



Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish Westhoughton

8 LORD STREET, WESTHOUGHTON, BOLTON, BL5 3SE

Parish Priest: Rev Fr Christopher Dawson

01942 812174

Salford Roman Catholic Diocesan Trustees Registered Charity Number 250037



DIOCESE OF Salford

Sunday 31st December 2023

**Feast of the Holy Family
Year B**

MASS TIMES THIS WEEK

Saturday:	6 pm
Sunday:	10 am
Monday 1st January	10 am
Tuesday	No Mass
Wednesday – Friday	9 am

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

**Saturday 5.30-5.50 pm
and at call**

THIS SUNDAY'S MASS

First Reading

Genesis 15:1-6, 21: 1-3

Your heir shall be your own flesh and blood.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 104: 1-6, 8-9

He, the Lord, is our God. He remembers his covenant for ever.

Second Reading

Hebrews 11: 8, 11-12, 17-19

The faith of Abraham and of Sarah.

Gospel

Luke 2: 22-40

My eyes have seen your salvation.

Facebook: @SHJWP parish

**Suggested items for inclusion in future editions of the newsletter may be emailed to
SHJWesthoughtonNewsletter@outlook.com
Please submit by midday on Thursday.**

The Word This Week

The story of the Presentation of the child Jesus in the Temple is dominated by Simeon's welcome, 'a light to enlighten the gentiles and the glory of your people Israel', and by his warning to Mary, 'a sword will pierce your heart'. Simeon reiterates the angel's promise that the child would fulfil the destiny of Israel and Israel's task to the nations. Much like any family life, the promised future included the delights of the growing, developing child, and the background fear that the great destiny of each child may include sorrow and even heartbreak. How much did Mary and Joseph know about the precious child they were nurturing? As he grew to independence, did he become more loving and supportive? How did his contemporaries find him? Was he a leader? Did he stand out from the pack? Each of us has a private picture of the child, the boy, the adolescent, the young man. All we know for sure is that 'the child grew to maturity' and that Mary 'pondered all these things in her heart', with Simeon's welcome and warning before her mind.

Thank you for the many Christmas cards and gifts I have received, they are all greatly appreciated.

Monday 1st January is the solemn feast of Mary, Mother of God. Mass on this New Year's Day is at 10 am. There will be no Mass here on Tuesday 2 January, and from Wednesday 3 January we return to our usual weekly timetable. Mass on Friday is a 9 am, as school is still on its Christmas break.

2024 In the first few months of 2024 there are two things I would like us, as a parish, to focus on. The first is the diocesan synod. Over the past months you will have seen various items about the synod on the newsletter, but since I was so new in post here, I felt it was more prudent to get settled in as parish priest before pursuing the synod agenda. I would like to think that in the first couple of months of 2024 we could 'catch up' with the rest of the diocese on this important process.

The second item I would like to develop beginning early in the New Year is a parish Laudato Si, or care for the environment, group. Bishop John is keen that every parish has a group which helps not only to ensure the Church is as environmentally

sustainable as it can be, but also that we do our part in raising awareness of what each of us can do to protect our common home for our children and subsequent generations.

If you are interested in either of these projects, please have a word with Fr Christopher.

Welcome to our parish: If you are new to Westhoughton, or are visiting us just for the weekend, you are very welcome! Please introduce yourself to Fr Christopher after Mass.

Card Payments. We now have a card payment machine, which you will find in the entrance foyer. You can use the machine to make credit or debit card donations to the parish, to pay for items from the piety stall or make donations to CAFOD, Caritas or any second collections we hold. The first time you use a new card it will ask you if you want to gift aid the donation – please say yes if you pay income tax as this increases your donation by 25% at no cost to you. You can use all major credit or debit cards, as well as Apple Pay and Google Pay.

St. Joseph's High School
60th Birthday Celebrations will continue on Friday 16th Feb at

Rivington Barn. Tickets available by 'googling' Eventbrite St Joseph's Alumni or follow the link from St. Joseph's school Facebook page.

Sacred Heart Primary School

The school will reopen on Monday 8th January 2024. To all pupils and staff – have a wonderful break!

2025 'Pilgrims of Hope' Jubilee This Advent, Pope Francis invites people across the world to embark on a Year of Prayer in preparation for the 2025 "Pilgrims of Hope" Jubilee. Over the coming weeks and months, the Diocese of Salford will be sharing a range of resources and ideas to help us journey together through this Year of Prayer. Head to <https://www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/news/jubilee-2025/> to find out more.

