

SUNDAY PLUS

Wake up to love!

Life continues

By Sr Janet Fearn FMDM

Life continues. Yet to board the Circumvesuviana means a train journey which rarely loses sight of Vesuvius, a sleeping volcano, which, one day, will erupt again. Indeed, volcanic activity has formed most of the landscape and coastline of the Bay of Naples.

The AD 79 eruption which destroyed the cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum also preserved them for future generations. In fact, although the archaeological excavations appear huge, they are only a small fraction of the treasures which are still to be revealed.

Centuries of repeated hardship, conflict and the ever-present threat of volcanic eruption have moulded the vibrant, dynamic personality of the people of Naples, who live for the present, constantly remember the past, and walk towards the future. Volcanic soils uniquely flavour food and wines. Countless shops sell statues representing the souls in purgatory,

reminding people to pray for those who have gone before them. Naples and Neapolitans are alive and active – but they know from whence they have come and keep an eye on the future.

Today, the first Sunday of Advent, Jesus reminds us that, one day, the world will end. Yet between then and now, life continues and what is important is to make the most of our time. We face many unknowns, but Jesus is our sure companion and so, with him, we walk in faith and trust, following the path that he lays out for us. We can't change the past. The future is full of uncertainties, but the present moment is God's gift – if we are prepared to accept the challenge.

Sr Janet Fearn is a Franciscan Missionary of the Divine Motherhood.

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Beginning again

By Natasha Pritchard

We have been in ordinary time for a while and perhaps during that time we haven't given ourselves the nudge we need to come out of our ordinary ways. Today, as we enter an extraordinary time, we have an opportunity to begin again and to ask ourselves, how will we make this Advent different?

In today's readings, we are reminded that we are called to love each other and to grow in holiness. We're reminded to stay vigilant and avoid falling into complacency. As St Paul puts it, we are called to lead the kind of life that God wants for us.

The day is approaching when the Lord will come and fulfil his promises. What are the promises you want to make to God today? What is one small way you might grow in holiness this special season?

Natasha Pritchard has worked in Catholic hospital chaplaincy, youth ministry and is now Area Support Chaplain at Methodist Homes.

Father in heaven, may the faith you have given us in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother, and the flame of charity enkindled in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, reawaken in us the blessed hope for the coming of your kingdom.

The Jubilee Prayer

Today: Jeremiah 33:14-16
1 Thessalonians 3:12-4:2
Luke 21:25-28,34-36

Monday: Isaiah 2:1-5
Matthew 8:5-11

Tuesday: Isaiah 11:1-10
Luke 10:21-24

Wednesday: Isaiah 25:6-10
Matthew 15:29-37

Thursday: Isaiah 26:1-6
Matthew 7:21, 24-27

Friday: Isaiah 29:17-24
Matthew 9:27-31

Saturday: Isaiah 30:19-21, 23-26
Matthew 9:35-10:1, 6-8

Next Sunday: Baruch 5:1-9
Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11
Luke 3:1-6

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The Catholic Parish of St Mary & St John Fisher, Denton



Parish Priest, Father Joseph Gee
Parish Sister, Sr Dolores

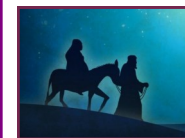
Churches: St Mary's (Our Lady of Sorrows) - Duke St., Denton M34 2AN
St John Fisher - Mancunian Rd., Denton M34 7WS

Office: St Mary's Presbytery, Duke Street, Denton, Manchester M34 2AN.

Tel: 0161 336 2358

Email: rcdenton@outlook.com

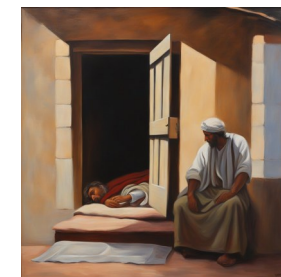
Website: www.stmaryandstjohnfisherparish.co.uk



1st Sunday of Advent 1st December 2024



The Word This Week



Advent opens with a great cry, and a great promise:
“Oh that you would tear the heavens open and come down!” is the cry, of a people who need God. “...The master is coming” is the promise, not to breed fear, but to answer our cry. Advent begins, not with thoughts of the past, with the coming of the Lord we celebrate at Christmas, but with the future, and the promise that He is coming back. We are encouraged to treat every day as the day the Lord will come; we do not do this out of fear for a Master who beats his servants, but out of love of a Master who always treats us with love and mercy. Nevertheless we must always be watchful, because we can grow sleepy and complacent, saying that we can leave this prayer or that confession or the other change in the way we live to tomorrow. Even as we look forward to the tomorrow of the Lord's coming, we must remember that it might be today !

