

Follow the way

SUNDAY *Plus*

14 DECEMBER 2025

3rd Sunday of Advent **Divine Office Week III** Year A

Teach me your ways

Teach me your way of looking at people:
as you glanced at Peter after his denial,
as you penetrated the fears of the rich young man
and the hearts of your disciples.

I would like to meet you as you really are,
since your image changes those with whom
you come into contact.

Remember John the Baptist's first meeting with you?
And the centurion's feeling of unworthiness?
And the amazement of all those who saw miracles
and other wonders?

How you impressed your disciples,
the rabble in the Garden of Olives,
Pilate and his wife
and the centurion at the foot of the cross...

I would like to hear and be impressed
by your manner of speaking,
listening, for example, to your discourse
in the synagogue in Capernaum
or the Sermon on the Mount where your audience
felt you "taught as one who has authority."

Pedro Arrupe SJ, Hearts on Fire: praying with Jesuits

I am an Augustinian, a son of St Augustine, who once
said, "With you I am a Christian, and for you I am a
bishop." In this sense, all of us can journey together
toward the homeland that God has prepared for us.

Pope Leo

Christmas tree legends

Legend says that one Christmas
Eve, in a forest in Germany, a poor
forester and his family huddled by
their log fire, trying to stay warm. A
small boy, bitterly cold, alone and
lost, knocked at their front door.
There was very little to spare, but
the family made space beside the
fire as the child gulped down a bowl
of hot broth. Soon it was bedtime.
Very early next morning, Christmas
Day, singing angels woke the
family from their sleep. They then

discovered that their young
visitor was the Boy Jesus. In
thanks for their hospitality,
Jesus gave the forester and his
family a freshly cut branch from
a fir tree – and thus began the
custom of having a Christmas
tree in the home.

Another legend tells that
the Boy Jesus found a poor
family who could not afford to
decorate their Christmas tree.
He solved their problem
by taking some spiders'
webs and changing
them into silver thread
– the first tinsel.



Jesus at the Sermon on the Mount by August Müller (1923). Renata Sedmakova / Shutterstock.com

Loving Lord, we'll soon be celebrating the joy of Christmas. Help me
to make it a meaningful celebration for the people around me. Help
me to spread your love.  Amen.

Jubilee 2025: Pilgrims of Hope

Remember young people

Signs of hope are also needed by those who
are the very embodiment of hope, namely,
the young. Sadly, they often see their dreams
and aspirations frustrated. We must not
disappoint them, for the future depends on their
enthusiasm. It is gratifying to see the energy
they demonstrate, for example, by rolling up
their sleeves and volunteering to help when
disasters strike and people are in need. Yet it is
sad to see young people who are without hope,
who face an uncertain and unpromising future,
who lack employment or job security or realistic
prospects after finishing school. Without the
hope that their dreams can come true, they will
inevitably grow discouraged and listless... With
renewed passion, let us demonstrate care and
concern for adolescents, students and young
couples, the rising generation. Let us draw close
to the young, for they are the joy and hope of the
Church and of the world!

Pope Francis, Spes non confundit, 12



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READINGS

Today:
Isaiah 35:1-6, 10
James 5:7-10
Matthew 11:2-11

Monday:
Numbers 24:2-7,
15-17
Matthew 21:23-27

Tuesday:
Genesis 49:2, 8-10
Matthew 1:1-17

Wednesday:
Jeremiah 23:5-8
Matthew 1:18-24

Thursday:
Judges 13:2-7, 24-25
Luke 1:5-25

Friday:
Isaiah 7:10-14
Luke 1:26-38

Saturday:
Song of Songs 2:8-14
Luke 1:39-45

Next Sunday:
Isaiah 7:10-14
Romans 1:1-7
Matthew 1:18-24



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3rd Sunday of Advent 14th December 2025

The Word This Week

This Sunday is called "Gaudete" Sunday – "Rejoice Sunday". This comes from the readings we hear today, and it underlines an important point. In the Gospel, we hear John the Baptist telling different groups what to do - they must repent, and change their lives. We might think of this as a rather joyless thing - something which is hard and unrewarding. The message of this Sunday is that repentance and changing our lives to welcome Jesus is something richly joyful. When we are planning to welcome anyone we love to our homes, we set about cleaning and preparing for their visit with enthusiasm - nothing is too much trouble for someone we care for greatly. Even scrubbing the bath or polishing the furniture can be a happy and joyful thing! The message of this Sunday is that preparing to welcome the Lord - even though it may involve hard work - is something utterly joyful, because of our love for Him, and His love for us



www.stmaryandstjohnfisherparish.co.uk

Mass Times 14th December 2025		
Sunday 14th	Vigil -Saturday 13th Sunday Morning	4pm - Teresa Mitchell (A) 11am - Parish
Monday 15th	Mass	9.30am –Mrs Ruane & Family
Tuesday 16th	No Mas	
Wednesday 17th	Mass	10am –Requiem Mass John Walsh 6.30pm Faith in Action film night
Thursday 18th	Mass	6pm Exposition 6.30pm– Mary Keaveney
Friday 19th	Mass	9.30 - James McDonald (A)
Saturday 20th Sunday 21st	Vigil Mass	4pm—Paul McDonald (RIP) 11am – Parish
Saturday & Sunday	Sacrament of Reconciliation	Available 30 minutes prior to the start of Mass

