

FORMING MISSIONARY DISCIPLES  
BUILDING MISSIONARY PARISHES

# DIOCESE OF SALFORD



HOPE IN THE FUTURE

## Hope in the Future

Stage Four: Proclaiming the Good News





In October 2021, parishes across the diocese simultaneously held a Holy Hour to launch Stage 4 of our Hope in the Future Programme.

The Holy Hour provided a wonderful opportunity to renew our commitment to our relationship with the Lord Jesus, to give thanks to God for the generosity of the many volunteers who kept our churches safe during the pandemic, and to ask the Holy Spirit to strengthen our missionary endeavors.

Throughout Stage 4 of our Hope in the Future journey, we have been reflecting on how we can develop links between our schools, parishes and families, and how we can help those who come into contact with our parishes through the celebrations of baptisms, weddings, funerals, RCIA, Christmas and Easter Liturgies, to experience the Good News of Jesus Christ.

In addition to this, we have been rebuilding our parish communities following the disruption of a global pandemic.

This booklet celebrates the many and diverse ways our parishes, schools and deaneries have responded to our great commission to “go out to the whole world and to proclaim the Good News” of Jesus. By sharing good practice and ideas from across the diocese, we strive to encourage and support each other.

Across our diocese, our schools, parishes, and families have been working in partnership to find creative ways to deliver preparation for the sacraments, both online and in-person. Several communities have created a prayer garden to help raise awareness of our need to care for our Common Home and create a place to encounter God in His creation.

I would like to thank priests and parish teams for their ongoing dedication to Hope in the Future.

As we embark on the fifth and final Stage of Hope in the Future, entitled ‘Sharing the Hope’, we turn our attention to putting our faith into action through caring for those most in need in our local area and caring for our Common Home. Stage 5 follows naturally on from Stage 4 where, as ambassadors for Christ, not only do we share Him in word but also by our good works and actions.

I look forward to continuing this journey with all of you.

Stay with us, Lord, on Our Journey.

*John*

**Rt Rev. John Arnold, Bishop of Salford**



# Stage Four LAUNCH



On Sunday 3rd October, Bishop John led a Holy Hour at Salford Cathedral, marking the launch of Stage Four of Hope in the Future: 'Proclaiming the Good News'. This Holy Hour was celebrated in many parishes throughout the Diocese of Salford simultaneously; a shared expression of our readiness to communicate the Good News of Christ throughout the world.

*I must proclaim  
the Good News of  
the Kingdom  
of God:*

*this is what  
I was sent to do.*

In previous stages, we have learnt to recognise the missionary activity in our own parishes, to understand our own gifts and their usefulness in this mission, and to build on the power of the Sunday Eucharist as a way of bringing people together.

Parishes throughout the diocese have engaged in this process first-hand, their shared experiences preparing us to 'Proclaim the Good News' to all those who have contact with us through our schools, baptisms, weddings, funerals, Christmas and Easter liturgies and Sacramental Programmes.

Bishop John began the Holy Hour with an invitation from Pope Francis, calling us to enter into a closer relationship with Christ.

This invitation was extended to all people, as "no-one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord" (Evangelii Gaudium 3).

We were encouraged to think of ourselves as missionary disciples.

Through kindness, generosity, and hard work, we are ambassadors for the church, sharing God's love with our neighbours, proclaiming the Gospel through our words and actions.

Bishop John also called on us to profess our commitment to this mission.

As Jesus said: 'I must proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God: this is what I was sent to do' (Luke 4:43), we say 'we must proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God: this is what we were sent to do'. We prayed for the Holy Spirit to work through us, enabling us to share the joy we feel with the world.

# AROUND THE DIOCESE in Stage Four

## | St Cuthbert's Bolton

St Cuthbert's launched the fourth stage of the programme with a Holy Hour of prayer and Adoration.

The parish celebrated key feasts such as Christmas and Easter by bringing together the parish and school community to record passages of scripture, reflections, and hymns that were broadcast on Bolton FM on Sundays during Advent, Lent, and Easter Sunday.

Schoolchildren also prepared artwork to be displayed in church, while some made Easter baskets filled with chocolate, flowers and toiletries, to give to new neighbours and parishioners supported by Home Visiting Eucharistic Ministers.

The parish also held its third Night of Testimony and Praise Service, consisting of Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament with music and prayer and testimonies from people whose lives have been touched and changed by the power of God.

At Pentecost, the parish celebrated, the vibrancy of its community by holding special Masses to reflect the different cultures that enrich the parish. Bidding prayers were read out in different languages; parishioners wore a variety of different clothes reflective of their culture; a world map was put on display highlighting the different countries represented in the parish, and Masses were followed by a coffee morning with traditional cakes, biscuits and sweets from different countries.

