



# Our Lady and St Joseph RC Church Heywood

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**Fourth Sunday of Advent Year A, 21st December 2025**

## THIS WEEK AT OUR LADY AND ST JOSEPH

**Monday 22nd Dec.:** Advent Weekday.

9.30am Morning Mass

**Tuesday 23rd Dec.:** Advent Weekday.

9am Exposition and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

9.30am Mass

**Wednesday 24th Dec, Christmas Eve: Mass.:**

**5.30pm Family Mass: principally for families with (young) children**

7.30pm Mass; Mass principally for families with older children and other parishioners.



**Thursday 25th Christmas Day:**

9.30 am Mass:

11.00 am Mass:

**Friday 26th Dec.:** St Stephen, Martyr (Feast).

9am Exposition and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

9.30am Mass:

**Saturday 27th Dec.:** St John the Evangelist

(Feast).

10am Morning Mass:

10.30am. Adoration and Confessions.

6pm: First Mass of Sunday:

**Sunday 28th Dec.: The Feast of The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph.**

9.30 am Mass:

11.00 am Mass:

## Readers & Eucharistic Ministers

**20th/21st Dec.: Readers:** 6pm J. Matthews, 9.30am: S. Jones, 11am: P. Greenall. **Eucharistic Minister:** 6pm: B. Doyle, 9.30am: L. Mather, 11am S. Fitzsimons.

**27th/28th Dec.: Readers:** 6pm J. Sherry, 9.30am: S. Skinner, 11am: G. Da Silva. **Eucharistic Minister:** 6pm: J. Matthews 9.30am: D. Dodd, 11am D. Tierney.

**Thank you** for your generosity. **Last Weekend:** £464.25 (Gift Aid) £366.70 (Loose Change) & CAFOD £62.00.

**200 Club** If you would like to join it is only £5 a month which needs to be paid at the beginning of every month. The more members we have, the bigger the prize and more money going back into our church. Winners are on the Notice Boards.

**Unclaimed 200 Club Winnings:** S. Lloyd, J. Emmet, M. Basford and P. Djamalis. Please pick up Winnings from the sacristy.

**Children's Liturgy:** From the 1st Sunday of advent 30th Nov., we shall resume children's liturgy in the parish at the 11am Mass. We are asking for children's liturgy volunteers.

**MEGA Raffle now on sale:** 1st Prize : **Shark Classic Anti Hair Wrap Cordless Vacuum ICZ160UK**, courtesy of Kathleen Murray, 2nd Prize: **NINJA 3.8L Air Fryer AF100UK** courtesy of **G. Housley** and some great Food Hampers for 3rd prize. Tickets, one pound per a strip.



**Parish Christmas Fayre :** Thank you so much for your support, contributions and donations toward our Christmas Fayre. Thanks also to our various volunteers who worked so hard organising, moving things,

being in charge of stalls and cleaning afterward.



## HAPPY CHRISTMAS

We wish you all and your families a joyous Christmas. May the joy and peace of Christ our Lord be with you at Christmas and always.

Fr Augustine Franklin MSP & Fr John Okeme MSP

**Heywood SVP Foodbank:** are looking for someone with good money management skills to act as their treasurer. Role involves processing donations and payments, keeping good digital records of transactions and occasional reporting. If you would like to volunteer, please contact 07396071193 or speak to Brian Doyle for more details

**This week we pray for** the people of the parish St. Winifred, Heaton Mersey, Fr Mark Paver, their parish priest, their parish primary school and Stella Maris school.

**Let us pray for** those who live and work on Grasmere Ave, Ulwater Gr, Wentworth Ave, Gleneagles Ave & Lynham Dr.

**For** The sick of our Parish.

**For** Bernice Stahler and all who have died recently.

**For** George Basset, Fr James Ryan, Bernard Hull, Joseph Wrigley, Ellen Holt, Handel Holt, Barry Fitzsimons, Lilian Walsh, James Doyle, Brian Neary, Kenneth Bray, Nora Jones Frank & Clara Taylor, Maureen Gerrard, Paul Dermody, Norma Kierans, Cathrine Rothwell, Kathleen Daly, Emma Grime, Nora Jones, Paul Haymes, Glen Wildman, deceased members of Rhodes & Wildman families, deceased members of Collen Family, Shea, Dominic, Bridget, Monica & Patricia, deceased members of Quayle and O'Donnell families, and all we remember at this time.

**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 with parishes and on the Diocesan website and social media channels.

**THE WORD OF THE WEEK:** Here we enter a new stage of Advent: having spent so much time on the Second Coming, now we look back, to remember the details of the Lord's First Coming. Today we focus on the characters of Mary and Joseph, and hear of the circumstances surrounding the conception of the child Jesus, and the reaction of Joseph. This mystery springs from the House of David, and so we lead into the Gospel by hearing of the promise that the Messiah would come from that line. The link between the First Reading and the Gospel is quite explicit today, since Matthew actually quotes Isaiah. Joseph, descendant of King David, is invited to take his place in the great story of God's relationship with the Chosen people. There is great sense of a timeless mystery reaching its focal point, as that which was "promised long ago" (Second Reading) now takes flesh in the womb of Mary.

