

Parish of St Margaret Clitherow

Fourth Sunday of Advent (A)

18th December 2016



DEANERY TEAM

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Deacons: Rev. Robert Hewertson and Rev. Anthony Arrowsmith

LITURGICAL CALENDAR

Psalter Readings Week 4
Sunday – Fourth Sunday of Advent (A)
Weekdays – Advent, Wk 4

Sunday **Fourth Sunday of Advent (A)**
(Day of Prayer for Expectant Mothers)

Next Sunday **Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord Jesus Christ (CHRISTMAS)**
(Holyday of Obligation)



LEIGH DEANERY

Parish of St. Margaret Clitherow

St. Ambrose Barlow
Astley
St. Gabriel's
Higher Folds
Holy Family
Boothstown
Sacred Heart
Hindsford
St. Richard's
Atherton

Parish of St. Edmund Arrowsmith

Our Lady of the Rosary Sacred Heart
St. Joseph's
Twelve Apostles
Leigh

Archdiocesan Mission Statement



Taking to heart the last words of the Lord Jesus, we will go into the world to proclaim the Good News to the whole of creation.

GOSPEL REFLECTION

The Gospel Reading this weekend reminds us of the importance of Joseph. Joseph was a man of deep faith who listened to the voice of God. He struggled to make sense of the message that Mary had given him – that she was to become the mother of God's only Son. Sometimes Joseph heard God speak to him through his dreams, at other times in a moment of quiet prayer, sometimes at the end of each day when he looked over the events of work, relationships and family. He knew that God is a God of mystery and that in history God always called people to take risks and live with the unpredictable nature of life. Joseph would have been very aware of the story of Abraham and how Abraham had left his home and then found that Sarah his wife, in her old age, conceived mysteriously through the power of God. He would have also known that David had been an unlikely choice for a king. The prophets too were often surprising choices of God.

Despite all this Joseph sometimes would have wondered why God was testing his faith. He thought that the easiest thing would be to abandon Mary and start again. However, he loved her and knew deep down that she was honest, true and had great integrity. In the turmoil of his mind, he wondered what God wanted him to do. He asked himself why life was so complicated, just when all had seemed to be going so very good as he prepared to marry Mary. He struggled with God in prayer during the night and eventually went to sleep. Next morning he awoke from his dream and understood the words the angel had spoken – God had conceived his Son in Mary through the power of the Holy Spirit. Joseph needed to accept this for himself. As he did so he went on to care for Mary and support her during this strange but wonderful time.

We often face difficult situations in our relationships and in our lives as a whole. Whatever problems we have to face can disrupt and disturb our familiar patterns of life. We ask God why they have happened and sometimes our faith in God is questioned. The example of Joseph teaches us that it is in these times that we are called to pray even more and seek the power of the Holy Spirit to help us trust more deeply in God. Like Joseph, we are asked to accompany people in their struggles and support them with love and care. A loving and caring Parish Community can be a real help to those who face difficulties of any kind in their lives at the moment. It wasn't easy for Joseph. Life is never easy for any of us. However, as we approach Christmas, we can be confident that if our hearts are open to God, God will help us to shoulder the burden and carry the load.

Psalm Response Let the Lord enter! He is the king of glory.

Gospel Acclamation The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel, a name which means 'God-is-with-us'.

PARISH NEWS

This Week

Festival Carol Service

This will be at Holy Family **TODAY, Sunday 18th December at 4.00pm** followed by mince pies and mulled wine. All are welcome!

Christmas Flowers

If you would like to make a donation towards the cost of flowers in one of the churches for Christmas in memory of deceased loved ones, please place donations in an envelope marked 'Christmas Flowers' with the name(s) of the deceased and the church in which you wish the name to be displayed. These names will be displayed in church to hold them in prayer during the Christmas Season. Please hand them in **by 18th December, i.e. TODAY** at the latest so the lists can be prepared.

Tuesday Tea and Coffee

The refreshments after the 9.15am Tuesday morning Mass at St Ambrose are proving popular with all. As a result some students from St Mary's have asked if they can help with this service during Advent. Please come along and enjoy a chat and some fellowship with our young people who will be with us on **Tuesday, 20th December**.