Young people were also invited to help lead a special Youth Mass by providing music, readings, and prayers. At the Offertory, they brought up to the Altar baskets of donated food items for various outreach initiatives.

A new parish leadership team has been set up to keep the parish developing and moving forward, while a trial 12-week Alpha course was run to see how it might help support adult formation within the parish.



## | St Anne's, Crumpsall

For the first time in three years, St. Anne's parish in Crumpsall celebrated its patronal festival with a sung Mass and a party afterwards.

The church was beautifully decorated with flowers and the image of St. Anne (newly restored during the pandemic) was moved into the sanctuary.

Parishioners said: "It was good to be together for worship and was lovely to see some old friends again and welcome some new ones.

"The prayers of our patron gave us new courage in our parish life and new energy for the future.



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## | St. Mary and St. Philip Neri, Radcliffe

One parish in Bury has been working hard to rebuild its community feel following the pandemic.

Over the past year, parishioners have been delighted to celebrate many baptisms and marriages, and schoolchildren were able to make their First Holy Communion in May.

Weekly coffee mornings have resumed after Mass, giving parishioners the opportunity to meet, socialise and build friendships. The Union of Catholic Mothers has commenced with their meetings, they held a social evening for the ladies of the parish,

with a buffet and entertainment.

Several parishioners attended an evening at St. Dunstan's in Moston, to watch a show, they were there to support our Parish Priest (Fr. Brady) who had one of the lead parts.

Fr. Brady celebrated his Silver Jubilee in July. Mass was celebrated with the parishioners, children and staff from school, as well as family and friends.





## | Our Lady of Hope, Salford

One Salford parish has been working hard to nurture a strong partnership between school and parish and to provide much needed support for families within the community.

A 'Hardship Fund' was established during the pandemic to support families in need. This was a collaborative venture between the parish and school which helped a number of families with uniform and other needs. An appeal went out to the parish for financial help and a fund was set up. This is administered by the school and parish priest, with confidentiality at its heart, in order to respond to needs identified as urgent by the school.

The parish held a joint Summer Fair this year at Ss Peter and Paul church, with the proceeds being shared between the St Luke's primary school and Our Lady of Hope parish. Pupils at the school look part in a competition to design the SummerFair logo and flyers and the winner of the competition will open the fair on the day.

More recently, the parish weekly newsletter has been sent out each week to parents of pupils in the school, for their information. This will hopefully encourage families to engage with events taking place in the parish.

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## | St Clare, Blackley

This year saw the parish Sacramental Team coordinating the Sacramental Programme, in collaboration with the school, the children and their families.

This allowed greater involvement from the parents in helping their children learn about the faith.

This also gave opportunity for the parents to grow in their own faith and learn more about the parish and the wider Church.

Following a successful period of preparation, two classes received their First Holy Communion at a dedicated Mass, attended by their family and friends.





## | Parish of The Good Samaritan, Burnley

During the past year, the Parish of the Good Samaritan in Burnley has experienced change, renewal, and celebration.

Under the leadership and guidance of parish priest, Fr David Featherstone - who has taken up the role of rural dean of St John Vianney deanery - and assistant priest, Fr Damien Louden, the parish has been striving to promote deeper spiritual enrichment, increased involvement of the laity and an enhanced feeling of community belonging.

The preparation and celebration of the sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, Holy Eucharist and Confirmation have been highly focused on throughout the year, involving the valuable support and commitment of lay persons in the parish, with the spiritual and practical direction of Fr David and Fr Damien.

A new programme to prepare parents for the Baptism of their child was introduced earlier in the year and the Sacramental Programme enabled children to celebrate their First Holy Communion in small numbers with the support of their families, the catechists and parishioners, at Masses.

In June, over 60 young people were confirmed by Bishop John,

at St Mary of the Assumption Church, during a beautiful Mass, where all three churches in the parish took an active part in the celebration service.

Regular school Masses are held, with Mass celebrated at the Blessed Trinity High School for each year group during the season of Advent, and with a special Mass to commemorate the school's patronal feast day. The Sacrament of Reconciliation was also offered at Blessed Trinity; it involved 14 priests from the deanery over a two-day period, and over 600 students took part and received the Sacrament.

Parishioners who cannot get to Mass are now able once again to receive Holy Communion at home, bringing them much spiritual comfort. Also, home visits by the dedicated members of the SVP parish team have been able to recommence.

As well this year, we have welcomed the celebrations of a CAFOD Lenten Mass, Bereavement Mass, Deanery Station Masses.

The parish also welcomed Bishop John and 27 priests to concelebrate the Requiem Mass of Fr Francis Jennings in August, and paid tribute to 150 years of faithful and parochial service of The Sisters of Mercy in a wonderful celebration Mass.

