

SUNDAY PLUS

Mission of hope

Defending the Jesus story

By Fr Denis McBride C.Ss.R.

On the hot summer night of 18 July in the year AD 64, a fire broke out in the arcade of shops surrounding the Circus Maximus, Rome's chariot stadium. The flames raged for nine days before they came under control. After the desolation, two-thirds of the imperial city lay in ruins.

When the fire began, the emperor Nero was miles away, at the cooler coastal resort at Anzio. Well aware of his growing unpopularity among the people and the rumours spread by the surviving

homeless that he started the fire, Nero sought to divert suspicion away from himself, so he looked for victims to blame. Thus began the first great persecution of Christians. The two principal apostles of the emerging church, Peter and Paul, were martyred in this persecution.

While the Church was adapting to its illegal status within the Roman Empire, the first great defence of Christianity was written – the two-volume work of

the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles. As we hear in today's Gospel, Luke dedicates his defence to an unknown high Roman official, his excellency Theophilus. Luke will defend Christianity against the accusations of the Romans.

Luke will portray the founder of Christianity as a figure of nobility, grace and charm; a man who breathed kindness and graciousness. Luke will show that Jesus and his followers were found innocent by the representatives of the Roman law: Pilate declares three times that Jesus is innocent of the charges brought against him. As you listen to Luke's Gospel this year, listen to his great defence of Christianity against the charge of the Roman authorities.

Fr Denis McBride's many books, CDs and DVDs are available from Redemptorist Publications, www.rpbbooks.co.uk.



Jubilee 2025 The Jubilee Pilgrimage

The Jubilee calls for us to set out on a journey and to cross boundaries. When we travel, we do not only change place physically, but we also change ourselves. Hence, it is important to prepare ourselves well, to plan the route, and learn about the destination. In this sense, the Jubilee pilgrimage begins before the start of the journey itself: the starting point is the decision to set out...

The journey takes place gradually: there are various routes to choose from and

places to discover; it is made up of particular sets of circumstances, moments of catechesis, sacred rites and liturgies. Along the way our travelling companions enrich us with new ways of understanding things and fresh perspectives... Pilgrimage is an experience of conversion, of transforming one's very being to conform it to the holiness of God. During the pilgrimage, one also shares in the experience of those who, for various reasons, are forced to leave their homelands to seek a better life for themselves and their family.

Dicastery for Evangelisation

Dearest Lord, you know my weaknesses and that I am not your greatest witness. Help me to celebrate your presence in my life and to tell others of your goodness. Amen.

On the margins

By Camilla Harrison

Jesus teaches us to care for those on the margins of society – in his time, the poor, the sick and the despised. He reached out to these people with his love.

Who are the marginalised in twenty-first-century Britain?

Those in loving families and caring communities can thrive at the centre of a phalanx of love, knowing what it is to be valued and needed. Without these vital elements of life, we are vulnerable

to despair. Mother Teresa said that the worst human disease, far worse than poverty, was loneliness.

The migrant worker, far from home, may feel at the margins of our society. So, too, may the young person emerging from the care system, with neither family nor community to protect them or to guide them into meaningful occupation.

Thankfully, none of us is outside the reach of God's love. But if we lack the warmth of human compassion at the centre of our lives, we know what it is to be marginalised.

Camilla Harrison was the head of an RE department at a comprehensive school for twenty years and the writer of two of the Family Walks series of books.

Today: Nehemiah 8:2-6, 8-10; 1 Corinthians 12:12-30; Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21
Monday: Hebrews 9:15, 24-28; Mark 3:22-30
Tuesday: Hebrews 10:1-10; Mark 3:31-35
Wednesday: Hebrews 10:11-18; Mark 4:1-20
Thursday: Hebrews 10:19-25; Mark 4:21-25
Friday: Hebrews 10:32-39; Mark 4:26-34
Saturday: Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19; Mark 4:35-41
Next Sunday: Malachi 3:1-4; Hebrews 2:14-18; Luke 2:22-40

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www.stmaryandstjohnfisherparish.co.uk



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

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2nd & 3rd Sunday of Ordinary Time