Exposition at St. Richard's Church

A reminder that this week will be **the last week we have Exposition on Wednesday morning in St. Richard's**, for the time being at least. As mentioned in last week's newsletter, with all the work that is soon to be done at St. Richard's Church there will be occasions when we have Mass in the Parish House or even the Parish Centre whilst the new radiators and heating system are being fitted. So we will resume Exposition on the first Wednesday of Lent, March 8th. More details nearer the time.

School Services

All the schools in the Parish will be celebrating the end of Advent and the feast of Christmas this week. Some celebrations are in the form of Mass, others are Assemblies and Carol Services. We hope the children and parents and staff have a wonderful week of celebrating this great feast. We hope and pray that they have a good Christmas break and come back to school refreshed in the New Year.

Alternative Christmas Cards

Stars are now available in the church porch at St Ambrose Barlow. Write your message on a star and place it in the basket for placement on the display. Then put your donation in the envelope provided and hand it in. All monies raised will go to CAFOD.

Padre Pio Prayer Group

This will **not** be meeting on 24th or 31st December, but will recommence the following week.

St. Richard's 500 Club December Draw

£150	308	M. Wyche
75	371	J. Murphy
50	30	A. Baxter
25	361	A. Hancock
25	68	J. Twist
15	190	E. Cooke
15	431	M. Donelon
15	9	M. Ellams

Thank you for your continued support.

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES 2016

Please take note of all the Mass times in the Deanery this Christmas.

Christmas Eve

5.30pm – Twelve Apostles, Leigh & St. Joseph's, Leigh
6.00pm – Holy Family, Boothstown & St. Richard's, Atherton
8.00pm – St. Ambrose Barlow, Astley

11.30pm – Carols and Readings, Holy Family, Boothstown (*before Midnight Mass*)

Midnight Mass – Holy Family, Boothstown & Our Lady Of The Rosary, Leigh

Christmas Day

8.30am – St. Joseph's, Leigh
9.00am – Holy Family, Boothstown
9.30am – St. Richard's, Atherton & Sacred Heart, Leigh
10.30am – St. Joseph's, Leigh
11.00am – Holy Family, Boothstown & St. Ambrose Barlow, Astley
11.15am – Our Lady Of The Rosary, Leigh

Feast of the Holy Family

This year this is celebrated on Friday 30th December and not on a Sunday as New Year's Day falls on a Sunday and we celebrate Mary as the Mother of God. There will be a celebration Mass in Holy Family Church at 6pm followed by wine and light refreshments. All are invited to come and celebrate the Holy Family in the Christmas Season.

RCIA

If there is anyone who is considering becoming a Catholic by making the 'journey of faith' this year please speak to one of the priests. A meeting will be arranged in the coming weeks for anyone who is interested.

Newsletter

Please ensure that items for the next two weeks' newsletters are sent in by **TUESDAY** evenings to meet Christmas & New Year print schedules. Thank you.

Clergy Addresses

Fr Paul Seddon

St Richard's Presbytery, Mayfield Street, Atherton, Manchester M46 0AQ

Fr Paul Grady

Holy Family Presbytery, 208 Chaddock Lane, Boothstown, Worsley, Manchester M28 1DN

Finance

The monies for the five church communities of the Parish of St Margaret Clitherow are held in one account. Please make all cheques payable to **St Margaret Clitherow** (Please note spelling 'Clitherow'). Thank you.

Deanery Website

www.leighdeanery.co.uk

Catholic School Websites

<http://stmaryschs.org.uk/>

www.athertonsacredheart.wigan.sch.uk

www.boothstownhollyfamily.wigan.sch.uk

www.saintambrosebarlow.co.uk

www.saintgabrielsprimary.co.uk

www.saintrichards.wigan.sch.uk

Children's Liturgy Catechists

If anyone would like to help with the Children's Liturgy during Sunday morning Mass why not come along and speak to one of the catechists after Mass to find out what it is all about. It is a wonderful way of sharing God's Word with the children of the Parish. We always need more helpers. Thanks to so many of you who have been running the Children's Liturgy for so many years. If you think you can help then please speak to one of the priests or/and one of the catechists whenever you can.

