

**NEWSLETTER FOR ST BRENDAN, HARWOOD, ST COLUMBA, TONGE MOOR
& ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, BROMLEY CROSS**

6TH NOVEMBER 2016 – THIRTY-SECOND SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME



It is fortuitous that this passage of the Gospel is normally read near to the beginning of November, when we have celebrated the feasts of All Saints and All Souls, since it is a strong proclamation of the reality of life after death and the resurrection of the body. This Sunday is not without its difficulties, however, since this message is framed in two very sensitive passages: we have a story of cruelty and martyrdom in the first reading, and a controversial (and possibly upsetting) question about marriage in the Gospel. Remember that the example that the Sadducees bring is ridiculous, legalistic and completely misses the point: Jesus' reply does not mean that we are not with our loved ones after death – quite the contrary; he proclaims that we will all become one with God and each other as children of God.

Liturgy & Activities This Week <i>Sunday Cycle C; Weekday Cycle 2; Divine Office Week 4</i> Sunday Missal: page 494; Readings page 500; Preface at Priest's choice		Prayers Please
Sunday	9.15am Mass (SJ) - With Children's Liturgy 11.15am Mass (SB) - With Children's Liturgy	<p>Sick: Mary Leigh, Joan Coles, Isabelle Owen, Laura Shuttleworth, Tony Winstanley, Bernard Holder, Eileen Murphy, Maureen Kennedy, Joan Pearce, Peter Cranmer, Anthony Axford, Pauline Bowling, Caroline Garside, Sarah Parkinson, Mary Long, Linda Southern, Rita Brooks, Callum Fazackerley, Elaine Jansen, Bernard Corri, Winifred Coyle, Josephine Knowles, Rita Bell, Mary Cassidy, Derek Crompton, Roy Shepherd, Tony Wright, Janet Rabbett, Mike Greenhalgh, Barbara Stoppard, June Dawson, Greta Barlow, Cassie Wilson, Christine Hasleden, Suzanne Freeman-Hill, Josephine Gell, Jude McCann Brown, Ann Cunliffe, John Pryor, Marie France and all who are sick or recovering from serious illness.</p> <p>Lately Dead: Eamonn Doyle, Stan Guffogg, Mary Gaskell</p> <p>Anniversaries: Fr Denis Sheahan, Robert Neil Potter, Laurence Clossick, Maureen Smyth Taylor, Philip Hall, Marie Pilkington</p> <p>Mass Intentions: Deceased Members of the Duffy & O'Toole families, John & Agnes Minihan and family, Eamonn Doyle, Fr Denis Sheahan, Laurence Clossick, Joan Walker (90th Birthday Remembrance), With thanks to St Anthony, Stan Guffogg, Mary Joan Quinn, Mary Gaskell, Robert Neil Porter, Elsie Grogan, Maureen Smyth Taylor, Philip Hall, Marie Pilkington</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; font-size: small;"> <p>This Newsletter is sponsored by HOWARTH'S FUNERAL SERVICE Peel House 638 Blackburn Road, Astley Bridge, Bolton. BL1 7AL 01204 309609</p>  </div>
Monday (7 th)	No Mass Today 7.45pm SVP (SJ)	
Tuesday (8 th)	2pm Meditation (Harbour Room) 7pm Mass (SJ) 7.15pm SVP (SB) 7.30pm Becoming Catholic (Patmos Room, SJ)	
Wednesday (9 th) <i>The Dedication of the Lateran Basilica</i>	9.30am Mass (SJ) 12noon Funeral Service for Doreen Ward (Heaton Cemetery) 2-4pm CAMEO Group (Harbour Room) 6.30pm Sacramental Programme Meeting (SC) 7.15pm Meditation (Harbour Room)	
Thursday (10 th) <i>St Leo the Great</i>	9.15am Mass (SB)	
Friday (11 th) <i>St Martin of Tours</i>	9.30am Mass (SJ) 11am Remembrance Service (Victoria Square, Bolton) 7.30pm Parish Quiz Night (Dunscar Conservative Club)	
Saturday (12 th) <i>St Josaphat</i>	2pm Baptism (SB) 5pm Mass (SC) – With Children's Liturgy <i>Special Collection for</i>	
Next Sunday (13 th) Remembrance Sunday	9.15am Mass (SJ) - With Children's Liturgy <i>Retired Clergy</i> 11am Remembrance Services (Dunscar & Victoria Square) 11.15am Mass (SB) - With Children's Liturgy 2pm Baptism (SB) <i>Jubilee of Mercy: Closing of the Holy Door</i>	

