



# The Roman Catholic Parish of Saint Vincent de Paul, Norden

Diocese of Salford

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## SUNDAY NEWSLETTER

1<sup>st</sup> March 2026

### THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT [A]

#### At Saint Vincent's This Week ...

*The First Week of Lent (Psalter Week 1)*

##### Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February

**Saint Polycarp, Bishop and Martyr**

Leviticus 19:1-2.11-18; Matthew 25:31-46

9.30 a.m. **Word & Communion**

##### Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February

**Lent Weekday**

Isaiah 55:10-11; Matthew 6:7-15

10.00 a.m. **Funeral MASS of Mary Anne Meredith**

1.00 p.m. **"Getting Together"**

7.00 p.m. **"Discover the Treasure"** (see inside)

##### Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> February

**Lent Weekday**

Jonah 3:1-10; Luke 11:29-32

9.30 a.m. **MASS**

##### Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February

**Lent Weekday**

Esther 4:17; Matthew 7:7-12

9.30 a.m. **MASS with Year 3**

10.30 a.m. **Coffee, Cake & Chat at Bamford Chapel**

7.00 p.m. **Lenten Station Mass at Saint Mary & Saint Philip Neri, Radcliffe**

##### Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February

Day of Abstinence

**Saint Gregory of Narek, Abbot and Doctor of the Church**

**CAFOD Lent Family Fast Day**

Ezekiel 18:21-28; Matthew 5:20-26

9.30 a.m. **MASS**

12.00 noon **Stations of the Cross**

##### Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February

**Lent Weekday**

Deuteronomy 26:16-19; Matthew 5:43-48

10.00 a.m. **Exposition and Confessions**

10.45 a.m. **Benediction**

11.00 a.m. **MASS for Peace**

12.00 noon **Baptisms of Sunny Rae and Sydney Lou Sweetman**

6.00 p.m. **Sacrament of Penance (Confessions)**

6.30 p.m. **First MASS of Sunday**

##### Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March

**The Second Sunday of Lent (A)**

Genesis 12:1-4a; 2 Timothy 1:8b-10; Matthew 17:1-9

9.00 a.m. **MASS Refreshments after Mass**

11.00 a.m. **MASS Refreshments after Mass**

## Welcome to Saint Vincent's

If you are a visitor to Saint Vincent's this weekend, please feel welcome! If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask. Here is some information to help you feel at home.

**Parking:** please try to give priority to places nearest Church for people with restricted mobility. Thank you.

**Hard of Hearing?** There is an Induction Loop System installed in this Church: if you wear a hearing aid, please turn it to the 'T' setting

**Refreshments after Mass:** Everyone is very welcome to stay behind after Sunday morning Masses and share a cuppa! Tea and Coffee are served in the Parish Centre on the opposite side of the carpark after 9.00 a.m. and 11.00 a.m. Sunday Masses.

**Toilets:** The toilet is located near the side entrance: children should not go out of Church unaccompanied. Please use the disinfectant wipes to clean all surfaces after every use—dispose of them in the bin but do not flush them down the toilet. Thank you.

**Saint Vincent's Parish Centre:** The Parish Centre is available for parish use and outside bookings. Please contact Robert Allen on 0758 320 7810 for all enquiries.

## In our prayers ...

### Masses & Prayer Requests

Recently Deceased: Father Bob Morrow, Monica Bowden, Mary Ann Meredith

Anniversaries: Leonardo Melidoni, Claudio Melidoni, Annunziata Curtosi, Salvatore Manco, Michael Ilkin.

### National Cycle of Prayer

During Lent we are asked to pray for: Candidates for the Sacraments; the Needy and Hungry of the World; Penitents and Wanderers.

### Diocesan Cycle of Prayer

We pray for the people of the parish of Saint Anne, Crumpsall, and for Father Joshy Joseph, SSP, their parish priest, together with their parish primary school and the chaplaincy to the North Manchester General Hospital.