H	T	R	I	B	D	R	E	A	R
E	L	E	T	C	E	N	R	U	D
H	F	W	H	O	H	O	I	I	I
M	E	I	M	P	T	N	V	S	V
O	L	F	W	S	O	O	T	O	O
D	D	I	T	H	R	R	O	E	R
E	E	R	S	C	T	O	P	M	E
N	A	G	E	E	O	L	O	C	
A	N	D	N	A	B	S	U	H	I
L	E	G	N	A	M	O	H	E	S

BETROTHED  
HONOUR  
DREAM  
SON

CHILD  
DIVORCE  
WIFE  
PROPHET

HUSBAND  
ANGEL  
BIRTH  
HOME

Christmas is coming

21 DECEMBER 2025

# SUNDAY Plus

4th Sunday of Advent **Divine Office Week IV** Year A

*A happy and blessed Christmas to you and yours* from all of us at Redemptorist Publications



## The Annunciation

And yet the quiet here  
retains no trace of great Archangel wings....  
A moment came, and that is all, a moment  
came and passed, and in the passing left  
a young girl here who was not now alone.  
This was not she who lifted up her head,  
and yet it was, and crowded days that stretch  
beyond will still be bound for her in sun  
and in the dark. Her steps will fall upon  
the dust and leave an imprint there, and tasks  
will weary her. Delicate, and now  
so utterly bequeathed, her strengths are yet  
her strengths.

This is God's chosen way with men,  
to take men's way; and so, the streets she walks  
and all the roads, the shepherds and the shepherds'  
sheep, the winds, the firelight, Israel's hills,  
will find just this, no more, a woman plain  
upon the earth, and in her arms, a child.

*John Lynch, A Woman Wrapped in Silence*



*The Annunciation* fresco in church St Anton by Fritz Kunz (1921). Renata Sedmakova / Shutterstock.com

Our Mother Mary always wants to walk at  
our side, to remain close to us, to help us  
with her intercession and her love.

Pope Leo

## Just a Little Donkey

Just a little donkey,  
but on my back I bore  
the one and only Saviour  
the world was waiting for.  
Just a little donkey,  
but I was strong and proud;  
I gladly carried Mary  
through the chaos of the crowd.  
I brought her to a stable  
where she made a tiny bed...  
a place for Baby Jesus  
to lay his little head.  
I pray the world remembers  
that special Christmas night,  
when just a little donkey  
carried Heaven's precious light.



*Author unknown*

## Mince pies and Christmas pudding

Christmas and mince pies go together, but before the Reformation, they were oblong or oval in shape. The pastry base symbolised the manger, whilst the filling was the straw and the top the swaddling clothes in which Mary wrapped the Baby Jesus.

Today's Christmas pudding is sweet and served with brandy sauce or brandy butter, but this was not always so. In medieval times, the pudding often

included rabbit, poultry, pheasant and partridge in its list of ingredients. By the end of the sixteenth century, eggs, dried fruit, breadcrumbs and brandy were added to thicken and flavour the mixture. The Christmas pudding traditionally had thirteen ingredients to represent Jesus and the twelve apostles. It was only in 1714, during the reign of King George I, that meat disappeared from the recipe. He also introduced the custom of pouring brandy over the pudding and setting it alight, apparently reminding the eaters of Jesus' passion, while the holly decoration represents the crown of thorns.

Lord God, be with us as we prepare to welcome your Son Jesus into our hearts and lives at Christmas. Watch over, protect and bless our families and all those whom we love. **†** Amen.

## READINGS

Today:	Mass at Dawn: Isaiah 7:10-14 Romans 1:1-7 Matthew 1:18-24	Mass at Dawn: Isaiah 62:11-12 Titus 3:4-7 Luke 2:15-18
Monday:	Mass During the Day: 1 Samuel 1:24-28 Luke 1:46-56	Mass During the Day: Isaiah 52:7-10 Hebrews 1:1-6 John 1:1-18
Tuesday:	Malachi 3:1-4, 4:5-6 Luke 1:57-66	Friday: Acts 6:8-10; 7: 54-59 Matthew 10:17-22
Wednesday:	Mass in the Morning: 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8-12, 14, 16 Luke 1:67-79	Saturday: 1 John 1:1-4 John 20:1, 2-8
Thursday:	Vigil Mass: Isaiah 62:1-5 Acts 13:16-17, 22-25 Matthew 1:1-25	Next Sunday: Ecclesiasticus 3:2-6, 12-14 Colossians 3:12-21
Mass During the Night:	Isaiah 9:1-7 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-14	Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23