Cycle of Prayer Part 6 (of 6): We pray especially for: the spread of the Gospel; the harvest; the fruits of human work & the reverent use of creation; justice and peace in the world; all victims of war; young people; prisoners & their families

Collections & Donations: All cheques (even for special collections) should be made payable to St Brendan's, St Columba's or St John's as appropriate.

Mass Intentions: Cheques should be made payable to St John's

Gift Aid: If you are a tax-payer, the parish can claim back the tax you have paid on any donations you make if you simply sign a Gift Aid form once. Thanks

Parish Priest: Rev Canon Michael Cooke VG

Assistant Priests: Rev Seán O'Brien & Rev Francis Parkinson

Parish Office: St John's Presbytery, The Crescent, Bromley Cross, Bolton BL7 9JP

Tel: 01204 301927 E-mail: office@sbsj.org.uk Website: www.sbsj.org.uk

Salford Roman Catholic Diocesan Trustees Registered Charity – 250037 Diocesan website: www.salforddiocese.net



Congratulations: To Emily Jayne Everitt and Belle Olivia Brindle who were baptized at St John's on Saturday 22 October. Also to Daisy Catherine James who was baptized at St John's last Saturday and Penny Olivia Fairhurst who was baptized at St John's last Sunday. We pray that they and their families continue to grow in faith

Becoming Catholic: The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 8 November at 7.30pm (straight after the 7pm Mass at St John's).

Mount St Joseph Former Students Association: Has arranged a Remembrance Mass for deceased pupils and staff of Mount St Joseph School at: St Edmund's Church, St Edmund St, Bolton BL1 2JR on Saturday, 12 November at 12.15pm.

Year of Mercy Holy Hour: As the Year of Mercy comes to a close, we will be holding a special evening of reflection (followed by Mass) on Friday 18 November (6pm-7.30pm) at St John's Church. More details to follow.

Message from Urban Outreach: A huge thank you to those of you who have helped sort all the harvest at our unit. It was incredible to see so many people down there getting stuck in. As a result of this success, we have no harvest food left to sort and so we are returning to our usual food sorting days of Wednesday and Friday mornings (10am-12noon). We will not be open at any other time. Thank you again for your continued support and we look forward to seeing you all again soon. *Samuel Bagley*

Parish Quiz: Thank you to everyone who purchased a ticket. The quiz (once again) has been a sell out!

Diocesan Finance Manager: The diocese is seeking to appoint a Finance Manager to manage the work of the diocesan finance team to ensure the highest standards of fiscal responsibility, compliance with financial aspects of Charity Law, and manage the department staff to ensure accounting functions and procedures are completed. Please see the parish notice board for further details, or for further information, job description and an application form, contact Patrick O'Dowd, Director of Administration and Personnel, Cathedral Centre, 3 Ford Street, Salford, M3 6DP; Tel 0161 817 2203; Email: recruitment@dioceseofsalford.org.uk. Further details are also available on the diocesan website: www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk

Cathedral Centre Cafe: As part of the ongoing development at the Cathedral a new contemporary café has just opened, serving an impressive selection of homemade soups, sandwiches and hot meals and a wide selection of freshly brewed teas and coffees sourced from local roaster *Heart and Graft*. At the moment the café is open from 11am-2pm, with a full lunchtime menu and a daily hot meal special. Opening times will be extended at the end of November to accommodate morning coffee and afternoon teas. Why not pay a visit to the Cathedral Centre and visit the diocesan bookshop and the new café.

