

SUNDAY PLUS

Families of hope

Every family has its own dynamic: in Nazareth, one could imagine, Joseph the carpenter's family would be well-known and respected. But nothing special is recorded of them by the Evangelist, apart from this dramatic story of their beloved son Jesus getting lost for three days on the annual Passover trip to Jerusalem.

If you've ever lost a child for even a few minutes you will know how desperate a feeling that is. No doubt Mary and Joseph had been lulled into a false sense of security by the habits of preceding years: he was obviously in the company of friends and neighbours.

People travelled in caravans for safety through this Roman-occupied territory with its possible dangers from robbers or wild beasts. Jerusalem, also, was a crowded city, full of visitors for the Passover. Mary and Joseph must have been sick at heart.

Except that when they eventually found him, intelligently discussing

Family dynamics

By Mary Bell

the Scriptures with the learned doctors in the Temple, he did not immediately show remorse but, with the recognisable confidence of a teenager, asked why they were looking for him, as if they should know his mission.

If anyone ever doubted the humanity of Jesus this incident confirms it. Although he feels the pressure of his calling, he is not yet a mature adult. However, he returns with them obediently to Nazareth and is obviously a good and diligent son.

And Mary waits in hope, storing away all that she knows about her son, Jesus the Messiah, as he grows to manhood

Following many years in the classroom, retired teacher and Head of RE, Mary Bell now has time to enjoy the beauties of the natural world around her.



Rooted in love

By Natalie Claveria

The coming together of families at Christmas can bring both delight and despair. Of course, families are made up of all different characters and personalities, some that gel like wine and cheese and others like oil and water. But each of these experiences provides us with the rich tapestry of family life. As St Teresa of Calcutta commented, "If you want to bring happiness to the whole world, go home and love your family." Eloquently, Mother Teresa reminds us of the importance of our family and that this

coming together is a smaller version of our church, our local community, our world. To love our family truly and sincerely is an act we can all make today, and one that can change the world. All families are rooted in love, a divine love that ties us together through life's up and downs. We are all reminded today we are children of God. We belong to God's family, alongside Mary, Joseph and Jesus. As we grow together with our own family and in God's, we become, like Jesus, filled with wisdom and understanding.

In addition to being a busy mum and active in her parish, Natalie Claveria is also the Head of Sales, Distribution & Customer Experience for Redemptorist Publications.

The family remains the basic unit of society and the first school in which children learn the human, spiritual and moral values which enable them to be a beacon of goodness, integrity and justice in our communities."

Pope Francis

May our house shelter our life.
When we come home here,
May all the weight of the world
Fall from our shoulders.
May our hearts be tranquil here,
Blessed by peace the world cannot give.

John O'Donohue

Jubilee 2025

Jubilees in history

In ancient Judaism, the Jubilee Year was celebrated every fifty years, and was a time of particular religious devotion and rest. The Mosaic Law prescribed that slaves should be freed and land returned to its former owners. The first Christian Jubilee was instigated by Pope Boniface VIII in 1300. Since then, the frequency of jubilee celebrations has ranged from every 100 years to today's practice of every 25.

Jubilee 2025 is the twenty-seventh Holy Year and the second jubilee to be declared by Pope Francis. The first celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the end of Vatican II and was dedicated to mercy.

"For the first time a 'door of mercy' was opened in the world's cathedrals, sanctuaries, hospitals and prisons. For the occasion, the Pope established a group of priests known as Missionaries of Mercy to whom he entrusted the power to forgive sins usually reserved to the Holy Father."

(www.jubilaum2025.va)



Today: 1 Samuel 1: 20-22, 24-28
1 John 3: 1-2, 21-24
Luke 2: 41-52

Monday: 1 John 2: 12-17
Luke 2: 36-40

Tuesday: 1 John 2: 18-21
John 1: 1-18

Wednesday: Numbers 6: 22-27
Galatians 4: 4-7
Luke 2: 16-21

Thursday: 1 John 2: 29 - 3: 6
John 1: 29-34

Friday: 1 John 3: 7-10
John 1: 35-42

Saturday: 1 John 3: 11-21
John 1: 43-51

Next Sunday: Isaiah 60: 1-6
Ephesians 3: 2-3, 5-6

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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

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4th Sunday of Advent & Christmastide 22nd December 2024 - 4th January 2025



Mass Times and 'offered for' dedications Two weeks commencing 22nd December 2024

Sunday 22nd	Saturday 21st	4pm SJF - <i>Parish</i> 9.30am SJF - <i>Dec'd Lally Family</i> 11am StM <i>Dec'd Mitchell Family</i>
Monday 23rd	Mass	9.30am StM <i>Dec'd Coriam Family</i>
Tuesday 24th The Nativity of the Lord	First Mass of Christmas	Carols 4.30pm St Mary's 5pm St Mary's - <i>Parish</i>
Wednesday 25th The Nativity of the Lord	Christmas Masses	9.30am SJF - <i>Peter Flood</i> 11am StM - <i>Maureen Griffiths</i>
Thursday 26th	Mass	9.30am SJF - <i>Altar Servers</i>
Friday 27th	No Mass	
Saturday 28th	Vigil Mass	4pm SJF - <i>George Davies</i>
Sunday 29th	Masses	9.30am SJF - <i>Parish</i> 11am StM - <i>Dr Noel Galvin</i>
Monday 30th	Mass	9.30am StM - <i>Christina Howley</i>
Tuesday 31st	No Mass	
Wednesday 1st Jan	Mass <i>Pls note later time</i>	10am StM <i>Sick & Infirm Clergy</i>
Thursday 2nd	Mass	9.30am SJF - <i>Dr Joan Hill</i>
Friday 3rd		9.30am St Mary's -
Saturday 4th	Vigil Mass	4pm SJF

