



Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish Westhoughton

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Salford Roman Catholic Diocesan Trustees Registered Charity Number 250037



DIOCESE OF SALFORD

Sunday 4th January 2026
2nd Sunday of Christmas
Year A

MASS TIMES THIS WEEK

Saturday	6pm
Sunday	10am
Monday, Wednesday &	
Thursday.	9am
Tuesday	10am (school) & 7pm
Friday	10am

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturday 5.30 – 5.50 pm
and at call

THIS SUNDAY'S MASS

First Reading

Sirach 24: 1-2, 8-12

The wisdom of God has dwelt in the chosen people.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 147: 12-13. 14-15. 19-20. R12a

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

Second Reading

Ephesians 1: 3-6, 15-18

He predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus.

Gospel Acclamation

1 Timothy 3: 16

Glory to you, O Christ, proclaimed among the nations. Glory to you, O Christ, believed in throughout the world.

Gospel

John 1: 1-18

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

Facebook: @SHJWParish

Suggested items for inclusion in future editions of the newsletter may be emailed to

SHJWesthoughtonNewsletter@outlook.com – Please submit items for inclusion by midday Thursday.



THE WORD THIS WEEK

The gospel reading for this Second Sunday after Christmas is the same as one of the options for Christmas Day itself, though we used the account of the shepherds visiting the stable. Perhaps, after all the celebrations of Christmas, there is now room for a more sober thought, and the prologue of John's gospel, as this text is called, certainly requires sober thought! The climax is not at the end of the reading, but is in the centre: 'to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God'. On either side of this verse are rejection by his own people, and acceptance by those who see his Glory. This theme of acceptance and rejection runs right through the gospel of John, some accepting (the disciples, Nicodemus, the Man Born Blind), some rejecting (the Pharisees, the leaders of the Jews). The disciples accept at the Marriage Feast at Cana; the Jews immediately afterwards reject at the Cleansing of the Temple. You cannot remain neutral; you must either accept or reject. It is a great trial scene, and we judge ourselves by our reaction to Jesus. The Father has given all judgment to the Son, but the Son judges no one. The last dread scene is when the Jewish leaders pass sentence on themselves before Pilate and before Jesus crowned as king and seated as judge; they reject God's kingship by saying, 'We have no king but Caesar.' There is no need for sentence to be passed, for we pass our own sentence on ourselves.

EPIPHANY Mass times

Tuesday 6 January is the feast of the Epiphany of the Lord and it is a holy day of obligation.

I have given some thought to our schedule of Masses for holydays and made a slight change. Beginning this year the evening Mass for holy days of obligation will be on the day itself, not the evening before. If the holy day falls in school term time, the morning Mass will be in school, but all parishioners are welcome to attend.

Epiphany Masses 10am in School, and 7pm in Church

Sunday Coffee Mornings: Join us for a warm welcome, brew and a chat after Mass on the first, third and fifth Sundays of the month. Our next coffee mornings are this Sunday, 18th January & 1st February. Everyone is welcome.

Forthcoming Funerals: The funeral service of Joyce Green will take place at

Sacred Heart on Thursday 8th January at 10.30 am. Please remember Joyce and her family and friends in your prayers at this time.

Children's Liturgy of the Word: Restarts this weekend. Children aged from 3 until they have made their first holy communion are invited to celebrate God's word together during our Sunday Mass. Please register your child as you arrive for Mass.

Sacred Heart School – Future Year Groups at Friday Mass:

9th January 2026 – Year 6
16th January – Year 1 & Year 2
23rd January – Reception
30th January – Year 4 & Year 5
13th February – Year 3

Social Event: The first parish social of 2026 promises to be a great night out here in the parish hall. On The Go Theatre presents POWER CUT, a comedic play about the lives of a group of

determined women from Wigan, who take on jobs at a newly opened restaurant 'The Lantern', to make ends meet during the labour strikes of the early 1970s. Bring your own candle there's no telling what could happen when the lights go out. Friday 30 January @ 7.30 pm. Tickets on sale from this weekend priced at £7 including hot supper.