Saints celebrated this week

3 December: Saint Francis Xavier

A friend of St Ignatius Loyola and one of the first members of the 'Company of Jesus'; he preached in India and Japan and died in China in 1552.

4 December: Saint John Damascene

From Damascus (hence his name); a monk, philosopher and theologian, he sprang to the defence of Sacred Art in the Iconoclast crisis of the eighth century.

6 December: Saint Nicholas

Bishop of Myra, in what is now Turkey; he died in the fourth century - in Eastern Europe, “Saint Nicholas” distributes presents to children on this day, in remembrance of his charity and care as a bishop.

7 December: Saint Ambrose

Born around 340, he was a surprising choice to be Bishop of Milan in 374; renowned for his charity and his eloquence, especially against the Arians, it is said that Saint Augustine returned to his faith after hearing Ambrose preach. A great writer of hymns for the liturgy, some of which survive to this day. He died in 397

Mass Times and ‘offered for’ dedications W/C 1st December 2024		
Sunday 1st Dec	Saturday 30th	4pm SJF - <i>Parish</i> 9.30am SJF - <i>Sick & Infirm Clergy</i> 11am StM - <i>Eugene Tucker & Deceased Members of the Italian Community</i>
Monday 2nd	Mass	9.30am StM - <i>Juana Maria Tumini</i>
Tuesday 3rd	No Mass	
Wednesday 4th	Mass	9.30am StM - <i>James McDonald</i>
Thursday 5th	Mass	9.30am SJF - <i>Frank Byrne</i>
Friday 6th	Mass	9.30am StM - <i>Veronica Byrne</i>
Saturday 7th	Mass	4pm SJF
Sunday 8th	Mass	9.30am SJF 11am StM
Saturday & Sunday	Sacrament of Reconciliation	Available 30 minutes prior to the start of Mass

Sacrament of Reconciliation in Advent - Wed 11th December 7.30pm - 8.30pm
Two local priests will join me at **St Mary’s Church** to help prepare us for the celebration of Christ’s birth.

I am also assisting at **Holy Family on Thurs 12th December at 7pm.**

St Joseph’s Reddish on Wednesday 18th at 7.30pm
You are very welcome to receive the sacrament at these churches if the dates are more convenient.

Parish Christmas Fair



Thank you to all who attended, supplied items and helped in any way with our Parish Christmas Fair. The amount raised is around £2800 which is fabulous in the current times. All raffle prizes have been claimed.

Special thanks to Paula and Bob who organised everything and to Mrs Harris and all the staff at St John Fisher for letting us use their school.



Introduction to the New Testament
The next of our monthly study sessions is:-
5th December - The Infancy Narratives



Venue - **St Mary’s Church Hall**
Time - **6.30pm—7.30pm**

Diocesan Synod - Exploration Meetings
Thank you to those who came to our Synod Exploration Meetings. Your input is very much appreciated.



Mass Offerings - Anthony Cummins (LD); Felifack Magnidieu Charnelle(Special Intention); Ellen Delaney (LD)
December Mass Offerings
When all dates are allocated for December we will send Mass requests to other priests so they will be said in December
(Please obtain permission from any living beneficiary of a Mass offering before sending it in.)



Sanctuary Candles *There are no candle dedications this week.*
There are currently no candle dedications allocated in December. This is a good way to do a Christmas remembrance for a loved one. (Forms at back of church)

Do you struggle to find cash for the Offertory Collection?
Since Covid many people are not using cash, so many Parishioners now make a weekly or monthly donation to the Parish via standing order? We can still claim the Gift Aid on the amount and it reduces admin for the office. Please e mail or phone the Parish office if you’d like a standing order form.



Christmas Gifts that make a difference
We have CARITAS and CAFOD Christmas gift booklets at the back of both churches. These alternative gift ideas could make a real difference to families in poverty locally and overseas.
[Will you 'Bee There' this Christmas? | Caritas Salford](#)
[CAFOD World Gifts](#)



Poppy Appeal We’ve received a ‘Thank you’ from The Royal British Legion for a donation of £26.60 which was raised selling Poppies at St John Fisher Church.



Haughton Green Food Bank - Christmas
Thank you to all who give donations of food and cash to the Food Bank. In addition to the usual non – perishable items, if you can, please add a Christmas treat such as mince pies, Christmas puds and cakes, biscuits etc. to your donations. They will be accepting fresh items from 18th December. More details nearer the time.



