

CALLED:

WELCOME TO OUR

Vocations Newsletter

The month of October, one of two in the year dedicated to Mary, contains both the feasts of Our Lady of the Rosary and St Luke. It is for the former that the month takes its Marian flavour, and all are encouraged to devote time to praying the rosary in this month above all. It is a happy coincidence that St Luke's feast follows, since Luke's Gospel highlights Mary's place in God's plan in a particular way, especially in his telling of the infancy narratives. It is also providential that, in just a few weeks time at the start of Advent, we will begin the cycle of readings at Sunday Mass that draws from St Luke's Gospel. This year, when we do so, we will hear a new translation in our lectionaries, the English Standard Version. We will hear Mary's song of praise to God in a new way, "My soul magnifies the Lord!" (ESV) in contrast to the current translation, "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord!" Is there any huge difference? Some would say no, but different ways of expressing the same idea in English can at times bring out a deeper understanding.

Mary's song emphasises that she lived to glorify God and her whole being was ordered to do just that. In this way she becomes the model for us as disciples as she shows us what is at the heart of every Christian vocation: giving glory to God!

In this update on vocations to priesthood and permanent diaconate in our diocese we will hear from some of those who have felt the call to give glory to God through ordained ministry. Highlights include the ordination of Fr Luke Bradbury, a spotlight on prison chaplaincy, and a reflection from one of our seminarians on Invocation at Adoremus, a national event to promote vocations.

We entrust the work of our vocations team, all those currently in formation for ordained ministry and those discerning to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Her "Yes" led her in haste to serve her cousin Elizabeth and provide a model of vocation for us all. We pray through her intercession that men will respond to the call to love and to serve in ordained ministry in our diocese."

Fr Mark Paver, Vocations Director for the Diocese of Salford

Scan the QR Code to access our full newsletter:

Ordination of Fr Luke | Permanent Diaconate Vocations Story | Spotlight on Prison Chaplaincy | Invocation at Adoremus | Updates on Vocations Events



Celebrating the ordination of Fr Luke Bradbury

On Saturday 28 September, hundreds of people gathered at St Patrick's Church, Collyhurst, to witness the priestly ordination of Luke Bradbury.

Clergy from right across the diocese and beyond joined Bishop John in welcoming their new brother priest, as friends, family, and parishioners from St Bernard's, Burnage - where Fr Luke has been serving as a deacon - came to celebrate this joyful day.

The bishop welcomed Fr Luke in his homily with a message of heartfelt gratitude, thanking him for his "generosity in answering the Lord's call to ordination to sacred priesthood." He continued by reflecting on the mission of a priest in the modern world; acknowledging that priesthood was a "point of arrival, not a destination" that required continual formation to adapt to an ever-changing ministry.

Bishop John noted that, today, parish priests need to be in three places at once: they must, like Christ, the Good Shepherd, be at the front of their communities as spiritual leaders; they must be amongst their flock, accompanying people on the path of faith; and they must be "round the back, making sure no-one is left behind."

The ceremony continued with Fr Luke making a promise of obedience, before lying prostrate before the altar as a sign of his total dependence on God. This was followed by a powerful moment of prayer as all those gathered joined their prayers with the hosts of heaven in the Litany of the Saints and Bishop John prayed the Prayer of Consecration. Fr Luke was then vested by Fr Shaun K Braiden and presented with a paten and chalice before Bishop John led all priests in the traditional sign of welcome.

Fr Luke has now returned to the parish of St Bernard's, in Burnage, where he will continue his service as priest. We wish Fr Luke the very best as he takes up his ministry and invite you to please remember him in your prayers.



Prison Chaplaincy: A Light in the Darkness

This October, we marked Prisoners Sunday by catching up with diocesan priest and former prison chaplain, Fr Ged Barry, on his 12 years of ministry in high security prisons.

Fr Ged's ministry in the prison service took root in the earliest days of his vocation, whilst studying for the priesthood at Oscott College, but it was his first experience in parish life that gave him a clear calling to this particular service.

