



AMDG

PARISH EXTRA



NEWS, VIEWS AND INFORMATION FOR ST PETER'S,
ST JOSEPH'S AND THE STONYHURST COMMUNITY

You can contact Father Curtis directly by telephone 01254 826268 or email stpeterschurchstonyhurst@btinternet.com

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Christmas 2024

EDITORIAL

When you come to church this Christmas to celebrate the birth of the Saviour, and as you listen to the readings from scripture, something will seem not quite right.

Since the beginning of December we have been using a new translation of the bible for the readings we listen to in church. Some familiar phrases might seem odd. For example, the vigil Christmas Mass gospel begins: "This is how Jesus Christ came to be born", but will now read: "Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way". Some of our long cherished Christmas phrases will sound a little odd. So why the new translation? The aim is to make the words we hear closer to the original text. Simply put, the words we hear will be closer to the words St Matthew actually wrote. Let us hope that our years be full of joy as we hear the Good News proclaimed to us.

A special time for everyone

Christmas is like looking at our lives through a magnifying glass. During this year some have lost a loved one. The empty chair round the Christmas table brings home their loss. Others may be celebrating Christmas as a couple for the first time. Their joy together is magnified. For some this might be their first Christmas with a new baby. The child is unaware of the love being showered upon them through the gifts they receive. So whether this year has been filled with happiness or sorrow, the baby Jesus comes to each of us where we find ourselves. May he take away the sorrow of those who grieve and may he deepen the joy of those who rejoice. The Lord has come into our world to bring each one of us the gift of his presence. May we receive him warmly.



Christmas Mass times



- Tue 24th Dec **5.00pm** Carols in St Peter's
5.30pm Mass including procession to crib
In St Peter's (please bring your baby Jesus)
8.30pm Carols in St Peter's
9.00pm Mass of Christmas in St Peter's
There is NO Mass at MIDNIGHT.
- Wed 25th Dec **9.30am** Mass in St Joseph's
11.00am Mass in St Peter's
- Thu 26th Dec No Mass
- Fri 27th Dec **8.00am** Mass in St Peter's
- Sat 28th Dec **4.30pm** Exposition **5.30pm** Mass in St Peter's
- Sun 29th Dec **9.30am** Mass in St Joseph's (Holy Family)
11.00am Mass in St Peter's (Holy Family)
- Wed 1st Jan **9.30am** New Year's Day Mass in St Joseph's

Please take this Newsletter home with you at the end of Mass



A Tale of Two Synods

The Universal Synod

This year the Universal Synod of the Catholic Church concluded in Rome. Pope Francis called the Synod three years ago as he believed that only by listening to the voices of the whole church could we chart a way forward and equip the Church to face the challenges of the modern world.



As a parish we took part in the initial phase of the Synod by forming listening groups, each of which met several times. They were not discussion groups, but rather groups where we had the opportunity to listen to each other. Each group then distilled what they had heard in the sharing to formulate a parish response. Then each diocese formulated a report based on the ideas that surfaced in each parish. All of these were sent to Rome.

The first plenary session took place in the summer of 2023. Delegates from all over the world: bishops, priests and lay people prayerfully considered all of these reports and listened to what the Holy Spirit is calling us to be.

Again, as a parish we listened to their interim report and fed back into the second plenary which took place this summer. We had an insight into how the whole process unfolded as Fr Timothy Radcliffe, the Spiritual Director of the Synod, came to address us at the Holy Week retreat this year. Fr Radcliffe has since been made a Cardinal.

The final document has been published. There were no headline grabbing conclusions, but the synod has called for women to be appointed to decision making positions in the church. More important than the individual conclusions is the method of listening, which will be the model for making decisions at every level of the church in the future.

The Synod of the diocese of Salford.

Running alongside the Universal Synod, Bishop John Arnold called a diocesan synod.

Once more as a parish we prayerfully considered questions in listening groups. These have been collated and presented to a meeting of the whole diocese. We chose two representatives to attend this meeting.

Four documents were produced and sent back to the parishes. We carefully considered these and have sent a response for the second plenary session due to take place in March. Our parish response focused on how, we as a parish, can reach out to our youth "where they are".

Sadly, few young people come to church on a weekly basis, so we need to find new ways to support them in the development of their faith.



Those who attend St Joseph's, Stonyhurst or St Augustine's receive a solid faith formation at school, but this needs to be strengthened by catechetical programmes and less formal structures. The Youth Club does a great job in forming a sense of community, but we need to find other ways in which we can engage our young people to engage with Jesus Christ.

