

# Parish of St Margaret Clitherow

1st Sunday of Advent ( B )

3rd December 2017

## DEANERY TEAM

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**Deacons:** Rev. Robert Hewertson & Rev. Anthony Arrowsmith

**Schools:** www.athertonsacredheart.wigan.sch.uk – www.boothstownhollyfamily.wigan.sch.uk  
www.saintambrosebarlow.co.uk – saintgabrielsprimary.co.uk - saintrichards.wigan.sch.uk  
http://stmaryschs.org.uk/ – **Deanery website:** www.leighdeanery.co.uk



## LITURGICAL CALENDAR

**Psalter** Week 1  
**Readings** Sunday – 1st Sunday of Advent ( B )  
Weekdays – Advent Time, Wk 1

**Sunday** 1st Sunday of Advent ( B )  
(Day of Special Prayer for Migrants)

**Tuesday** St. John Almond, priest

**Thursday** St. Ambrose, Bishop & Doctor

**Friday** Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

**Next Sunday** 2nd Sunday of Advent ( B )

(Bible Sunday)



First Sunday of Advent

### 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

In today's First Reading Isaiah bemoans the way the Lord has seemingly abandoned the people as they have distanced themselves from God through their waywardness. Since returning from exile, the people have had a tough time and, forgetting God's kindness to them, have reverted to pagan practices. The people feel like they have been abandoned by God and turn elsewhere. Yet, despite their sense of distance from God, the prophet acknowledges a desire for the Lord's presence to surround them, as he prays "Oh, that you would tear the heavens open and come down."

Jesus in the Gospel speaks of the need to be prepared for God's coming. Referring specifically to his second coming, Jesus urges those around him to be attentive and vigilant. In effect we're called to remind ourselves to remain close to God our creator. One of the great images of God in the Old Testament is that of the potter, we being the clay. Staying awake spiritually is to ensure that, as the clay, we remain on the potter's wheel, a place of safety. We can hear the words of Paul encouraging us in this venture, as he reminds us that the Lord will keep us steady and blameless until the last day, if we just let the Lord hold on to us.

As we begin this season of Advent, the readings are an encouragement to us, even though they may sometimes sound rather stark. We're called to remember that God respects the choices we make and so, if we choose to distance ourselves from God, it becomes harder to hear God's voice. If we choose a path that obviously deviates from the one that God has set out for us, it can be difficult for us to see the signs that point us back to the right route. Advent is a wake-up call to bring us from potential slumber to a new alertness of the immediacy of God's presence. God is never distant from us. It's just that sometimes we don't allow God's closeness to be apparent to us. Advent can bring us back on track. Advent gives us the opportunity to be further shaped on the potter's wheel. God the potter will never discard us into the waste, even though we do at times find ourselves out of shape, or with fractures. Life itself and the choices we sometimes make do that to us.

In the production of pottery, the potter will sometimes use what is called "slip". Slip is a liquid mixture of clay suspended in water. It is often used to decorate pots, or to help join parts of a pot, or to cover up cracks. At the beginning of this special season of Advent, perhaps we can imagine God's grace being poured over us like the potter's slip. The Lord wants to pour his love out upon us, gently filling the imperfections and smoothing out the inconsistencies. God wants to join us where there is brokenness. Having an image of God like this, like the potter forming us in the palm of his hand, can really help us this Advent. God will never abandon us. Fired in a kiln of pure love, we are a delight in God's eyes.

**Psalms Response** God of hosts, bring us back; let your face shine on us and we shall be saved.

**Gospel Acclamation** Let us see, O Lord, your mercy and give us your saving help.

## PARISH NEWS

### This Week

#### **First Holy Communion Celebrations**

Please note that the Holy Communion preparation for Year 4 children from Sacred Heart, Hindsford, St. Richard's, Atherton and St. Ambrose Barlow, Astley, will take place in the New Year. Letters will be sent through school soon to explain what the preparation course involves. A good way of preparing now is to bring the children to Mass each week so that they become more familiar with the Church and get to know everyone in the Parish.

#### **Holy Family Craft Group**

This has been started in the Parish Hall at Holy Family on Wednesday afternoons between 1.00pm and 3.00pm. We hope to cover most popular crafts such as knitting, crochet, card making and sewing amongst others. Admission £3.50 including all materials.

#### **St Ambrose Barlow Guides**

Guides are collecting items for Women and Children's Wellbeing Bags to go out to Uganda in early December. Please donate any of the following in the box at the back of church or please contact Delia on 07753929476 to collect.

Any item will be much appreciated: toothpaste and toothbrush; wrapped soap; flannel; writing paper and pens/pencils and sharpener; hairbrush; socks; crayons.

Thank you so much for your support with this.

Delia, Bernadette and all the leaders and guides.