Save Stamps for Charity

If you would like to save stamps for charity they can be placed in the red box at the back of St Ambrose Church.

St Margaret Clitherow (St Ambrose Barlow) 200 Club

This year's 200 Club will be starting soon. Entry costs £20 – payable weekly, monthly or in one up-front payment. Members are entered in a monthly draw in January, February, March and April for £100 and £50. In late April there will be a cabaret evening in the church hall (free to members) where a draw will be made for £1000 – with consolation prizes of £100, £50 and £25. If you would like to join the 200 Club please see Steve Cooper at the back of church after 11.00am Mass on Sunday, or give him a call on 07952 152371. Or see your usual agent.

St Richard's 500 Club

Please note that from January 2017 the **500 club** will be run by **Mr Michael Farrimond and Mr James Duffy**, and the Monthly Draw will take place during the Coffee Morning after 9.30am Mass at St. Richard's on the first Sunday of every month. **New members will be welcome from January.**

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Astley Churches Together Carol Service

Astley Churches Together invite you to join them at Astley Christian Fellowship (formerly Astley Independent Methodists) on **Monday, 19th December at 7.00pm** for the annual ecumenical open air Carol Service. Following the singing there will be hot drinks and mince pies served in the Church Hall. All welcome – including children.

Sacred Heart Hindsford Parish Club

Lodge Road, Hindsford

Tickets are now on sale

£3.00 Christmas Eve

Carl Gordon – Fantastic Male Vocalist

£5.00 New Year's Eve

Darren Shaw – Another Fantastic Vocalist

New Year's Eve Dance

Bring 2017 in at a fantastic dance at St Joseph's (large hall), Mather Lane, Leigh on 31st December from 7.00pm till late. Entertainment by country artist Pete Redfern. There will be a bar and tea/coffee will be available for 50p (bring a cup). Tickets cost £8 and are available from Theresa on 01942 792293. Book early. It was a sell-out last year.

Motown New Year Party / Concert

Featuring Countdown to Midnight

**At St Stephen's Church, Manchester Rd, Astley
On Saturday 7th January – 8.00pm, til late, with bar**

Tickets: Adults £10.00, Children Free (Includes food)

available from 01942 879608 or email Phil:

p.dand2011@btinternet.com

St Joseph's Players Pantomime

St Joseph's Players will present their pantomime, "Robinson Crusoe" in St Joseph's Hall, Leigh from 18th January to 28th January 2017. Evenings at 7.15pm. Matinees, 21st, 22nd, 23rd from 2.00pm. Special Offer, 18th and 19th, all tickets £4.

Tickets available from Stones Carpets, Chapel Street, Leigh (opposite Church).

Live Screenings at Cineworld

It has been quite a while since we last advertised the Live Screenings at Cineworld in Leigh. It was great to meet up with other parishioners to watch a live performance and enjoy each other's company. There are three good looking performances coming up in the New Year.

- RSC's "The Tempest" – Wednesday, January 11th at 7.00pm.
- National Theatre's "Amadeus" – Thursday, February 2nd at 7.00pm.
- National Theatre's "St. Joan" – Thursday, February 16th.

More details nearer the time.

Burns Night, Friday 20th January at St Ambrose Barlow Church Hall - **SOLD OUT!**

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

After 6.00 pm Saturday Mass at St. Richard's.

No morning Confessions on Saturday at Holy Family.

Confession is instead available after Thursday Mass at Holy Family, 10.30am.

Confession also available by request or by appointment.

BAPTISM

**We welcome into the family of the Church
through the celebration of Baptism**

Sinead Bridget Brennan

May God bless her and her family.

LAST WEEK'S PARISH COLLECTIONS

Offertory Collection **£1827.20**

CAFOD **£ 34.99**

Alternative Christmas Card **£ 48.00**

(Also to CAFOD)

Thank you so much for your generosity.

Advent Collections have now finished and donated goods have been taken to the designated charities. Thank you for your kind generosity for those in need.