Mass Offerings :- These Masses will be offered by **Fr Laurence Gambella**, on behalf of the Parish:-
Tom Lally

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

Altar Prayer Candles W/C 14th December 2025	
The Sanctuary	
Sacred Heart	
Our Lady	Anthony Scanlon

Vigil Mass; 4pm St Mary’s, Denton ; 5pm St Josephs, Reddish; and 6.30pm Holy Family, Dane Bank

Sunday Morning; 9am St Joseph’s, Reddish; 10am Holy Family, Dane Bank and 11am St Mary’s, Denton

What’s coming up in our parish

December

Wednesday 17th December **Faith in Action**
6.30pm to 8.30pm in the Parish Hall

Scripture Course

Wednesday Evening from 6.30m in the Parish Hall. The dates are:

2026 28th January; 11th February; 4th March; 1st April (Holy Week); 6th May; 11th June



CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

Wed : 24th December
4.30pm Carols
5pm First Mass of Christmas
VIGIL

Thur : 25th Christmas Day
11am Mass

Mass Intentions.

All the December Masses have now been allocated, we will now forward any intentions to Fr Laurence Gambella, to be said on our behalf. We will start allocating Masses again from the 1st January 2026.



December Carol Services: Diocese of Salford Schools' Singing Programme

The Diocese of Salford Schools’ Singing Programme will be hosting a series of free carol services in churches across the diocese this December. Each service begins at 6.30pm and includes traditional carols and readings as part of a one-hour programme. Find your nearest service at <https://dioceseofsalford.org.uk/news/whats-on/>

Recent deaths in our Parish

The death has occurred of **John Walsh** . Our prayers and condolences go to his family and friends. His Requiem Mass will be on Wednesday 17th December at 10am. May he rest in peace.



Food Bank Donations

Please donate something for the food bank at this time of heavy demand. There is a box at the back of church.

Suggested items needed:

Tinned Vegetables; corned Beef; Curry; stew’ spaghetti; soup; etc

Other Items:

Long life milk; tea; coffee; sugar Jars of Pasta or Curry sauces; Rice; Savoury Rice; Noodles; Smash; Baked Beans’ Jam; Cordial; etc

Christmas Treats for Children

Thank you for your continued support

Food Bank Christmas meal donations

Fresh items such as chickens, vegetables and fruit can be brought to the entrance of St Mary’s Church Hall on **Monday 22nd December and Tuesday 23rd December from 10am to 12noon** These will then be taken to the Food bank, each day, for those in need. If you can’t get to church they can collect items on those days. Phone or text Anne and Brian Fox on 07379794924 to arrange a time.

Christmas Hamper Raffle.

Congratulation to **Helen Fairhurst**, who won the Christmas Hamper. To total raised from the raffle was **£434.00**.

New Monthly youth Group for Yr4,5 & 6

As part of our young people's Faith in Action programme, from 22nd October 2025, **we will be offering a group for children in school years 4, 5 and 6.**

The group will take place monthly and be from 6:30pm until 7:30pm.

Our Faith in Action young people will run it (though there will be adult supervision as well) and it will consist of liturgy alongside games and activities.

There is a maximum of 20 places and this will be on a first come first serve basis. The dates are as follows: 17/12/25; 21/01/26; 25/02/26; 18/03/26; 22/04/26; 20/05/26; 17/06/26

This is a lovely opportunity to allow our Faith in Action young people to develop their skills further as well as bringing the young of the Parish together.

If you are interested in your child attending or would like any further information please could you speak to Claire Cull after Sunday mass for a parental application form.

Christmas Day—Meal

Anyone who will be on their own on Christmas day, will be very welcome to join Councillor Denise Ward at **Victoria Park Community Centre**, between 12 and 3pm for a Christmas lunch. **Please let Councillor Ward know if you wish to attend phone 0161 336 6121 or email Denise.ward@tameside.gov.uk**



T	S	T	N	E	T	N	O	C	N	COLLECTORS
S	R	E	I	D	L	O	S	A	O	BAPTISM
C	O	S	X	P	T	S	M	H	I	EXACT
E	T	E	A	A	A	A	S	F	T	SOLDIERS
L	C	F	L	N	E	R	I	F	R	EXTORTION
L	E	F	D	I	H	B	T	I	O	CONTENT
O	L	A	N	N	W	A	P	S	T	WATER
C	L	H	A	R	E	T	A	W	X	STRAP
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T	C	A	X	E	N	T	N	O	C	FIRE
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