Sacramental Programme: The first meeting for parents and children from all three parishes will take place at 6.30pm on Wednesday 9 November at St Columba's Church. If you have a child in Yr 3 who does not attend one of our schools, or an older child who did not take part in the programme previously, and you would like them to take part in this year's programme, please come along to the meeting.

Theatre lovers: All tickets for *Educating Rita* are now available for collection. They can be collected after Sunday Mass at St Brendan's or perhaps you can make other arrangements to have them collected for you. Any problems, please give us a ring. Madeleine/Frank 303505. Thank you.

SVP News

Annual Mass for the Deceased: Will be held on Saturday 26 November at 11am in St John's Church. Refreshments will be available afterwards.



St John's Christmas Draw: Tickets will be available after the 9.15am Mass today in the Patmos Room. Please do take some tickets to sell to your family and friends. There is a list available for anyone wishing to donate prize vouchers. Thank you for your support.

Vince & Danny

Retired Priests Fund: Next Weekend we have a special collection to help towards the cost of supporting the retired priests in our diocese.

The Resurrection (Voskresenije) Choir of St Petersburg Return to

St Mary's Church, Horwich
Thursday 24th November 2016 - 7.30pm
Tickets £10 - available by contacting 01204 468209
or emailing stmaryshorwich@gmail.com

For more information about this wonderful choir
visit: voskresenije.blogspot.co.uk

CAMEO GROUP (Come And Meet Each Other)

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 9 November (2-4pm) in the Harbour Room at St Brendan's. Kath Denton will hold a "Fun Auction" and money raised will go the St Brendan's SVP. Please bring one item only to auction, but bring as many friends as you like to join in the fun!

Your Local Councillors Invite you to attend a hugely important PUBLIC MEETING

In the Village Hall, Darwen Road
On Monday 7 November at 7.30pm

To discuss the proposed Planning Application to build 98 houses at the Last Drop, and the implications for our area.

Also to make residents aware of the threat to our area from the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework.
Please do your best to attend

Readers and Eucharistic Ministers for 12/13 November

Mass	Reader	Eucharistic Ministers
5pm (SC)	N Villa	M Hilton, J O'Connor
9.15 (SJ)	M Roe	E Rothwell, M Russell, A Gracie, M Cropper, T Armstrong, F Smith
11.15(SB)	K Wilkinson	P Brennan, M Durkan, C Owen

Parish Consultation Meeting: Attached are the minutes of our recent meeting held on 6 October. These were forwarded to Bishop John for his consideration. Thank you to all who came along and contributed..

Outcomes from the Consultation Meeting of the Parishes of St. Brendan, Harwood, St. Columba, Tonge Moor and St. John the Evangelist, Bromley Cross held on 6 October 2016.

The meeting was well attended by over 60 parishioners and chaired by Fr. Cooke, supported by Frs Parkinson & O'Brien. There were three parts to the meeting: - presentations on "What needs to be done" and "How it is proposed to be done" and a discussion about the local proposals.

Part 1 - "What needs to be done"

The meeting was presented with statistical data about the numbers of priests, worshippers, churches, future forecasts on the availability of priests. There was a consensus that there is a need for change, otherwise pastoral care would suffer and there would be insufficient priests to minister. There was an extensive discussion about local issues & attitudes which might impact on any proposed changes. These included some parishioners from SC expressing a view that they had felt to some extent marginalised within the SBSCSJ parish structure. Some SC parishioners said that there had been insufficient investment in the buildings at SC which were now in a poor state of repair. Fr MC explained that there was no intended marginalisation of SC. The fact was that over the years SC had not been well maintained and there was no finance available in SC's budget to meet even the least costly of the urgent repairs needed, which were in excess of £100,000. He explained that the works at SB & SJ had been fully funded by those parishes.