Parish Finances: Jim Maxfield who has been responsible for keeping our financial records in order for many years is moving away from the parish in the next few weeks. If anyone has bookkeeping experience and would be willing to take on this role, please speak to Jim or Father Christopher. The role includes recording income & expenditure using Xero, counting and banking any cheques/cash received, keeping records for Gift Aid purposes and providing quarterly/annual reports to the F & B committee, parish and Diocese. The role could be split between 2 or 3 people as it needs a minimum of two for cash handling. Training will be provided!

When does Christmas End? Across Christian history the close of the Christmas season has been marked in different ways, reflecting the many facets of the mystery we celebrate. One tradition has Christmas end with the Feast of the Epiphany on 6 January, or 'Twelfth Night'. Here the focus is on Christ being made known to the nations through the visit of the Magi. In British custom this was often when Christmas decorations came down, and to leave them up longer was thought to invite bad luck.

More recently, the Church has extended the season to the Sunday after the Epiphany, the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. This highlights not only Christ's birth, but the beginning of his public ministry, when he is revealed as the beloved Son of the Father. The Christmas season thus ends as Jesus steps forward into his mission.

An older and still meaningful tradition keeps the celebration going through the dark days of January until the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord (Candlemas) on 2 February. Marking forty days after Christmas, it recalls Jesus being presented in the Temple and being recognised as a 'light to enlighten the nations'. Each of these endings emphasises a different aspect of the same mystery: the Word made flesh,

revealed, and sent for the life of the world.

Safety in Winter: A reminder to everyone to take extra care when you are out & about at this time of year. The Parish Ice & Snow Plan, which lays out which areas will be gritted when it is icy, is displayed on the notice board. It is, however, every individual's responsibility to ensure they and others are safe. If you have any concerns about any issues of Health & Safety on the church site, please report it by writing it on the Repairs Reporting Sheet on the noticeboard.

Our Parish Groups: We hope you have been able to take a moment to check out the display on the noticeboard. With 21 groups of volunteers and over 50 people already involved, we definitely have a lot to celebrate in our parish community. Over the next couple of months, we will focus on each of the areas in turn starting with *Site Maintenance*. Are there any parishioners who are experienced plumbers, electricians or joiners who would be willing to be included in a list of contractors we could call on to carry out minor repairs to the building. If you are suitably qualified and interested, please speak to Father Christopher. We are also looking to increase the number of people in our Winter Site Team, who help to keep our church and grounds safe and welcoming throughout the winter months. If you would be willing to help, please leave your details on the sheet in the foyer.

Safeguarding Survey - Public Call for Information: The Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) are completing a safeguarding inspection within the Diocese of Salford, and would like to hear the views of as many people as possible regarding their arrangements for safeguarding. Responses will be collected anonymously unless you choose to provide your contact information, and the survey will close at 11:45pm on Friday 16th January 2026. To submit your response, please scan the QR code:



Laudato Si' Centre Volunteer Call-out: Retired Educators: The Diocese of Salford's Environment Team is inviting

retired education staff to volunteer at the Laudato Si' Centre to assist with their successful programme of school visits. Volunteers would support sessions with children from nursery age to Year 11, including activities such as arts and crafts, games, and foraging. To find out more, please email laudatosi@dioceseofsalford.org.uk

Mass for Engaged Couples to be celebrated by Bishop John Arnold: On Saturday 14th February, Bishop John will be celebrating a special Mass for engaged couples across the diocese. The Mass provides couples with an opportunity to seek God's blessing to guide and strengthen them during this time of preparation. Newly-married couples are also invited to receive a blessing in their first year of marriage. The Mass will take place at St Patrick's Church in Collyhurst on Saturday 14th February 2026 at 1:30pm.

Advice as energy bills continue to rise: If you or those in your wider parish community are in need of support with rising energy bills, Caritas Salford has put together some helpful advice on their website. Their energy advice service team can support with free sessions and drop-ins in your area. You can find out more by visiting www.caritassalford.org.uk/energysupport

HYMNBOARD

Entrance: 145 What child is this?
Offertory: 989 Word made flesh.
Communion: 150 The first Nowell & 136 Silent Night
Recessional: 164 Go tell it on the mountain

Please note: Hymns are subject to last minute changes!

December's Collection Thank you for your continued support for our parish. The offertory collection for December, including standing orders and donations made via the card machine, was £3822.52