St. Mary 's Parish Horwich
Weekly Newsletter
Sunday 29th November 2026 (1st Sunday of Advent)

Mass this Week
Tues 1st Dec - **11am Requiem Mass for Anne Aldred**
Weds 2nd Dec - **6:30pm Mass**
Thurs 3rd Dec - **10am Mass *with Exposition from 9:30*** *(St Francis Xavier)*
Fri 4th Dec - **12pm Mass**
Sat 5th Dec - **11am Mass followed by Exposition, Rosary & Confessions**
Sun 6th Dec - **6:30pm Saturday Vigil; 10:30am Mass**
(2nd Sunday of Advent)

Prayer List
Our sick and housebound: Margaret Brice, The Ashworth Family, Theresa Hargreaves, Theresa Jean Molyneux, Kevin Lawman, Derren Harrison, Madeline Bell, Anthony Michael Woods, Stan Ellison, Simon Taylor, Paul Davis, Tim Travis, Steven Welch. **Lately Dead:** Michael Jennings, Michael Burns.

Advent 2026 'Walk with Me' booklets
Speak with Fr Richard if you would like a booklet.

St Mary's Sacramental Programme 2027
We are now inviting baptised Roman Catholic children in Year 3 (or above) to register for this year's Sacramental Programme (whether at St Mary's Primary School or not). If your child is eligible and wishes to prepare for and receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion next year, please submit his/her full name together with your own name and contact details to the Parish Office: secretary.stmaryshorwich@gmail.com A letter with the same invitation will go out this week to all families via St Mary's Primary School.

Parish Children's Liturgy
A reminder that the Parish Children's Liturgy starts today, **Sunday 29th November** (First Sunday in Advent) during the 10:30am Mass. The Liturgy will take place in term time only. The Children will leave the church after the opening prayer and be taken to the Presbytery for their session. They will return to their parents/families after the bidding prayers. As numbers grow, we may progress to using the Rosary Room. Children should be aged between 4 and 8; from Reception at Primary School until the end of Year 3 when they have made their First Holy Communion. Children in Year 4 and above should remain in Mass. Children should be happy and comfortable to attend Children's Liturgy without their parents. Parents are asked to remain in Mass and take the opportunity to reflect on Scripture without distraction. All volunteers that are 16 and over will undertake a DBS check with the Diocese of Salford. If you would like to join the rota to support Children's Liturgy, please see Sara or Faith Pepperday.

Parish Christmas Fair
The Parish Christmas Fair is on this weekend **Sunday 29th November** after Mass in the Rosary Room. Bottles for the tombola would be gratefully received. Likewise, donations of cakes for the cake stall would be appreciated. These can be brought to the Rosary Room. In addition: Raffle tickets for the Christmas Fair will be on sale on Saturday evening at the back of church. The Raffle prizes include items kindly donated to us by local shops.

Friday Coffee Morning
The next monthly Coffee morning in the Rosary Room is this **Friday 4th December** from 10am All welcome.

Primary School Appeal
Our Primary School, St Mary's, has asked if anyone has any tinsel or hanging Christmas decorations that could be donated to school. Please contact the school: 01204 333625.

CAFOD World Gifts Catalogues
The catalogues for Christmas 2026 are now available at the back of church.

Reading the Bible through Advent and Christmas - Rev. Dr Adrian Graffy
Darton, Longman and Todd have recently published this new book by Rev. Dr Adrian Graffy, a priest of the Diocese of Brentwood, and a well-known scripture scholar and lecturer, on the Advent and Christmas readings. As this will be a helpful resource for both clergy and laity in the coming seasons, you may wish to publicise it in your parish. More details can be found by visiting www.whatgoodnews.org

Schools Singing Programme's Advent Carol Concerts
The Salford Schools Singing programme is hosting a series of Advent Carol Concerts next month, with one-hour services performed by schoolchildren from around the diocese. Please see below for dates and locations, and for more information please visit the diocesan website here: https://dioceseofsalford.org.uk/news/whats-on/

- Thursday 3 December - Our Lady of the Assumption RC Church, Middleton
- Tuesday 8 December - St Mary's RC Church, Burnley
- Thursday 10 December - Salford Cathedral
- Tuesday 15 December - St Alban's RC Church, Blackburn
- Wednesday 16 December - Sacred Heart RC Church, Colne

REACH Christmas Appeal
The local charity REACH is appealing for donations of Christmas gifts for children (0–16 years old) and the elderly. These can be placed in the box at the back of church. Suggested gift ideas for children include: 0-2 years: tummy time mat, teething toys, walker toys; 3-7: bluey toys, musical instruments, cars, dolls; 8-11: footballs, remote control toys, Lego etc.; 12-16: wireless headphones, branded gift cards (JD sports, Foot asylum etc.), power banks, perfume. Gifts must be new and unopened. All gratefully received.