#### **Alternative Christmas Card Giving**

##### **Pick up a Star.**

Write a Christmas Greeting to your Friends/Parishioners on the Star (instead of sending individual cards),

Place a donation and the Star into an envelope and place in the basket (St Ambrose Church Porch). All funds raised will go to CAFOD.

Stars available from this weekend, to be displayed from weekend 2nd/3rd December

#### **Advent Collections - Food & Toys 3rd December to 17th December**

During Advent we will be collecting food and toys, as in previous years, but NOT clothes as we have just closed the Barnabus Project collection. More details of the Advent collections see page 3.

#### **Carols by Candlelight**

**Tuesday 12th December 7.00pm**

To be held in the grounds of

**Sacred Heart Church Hindsford**

Music by Tyldesley Brass Band

This will be followed by a Raffle and mince pies in the Parish Club where the fully stocked bar will be open.

NB: IF THE WEATHER IS BAD THE CONCERT WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE PARISH CLUB

#### **Christmas Party Invite from Students at St. Mary's Sixth Form Tuesday, 12th December 2017**

St. Mary's Sixth Form students would like to invite the senior members of our parishes to their annual Christmas party, which will be held at St. Mary's on Tuesday, 12th December 2017 between 12.00 pm and 2.00 pm in the school's Conference Centre.

Refreshments and entertainment will be provided, along with a raffle and prize bingo.

**If you would like to attend please add your names to the list at the back of the church TODAY Sunday 3rd December so we can cater for numbers appropriately.**

Looking forward to seeing you there.

#### **Christmas Flowers for St Ambrose Barlow and Holy Family**

Please fill in the forms at the back of church with names of loved ones who we will remember during the Christmas season. Donations welcome.

#### **Editors note.**

In order to accommodate the items for inclusion this week I have had to reduce the size of text, I apologise for the inconvenience.

#### **Father Christmas**

TODAY Sunday, 3rd December, immediately following the 11.00 am Mass at St Ambrose Barlow, Father Christmas is visiting the Parish Hall and the children will be able to come and see him. There will be refreshments on sale and a Christmas Stall - selling only NEW Christmas items (boxed cards, decorations, wrappings etc.) plus a raffle for a luxury Christmas Hamper.

#### **Christmas Donations**

Your kind donations are requested for:

- New Christmas items (e.g. Boxed Christmas Cards, Christmas wrappings, decorations, or any new items suitable for sale on a Christmas stall).
- There is a list on St Ambrose Barlow Church door asking for food items for the Luxury Christmas Hamper. If you are able to donate any of the items please indicate on the list. Items can be handed in at church each week and will be collected weekly. Finally, thank you in advance for your continuing generosity in support of St Margaret Clitherow parish.

#### **Advent Hamper**

There will be a hamper in St Ambrose Barlow church into which you are asked to place items throughout Advent. On Christmas Eve these items will be taken to a local food bank for distribution amongst those in the community whose needs are greater than our own.

#### **Services During Advent**

Please try your very best to come along to some of the Advent services as we prepare for the great celebration of Christmas.

- Reconciliation Service (with individual Confession) – December 7th at 7.00pm in Ambrose Barlow.
- Advent Carol Service – December 12th at 7.00pm in the grounds of Sacred Heart Church, Hindsford.
- Advent Taize Service – December 13th at 7.00pm in St. Richard's.
- Advent Confessaphon – December 16th from 10.00am-1.30pm in St. Joseph's, Leigh.

#### **HCPT Coffee Morning**

HCPT are holding a Coffee Morning in St. Richard's Parish Centre after the 9.30am Mass TODAY Sunday December 3rd. The Coffee Morning will include a raffle and a tombola. All proceeds go towards HCPT.

Also, at all the Masses on the same weekend some of the students from St. Mary's will be selling raffle tickets for a Christmas Hamper. Again proceeds will go towards HCPT.

#### **Foundation Governor Vacancy**

St Mary's Catholic High School currently has a vacancy for a Foundation Governor.

To apply to become a foundation governor you need to:-

Be a Catholic who attends Sunday Mass regularly and gives true witness to the teachings of the Church

Be prepared to work with discretion as a member of the full governing body and attend training events to help build up a body of knowledge and expertise

Bring a wider skill set to enhance the wider Governing Body in undertaking its collective duties to lead the school and meet the contemporary requirements of the Department for Education and Ofsted

If you are interested in becoming a Foundation governor please can you send a short resume of your particular skills and how you would contribute to our school Governing Body (250 words max). Please send your expressions of interest into school for the attention of the Chair of the Governing Body no later than Friday 15th December 2017.

For further information on the role of a Foundation Governor please check out the Archdiocese website

[www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/schools](http://www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/schools)

or contact the Clerk to Governors (Mrs Pat Lloyd) by telephone on 01942 766906

or email [p.lloyd@admin.st-maryshigh.wigan.sch.uk](mailto:p.lloyd@admin.st-maryshigh.wigan.sch.uk)

In the event of multiple applicants the Chair alongside a member of the clergy will shortlist and assess the skills offered.