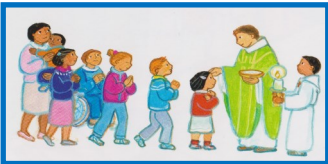
Red Mission Boxes
Any Parishioners who have a red mission box please bring them in to be emptied. The Mill Hill Fathers rely on the money raised from these boxes to finance their missionary work overseas and very much appreciate your support and generosity. Thank you.



Can you find all the words in today’s Gospel?

S	H	P	E	E	L	S	A	R	T	GUARD	AWAKE	ASLEEP
W	M	O	R	E	V	E	N	R	H	ABROAD	HOME	SERVANTS
O	O	E	M	O	H	R	A	I	G	TASK	EVENING	MIDNIGHT
R	G	N	I	N	E	V	E	S	I	DAWN	COCKCROW	KNOW
C	U	P	K	S	E	A	T	Y	N			
K	A	T	O	L	K	N	W	A	D			
C	R	I	L	E	A	T	K	T	I			
O	D	I	M	E	W	S	I	S	M			
C	N	I	R	D	A	O	R	B	A			
G	T	R	E	T	S	A	M	O	T			





Thank you to the families now bringing their children to the Sacramental Programme. Please show this little prayer to them.
[A Prayer for Children preparing to receive their First Holy Communion.](#)
Jesus, I know that you love me. Prepare my heart so that I can receive you soon!

God of all people, you give us the care of the whole world and everyone in it. Like Jesus, may we be committed totally to you and to everyone in generous love and dedicated service. May we find joy and happiness in living our lives in service of others. Amen.

Faith in Action (FIA) Programme
Participants looking to complete their FIA award need to demonstrate that they are contributing to the Parish in various ways (Parish Hours). Support for activities at **St Mary’s** is provided at an FIA meeting for **silver and gold participants every 2nd Sunday** of the month and **all FIA participants every 3rd Sunday** of the month at the end of 11:00am Mass.. A meeting for **all participants who attend Mass at St John Fisher** is scheduled to take place **after 4pm Mass on the Saturday** for the first Sunday of the month. Current meetings at St Mary’s are for the organisation, preparation and participation in the FIA children’s led Mass which takes place on the 4th (or last) Sunday of every month.



Salford Diocese Information

Laudato Si’ Centre - Advent Wreath Workshop
Join the Diocese of Salford’s Laudato Si’ Centre team on **Friday 6 December** for the return of its Advent Wreath Workshop, where you will have the opportunity to learn how to create your own wreath from natural materials under the guidance of our skilled team. Find out more and book at <https://laudatosicentre.org.uk/events/wreath-workshop>

Diocesan Mass for Young Adults Our Diocesan Mass for Young Adults returns to St Augustine’s in Manchester next month with a festive feel! Join us at **5.30pm on Sunday 8 December** as we gather together for Mass before enjoying some seasonal treats and the return of our series of talks exploring the Catholic faith. All are welcome!

Carol Services The Diocese of Salford is delighted to announce the return of its Salford Schools Singing Programme (SSP) Carol Services, which will take place in churches across the diocese this December. For a full list of dates and locations for our services, please visit <https://dioceseofsalford.org.uk/ssp-carol-services-24/>

Diocesan Pilgrimage to Walsingham 2025 Our diocesan pilgrimage office is now taking bookings for its next annual pilgrimage to Walsingham. Next year’s pilgrimage will take place on **Saturday 3 May 2025**, with an option to extend your visit by staying overnight on Friday 2 May. For more information, prices, and details on how to book, please visit <https://dioceseofsalford.org.uk/walsingham-pilgrimage-2025> or call 0161 817 2209.

A Call to Lead - A Post-Confirmation Programme A new post-confirmation programme has been developed by Salford Youth Ministry and the Young Christian Workers Movement to bridge the gap between confirmation and adult formation, with the aim of helping young people to grow in faith and become active leaders of the parish community. For more information about the programme, please visit <https://dioceseofsalford.org.uk/a-call-to-lead>

Caritas driver Caritas Salford, our diocesan charity that supports people across Greater Manchester and Lancashire, is in urgent need of the support of a volunteer van driver. Van drivers are vital to Caritas services and are essential to their day-to-day running. If you can drive, and have a few hours to spare each week, then please contact their volunteer coordinator Matt on m.yates@caritassalford.org.uk or visit www.caritassalford.org.uk/volunteer

Job Vacancies—Find out more and apply at <https://dioceseofsalford.org.uk/news/vacancies>