He said: "Over a six-year period, I was burying so many young people from unnecessary deaths, many of whom had come out of prison, often on drugs, with nowhere to go."

Desperate to break this cycle, Fr Ged soon embarked on a new ministry as a prison chaplain, working with prisoners in HMP Durham and HMP Full Sutton, to offer a listening ear, a new perspective, and a pathway to the forgiveness of Christ.

He said: "Our job is to bring humanity into people's lives. It's not about judging them - they've already been sentenced - priests are there to be shining lights in darkness."

Sharing details of the highs and lows of prison chaplaincy, Fr Ged recounted the incredible impact this service has on the lives of prisoners; work that, in his time, saw 70% of main wing prisoners at HMP Full Sutton become regular Mass goers - introducing them to a vibrant faith that many continue to carry with them throughout their lives.

Fr Ged reflected: "The deepest things I found in priesthood, I found in prison. It was an absolute joy, the most joyous thing and the best part of my priestly life. It is Christianity at its rawest and most glorious."

Scan the QR code on the front of this newsletter to read the full story now.

A Vocation Story: Deacon Paul Griffin

We are delighted to introduce Deacon Paul Griffin, who has recently moved to Salford Diocese and taken up a temporary position at Ss Aidan and Oswald in Royton and St Joseph's in Shaw after three years of ministry in the Diocese of Middlesbrough.

To find out more about Deacon Paul, we caught up with him to hear all about his calling to the permanent diaconate and unique take on this remarkable ministry.

Scan the QR code on the front to read more about Deacon Paul and to view our information leaflet on the permanent diaconate.

Upcoming Masses for Vocations

Wednesday 13 November, 7pm

Our Lady of the Assumption Church, Langley

Thursday 21 November, 7pm

St Thomas of Canterbury Church, Bolton

Diocesan Prayer for Vocations

Heavenly Father,

In the great love you have for your people,

We ask you to inspire men in our diocese

To respond to your call to love and to serve.

Mould their hearts, Lord,

After the Sacred Heart of your Son,

So that they may grow in love and serve with joy.

Through Christ our Lord,

Amen.

Vocations Day

On the feast of St John Henry Newman, Newman Catholic College, Oldham, held a Vocations Day to give the opportunity for young members of their community to reflect on a life lived dedicated to giving glory to God.

Every class in the school attended a vocations panel with local dean, Fr Philip Sumner, Canon Michael Job, religious sister, Sr Benedicta Tokede, and local Imam, Moulana Akmal Hussain, who all fielded questions about vocation. 1,500 students attended over the course of 5 sessions during the day. Each year group also had Mass during the day and had sessions on what they thought vocation was.

Get in touch

To speak to someone about a diocesan vocation to the priesthood or permanent diaconate, please contact:
Fr Michael Deas & Fr Mark Paver | Vocations Directors
Fr Chris Gorton | Director for Permanent Diaconate
Rev S. Scott | Assistant Director, Permanent Diaconate
Call us on 0161 817 2226, or email:
vocations@dioceseofsalford.org.uk

Invocation at Adoremus

By Theo, a seminarian

On Sunday 15th September, I joined seminarians, priests, bishops, and religious brothers and sisters from across England and Wales for Invocation at Adoremus.

This gathering was part of the Eucharistic Congress and had a clear focus of highlighting the essential connection between the Eucharist and our Christian vocation of service.

In his homily, Archbishop Bernard Longley stressed that religious vocations are not just discerned in formal settings such as seminaries, but are nurtured and grown in our family homes, in our Catholic schools, and in our university chaplaincies.

This point resonated particularly with me as I looked back and recognised that the seeds of my vocation were sown when my family prayed regularly together as I was growing up, that it was watered through my time in a high school open to the concept of vocation, and that it reached the point where I was able to say “yes” to it while I was studying for a chemistry degree and playing an active role in the university Catholic chaplaincy.

My prayer for our diocese is that many young people will be open to asking God’s help in discerning His will for their lives.