### Holy Father's Intention (February)

**For children with incurable diseases:** Let us pray that children suffering from incurable diseases and their families receive the necessary medical care and support, never losing strength and hope.

## The Word This Week

In the Cycle of Sunday Readings, the oldest are those of Year A in Lent - these Gospels have accompanied the Church for many centuries. We must realise why: Lent was originally the time of immediate preparation of candidates for Baptism at Easter (something which has been reintroduced to the Church by RCIA): those already baptised used it as a time to prepare for the renewal of Baptismal promises. This is why so much of the Scripture in Lent is about Baptism, New Life and Salvation. What is the new life of Baptism? What are we set free from? What is sin? We begin Lent by hearing about sin and temptation; the Gospel will tell us of Jesus' own temptations, something he shares with us, though he did not sin. The other Scripture readings prepare us for the Gospel, in which Jesus, the new Adam, triumphs over temptation.

## News and Notes

### "Getting Together"

The next meeting is this coming **Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February** from 1.00 p.m. - 3.00 p.m. in the Parish centre, with the usual hospitality, refreshments and raffle. This week we welcome Joanne from the Justicia FairTrade Shop, who will be bringing goods for us to buy! Everyone is very welcome.

### Hospitality Teams Needed!

Over the next few weeks we are hosting a few events that need brews and biscuits. If you can help, please sign up in the porch: we need teas and coffees before the Deanery Event **this Tuesday evening**; cakes and brews for a Churches Together event on the afternoon of **18<sup>th</sup> March**; and brews, biscuits and cakes for after the Deanery Station Mass on **26<sup>th</sup> March**. Thanks in advance!

### "Discover The Treasure"

Have you ever found it difficult to talk about your Catholic faith? Or ever wondered if you know enough about it? This Lent our Deanery is offering an invitation to "Discover the Treasure": there will be a session of discussion and input led by Father Brian Murphy and Anne Bardell, authors of "A Message for its Own Time", which seeks to help ordinary Catholics build up their confidence in living, understanding and sharing our faith. The sessions are this coming **Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February** here at Saint Vincent's, or on **Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March** at Saint Mary and Saint Philip Neri, Belgrave Street, Radcliffe, beginning with refreshments at 6.30 p.m. This introductory session will be followed by three more in Eastertide, for those who wish to delve deeper! Everyone is very welcome!

### "Coffee, Cake and Chat"

Our Churches Together gatherings are back! Over the next few months we are invited to each other's churches for a cuppa and a chance to get to know each other a bit better! Each session will have someone from one of our churches giving a short talk about their denomination. There is a poster in the porch advertising all events: the first is at Bamford Chapel this coming **Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February** at 10.30 a.m. Please pop along if you can!

### Deanery Station Masses

Lent is a journey, whereby we travel from Ashes to the Font at Easter. Along the way an ancient tradition of the Church is to stop at "stations": in our Deanery we will be calling at five different "stations" - four churches and a Sixth Form College - to celebrate Mass together as we journey through Lent. The Stations this year are:

#### **Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February:**

Saint Mary and Saint Philip Neri, Radcliffe

#### **Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March:**

Holy Cross Sixth Form College, Bury

**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March:** Saint Michael's Whitefield

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March:** Sacred Heart, Rochdale

**Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March:** Saint Vincent's Norden

Each Mass begins at 7.00 p.m., with the opportunity for confession beforehand, and refreshments afterwards. Everyone is very welcome to come to one or all Masses!

### A Little Lent Extra ...

It's a long time since we had a "Wednesday Witter", so there will be a special one for Lent on **Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March** on "The Shroud of Turin." This remarkable object, whether miraculous or a medieval work of art, is a wonderful aid to understanding what the Lord went through in Holy Week. Starting with tea and coffee straight after 9.30 a.m. Mass, everyone is very welcome!