For more information on the diocesan synod go to:

www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/synod

The final document of the Universal Synod is at: www.synod.va/news



Our Neighbours at the CHC tell us of their plans for next year...

The **Christian Heritage Centre** has had a busy 2024, with this having been the first year that we were in a position of being able to launch and advertise a year-round programme for the year ahead: an encouraging marker!

This year we relaunched our **Christian Leadership Formation programme** this year. A cohort of 15 sixth-form students from around the country came together at Theodore House in the summer, for a week of prayer, study, fellowship and communication skills development. The second module ran in London in October, with the third likewise concluding the programme in the capital in February.

How is 2025 shaping up?

We intend to relaunch the **Christian Leadership Formation** programme for the coming year. As before, we will be seeking applications from Year 12 students from around the country who are passionate about bringing their Catholic faith to bear in our country's public discourse. Please do help spread the word to any families and young people you know. The necessary information is at www.christianleadershipformation.com

* Our 2025 weekend retreats for laity will kick off with St Edith Stein (or St Teresa Benedicta), and a study of her remarkable life and persistent search for the truth, which brought her to the Catholic faith amidst persecution. We will welcome Fr Matthew Blake, OCD back to Theodore House to preach this retreat for us.

* Closer to home and in honour of the Holy Year, we have invited Mgr. John Allen from Salford Diocese to offer a weekend of study and prayer with a focus on our local martyr-saints of the Reformation era. This will take place in September, and will be followed not long afterwards by a Salford Diocese day pilgrimage to Stonyhurst and Sablesbury Hall.

* Subject to confirmation, we are also planning another retreat with the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal from Bradford in June or July.

* Following last year's success, we are planning to continue our "Called to Love" retreat in the coming May, which is geared towards young, singles or dating couples, to engage them more deeply with the Church's understanding of the human person, of love and chastity and of the marital vocation.

* We are also welcoming monks from St Joseph's Abbey, Flavigny (France) this March. Since its foundation, the community has had a particular apostolate to men, and they will be offering a 5-day retreat for men based on the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius.

* And we look forward to welcoming back Fr Roger Dawson, SJ and his team to provide another retreat next November on Christian spirituality, mindfulness and psychology.

In terms of our summer courses, the iconography course has proved so popular that places for 2025's course are already sold out! August's annual course in partnership with CEPHAS will, this year, take into consideration the broader question of the understanding of God across the monotheistic faiths and the Western philosophical tradition, with a particular focus on comparing and contrasting the Christian and Islamic theistic accounts.

visit our website –

www.christianheritagecentre.com

or subscribe to our monthly newsletter.

Stefan Kaminski
Director, The Christian Heritage Centre



THEODORE HOUSE

Theodore House, located on the Stonyhurst Estate, offers 25 en-suite rooms available for

**B & B bookings. Contact: telephone 01254827084
or bookings@theodorehouse.com**



What's new at St Joseph's:

As many will know, the start of our summer holidays did not begin as we had hoped. Our beautiful school was victim to an arson attack - burning down the Year 5 and 6 classroom. I cannot begin to tell you how devastated our school community felt on the day of the fire with the thought of the enormity of what was to come. Yet, among the sadness and despair, I was overwhelmed by the kindness and generosity we received from parents past and present; parishioners and villagers. On the day of the fire, a team of people appeared to remove potential fire risks preventing another attack. A few days' later parents gathered to help clean up the initial fire damage in the dining room. St Mary's Hall donated much needed furniture to create a temporary classroom within the school hall, allowing our Year 5/6 pupils a place to study and our school staff spent part of their summer holiday to create resources and displays ready for the new learning space.



On the 4th September, we were ready to welcome our children back to school. The Year 5/6 pupils have adapted to their new learning environment beautifully. Miss Winnard, our new Year 1/2 teacher has settled in well and Mrs Leybourne gave birth to a beautiful baby girl – Mabel Beatrice.

We started the festive season with the opening of doors on our beautiful 'Christmas story' display, enjoyed 'Blessing of the class wreaths' service from Fr Tim along with a special Mass on the feast of St Nicholas.

Our younger children enjoyed a trip to the panto, whilst our older children enjoyed watching the musical 'Chitty chitty bang bang' at the Grand theatre in Blackpool. Our annual nativity performance will create memories for many parents and fun parties with a visit from Fr Christmas will bring joy to all, proving a primary school at Christmas really is the best place to be!