Team St Mary's Parish Kit
We have a new navy zip up fleece and the relaunch of the woollen hats, fleece gloves and scarves, all with a new blue SMH logo. This includes hats for young children. The hoodies and other merchandise are still available. We are also selling umbrellas with the SMH logo: great for Christmas presents. Lorraine is available after Mass to take orders and answer any questions. As ever, enquires can also be emailed to: stmarysteamkit@gmail.com

Parish Flower Arranging
If anyone has some experience or interest in flower arranging and might be interested in helping with the altar flowers in church, please email Fr Richard: richard.howard@dioceseofsalford.org.uk

St Mary's Parish Garden
We are always looking for more volunteers to help with the care and maintenance of the church garden. Please contact Mary Durkan on 07786 033449 if you would like to help or want more information about what is involved.

St. Mary's Volunteers
We recently made an appeal for new volunteers in the parish. Volunteering makes a huge positive contribution to the life of the parish, and we are always looking for new helpers. All volunteers will go through the Diocesan 'Safe Recruitment' process. If you would like to volunteer or ask for more information, please send an email to stmaryshelpers@yahoo.com

Rosary Room: House keeping
If you have any items to donate or which you think might be useful for the Rosary Room, please speak first to Geraldine Ratcliffe before bringing them in. Thank you.

Parish Flower donations
As announced recently, we are launching a new fundraising initiative whereby parishioners can sponsor the altar flowers for a particular date e.g. for a special feast day, or for the anniversary of a loved one etc. We are grateful that one of our parishioners, Liz Gillies is overseeing this project and you are welcome to speak with Liz for more information: e-mail: lizgillies274@gmail.com or phone: 07510332291. Full details are available on the blue sheet at the back of church.

New 2027 Almanacs
The new Salford Diocese Almanacs are on sale at the back of church, priced £5.50. Money for these can be simply placed in the Piety stall collection box or use the Dona Card device at the front of church.

Parish Art Club
The Art Club meets in the Rosary Room on Monday mornings 10am-12noon. If you are interested, please come along and join us in the next few weeks and see what we do. All are welcome (not restricted just to Parish members). The cost is £5.00 per week, which includes refreshments and is only required when you attend. Enquiries to Anne-Marie Davies, Tel:01204 695210.

Donations made to Charities by Cheque
You can make a donation to a particular charity at any time by putting it in the Parish Collection (e.g. CAFOD, Caritas Diocese of Salford etc.). If you do this by cheque, please make it payable to: '**St Mary's RC Horwich**' and write the name of the charity you wish to support on the back. Thank you.

Advent Talks 2026
During Advent, we are pleased to be joined by Mgr Paul Smith and Sr Joan Kerley for a series of talks on an exploration of Pope Leo's recent Encyclical Letter "Magnifica Humanitas". Join us every Tuesday between 24 November and 15 December as we consider Exploring Human Dignity with Pope Leo in the age of AI. The venue for this year's talks will be Our Lady and Lancashire Martyrs Church Hall, M38 0DL, and the talks will take place from 10:30am - 12:30pm. Please email joankfmsj@gmail.com or phone 07934 816796 to register your interest. For more information please click use this link to visit the Diocesan 'What's On' page https://dioceseofsalford.org.uk/news/whats-on/

Italian Mass at Salford Cathedral
There will be Mass celebrated in Italian at Salford Cathedral at 2PM on **Sunday 6th December.** Please do come along. *Una Santa Messa in italiano verrá celebrata al Duomo a Salford, domenica 6 dicembre, a 14:00. Sarete tutti benevenuti.*

Hope in the Future Cycle of Prayer
Over the coming weeks, we will be praying for the parishes of the Deanery of St Joseph, for its parishioners and clergy in our latest Hope in the Future Cycle of Prayer. Please click here to download the latest cycle.