### CAFOD Lent Family Fast Day

This coming **Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February** is the CAFOD Fast Day - a day when we are invited to save some money by giving something up, and bring that money to Church next weekend to help the hungry and needy in our world. This year there is a focus on Zimbabwe, facing ongoing drought: "Shorai and his family worked with CAFOD's local experts to build an eco-garden, using drought-resistant crops and a solar-powered water pump. That pump, funded by Fast Day donations like yours, draws water from a nearby dam, turning dry ground into fertile land." By supporting CAFOD's Family Fast Day this Lent, you're being the good neighbour Jesus calls us to be - loving others as we love ourselves. This Family Fast Day, let's show love to our neighbours. Let's eat simply and give generously - so another family can put food on the table. Thank you.

### Parish Census

Many thanks to everyone who has already returned Registration Forms: please keep them coming, and if you haven't taken one to fill in yet there are plenty in the porch.

### Anointing Oil

After the success of the small vials of blessed oil (not the Sacramental Oil of the Sick) at our last First Friday Mass, there are now some more available near the Font. This oil, perfumed with frankincense and myrrh, has been blessed by Father James, and can be used at home. It is not "magic" - it is an outward sign of the inner prayer and trust in God that we need in times of ill-health. Please make sure you take a little prayer card which should always be used with the Anointing Oil at home.

### Marriage Matters

Avoid independence! Today, both Eve and Jesus are tempted to become independent, to turn away from the love of God. In marriage, we can think we have a right to fulfil our own desires without considering our partner, but we need to share these deepest hopes and dreams, and be prepared to hear the impact on our loved one and our relationship.

## Diocesan Notes

### Laudato Si' Centre Parish Awards 2026

The inaugural Laudato Si' Centre Parish Awards will take place this year - the Year of St Francis. Inspired by Pope Francis' encyclical, the awards are open to parish communities who take part in practical action that supports environmental stewardship and/or social justice, showing faith-filled care for God's creation. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to a presentation at Wardley Hall where they will receive a certificate in recognition of their work, presented by Bishop

John. Please email [laudatosicentre@dioceseofsalford.org.uk](mailto:laudatosicentre@dioceseofsalford.org.uk) for a nomination form. The deadline for nominations is Friday 27 March.

### Caritas Salford - Pray, Fast, Give

This Lent, visit Caritas Salford's website for a range of free resources and information for your parish community as you pray, fast and give this Lent: [www.caritassalford.org.uk/Lent](http://www.caritassalford.org.uk/Lent)

### Exploring our Lenten Gospels

Each Tuesday during our Lenten period, a series of reflections will be given online by various speakers, exploring the meaning of our Lenten Gospels and their implications for our lives today. The series will begin on Tuesday 17 February with Fr. Michael Deas reflecting on The Temptations of Jesus and will conclude with Bishop John on the Palm Sunday readings. For more information on how to book your free place, please visit the diocesan website: <https://dioceseofsalford.org.uk/online-readings-for-lent/>

## THE BODY BIBLE

### 3: The Nose



Noses? In the Bible? Really? Indeed there are! One of the most significant (and slightly amusing) passages comes from a Psalm, which is mocking those who worship false gods: it points out that the statues and images that pagans worship are incapable of doing anything, and we get the line "they have ears but they cannot hear, noses but they cannot smell!". Other nasal references concern jewellery and restraints: nose rings for women (as in Genesis, when Abraham's servant finds Rebecca as wife for Isaac, and gifts her a gold nose-ring) and accompaniments to bridles and bits for livestock – the latter also being used metaphorically against the invading Assyrian king Sennacherib: "I will put my hook in your nose, and my bit in your mouth; I will turn you back on the way by which you came." Sennacherib indeed failed in his assault on Jerusalem, and slunk back to Assyria, defeated! There is one other, rather unusual reference: in the story of the Flood, when Noah comes out of the ark he offers a burnt sacrifice to the Lord: we are then told "The LORD smelt the pleasing odour..." – as with the mouth of God last week this is not to be taken literally – God does not have a nose! It is an image, of something that pleases God. While Jesus does not explicitly mention noses, nevertheless he does talk about how our senses can lead us into sin – while he talks about the eye and the foot, he could also include noses: how often might the sweet odour of something tasty tempt us into gluttony!

