

Congratulations

We offer our warmest congratulations to all of those children from our three Parish Primary Schools (and a few of our children from other schools) who have received their First Holy Communion over the past couple of weeks, ending with the celebration yesterday in St James the Less. I would like to record my thanks to the volunteers from the Parish and our staff from the schools who prepared the children over the past academic year, and also many thanks to the families for taking part in the programme this year. As the programme comes to an end for this year, we especially want all of the children and families to know that you are always welcome in our churches and we as a Parish love having you all at the Sunday Masses!

Weekday Mass Times

Over the past few months in the newsletter I have been consulting about a change to the weekday Mass times which was proposed by a parishioner from St James the Less and discussed at Parish meetings. So far, I have received only positive feedback about the proposed change from parishioners. As a result, as mentioned in the newsletter a couple of weeks ago, the weekday Mass times will be standardised to 9.30am in both churches on weekdays from the beginning of July, which is this Monday. When it comes to a School Mass in St James the Less church, the time will revert to 9am and this will be announced in the newsletter, as the School has a long standing system in place for the children to be dropped off at that time by parents. Over the next couple of weeks, with Leavers Masses, end of year Masses etc, there won't be as much consistency as usual, but over the summer we will have chance to 'bed in' these changes and see how things go. Many thanks for your patience!

Parish Primary Schools

Many congratulations to our Primary School, St Joseph's, Stacksteads, which won 'Most Supportive School' at the Pride of Rossendale Awards. This is a lovely recognition of all the hard work of our staff who go above and beyond to support the children and families. At the same Awards Ceremony, our Head Teacher from St Peter's, Helen Sullivan, came second in the Award for 'Woman of the Year', also a lovely recognition of all she does to support our children and families. And finally, in the Lancashire Evening Post, two of our Schools, St James the Less and St Peter's, were listed in the top three following SATs results with St James the Less coming in at number 1. An amazing achievement. So, as the School year comes to a close, all three of our Primary Schools are ending on a massive high! Many thanks to all of our school staff for your work throughout the year and we hope you enjoy a well deserved break over the summer.

Sacrament of Baptism

Louise Oliver has kindly agreed to co-ordinate the Baptism Preparation Sessions for parents, assisted by a group of parishioners. The next Baptism Preparation Session will take place on Tuesday, 16th July, at 6.30pm in the church at St James the Less. If you wish to book a Baptism in the Parish, it is essential to attend one of these sessions. If you would like to book a Baptism, please ask Father Stamp for a booklet which has all the info.

Parish Centre at St James the Less

The works on the Centre are on schedule and should hopefully be completed by the end of July. I am aware that a number of people are now in contact wanting to book the Centre once it re-opens. The first thing I should make clear is that, as with all building work, we cannot give a cast iron guarantee that everything will be complete by the finish date of 24th July. These things have a tendency of running over time! Secondly, there are some changes to how the Centre will operate once it re-opens. At the different Parish meetings over the months, following discussion and advice, we decided that the Parish Centre will not be re-opening as a Salford Diocesan Club, which means the Centre will no longer be a licensed premise. Any private parties booking the Centre would, from now on, have to bring their own alcohol and would not be able to sell it. Licensed activities would be reserved for Parish events, such as the Fayres and social functions such as the St Patrick's Night Dance, and School events. On those occasions, we would obtain a temporary license from the Council, but there is a limited number of these available each year which is why they would be reserved for Parish and School events. At the same time, the Old School Room will be coming into use as a Parish Shop hopefully from the autumn. This means that the different groups currently using the Old School Room, and the Coffee Mornings on Sundays, will be moving into the Centre. I have met with all of these groups who are happy with this plan. This means that the Parish, and those groups currently using the Old School Room, will have to be considered when it comes to bookings. I have also made clear that I would like to form a Parish Committee/Group who would support Jeanette Pritchard in the running of the Centre once it re-opens. I would like to invite any parishioners who would be interested in helping with this to come to a meeting on **Thursday 4th July at 7.00pm in the Presbytery at St James the Less**. The purpose of this meeting is to begin looking at a new policy for bookings etc once we re-open, taking into account everything written above.