Sacrament of Reconciliation - 30 minutes prior to the start of Mass

Mass Offerings - Christmas Remembrance - Albert & Winnie Duke and Nellie & Terry McGrath; Margaret Hourihane; Cornelius Hourihane; Fr Michael Kelly (A); Maureen Griffiths (LD); Rosaleen Bennett (Recovery of Good Health); William Lister (LD); Doreen Jackson (A); Ernie Stokes (BM); Dr Joan Hill (LD)

(Please obtain permission from any living beneficiary of a Mass offering before sending it in.)

Altar Prayer Candles W/C 22nd December

The Sanctuary	Maureen Griffiths RIP
Sacred Heart	Bernie & Stephen T -Christmas Blessings
Our Lady	Cecilia - Christmas Blessings

Altar Prayer Candles W/C 29th December

The Sanctuary	Cecelia Addy
Sacred Heart	Debbie & Adele - New Year Blessings
Our Lady	Johanna Monaghan

Recent deaths in our Parish

Please pray for the repose of the soul of **Dr Joan Hill**

Our condolences go to her family and friends. May she rest in peace.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of **Maureen Griffiths**.

Our condolences go to her family and friends. May she rest in peace.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of **William (Bill) Lister**.

Our condolences go to his family and friends. May he rest in peace.



Thank you to everyone for all the support you've given us throughout the year and for the lovely cards and generous gifts. We wish you and your families A Happy and Holy Christmas and Blessings in the New Year. *Fr Joe & Sister Dolores*



Haughton Green Food Bank -Christmas Appeal

Thank you to all who donated extra items and cash for the food bank. Your support is very much appreciated.



Parish Administrator - Part Time

We are looking to recruit a suitable person to fill the role here in the Parish. The full job description and application is on the link below or see Fr Joe to find out more/get a copy. In brief it is 9 hours per week-Wednesday, Thursday & Friday 9.30am-12.30pm.

[Vacancies - Roman Catholic Diocese of Salford](#)

Olivia's Cake Sale

Thank you to all who bought cakes to raise funds for Olivia's trip to Cambodia next year. £234 was raised.

How do I arrange a Sacrament of the Sick Visit?

When you need to organise a visit for the Sacrament of the Sick, please see Fr Joe or telephone the office. If you cannot contact Father Joe and a visit is urgent please contact a neighbouring Parish Priest at Holy Family, St Josephs Reddish, or Sacred Heart Gorton.

Hospital Chaplaincy

If you or a relative needs a hospital visit at a hospital which is part of the **Manchester Foundation Trust including The Christie**, you must now request a visit directly from the Roman Catholic Priest Chaplain on: **0161 276 8792**

For **Tameside Hospital** contact **0161 922 6000** (main switchboard) and request a visit from the on call Roman Catholic priest.

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

H	A	E	L	H	A	D	U	J	A	MARY	JUDAH	ZECHARIAH
E	A	T	O	T	M	B	O	W	D	ELIZABETH	CHILD	LEAPT
L	B	I	M	E	O	Y	J	R	E	WOMB	BLESSED	FRUIT
I	L	U	R	B	M	O	W	A	S	MOTHER	JOY	PROMISE
Z	E	R	O	A	L	A	T	H	S			
A	S	F	E	Z	H	E	R	C	E			
B	E	D	L	I	H	C	O	Y	L			
T	P	A	E	L	O	T	E	A	B			
M	O	T	H	E	R	S	O	Z	L			
D	E	S	I	M	O	R	P	M	E			



Pilgrims of Hope Jubilee in our Diocese

Pope Francis has declared that the year **2025** will be a **Holy Year of Jubilee for the Catholic Church**, an event that takes place once every 25 years and offers the faithful an opportunity to renew their relationship with God, each other, and all of creation. Over the coming months, there will be plenty of opportunities for you to observe this special year of grace in our own diocese. To find out more about the Jubilee and how to get involved, please visit <https://dioceseofsalford.org.uk/news/jubilee-2025/>



Opening Mass for the Pilgrims of Hope Jubilee

Pope Francis has invited dioceses across the world to unite in prayer as we begin the 2025 "Pilgrims of Hope" Jubilee. Our diocese will be marking the start of the Jubilee with a Mass, celebrated by Bishop John, on

Sunday 29th December at 2pm at Salford Cathedral's Temporary Church. All are welcome to join us as we mark the start of this special year of grace.