Gregorian Chant for Advent & Christmas – A Workshop for Singers
St Augustine's RC Church, Grosvenor Square, Manchester, M15 6BW Saturday 12th December 2026 11AM to 4PM. A wonderful opportunity to discover more about Gregorian chant. A practical day course on Gregorian chants for Advent and Christmas led by Dr. Rosemarie Darby of the University of Manchester. For more information and a booking form please contact Dr Rosemarie Darby by email at: stphilipnerisingers@yahoo.co.uk

Become a CAFOD School Volunteer
Do you have a passion for faith, justice, and inspiring young people? CAFOD is seeking volunteers to visit local Catholic schools to lead assemblies and workshops about our work and mission. Help children and young people learn how they can make a positive difference in the world. Full training and support provided. For further information, please contact Anna Letizia on 07710 094449 or email aletizia@cafod.org.uk

Newsletter from Diocesan Vocations Team
The Diocese of Salford's vocations team is delighted to share its latest newsletter exploring updates on vocations to diocesan ministry, which includes the priesthood and permanent diaconate. For the latest on ordinations, inspiring vocation stories, and the latest update by numbers, please visit https://dioceseofsalford.org.uk/faith/vocations/

Volunteering at the Laudato Si' Centre
The Diocese of Salford's environment hub - the Laudato Si' Centre - is looking for new recruits to join its team of volunteers. This flexible, rewarding opportunity can be on a regular or ad hoc basis as the team works to develop the Centre's beautiful walled garden and woodland areas, set within the grounds of Wardley Hall. Email laudatosi@dioceseofsalford.org.uk to find out more!

Laudato Si' Centre Website and Brochure
We're delighted to share details of a brand-new brochure and updated website for our Laudato Si' Centre. Packed full of information on our beautiful spaces, engaging activities, and opportunities for parishes and schools, our updated resources are a great way to find out more about the Centre and how your parish can get involved. The brochure is available online now at https://tinyurl.com/brochure-lsc You can visit our website at https://laudatosicentre.org.uk / For more information or to discuss a visit to the Centre, please email laudatosi@dioceseofsalford.org.uk

CARITAS

Caritas Advent Appeal 2026
The Caritas Salford #BeeThere bees are retelling the story of the Nativity and asking us to help change the script for local people facing hunger or homelessness. This Advent, could you #BeeThere for a child or adult in need? Watch the animation, created with Doodledo and featuring the voices of local children, at http://www.caritassalford.org.uk/BeeThere or donate at http://www.caritassalford.org.uk/donate

Advent Prayers, Resources and Information
As part of its annual Advent Bee There campaign, our diocesan charity, Caritas Salford, has a range of free resources which can be downloaded via their website. You can find out more and access them at: www.caritassalford.org.uk/BeeThere

Child Poverty in our School Communities
Caritas Salford, our diocesan charity, is calling for urgent action after carrying out research with our diocesan schools that have shown a staggering increase in child poverty in our area in recent years. This was the second time our schools have contributed to the survey, and shows a stark picture with many families in our parishes in need of urgent support. You can read more about the findings and discover what changes Caritas is calling for from local and national government too, at: www.caritassalford.org.uk/SchoolPovertySurvey2026

Services to Support Local People
Caritas Salford runs a wide range of community and outreach services to help people in our diocesan communities who are experiencing poverty, homelessness, isolation and discrimination. If you, or someone you know, might benefit from their support, you can find details on their website: www.caritassalford.org.uk/services

Free energy bill advice from Caritas

If you are worried about rising energy costs, our diocesan charity Caritas Salford runs a range of free drop-in advice sessions to help with everything from energy debt to making your home more energy efficient. You can find out more about these and other ways the team can help people across Greater Manchester and Lancashire on the Caritas website at www.caritassalford.org.uk/energysupport

Caritas Salford E-newsletter

Did you know that Caritas, our diocesan charity, now has a monthly e-newsletter providing updates, free resources, news and event details, plus much more? To begin to receive it, visit: https://www.caritassalford.org.uk/newsletter/

LOCAL COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Reach Befriending Service

Reach is a charity which matches volunteers with isolated and elderly people across Bolton for weekly visits, friendship, and a listening ear. If you would like to volunteer or for more information, contact: Hello@reachfamilyproject.co.uk