Next week: the Eye.

## The Sacraments

### Home Communion

Brenda Robinson is our Coordinator for Home Communion: if you or a relative find yourself housebound for a period of time, or know of a Catholic moving into one of our care homes, and would like to receive communion at home, please let Brenda know on 0785 559 8016.

### Baptisms

...are by appointment: please collect, fill in and return one of the Information forms from the porch. They provide details of what is required and the next steps in the process.

### Marriage

...is by appointment. Please take an information leaflet from the porch and return the tear-off portion to arrange an

interview. Do not make bookings before the interview. Six months' notice is required.

### Anointing of the Sick

Please call the Presbytery to ask for this Sacrament. It should not be left until the last minute, but the sick should celebrate this sacrament to receive God's healing and comfort.

### Confirmation and First Holy Communion

As the Communion programme has begun, no further candidates can sign up for 2026. Registration for 2027 will begin next September. Confirmation is in Year 8—children in Catholic High Schools will soon be invited directly, otherwise please ask Father James for a Registration Form.

## Care and Concern

### Our Parish S.V.P.

The S.V.P. Conference at Saint Vincent's support people in need in a variety of ways; visiting people at home or in care homes, responding to calls for practical help, providing home cooked meals for around twenty-four residents of Leopold Court, a local homeless unit, one day every fortnight, providing food bags for local families. If you or anyone you know would like any kind of help please contact Joan Hamilton on 0773 990 8561 or send an email to [PresidentD111410@svp.org.uk](mailto:PresidentD111410@svp.org.uk). Please also remember that donations to the SVP can be made at any time through the donations slot on the back wall of Church, or by bank transfer online: Account Name D111410 SVP ST VINCENT—ROCHDALE; Account Number 4608 2506; Sort Code 60-60-04. Thank you for your support!

### Rochdale Food Bank

Please place your donations in the boxes at the back of the Church. The Food Bank is currently short of everything, but in urgent need of Coffee, Tinned Rice/Custard, Sugar, Tinned Potatoes, Fruit Juice and Jam. More details at [rochdalefoodbank.org.uk](http://rochdalefoodbank.org.uk)

### Donations

Please be aware that there are permanent donation boxes on the back wall of Church for CAFOD, Caritas Diocese of Salford, Caritas Ukraine and the Parish S.V.P. Thank you for your constant generosity!

### Bank Donations

The account details for direct banking, for either one-off or regular giving are: Account Name: "The Salford Diocesan Trust St Vincent de Paul Norden" Account Number: 8049 2523 Sort Code: 20.55.34

## Next Sunday's Gospel

### Matthew 17:1-9

At that time: Jesus took with him Peter and James and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. And Peter said to Jesus, 'Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah.' He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.' When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, 'Rise, and have no fear.' And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one, but Jesus only. And as they were coming

down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, 'Tell no one the vision, until the Son of Man is raised from the dead.'

## Pastoral Letter

**of the Right Reverend John Arnold, Bishop of Salford**

*To be read or distributed in all Parishes on the weekend of 22nd February*

Dear Sisters and Brothers, dear friends in Christ,  
With the celebration of Ash Wednesday, we have begun our observance of the Season of Lent and this year we do so as we mark the first anniversary of our diocesan synodal voting day and as we commemorate the eighth centenary of the death of Saint Francis of Assisi, one of the most celebrated saints of our Church. I believe we can merge these themes together, including the impact of the recent visit of the relic of Saint Carlo Acutis, as a fitting focus for our Season of Lent.