19th January - 1st February 2025

Mass Times and 'offered for' dedications

Two weeks commencing 19th January 2025

Sunday 19th	Saturday 18th	4pm SJF - <i>Mary Angela James</i> 9.30am SJF - <i>Parish</i> 11am StM - <i>Joan & Frank Wynne</i>
Monday 20th	Mass	9.30am StM -
Tuesday 21st	No Mass	
Wednesday 22nd	Mass	9.30am StM - <i>Dec'd members of Wynne/Conlan Families</i>
Thursday 23rd	Requiem Mass	10am StM - Pam Slater
Friday 24th	Mass	9.30am StM - <i>Thomas Lally</i>
Saturday 25th	Mass	4pm SJF - <i>Forgotten Souls</i>
Sunday 26th	Masses	9.30am SJF - <i>Frances Mulcahy</i> 11am StM - <i>Parish</i>
Monday 27th	Requiem Mass	9.30am StM - Thomas Lally
Tuesday 28th	Funeral Service	10.30am StM - Geoffrey Parsons
Wednesday 29th	Mass	9.30am StM - <i>Joan Berry</i>
Thursday 30th	Mass	9.30am SJF - <i>60th Birthday Wishes</i>
Friday 31st	Mass	9.30am StM - <i>Branner Family</i>
Saturday 1st Feb	Mass	4pm SJF - <i>Parish</i>

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

Recent deaths in our Parish

Please pray for the repose of the soul of **Pam Slater**
Our condolences go to her family and friends. Her Requiem Mass takes place at **St Mary's - Thursday 23rd January at 10am**
May she rest in peace.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of **Tom Lally**
Our condolences go to his family and friends. His Requiem Mass takes place at **St Mary's - Monday 27th January at 10.30am**
May she rest in peace.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of **Geoffrey Parsons**
Our condolences go to his family and friends. His Funeral Service takes place at **St Mary's - Tuesday 28th January at 10.30am**
May he rest in peace.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of **Dr Joan Hill**
Our condolences go to her family and friends. Her Requiem Mass takes place at **St John Fisher - Monday 3rd February at 10.30am**

Mass Offerings - Barry Hall (LD) x 4; ; Branner Family; Joan Berry (BM); William (Bill) Lister (LD); Thomas Lally (LD); 60th Birthday Wishes; Agnes Richmond (A); Forgotten Souls; John Conole; Thanksgiving for Generosity Received; Patrick Dunne (LD); Angela Cuomo Coppola (BM 21/1)

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

Faith in Action Meeting - Wednesday 22nd January
6:30pm - 8:00pm



This is our first Faith in Action meeting of 2025 and is open to **all young parishioners from age 11 to 18**. At this meeting, we would particularly like to extend a warm invitation to all our young people who have been **Confirmed**, as we are really lucky to have Lorraine Leonard, diocesan youth ministry lead, attend to speak about an exciting new opportunity for all our confirmed young people. Our Faith in Action meetings allow our youth to play an integral role in service both during mass and in our wider parish. Everyone aged 11 to 18 is welcome! If you would like any further details please see Claire Cull at the end of 11am Sunday mass at St Mary's.

Parish Administrator - Closing date 20/1

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](#)

Introduction to the New Testament
The next of our monthly study sessions :-

Thursday 23rd January -

(The Synoptic Problem) & Synoptic Gospels

Thursday 13th February -

Synoptic Gospels—Parables & Miracles!

Venue - St Mary's Church Hall
Time - 6.30pm - 7.30pm

Sanctuary Candles

There are no candle dedications this week.

You can dedicate one of the candles at St Mary's in loving memory, in thanksgiving, or for special Intentions. (You must get permission from any living beneficiary of a dedication).

The dedication is printed and placed on the altar for the week. Parishioners attending Mass can then pray for your intention. After the dedication has been displayed for the week you can take the printed sheet to keep if you wish. When you dedicate a candle, your donation helps us fund the many candles we use in church. Thank you! Forms for Masses and Candles are at the back of church.

Donations Acknowledged

Francis House and **Caritas** have thanked us for £91.49 and £22.11 sent to them in December. Please see notice boards for the letters. Thank you!

Thank you! It's my last time putting our newsletter together and I'd like to thank all who have helped me in my role as Parish Administrator and all those volunteers who I've seen contributing so much to our Parish! God Bless! *Denise*

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**.



There are a few copies of our guide to **Celebrating The Jubilee of Hope** booklet at the back of church. Please only take one if you can't access the website copy on the diocesan website www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/jubilee-booklet

[Pilgrims of Hope Jubilee Booklet](#)

Salford Diocese Information

Marriage Course

The Parish of Our Lady's in Moss Side is set to hold a Marriage Course, taking place next month. The course will last four weeks, taking place on the four Sundays of February, beginning at 3pm. To find out more or register, please call the parish on 0161 226 1730.

Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes Bookings are now being taken for the 2025 Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes. This year's pilgrimage will take place between 31st July and 6th August. For more information on how to book as a pilgrim or register as a volunteer, please visit <https://www.salfordlourdes.co.uk>

Jubilee Resources Want to learn more about our Pilgrims of Hope Jubilee? Want to find out how we're observing the Holy Year in our diocese? The Diocese of Salford's website has a range of information to accompany you this Jubilee Year, with information on our Designated Churches, upcoming pilgrimages, and a range of different resources. Explore more at <https://dioceseofsalford.org.uk/news/jubilee-2025>

Caritas Sunday - 26 January. This annual occasion is a great opportunity to celebrate work of our diocesan charity, Caritas Diocese of Salford. To find out more about the work of Caritas Salford and how you can get involved, please visit <https://www.caritassalford.org.uk/campaign/caritas-sunday/>. Please keep our charity in your prayers.

Accessible Prayer Walk

The Diocese of Salford's Laudato Si' Centre is teaming up with diocesan charity Caritas Salford to host an accessible prayer walk. The session offers an opportunity to explore the beautiful, accessible grounds of the Laudato Si' Centre along with a peaceful prayer reflection, taking place between 10 and 11.30am on **Friday 31 January**. Find out more and register by emailing laudato-si@dioceseofsalford.org.uk

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time • Peace Day (E&W) • Divine Office Week II • Year C

19 January 2025

SUNDAY PLUS

Spread hope

"From his fulness..."

By Fr Denis McBride C.Ss.R.



The world tells us to seek success, power and money; God tells us to seek humility, service and love.

Pope Francis

Bountiful generosity

By Neil Foley

The story of the wedding feast at Cana is so familiar to most of us that we can be at risk of glossing over it. We hear the words of a miracle taking place and of Mary prompting her son into action. But maybe we see this in a different time or for other people. Sometimes we miss the most important part of this miracle – the sheer generosity of God. There were

six stone water jars holding up to thirty gallons each. Jesus created what today would be 900 bottles of wine! Can you imagine holding a party and having 900 bottles of wine? It would be completely over the top! Yet this is God's creative and redeeming power, a power that is so over the top it provides everything we need and a love that has no end. And this is what is at the heart of a Jubilee Year, where faith, hope and love abound.

Neil Foley is from Wexford, Ireland, where he lives with his wife, Helen, and twin girls, Zélie and Martha. He works full-time as an environmental scientist but is also a lay missionary with the Redemptorists, a retreat facilitator and a spiritual writer.

I recently officiated at the wedding of a young couple who felt they somehow knew me better than they knew the new parish priest. I readily obliged and the service went exactly as planned. The trouble started at the reception when, after much wine had been consumed, a fight broke out involving several people from both families and was only stopped when the mothers of the bride and groom stood on a table together and screamed for quiet. In the silence that followed, they jauntily descended and ordered drinks for everyone.

The danger at this wedding was not that the group were running out of wine but some guests were running out of respect and courtesy.

This was reversed, thanks to the authority of two brave mothers. At the wedding feast in Cana, it is the authority of the mother of Jesus that leads towards the solution of the lack of wine when she instructs the servants: "Do whatever he tells you." The steward is astonished at the quality of the water turned into wine – not the plonk you might suspect to be served at this point, but gallons of the choicest wine.

This illustrates a beautiful point in John's Prologue: "From his fulness we have all received, grace upon grace." That includes all of us.

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Jubilee 2025

Friday 24 – Sunday 26 January:
Jubilee of the World of Communication

"Emails, text messages, social networks and chats can also be fully human forms of communication. It is not technology which determines whether or not communication is authentic, but rather the human heart and our capacity to use wisely the means at our disposal. Social networks can facilitate relationships and promote the good of society, but they can also lead to further polarisation and division between individuals and groups. The digital world is a public square, a meeting-place

where we can either encourage or demean one another, engage in a meaningful discussion or unfair attacks. I pray that this Jubilee Year, lived in mercy, may open us to even more fervent dialogue so that we might know and understand one another better; and that it may eliminate every form of closed-mindedness and disrespect, and drive out every form of violence and discriminations (Misericordiae Vultus, 23)."

Pope Francis, Message for the 50th World Communications Day, 2016

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Amen.

Today: Isaiah 62:1-5 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 John 2:1-11	Monday: 1 Samuel 1:1-8 Mark 1:14-20	Tuesday: 1 Samuel 1:9-20 Mark 1:21-28	Wednesday: 1 Samuel 3:1-10, 19-20 Mark 1:29-39	Thursday: 1 Samuel 4:1-11 Mark 1:40-45	Friday: 1 Samuel 8:4-7, 10-22 Mark 2:1-12	Saturday: Acts 22:3-16 or 9:1-22 Mark 16:15-18	Next Sunday: Nehemiah 8:2-6, 8-10 1 Corinthians 12:12-30 Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21
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