Meanwhile the social side of the parish community is once again beginning to thrive following the pandemic, with a range of coffee morning, sponsored walks, and days out.



## | Parish of Our Lady of the Valley, Clitheroe, Sabden and Dunsop Bridge

One parish community has turned to nature to strengthen ties with their parish school.

Parishioners, school staff, parents and children have been working together on a garden project as part of a parish Laudato Si' group.

The Garden is a small area behind the church separated by a fence from the much larger school gardens and playing field.

The church plans are limited to rewilding and encouraging wildlife, coupled with the need for an attractive appearance.

The school plan is much more ambitious with the Forest Trained leader hoping to create a large Forest School area.

For updates on the parish Laudato Si' group, please visit [www.olotv.org.uk/parish-groups/laudato-si](http://www.olotv.org.uk/parish-groups/laudato-si)

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## | Holy Infants and St Anthony, Bolton

A social event was held in the school hall at Holy Infants & St Anthony's primary school in June 2022 to celebrate the platinum jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II and the feast of the parish patron, Saint Anthony.

Parishioners gathered for a wonderful celebration complete with games for children, a tombola, raffle, and coffee morning, while the choir from Holy Infants primary school performed some beautiful songs.

It was a delight to welcome Fr Gerry and Fr Kieran, Salesian priests who have just joined the parish, to attend and enjoy the wonderful day too.



The Parish of Divine Mercy in Oldham has been working hard to develop links between home, school, and parish.

After launching Stage 4 with a Holy Hour, the parish Hope in the Future Rep met with both of the parish primary schools to discuss joint activities, and schools have also been represented at Hope in the Future parish meetings.

For Pentecost Sunday, a special Pentecost Liturgy was held at the Masses that weekend. Parishioners were asked to think about the contribution they could make and to consider how they could be more actively involved in the life of the parish.

A Family Mass was held at both Corpus Christi and St. Herbert's churches on Sunday 19th June to mark the end of the year for St. Joseph and the World Meeting of Families. The Family Mass built on home, school and parish links as parishioners were encouraged to attend as a family and the schoolchildren made a wonderful contribution.

On 15th November, the parish held a special Mass to celebrate the lives of those friends and family members who died during the COVID pandemic. During the Mass, a candle was lit in memory of each of the deceased.

Other activities which brought the parish together and strengthened the community include a parish lunch on the feast of St Herbert and a special BBQ at Corpus Christi to mark the platinum jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II.

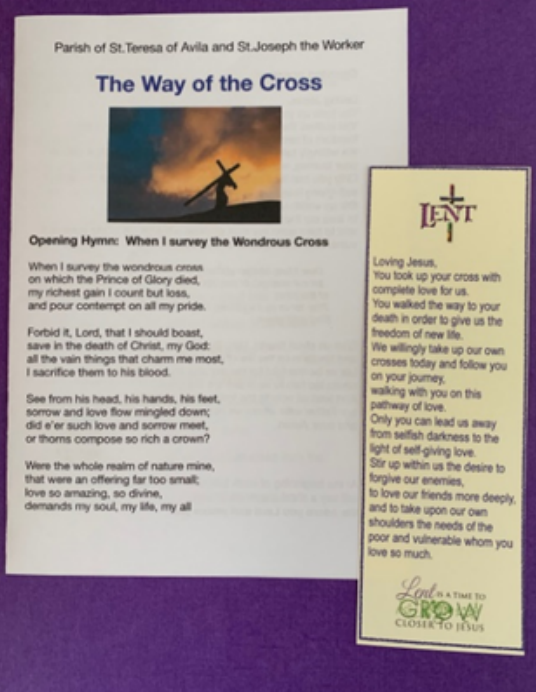
Also, coffee mornings at both churches after the Sunday Masses have been resumed following the pandemic.

Throughout the year, the parish worked to develop celebrations of Baptism, Sacramental preparation, weddings, funerals, Christmas and Easter Liturgies, with parish Hope in the Future members being involved with the Children's Liturgy programme at both churches and providing support for the Sacramental preparation programme.

The parish also now has a fully functioning Shared Leadership Team in place with representation from the various Parish Ministries and groups.



PARISH OF  
DIVINE MERCY



## St Teresa of Avila and St Joseph the Worker, Irlam

### Service and Prayer in the Community

In September 2021, the parish held a Welcome Refugee Day to build new relationships with families seeking sanctuary in our communities.

It took place in St. Teresa's primary School and involved a range of activities in the grounds such as football, archery, basketball, crafts and time to sit and chat.

The refugee families were welcomed with biscuits, drinks and a lunch of hot food and salads, followed by ice cream, which was enjoyed by all.