# FORTHCOMING EVENTS



## **Advent Collections: 3rd – 17th December**

We are having three collections during Advent for the following:

1. The Windsor Drop in Centre (also called Loaves and Fishes) in Salford is looking for tinned food for the homeless over the Christmas period.
2. The Royal Manchester Children's hospital is looking for NEW gifts for those children who will not receive a gift or a visit on Christmas Day. Children range from babies to 18 years old. Hospital staff sort and wrap the gifts but do welcome contributions of wrapping paper. Gifts should bear the British Standards Kite Mark or the EU Standards CE Mark.
3. Animals in Distress in Irlam would welcome donations of cat and dog food and old towels.

## **Act in Support of Catholic Education**

Archbishop Malcolm wishes to contact us to encourage us to speak out for Catholic Education. He writes:

"Do you support Catholic schools and the right of Catholics to send their children to them? Then we need you to make your voice heard. The Government is making a critical decision on whether to overturn the admissions cap which prevents new Catholic schools from allowing all Catholic pupils to attend. The Prime Minister has acknowledged that this policy discriminates against Catholics and had promised previously to abandon it. Now the Government may decide to keep this discriminatory policy in place instead of removing it. We need you to tell the Government NOT to discriminate against Catholics and to remove the admissions cap on new faith-based schools."

Visit <http://catholicnews.org.uk/education-cap> or search for "Catholic Education" in your search engine to write to the Government and urge them to drop their policy which bans new Catholic schools.

## **Response to the Archbishop's Letter**

A few weeks ago we listened to a Pastoral Letter from Archbishop Malcolm concerning a way ahead for the whole of the Archdiocese. The letter was in response to the results of Deanery meetings throughout the Archdiocese early in the Summer – many thanks again to all those who came along to our Open Meeting in St. Joseph's. In his letter the Archbishop outlined a three-year plan in which we can share a vision for the future of the Archdiocese and every Parish and Deanery within it. This will lead to a Synod – a gathering of the whole Archdiocese in 2020. This doesn't mean that nothing will be done until then. It means that the process will begin in the New Year with a year of prayer. Therefore, during 2018, there will be a number of Holy Hours throughout the year. One of these will be led by the Archbishop himself. The second year will focus on Parish groups coming together to share their vision for the future. Then the final year all the deaneries will meet on a more regular basis to propose a way ahead. It is a proposal that the Archbishop has initiated himself in response to the people who shared their views at the different Open Meetings last year. As soon as we know more about the process we will share it with you but, in the meantime, please come along to the Holy Hours when we have them in the New Year and pray for the future vision of our Church.

## **6.30 pm Sunday Mass (St. Richard's)**

As mentioned last weekend at Mass we have made the difficult decision to end our celebration of the 6.30 pm Mass at St. Richard's on Sunday evenings. It was a very difficult decision but a necessary one since it is proving more and more difficult to find supply priests who can cover Sunday evenings. Also the numbers of people attending the Mass have decreased quite a lot over the years. We will lose more Masses in the future as we prepare ourselves for a time when there will be only three priests in the Deanery. This is the first step. It has been on the cards for many years but still it is sad. We do, however, have more than enough Masses in the Deanery at present – perhaps still too many for the numbers of those attending. The last 6.30 pm Mass will take place on Sunday December 17th, since the following two Sundays are Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve

## **Reflect:**

'Stay Awake!' This week's Gospel theme reminds us that it is easy to be lulled into a false sense of security, to become entrapped in our own little bubble of awareness and lose sight of the wider dimension and picture of what other people are feeling or experiencing, and of what is happening in the world in general.

## **Pray:**

An Advent Prayer

Come Lord Jesus, come, and let your light shine through us so that through our actions We may be salt for the earth,  
A light in people's sight And that we might reach out to you  
In one another, Especially those in need.

Amen  
(CAFOD)

## **Act:**

Consider ways in which you can prepare more meaningfully for Christmas. Try not to get caught up in the consumer race to buy, buy buy!

## **Challenge:**

To cut down on plastics, buy loose fruit and vegetables at the market, greengrocers or supermarket. Use recycled plastic bags or paper or cloth bags to carry your produce in rather than buying items in a plastic tray wrapped in cling film.

## **Christmas Mass Times**

An early notice of the Christmas Mass times this year. Many people like to plan ahead so here are the Mass times for St. Margaret Clitherow Parish and St. Edmund Arrowsmith:-

### **Christmas Eve.**

- XII Apostles, Leigh at 5.30pm.
- St. Joseph's, Leigh, Holy Family, Boothstown & St. Richard's, Atherton at 6.00pm.
- St. Ambrose Barlow, Astley at 8.00pm.
- Sacred Heart, Leigh & Holy Family, Boothstown at 11.30pm.