Discover more about our Diocesan

Synod Over the coming weeks and months, the Diocese of Salford is carrying out the first key stage of our diocesan synod. But what is a synod? And



what does it mean for our diocese and the future of the Church in Greater Manchester and Lancashire? Scan the QR code to find out more.

Cafod Israeli-Palestinian Crisis

Appeal Donate at cafod.org.uk/ipc or call 0303 303 3030 to support those affected and get funds to local trusted experts in Gaza and southern Israel who have been working alongside communities helping those most in need. Your donation will help support aid workers providing urgent humanitarian aid including food, water, and emergency shelter to those in need. Thank you for your prayers.

ECT Primary Pool 2024 Are you looking for a career in teaching? Do you know someone who is training for a career in primary education? ECT (Early Career Teachers) due to gain Qualified Teacher Status in Summer 2024 are being invited to apply for recommendation for interview to Catholic schools with vacancies for September 2024. Email education@dioceseofsalford.org.uk to find out more and apply.

Christian Heritage Centre Marriage Preparation Courses

The next marriage preparation course at the CHC will run over two consecutive

Saturdays: 27 January and 3 February. The course offers a testimony to the sacramental married life, an overview of the key themes underpinning the Church's vision of marriage, relational exercises for the couples, time for discussion as couples and in groups. For more information and to book: <https://christianheritagecentre.com/events/marriage-preparation/>

Pilgrimage to Walsingham The Diocese of Salford is now accepting bookings for our 2024 pilgrimage to Walsingham. If you would like to join next year's pilgrimage, bring along a group, or help as a volunteer, please fill out a booking form, available at <https://dioceseofsalford.org.uk/walsingham-2024>. You can get in touch by calling 0161 817 2214 or emailing walsingham@pilgrimage@dioceseofsalford.org.uk

Baptism and Marriage preparation: Please speak to Fr Christopher if you are a parent and would like to have your child baptised or if are hoping to get married either in this parish or elsewhere (a minimum of six months' notice is required for marriage).

Liturgy of Blessing for Engaged Couples On Saturday 17 February, the Saturday nearest to St Valentine's Day, Bishop John invites those getting married in the churches of our Diocese, or who are being prepared in our parishes for marriages elsewhere, to come to a Liturgy of Blessing. In this celebration, we will seek God's blessing on them as they begin their married life. The Service will take place at St. Patrick's Church, Livesey St, Manchester at 2:30pm.

Salford Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage Centenary Year Fundraiser - The Mercy Brothers Join us for a family-friendly night of musical entertainment with the fabulous 'Mercy Brothers' band on Friday 9 February, 8pm (doors 7.30pm), at The Hough End Centre, Mauldeth Road West, Chortlon-cum-Hardy, Manchester, M21 7SX. The band is made up of members of the clergy from around the diocese. Tickets are priced at £15 (over 16s) and free for under 16s. Money raised will go to the Centenary Pilgrimage Fund and in support of our sick pilgrims and medical team. To book please visit www.salfordlourdes.co.uk/fundraising or phone the pilgrimage office on 0161 817 2209.

Job Vacancies: the Diocese of Salford is currently recruiting for the following positions. You can find out more and apply for all of them at <https://www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/news/vacancies/>

Parish Administrator - St James and All Souls

Appointment Type: Part-time, permanent

Working hours: 22 hours per week - worked over four days

Location: Mother of God and St James Presbytery, Heywood Way, Pendleton, Salford, M6 5UJ

Salary: £11.26 per hour

Closing date Friday 12th Jan 2024

Childcare Assistant - Early Years Practitioner (St Hubert's)

Appointment Type: Part-time, fixed-term until 31st July 2024

Working hours: 21.5 hours per week - worked Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday

Location: Our Lady and St Hubert's Playgroup, Hallfield Road, Great Harwood, Blackburn, BB6 7SN (with some flexibility to work out of St Wulstan's Pre-School, Great Harwood)

Salary: £12 per hour

Closing date Monday 8th Jan 2024

Feast of the Holy Family We know so little about the Holy Family. The gospels give us tantalising glimpses during Mary's pregnancy and in the early stages of Jesus's life. But apart from the time a 12 year old Jesus got lost in the Temple, the pages are blank until a young man reappears to be baptised by his cousin. It would be nice to know more but it doesn't really matter.

The missing years were about respect, about allowing a family the right to be themselves without forcing them into being what we want: Joseph when told of Mary's vision with the angel; Mary when Joseph wanted to flee to Egypt; Jesus's family letting him preach when all around were ridiculing him. Their love for each other in difficult circumstances is evident in the gospels. And all of this was done without pretention. Mary and Joseph did not become stage-struck. They saw it all as their way of co-operating with God. Dare we do the same?