Guests were entertained by music and poetry and just before leaving, the adults were able to select gifts of toiletries (donated by the parish) and the children chose toys to take home (donated by the children at the schools in the parish).

### Advent, Lent, and Easter Services

During Advent 2021, a service which involved parishioners and children from both the parish schools was arranged. A prayer card was given to all those who attended.

During Lent 2022, a Way of the Cross service which involved the parish and school children in prayer and reflection, was held, whilst a service on Good Friday was adapted to involve friends from the Church of England and Methodist churches in the area. Young people carried a large wooden cross in a procession, which was then erected on the main road for all to see over Easter Weekend.

### Parish and School Summer Fayre

In July, the parish and school came together to hold a joint summer fayre in the grounds of St. Joseph the Worker Primary School, with support from the Polish Family Centre based in the parish. The day was a great success and helped strengthen the parish community.

# Events

Over the past year, it's been a delight to have been joined by so many people from across the diocese at our Hope in the Future events. From our popular formation series, to interactive workshops exploring how to nurture our parishes in person and online, there have been plenty of opportunities to learn more about building our parish communities.

## Divine Renovation Open House Day | Attendance: 90

This inspiring day welcomed people from across the diocese to work with St James and All Souls parish to explore different ways to breathe new life into parish life.

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## At Your Side - The Art of Accompaniment | Attendance: 50

At Your Side was a deeply prayerful day that encouraged parishes to think more about how we journey in faith with one another as a connected, united community.

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## Genesis Mission | Attendance: 25

This fantastic event focused on missionary discipleship and proclaiming the Good News. The session explored the encouragement of missionary attitude and practical tools and ways to share the Gospel sensitively and appropriately in everyday life.

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## Digital Communication Day | Attendance: 25

Representatives from across the diocese came together to explore more about how the digital world can support traditional communication methods in our aim to become missionary disciples.

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## Alpha Day | Attendance: 20

This engaging event, run by the Alpha UK Catholic Context team, helped parish representatives explore a little more about this powerful evangelisation tool.

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## Formation Series | Attendance: 150 in person, 415 online

During this stage of the programme, our formation department hosted a range of sessions to enable parishioners to explore different aspects of our Catholic community and how to become the Church God is calling us to be.

# Universal Synod Responses

Our first word is a heartfelt 'Thank You' to all who engaged in the process of gathering diocesan responses to help Pope Francis and the Synod of Bishops in reflecting on the Church as Communion, Participation and Mission.

Over 1500 individuals took part, and group submissions were received from families, organisations and parishes. Not all of these were Catholics who attend church regularly. You can read the full response at [www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/faith/synod](http://www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/faith/synod)

Those responding to the Synod suggested many different, and sometimes polarized, ways the Church should move forward.

The responses from our diocese will join those from the other dioceses in England and Wales, Europe and the rest of the world. These will be discerned by the Synod of Bishops who will gather in Rome in 2023.

We pray the Holy Spirit will be at the centre of this discernment and will show a clear way forward for the Church.

Pope Francis is clear that 'Synodality is what God expects of the Church in the third millennium'. A diocesan synod will allow us to listen more deeply to more people over a longer period of time as together we discern what God is asking of His Church in our diocese



For a synodal Church  
communion | participation | mission



## Sharing the Hope: Stage 5

Our parishes and schools already make an enormous contribution to the local community. The Fifth Stage will place an emphasis on building on existing outreach and resourcing and providing new opportunities for our communities to be a beacon of hope within the local area.

Throughout this Stage and beyond, we would seek to equip and support Parishes, Deaneries and Schools to:

- 1) Carry out a reflective process of listening to the needs of their local community.
- 2) Be formed in Social Teaching of the Catholic Church and respond to it.
- 3) Be a beacon of Hope to their local community through prayer, financial giving, volunteering, advocacy and signposting to existing support.

Stage 5 will be based on the principles of See, Judge, Act and the Pastoral Cycle.



*“The Church's deepest nature is expressed in her three-fold responsibility: of proclaiming the word of God, celebrating the sacraments, and exercising the ministry of charity. These duties presuppose each other and are inseparable.”*

*Pope Benedict in Deus Caritas Est, 25*







# HOPE

IN THE FUTURE

God our loving Father,  
We thank you, for blessing our parish  
with all that we need,  
to respond to our vocation to be a  
missionary community in our locality.

We thank you for all our parish members who,  
in response to your call,  
give of themselves so freely to enrich  
our parish life in the ways of love and service.

We ask you now,  
to pour out afresh the gifts of your Spirit  
upon each one of us that we may be inspired  
to serve you in new and creative ways  
as missionary disciples,  
bringing your Light to the world.

We ask your blessing upon us as we journey  
together in hope, through Christ Our Lord  
Amen.