SECOND COLLECTIONS

Today

Monthly SVP Collection

Next Week

No Collection (Crib Offerings)

'SVP' stands for 'St Vincent de Paul'. There is an SVP Group in most Catholic parishes whose sole purpose is to reach out to those who are struggling and in need in the community in which we live. The monthly SVP collection assists us in this ministry. Thank you for the support you give consistently throughout the year. It really does help to change lives.

PARISH MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS

Week Beginning 18th December	Holy Family	St. Ambrose Barlow	St. Richard's
SUNDAY	9.00 am Gladys Waring 11.00 am Seamus McNulty 12.30pm Baptisms	(Sat) 6.00 pm John Burke 11.00 am Bernard Hughes	(Sat) 6.00 pm Mary & Martin Furey 9.30 am Harold Haigh 6.30 pm Alan Charlton
MONDAY			
TUESDAY		9.15 am Deceased members of the McGrath & Beresford Families	9.15 am Fr. John McLoughlin
WEDNESDAY	7.00 pm Lillian Postlewaite		9.00 - 10.00 am Exposition 9.30am Sacred Heart School Christmas Mass 2.00pm St. Richard's School Carol Service
THURSDAY	10.00 am Philippa Craig	3.00 pm Funeral for Frank Bryan	9.15 am Bessie Hulme
FRIDAY	Mass in St. Ambrose Barlow Church	10.00 am Mary, Jim & Gerard Burke	9.15 am Jimmy Hancock
SATURDAY	No Morning Mass First Mass of Christmas 6.00 pm Philip Ward 11.30 pm Carols and Readings 12.00 Midnight Mass George & Margaret Baybut	No Padre Pio Prayer Group First Mass of Christmas 8.00 pm Steven Blears, Norah Malone, Bob & Anne Roberts	First Mass of Christmas 6.00 pm Christmas Mass Intentions
NEXT SUNDAY	9.00 am Eileen Coates 11.00 am Anastasia Giblin, Christopher Tickle, Knight and Nuttall Family	11.00 am Ronnie Kenwright, Joan Clegg, Mary Sharples, Joe Rigby	9.30 am Christmas Mass Intentions NO 6.30 pm Mass this week

LET US HOLD IN PRAYER

Those who have died, especially:

Frank Bryan

Those who are sick, especially:

Emma Oldham Kathy Kenyon Guy Ryan Shelagh Welsby Frank Bryan Joan Wilkinson Margaret Smith Agnes Pilkington Margaret Hurley Thomas McLoughlin Marjorie Price Jean Tchibukdjian Ann Lyons Margaret Dawson Fon O'Hara Margaret Brown Thomas Higgins Bernard O'Donnell Simon, grandson of B & N Atkinson	Pat O'Neill Rev Jim Melia Anne Broad Margaret Case Derek Maude Catherine Jones Michael Wright Irene McIntyre Neil Hurley Susan Phillips Margaret Ross Eugenie Cheetham Freda Peake Ann Mellin Leonard Beach Maureen Halliday Enid Kenwright Betty Rostern
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READINGS FOR NEXT WEEKEND

Christmas Day

During the Christmas weekend there may be different readings for the various Masses, such as Midnight Mass, Dawn Mass & Christmas Day Mass. So this weekend we present a collection of reflections for all the Masses together.

First Readings

All from Isaiah.

Isaiah's great prophecy is fulfilled in the birth of Jesus.

The joy of the exiles returning from Babylon is a foretaste of the joy Christians experience at Jesus' birth.

We also hear Isaiah's great hymn of praise in thanksgiving for their salvation, which becomes a poem of joy for our salvation at the birth of Jesus.

Second Readings

Two from Paul's Letter to Titus and one from Hebrews.

St. Paul reminds us of what is expected of us if we are to enjoy the salvation won for us by Jesus.

It is out of complete love for us that God sent his Son to bring us salvation. The whole history of God's dealings with his people was a preparation for the coming of Jesus his Son.

Gospel Readings

Two from Luke's Gospel and one from John.

The Gospels tell us about the birth of Jesus, and how the Good News was brought by angels to the shepherds.

With Mary we reflect on the real meaning of Jesus' birth.

John's Gospel begins with a great hymn to the Word of God, the source of all life, whose coming among us makes us children of God.