The meeting then considered each statement of the "Response to the Consultation on Proposed Parish Re-Structuring."

S1. It was "Strongly Agreed" that there is a need to change because of the reduced number of priests and parishioners.

S2. It was "Agreed" there is a need to strengthen our ability to be the missionary Church that Pope Francis is calling us to be. However, the meeting felt that the concept of a 'missionary church' was nebulous. The concept needed to be explored, simplified and better defined by Church leaders in the context of parish life. There was a lack of understanding as to exactly what being a missionary parish means in practice? What would it look like? How different would it be from today? How would we know when we had achieved it?

There was strong support that our first priority for 'mission' ought to be directed to encouraging young people and young families to become more engaged in parish life; attending Mass regularly; engaging more fully with parents through our schools and the sacramental programme; and reaching out to those who have lapsed from the faith.

S3. The meeting was "Not Sure" that larger, dynamic and sustainable parishes are preferable to smaller, struggling communities

There was consensus, based on our experience across our three parishes of working as "One Parish with two / three churches" (in the case of SJ & SB for some nine years and about four for SC) that larger parish structures can be dynamic & sustainable, whilst retaining a strong sense of community in each church.

The meeting was unsure that smaller parish communities would inevitably struggle as most presently have an active, 'core group' of faithful parishioners who have a strong sense of ownership, continuity, pride and living faith. It was however recognised that in the longer term this might not be sustainable.

S3. It was "Agreed" that the welfare of priests was important and that the possibility of retirement at 75 was supported.

S4. It was "Strongly Agreed" that there must be greater lay involvement so that priests can do what they were ordained to do.

Our "One Parish with two / three churches" model already enjoyed significant lay involvement with Sacristans, Eucharistic Ministers, Readers, CAFOD group, SVP etc. An effective Parish Office was in place to co-ordinate activity. Communication between Priests and Laity across the three churches was generally good and aided by the parish website & newsletter. It was recognised that improvements in cohesion and laity involvement, especially the laity taking ownership of more functions, was an opportunity to be explored further.

S5. The meeting was "Unsure" that re-structuring of parishes will enable us to develop our outreach to the wider community.

The reasons for this answer are two-fold. Firstly, as previously stated, the concept of a "Missionary Parish" is too vague and not well understood. There was a repeated view that 'missionary effort' was needed within our own parishes and communities, to those who are on the margins of society and good examples of outreach were cited such as the work of the SVP and Bolton Destitution Project. The need to reach out to our lapsed Catholics, engage young families through our schools was restated.

The second concern was whether there was an adequate understanding of the demography of the Diocese, particularly in relationship to the proposed closure of some churches in areas of social deprivation, where the need for outreach was perhaps the greatest. The meeting felt that much more work needed to be undertaken to identify and define outreach opportunities and how the Church might best respond.

S6. The meeting was "Not Sure" about retaining ownership of some of the closed churches for future use.

The meeting had two complementary views about the future of church buildings which resulted in a "Not Sure"

Whilst recognising that some churches and presbyteries might lend themselves to other appropriate uses, the reality is that any church that was no longer used quickly deteriorated and becomes a corporate liability to the Diocese. The Diocese should have confidence in the outcome of its consultation exercise and unwanted buildings ought to be sold, demolished or re-developed. The visible presence of the Church in Salford ought to be fewer, well maintained, thriving centres of worship and community outreach, rather than, as has been for many years in parts of the Diocese, decaying, boarded up, sad buildings representing a dying, rather than thriving Church.

However, the meeting also proposed that with an imaginative approach from the Diocese and external professional advice, there may be opportunities to realise significant financial, social and community outreach benefits from the redevelopment of some church buildings, whilst retaining a place of worship. Opportunities such as partnerships with major developers could see sites redeveloped for example for social housing, community facilities and a smaller church or chapel. This would be particularly pertinent in areas of social deprivation where the number of worshippers might be low, but the potential opportunity and need for outreach is significant.