Lent invites us to a time of reflection, when we are asked to consider the life of Christ and his journey and the response in our own lives to his teaching and ministry. The definitive voting of the Diocesan Synod took place just one year ago next weekend. That time of prayerful discernment presented us with priorities for action in the life and work of our Diocese. We are acting on the decisions and the priorities that were established that day and we will have a Pastoral Plan to share with you later this year. By adopting this synodal way, we are committed to continuing that sense of openness and discernment and it continues to be a reminder to us that our life as Christians is not a matter of just keeping some rules and maintaining some religious routine, but an on-going journey of discovering how we can be like Christ, bringing love and hope and encouragement into our world and into the lives of the people that God places in our lives each day, be they family members, friends, work colleagues or even strangers. Saint Paul calls us "ambassadors for Christ" which is both a privilege and an enormous challenge. To be ambassadors, we are called to continue the work of Christ, imitating his actions and ministry in all we do. By the synodal way, we are invited to continue that prayerful listening so that we are constantly considering, and reviewing, how best we may live the Gospel values in our Diocese today.

What encouragement might we find in the life of Saint Francis, as we celebrate this anniversary? Here was a man who lived his

convictions, radically. As a young man, he enjoyed wealth and willingly armed himself for conflict against the neighbouring city of Perugia. But when he saw conflict as incompatible with his faith, he worked for peace and for the relief of poverty, witnessed in his own personal poverty and in his providing for the poor. He understood the need for a time of silence in his life, for prayer in the presence of God. Pope Leo urges us to see that conflict does not provide any lasting solutions and that we can all be peacemakers. He also speaks often of the need to find some silence for prayer in our busy and noisy lives. Once Saint Francis had come to believe something, he dedicated himself to pursuing it, best seen perhaps in his understanding of the union of our lives and activities with the environment and the need to care for creation and our common home.

It is that same sense of conviction and dedication which we see in the short life of Saint Carlo Acutis. What a privilege it was to receive the relic in this Diocese, for five days. Thousands of people came to pray, and to hear of Saint Carlo's dedication to attending daily Mass, his desire for frequent confession, the praying of the rosary and spending time before the Blessed Sacrament. He found real joy and peace in celebrating his faith in prayer and sacrament, which in turn prompted his generosity to those around him and his simplicity of life. All this was done in the context of our times and the positive and creative use of the internet.

As the family of the Church in the Diocese of Salford, we are people who are so diverse in terms of our experience and gifts. That diversity is our strength so that, working together, with all those gifts and talents and skills, we make present the body of Christ. In these days of the Season of Lent, let us all be courageous in asking ourselves, how might we imitate the energy and enthusiasm and conviction of Saint Carlo Acutis and Saint Francis of Assisi and make Christ present through the daily actions of our lives.

And, in these days, let us offer our prayers for Archbishop Richard Moth, as he begins his ministry as Archbishop of Westminster and his shepherding of the Church in England and Wales, guiding us all in our role as "ambassadors for Christ". And, as the family of the Diocese of Salford, we continue to pray "Stay with us, Lord, on our Journey".

With my best wishes, prayer and blessing,  
+John Arnold, Bishop of Salford

### Sunday Gospel Wordsearch

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WILDERNESS

TEMPTED

DEVIL

FASTED

FORTY

HUNGRY

STONES

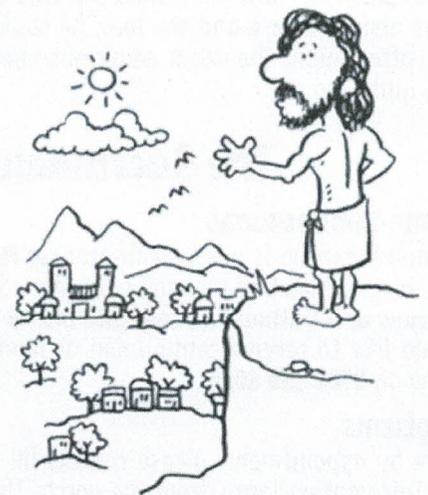
LOAVES

ANGELS

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WORSHIP



✠ STAY WITH US, LORD, ON OUR JOURNEY ✠