaincy at Fairfield General Hospital and the Bury Hospice. May Mary and Joseph lead us to Jesus the Lord.

If you do experience any difficulty with the card payment system, please signal to a steward to assist. It's early days just now, and things will get easier as more people become more familiar with it.

COLLECTIONS

Last week's collection totalled £1,066.95 and we have also received a further £120 towards the "Advent Challenge" for gifts of water to the developing world—bringing our current total to £320. We will keep this collection open throughout the Christmas season. THANK YOU for your generosity in supporting the parish during these difficult times.

RED MISSION BOXES

Please do not bring Red Mission Boxes to church for counting until further notice. This is because of the pandemic. Clearly marked envelopes may, instead, be left in the basket at the back of church, or posted through the letterbox. Thank you.

PARISH CONTACT DETAILS *(Please note that email addresses below can NOT be clicked as links)*

Parish Priest: Fr Martin A Collins GTCL
Telephone: 0161 789 4424
Mobile: 07502 633383
Email: martin.collins@dioceseofsalford.org.uk
or via contact form on the parish website.

Parish Secretary: Mrs Marie Twemlow
Telephone: 0161 789 4424 (Mon & Tue, 10am-4pm)
Sec. Email: secretary@ourparishcommunity.co.uk
Office Email: office@ourparishcommunity.co.uk

Parish Website: www.ourparishcommunity.co.uk
Facebook: [@ourparishcommunity](https://www.facebook.com/ourparishcommunity)

Parish Sister: Sr Jenny (Franciscan Missionary of St Joseph)
Telephone: 0161 789 4424 (Wednesday 10am-4pm)
0161 707 9537 all other times
Email: srjenny@ourparishcommunity.co.uk

Parish Halls Hire: Enquiries to Steve Jackson
Telephone: 07580 571839
Email: hall@ourparishcommunity.co.uk

Holy Cross RC Church
370 Liverpool Road
Patricroft
M30 8QD

St Mary's RC Church
Oxford Street
Eccles
M30 0LU

Parish Safeguarding Reps: Katrina Foster/Tara Higgins/Ged Dale
Email: safeguarding@ourparishcommunity.co.uk

Schools:
Holy Cross and All Saints: 0161 789 4386
St Gilbert's: 0161 789 5035
St Mary's: 0161 789 4532
St Patrick's High School: 0161 921 2300

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Stay with us, Lord, on our Journey