

Parish of Corpus Christi, Bolton

St John, the Evangelist, Bromley Cross, St Columba's, Tonge Moor and St Brendan's, Harwood

14 December 2025

Gaudete Sunday - Third Sunday in Advent





Advent is a time for watching. To everything there comes a time; in springtime the crocus and the daffodil tell us that summer is on its way, in autumn the falling leaves and the migrating birds tells us that winter is near. Advent is about watching for the signs of the times; we watch in hope, in anticipation and in joy. Today is Gaudate Sunday. This is the day when we take a break from the long preparation for the coming of the Christ Child and rejoice that He is so near.

When you live in a country which is nearly all desert you watch for the signs of nature. Crops will only grow if the seed is sown at the right time and if rain and sun will follow the sowing and bring forth a harvest. The people of Israel had waited a long time. They had the vision of Isaiah, which we share today, to sustain them through the long dry spell of history when nothing would grow and their nation suffered from powerful enemies. Isaiah's words are full of the joy of dreams being fulfilled; the coming of Christ was that fulfilment but how would the people know that He is the Messiah?

John the Baptist was imprisoned because he spoke out against the actions of King Herod. During his time in prison, he must have felt depressed and disillusioned. He loved the freedom of the open air, the wide clear skies of the desert places. He must have felt like a bird caught in a cage, deprived of his freedom. In his despair he asks for a sign that the Messiah was indeed walking the land. When he is told that the blind see, the deaf hear and the lame walk again he recognised the words of Isaiah in the work of Jesus, the one he baptised in the Jordan and John is then content to wait in joy for the coming of the Kingdom.

James asks us to be patient; Christ will be along soon, don't despair but be prepared. Patience is a gift that is sorely lacking in our world of today; we want everything and we want it now. We need to find a way to enjoy the waiting; to be good to ourselves and our neighbours just for today is not sufficient, we must find a way to make goodness a way of life.

David Frank

Masses & Activities this Week

Sunday Cycle A Readings: Page 88 of Mass Book

Sunday 14 December

9.30am Mass (SJ) - With Children's Liturgy followed by Gaelic Coffee

11am Mass (SB) - With Children's Liturgy followed by Christmas Hamper Raffle & Baileys Coffee

Monday 15 December

9.15am St Columba's School Christmas Mass (SB Church)

1pm Funeral Service for Alice Leggatt (Overdale)

Tuesday 16 December

10am Mass (SB)

7.30m Christian Meditation (SJ)

Wednesday 17 December

9.30am St John's School Christmas Mass (SJ)

1pm Harbour Room Book Club (SB)

Thursday 18 December

10am Requiem Mass for Irene O'Connor (SB)

Friday 19 December

12noon Mass (SB)

Saturday 20 December - St Lucy

9.30am Confession and Adoration (SJ)

10am Mass (SJ)

5pm Mass (SB) - With Children's Liturgy

Sunday 21 December - Fourth Sunday of Advent

9.30am Mass (SJ) - With Children's Liturgy 11am Mass (SB) - With Children's Liturgy

1pm Baptism (SJ)

Early Notice for Christmas Masses

Christmas Eve: 4.30pm (SB); 6.30pm (SJ) Christmas Day: 9.30am (SJ); 11am (SB)

Parish Contact Details

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We pray for all the sick and housebound in our parish, and other relatives and friends: Jackie Harte, Moya Fau-Goodwin, Fred & Joyce Heywood, Frances Skemp, Edwin Rankin, Pat McDowell, Richard Crichton, Michael Latham, Kathryn Browning, Frank Vickers, Frederick Parkinson, Eileen Fitzgerald, Peter Reilly, Terry Scott, Margaret Kay, Tony Martin, Annie O'Brien, Margaret O'Brien, Kevin Knowles, Pat Howarth, Bernard Earp, Michael Kitching, Jane Manuel, Rita Margiotta, Pauline Dobson, Winifred Goodwin, Barbara Owen

Lately Dead: Alice Leggatt, Irene O'Connor Ruben Jorge, Lynn Musgrave

Mass Intentions: Lynn Musgrave, Ruben Jorge, Andrew Hayes (Birthday Remembrance)

We are asked to pray for these intentions: Migrants & Refugees, Expectant Mothers

We pray for all the people who have fallen victim to the devastating floods in Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Thailand. Let us send a message of hope as the communities come to terms with their losses.

Offertory: We are always extremely grateful for all you do to help us financially; if you are UK taxpayer, please consider gift aiding your kind donation, the parish will benefit at no extra cost to yourselves.

Dona: We can now accept cashless payments, using our contactless system.

Cheques: Please make all cheques payable to *Corpus Christi*. Thank you

Parish Mass Book: This weekend we will start using our new Parish Mass Books. The Introductory Rites begin on Page 7 and the page number for Readings will be published under the heading of our weekly Masses and Activities (each book comes with a bookmark to assist). Hopefully, these new books will be much more beneficial to our parish as we will keep them for many years.

Harbour Room Book Club: The next meeting is Wednesday 17 December: Diary of a Provincial Lady by E.M. Delafield. Meeting begins at 1pm and all are welcome. A very happy Christmas to all our members and supporters with a special mention for Catherine in the offices who has printed out our notices for the newsletter for many years. We wish you a very happy retirement and all our thanks for your support and help. The Book Club.

Fortalice Christmas Toy Collection: As in previous years, we have been asked if parishioners would be able to kindly donate a newly purchased gift or voucher for children at Fortalice. These will be collected from both churches in time for Christmas. Thank you.

Caritas Morning Star Men's Hostel: Are appealing for some essential items. If anyone can donate toiletry items, socks or underwear(new) over the next few weeks, they would be very welcome. Please leave at the back of each church and they will be delivered before Christmas. Thank you.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation: During Advent, Confession is an ideal way of preparing for the coming of Christ into our hearts, that is, allowing Him to draw us into deeper conversion. We hold Confession every Saturday morning at St John's Church, and Fr Alf would like to remind everyone you are welcome to have Confession by appointment at either Church.

Newsletter: Next week, the newsletter will cover two weeks. Please could any Mass Intentions and news items be handed in before Wednesday 17 December. *Thank you*.

Other News from Around the Diocese

Safeguarding Survey - Public Call for Information The Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) are completing a safeguarding inspection within the Diocese of Salford and would like to hear the views of as many people as possible regarding their arrangements for safeguarding. Responses will be



collected anonymously unless you choose to provide your contact information, and the survey will close at 11:45pm on Friday 16January 2026. To submit your response, please scan the QR code:

Relics of St Carlo Acutis to Visit Diocese of Salford: In January, the relics of St Carlo Acutis will be hosted at two of our churches over five days, during which time the Diocese will welcome schools, parishioners and people from all over for veneration. Carlo is the first millennial saint and is celebrated for his profound faith and his use of the internet to log Eucharistic miracles from around the world. He was passionate about spreading the teachings of the Catholic Church up until his death from leukaemia at the age of 15. The relics will be presented at St Mary's Church, Burnley from 28-29 January 2026 before they travel to St Patrick's Church, Collyhurst from 30 January to 1 February 2026. More information will be shared soon.

Thought for the Week...

"For those who love, nothing is too difficult, especially when it is done for the love of Jesus Christ."

St Ignatius of Loyola

Readers 20/21 December 2025		
5pm Vigil (SB)	9.30am (SJ)	11am (SB)
A Grundy	H O'Donnell	F Evans
Eucharistic Ministers 9.30am (SJ) 21 December		
M Cropper & A Gracie		