Salford Diocese Information

Pilgrims of Hope Jubilee Mass celebrated by Bishop John, on **Sunday 29th December at 2pm** at Salford Cathedral's Temporary Church. All welcome **Christmas Tree Recycling** Our Laudato Si' Centre is collecting used Christmas trees. Funds raised for local charities and chippings used at the centre Details: <https://dioceseofsalford.org.uk/christmas-tree-recycling-24>

Crisis support over the Christmas period

Caritas Salford has put together an information page on their website which includes information on when their services are open, as well as signposting to other organisations who might also be able to support those in urgent need. You can read more here: www.caritassalford.org.uk/service-christmas-opening-times/

Advice as energy bills continue to rise Caritas Salford has put together some helpful advice on their website. <https://www.caritassalford.org.uk/fuel-poverty-challenges/> also details on the website page on how to arrange a session with their energy advice service team.

Pilgrims of Hope and A Popular History of the Diocese of Salford -Two new books written by Monsignor John Allen are raising funds for Caritas Salford. www.caritassalford.org.uk/pilgrimbook and www.caritassalford.org.uk/

4th Sunday of Advent • Divine Office Week IV • Year C

SUNDAY PLUS

Hold on to hope

"Hope loves what will be"

By Paul Higginson

Pope Francis is fond of quoting the poem by French writer Charles Peguy who describes Faith, Hope and Charity as three sisters who walk together. Although Hope is the little sister, she leads the others and makes them all walk together: "Because Faith only sees what exists. And Charity only loves what exists. But Hope loves what will be."

In today's Gospel Elizabeth's baby leaps with joy in her womb when Mary arrives at her home. The future John the Baptist is filled with the joyful hope of what will be. Take time today to contemplate the hope that we all place in that tiny baby, born into poverty, far from home, sharing a stable with farmyard animals.

God enters our world, not as a distant heavenly ruler but as a weak and vulnerable infant. He embraces the messy reality of our world – a declaration of hope as well as love.



As Mary gazed at her new baby, her heart filled with Faith and Charity, she must also have recognised the little sister Hope "who loves what will be". Jesus was to become the hope of the world, the Saviour, our Emmanuel. Nothing will ever be the same again. From now on we will glimpse Christ in everyone and everything if we have eyes to see and ears to hear. Spend time with Mary at the crib this Christmas as we prepare for the Jubilee Year of Hope and let the child Jesus stir your soul with the promise of new life with him.

Paul Higginson is a retired teacher and author of Doing Christianity: How religion is about what you do, not what you believe.

We're so close...

By Natasha Pritchard

Hidden away in darkness, the baby in Elizabeth's womb recognises the light outside. He leaps in joyful acknowledgement of the Lord, completely alert to his presence. This is how close we are to encountering Jesus and yet we are still hidden away, awaiting the light of Christmas Day. We are not yet experiencing the joy of the baby in the womb, but rather the anticipation of Mary and Elizabeth.

Would we leap for joy if we met Christ today? In the midst of our worries about shopping to be done, presents to be wrapped and meals to be prepared, we might not notice him. It's not too late to experience the reverence and awe of the Advent season, as we prepare for the joy of Christmas. Let us acknowledge with joy the tiny bundle of light which will soon enter the darkness of our world.

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

Don't let anyone rob you of hope.

Pope Francis



Loving Lord, may this Christmas be a time of hope for everyone I know and love, and also for people whom I may never meet but are equally precious to you. 🙏 Amen.

22 December 2024

Jubilee 2025

24 December: Opening of the Holy Door of Saint Peter's Basilica

All the four papal basilicas in Rome have a Holy Door which is bricked up from the inside and only opened during Jubilee years. On the first day of the Holy Year, the Pope strikes the brick wall with a hammer and then opens the door to allow pilgrims to enter. He will also close the door at the end of the Jubilee Year. The tradition of the opening and closing of the Holy Door, which represents Jesus, the Good Shepherd and gate of the sheepfold, can be traced back as far as the fifteenth century.

In 2015, Pope Francis allowed for a Holy Door in every diocese and prison globally, thus allowing access to people who couldn't travel to Rome.

The Jubilee of Hope will begin in December 2024 when Pope Francis opens the Holy Door in St Peter's Basilica, closing the doors and the Jubilee on the feast of the Epiphany in 2026.

Pope Francis

Today: Micah 5:1-4 Hebrews 10:5-10 Luke 1:39-45	Monday: Malachi 3:1-4 23-24 Luke 1:57-66	Tuesday: 2 Samuel 7:1-5 8-12, 14, 16 Luke 1:67-79	Wednesday: Vigil Mass: Isaiah 62:1-5 Acts 13:16-17, 22-25 Matthew 1:1-25	Mass During the Night: Isaiah 9:1-7 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-14	Dawn Mass: Isaiah 62:11-12 Titus 3:4-7 Luke 2:15-20	Thursday: Acts 6:9-10; 7:54 -8:1 Matthew 10:17-22	Friday: 1 John 1:1-4 John 20:12-8	Saturday: 1 John 1:5-2:2 Matthew 2:13-18	Next Sunday: 1 Samuel 1:20-22, 24-28 1 John 3:1-2, 21-24 Gospel: Luke 24:1-32
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