As we close the door on 2024, we look with hope for the New Year where the next chapter will begin.

Mrs Laura Orr
Headteacher

For more information about St Joseph's Primary School go to:
[www. https://www.st-josephs-hurstgreen.lancs.sch.uk/](https://www.st-josephs-hurstgreen.lancs.sch.uk/)



St Joseph's Youth Club

It's been another great year at St Joseph's Youth Club, with an average attendance of 35 plus youngsters per session. The youth club runs fortnightly during term time and is open to 9-14 year olds. It's a great place for kids to unwind after a busy week at school, and maybe catch up with some old friends who may have gone to different secondary schools. Activities undertaken this year include rounders and football on the football pitch (weather & light permitting), table tennis, air hockey, basketball, badminton and pool. We also have a great tuck shop and crafts activities. We had an end of year party in July which proved very popular and I am pleased to report that the weather was warm and dry for a change! We are about to hold our Christmas Disco.

Wishing our members, our volunteers and the parish, a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous 2025!



If you would like more information, or would like to volunteer please contact Darren on 0783756514.

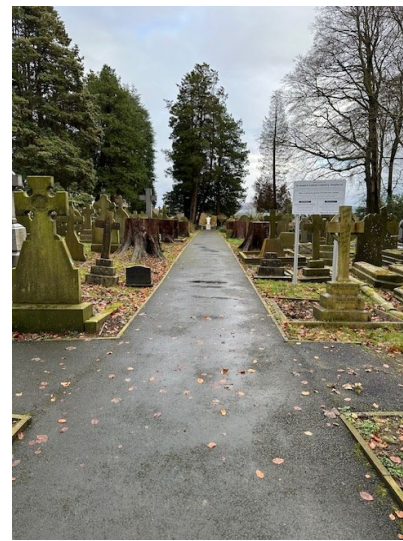
Our cemetery has a brighter future



Before



During



After

The main right hand side path into the cemetery has had all the Cypress trees cut down. The majority had simply come to the end of their natural life, and it made sense to take them all down.

Sadly more trees have been earmarked to be taken down next year. We hope to create a Stations of the Cross using the residual stumps so there is a positive outcome for the future.

Please check out the St Peter's website for any matters relating to burials at St Joseph's Cemetery.

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

If you would like to join the crew that keeps the cemetery neat and tidy, please contact Niall Macfarlane. New volunteers always welcome.

The Law Commission has recently proposed amendments to the Law with reference to 're-using old burial grounds'. The changes include: *Old graves could be reused, and closed burial grounds could be reopened to help manage the shortage of burial space, under proposals made today by the Law Commission. The proposals form part of a consultation to bring the law on burial and cremation, which in parts is over 170 years old, up to date.*

(Google: Law Commission Cemeteries)

We have such a space on the left hand side of the Chapel which includes graves which are from the 1830s, with very few headstone furniture, and potentially the equivalent space as the current 'new' cemetery part, which started nearly a hundred years ago. The Law Commission is seeking feedback from Parishes such as ourselves and we would be in favour of developing this space for future use. We will be submitting our suggestions and support for the Law changes on-line very shortly. This will still take time to feed into actual changes in the Law, but it seems the best outcome for our cemetery in two or three years' time.



2024 remembered

Fr Timothy Radcliffe OP, who gave the key-note talk at the Holy Week retreat has been made a Cardinal by Pope Francis.



Fr Peter Gallagher, the Jesuit Provincial, came to celebrate our St Ignatius day Mass. After the Mass we enjoyed a splendid B-B-Q.

Some of our parishioners took part in the sponsored walk (in the rain) for Caritas. Well done!



A festive meal for Christmas in the Memorial Hall

Coffee Stop takes place in the Bowling Green Pavilion every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month. All welcome.



**Food is a real part of
Christmas - feast on
these tasty jokes!**



Why does the turkey play percussion?

He has the drumsticks

I use my gran's turkey recipe

I just copied and basted it

Did you hear about the baby that ate
the Christmas decorations?

It got tinsel-itis!

What did one cranberry say to
another?

Tis the season to be Jelly!

Why did the gingerbread man
go to school?

To become a smart cookie



What do you get when you
cross a turkey with a ghost?

A poultry-geist

How does a bottle of wine know
so many secrets?

Heard 'em on the grapevine

**Why does cheese always get
its own way?
A feta compli**