S8. It was "Agreed" that changes to our parish structures are a necessary step in our journey as a Diocese.

Part 2 – “How we propose doing it”

Fr MC introduced the proposals for this parish, the deanery and the overall diocese. He explained that these were only proposals and had been developed by the priests of the deanery and would ultimately require the Bishop to make a decision. No proposal would be ideal for all and there would need to be change.

The proposals were considered and the following key points were discussed leading to the recommendation from the meeting:

1. There was no support for the combination of SB with SO. This proposal had been considered in previous years and had been dismissed as there was no natural relationship in terms of geography, public transport links were poor and SO is already the largest parish in Bolton Deanery with a population of 4,000
2. There was significant regret expressed by all that for the last nine years the parishes of SJ and SB, and more recently SC had faithfully and diligently worked together to deliver the Parish Priest’s vision that we be “One Parish with two / three churches” and had effectively become so.
3. This had brought great rewards spiritually, materially and socially with sharing of priests, joined up and effective working across the three church communities, extended laity involvement and most importantly the development of trust and mutually supportive relationships between priests and people. There was a mature acceptance that more was yet to be done, but there was a willingness to embrace further integration.
4. Our experience had been that change takes a long time, especially in an organisation such as the Church and the meeting questioned why we would want to dismantle a structure that was working well? Rather, the meeting proposed an alternative structure of including HI into the existing arrangements. This would allow all the experiences and lessons learned over the past nine years to be built upon.
5. The inclusion of HI with SJ was supported as many parishioners worship at both churches and they are accessible by public and private transport.

Other Issues Discussed

Demography and Outreach: There was some scepticism as to whether there was a full appreciation of the impact of the proposed changes especially where they impacted on the poorer parts of society. If we are to be successful in reaching out to the wider community, then we will need to be innovative in the way we use our limited resources.

There was a strong feeling that closures should not adversely affect the most deprived communities in the diocese and wherever possible provision should be made for Mass, perhaps by using school halls and other chapels (such as Thornleigh)

Opportunities Arising from Change: The proposals should not be seen necessarily as a negative, and many parishioners recognised the need for improving including greater Laity engagement, reducing the pressure on priests, and sharing of experiences from other parishes which could lead to new ideas and initiatives.

Relationship with School: Having effective links between the schools and the parish, the main issue was that ideally a school should be in close proximity to its church wherever

practicable. The meeting felt that schools should continue a significant role in the formation of children; however the primary responsibility must rest with parents.

Vocations: The meeting recognised the dwindling number of vocations; however the nurturing of any future vocations was not just a matter for the priests but for all the community.

Leadership Development: The meeting welcomed the pilot project currently underway in the deanery, to equip parishioners with the necessary skills for administrative/financial, catechetical and safeguarding responsibilities.

Deacons: There was support for the ordination of deacons but the meeting wondered what progress was being made. Fr MC reported that, whilst this initiative was underway, it would take at least five years before the first deacons are ordained.

Learning From Others: The meeting felt it was important to learn from the experiences of other churches that had rationalised their own structures and building (for example, the Methodist community in Bolton had created a brand new centre for worship and community life called the Triangle). That seemed to have reduced their overall costs and brought three communities closer together

Conclusion/Our Preferred Options

- A. Having carefully considered all the options and the view of the meeting, it was proposed that a single parish of SB,SC,SJ and HI, with the possible closure of SC church, be submitted to the Bishop. It was recognised that this would be a large parish requiring two priests but would build upon the experiences of working together over the last nine years.
- B. As regards the deanery proposals, the merger of SO and ST be considered, given that the two parishes are adjacent.
- C. The meeting also considered bringing together SB,SC,SJ,SO and HI. However this was subsequently discounted because the parish would be too large in terms of the number of churches, priests, parishioners and the travelling distances.

Glossary: SB – St Brendan, SC – St Columba, SJ – St John, SO – St Osmund, ST – St Theresa, HI – Holy Infant