### **Christmas Day.**

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

There will also be a special Mass to celebrate the arrival of 2018 in Our Lady of the Rosary Church in Leigh. This will take place at 12noon on New Year's Day. All welcome.

## **Christingle**

This will be this Sunday 3rd December in Holy Family church at 4.00 pm. All children welcome.

## **Ecumenical Carol Service**

This will be held at Standfield shops on Sunday 3rd December at 5.00 pm together with the local churches. All welcome.

## **Newsletter**

Please ensure that items for next week's newsletter are sent in by Wednesday evening. 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**

All monies should be paid into the Parish account of St Margaret Clitherow Please note spelling 'Clitherow'. Thank you.

## **Sacred Heart Church, Hindsford Community Website**

[www.sacredheartchindsford.co.uk](http://www.sacredheartchindsford.co.uk)

# PARISH MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS

Those who are Sick  
please pray for



Agnes Pilkington  
All Cancer Patients  
Ann Mellin  
Anne Broad  
Baby George  
Bernard O'Donnell  
Bridie Molyneux  
Catherine Jones  
Christopher Browne  
Clifford Browne  
Derek Maude  
Edward Leach  
Emma Oldham  
Enid Kenwright  
Eugenie Cheetham  
Fon O'Hara  
Freda Peake  
Gerald Hackett  
Guy Ryan  
Irene Burke  
Irene McIntyre  
Jean Tchibukdjian  
Jess Garrett  
Joan Wilkinson  
John Wall  
Kathy Kenyon  
Maisie Sweeney (age9)  
Margaret Case  
Margaret Dawson  
Margaret Hurley  
Margaret Ross  
Margaret Smith  
Margaret Wall  
Marjorie Price  
Mary Tiernan  
Maureen Halliday  
Michael Skiffington  
Michael Wright  
Pat O'Neill  
Patricia Wilson  
Rev Jim Melia  
Sandra Jones  
Shelagh Welsby  
Sr Megan Haisley  
Ted & Harriet Langin  
Thomas Higgins  
Thomas McLoughlin  
Wyn Wright

Those who have died  
recently

Fred Croft.  
Ellen Heaton  
Betty Rostern  
Ronald Hailwood

Week Beginning 3rd december	Holy Family	St. Ambrose Barlow	St. Richard's
<b>SUNDAY</b>	9.00 am John Quigley 11.00 am Anthony Dermody	(Sat) 6.00 pm Karen Conlan  11.00 am George Daniel Love	(Sat) 6.00 pm Margaret Aspden  9.30 am Derrick Langin 6.30 pm Pat Hughes
<b>MONDAY</b>			
<b>TUESDAY</b>		9.15 am Leslie Almond	9.15 am Tony Donelan
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	6.30 pm Elizabeth Dempsey <i>Please note earlier time</i>	9.00 am St Mary's Mass Joan Clegg	9.00 - 10.00 am <i>Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament</i>
<b>THURSDAY</b>	10.00 am Anastasia Giblin		9.15 am Julie Gilbertson
<b>FRIDAY</b>	10.00 am Derek Bates <i>Mass in St Gabriel's School</i>		9.15 am Joan Baxter
<b>SATURDAY</b>	10.00 am Danny Williams	10.00 am <i>Padre Pio Prayer Group</i> 6.00 pm Madge Farrell	6.00 pm Mary Furey
<b>NEXT SUNDAY</b>	9.00 am Eileen West  11.00 am Joan Higgins	11.00 am Mary Agnes Kearns & Anastasia Marie Kearns	9.30 am Leonard Beach. 6.30 pm Peter Yates

## LAST WEEK'S PARISH COLLECTIONS

Offertory £ 1963.89  
Animate £ 357.18

*Thank you so much for your generosity.*

## SECOND COLLECTIONS

Today Advent

Next Week Advent  
Collections - Food & Toys

**Animate:** The annual National Youth Sunday collection goes to support Animate - the Archdiocesan Youth Service.

**Advent Collections - Food & Toys:** See page 3.



## SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Confessions 10.30 am on Saturday after morning Mass at Holy Family and after both 6.00 pm Masses in St Ambrose and St Richard's.

Confession also available where possible by request or by appointment.

## READINGS FOR NEXT WEEKEND

Second Sunday of Advent (B)

**First Reading** *Isaiah 40:1-5,9-11.*  
Isaiah offers a message of hope: the people are to prepare for the coming of the Lord.

**Second Reading** *2 Peter 3:8-14.*  
God is patient, wanting no one to be lost.

**Gospel Reading** *Mark 1:1-8.*  
The beginning of the Good News: Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

## BAPTISM

We welcome into our family of Faith

Rex Leech

*Advent:  
A Season  
of Hope  
and  
Anticipation*

