



Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish Westhoughton

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Salford Roman Catholic Diocesan Trustees Registered Charity Number 250037



DIOCESE OF SALFORD

Sunday 11th January 2026
The Baptism of the Lord
Year A

MASS TIMES THIS WEEK

Saturday	6pm
Sunday	10am
Monday - Thursday	9 am
Friday	10 am

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturday 5.30 – 5.50 pm
and at call

THIS SUNDAY'S MASS

First Reading

Isaiah 42: 1-4,6-7

Behold my servant, in whom my soul delights.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 28: 1-4,9-10

The Lord will bless his people with peace.

Second Reading

Acts 10: 34-38

God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit.

Gospel Acclamation

Cf. Mk9:7

The heavens were opened and the voice of the Father thundered: 'This is my beloved Son; listen to him'.

Gospel

Matthew 3: 13-17

When Jesus was baptised he saw the Spirit of God coming to rest on him.

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 account of the baptism of Jesus in Mark, the earliest gospel, is also the simplest. In Mark the Voice from heaven is addressed to Jesus himself, and there is no sign that others heard it; it is an experience of Jesus: 'You are my Son.' In Matthew, the voice is addressed to the bystanders: 'This is my Son.' This makes the private revelation into a public scene, a declaration that Jesus' work is about to begin. In the same way, our baptism is a public scene, a declaration that we are committed to Christ in his Church—even if we don't remember it! Matthew also records the little dialogue of John's unwillingness to baptize Jesus. Why should Jesus enter into the community of repentance that John was forming? He was no sinner! However, it was a gesture that Jesus was entering fully into the condition of all humanity. He shared fully in human nature, the nature of a fallen humanity. At the outset of his ministry, he must show this, for only so could he redeem the fallen human race. Jesus is not merely passive, for he himself joins with John in making the positive step: 'We must do all that righteousness demands.'

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 18th January, 1st February and 15th February. Everyone is welcome.

Children's Liturgy of the Word: 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:

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 a 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 to begin his public mission.

An older and still meaningful tradition keeps the celebration of Christmas 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, this feast 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 and 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.

Relics of St Carlo Acutis to Visit Diocese of Salford: In January 2026, the relics of St Carlo Acutis will be hosted at two Diocese of Salford churches over five days, welcoming schools, parishioners, and visitors for veneration. Carlo is the first millennial saint, known for his deep faith and use of the internet to log Eucharistic miracles worldwide. He was passionate about spreading the teachings of the Catholic Church up until his death from leukaemia at 15. The relics will be at St Mary's Church, Burnley, from 28-29 January 2026, then at St Patrick's Church, Collyhurst, from 30 January to 1 February 2026. More details will be shared soon with parishes, on the Diocesan website and social media channels.

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: 747 The light of Christ

Offertory: 749 From heaven you came

Communion: 972 Do not be afraid,
629 I am the bread of life

Recessional: 156 Joy to the world

Please note: Hymns are subject to last minute changes!



When Jesus was baptized in the Jordan by his cousin John, it was not just for show. After thirty years preparation this was the decisive moment when he was strengthened by the Holy Spirit for the mission he was about to undertake. As a result of our own baptism we can call upon that same Spirit to strengthen us as we too agree to proclaim the same good news that Jesus brought.