



# DIOCESE OF SALFORD

*Pastoral Letter of  
The Right Reverend Terence J Brain  
Bishop of Salford*

Dear Family of God in Salford Diocese,

*“The Spirit of God has made his home in you”* (Romans 8,9).

Many of you listening today will have been brought up in homes where there was a picture of the Sacred Heart hanging on the wall reminding us that our family had been placed under the protection of the Sacred Heart. I can remember us all gathering to witness my father writing in the names of the new arrivals in the space below the picture; I remember him telling my mother that her writing was neater than his, and she saying the father of the family should place his children under the protection of the Sacred Heart.

Some of you will remember Fr Peyton the Rosary Priest, 50 years ago, coming around the world to promote his Rosary Crusade with the slogan “The family that prays together, stays together”. He had great faith in the family rosary. His cause is now before the Holy Father to consider whether to declare him a saint.

You will remember that last year we celebrated family life through the programme, promoted by the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, “Everyone is welcome”. The Church, the family of God, welcomes all who seek him with a sincere heart. We are reminded in today’s Gospel of the Lord’s invitation “Come to me all you who labour and are overburdened and I will give you rest”.

So today is a good day to begin the next stage in this programme of *My family, My Church*, and this new stage is entitled “**Home is a holy place**”. If we welcome each other, then we must first welcome the Lord.

Home is where we all learn the lessons that make us into the people we are; we learn our values, how to behave. We also learn our first lessons about God at home; our first prayers. Home is the safe place from which we set out into the world; if we have come to know God at home, we will be able to recognise his presence in the world outside, and will not get lost; and will be able to help others to find and recognise him.

So to help us all make our homes holy places - places where God dwells - I have asked your priests to bless for each of you a picture of the Sacred Heart which is a copy of a modern icon that hangs in the first oratory in England that was dedicated to the Sacred Heart. Take it home with you and put it in a place of honour. Say, together or alone, the prayer that comes with the icon. And in this simple way we will, each day, be reminding ourselves that the Lord has first given us his love in creating us all; first given us his love in sending His Son to redeem us all; first given us his love in choosing to dwell with in us through the sacraments of baptism and confirmation. We are a holy people; our homes are holy places. Let us recognise this truth and live it in this simple way.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in Thee.

+ Terence J. Brain

Bishop of Salford

*Given at Wardley Hall on Friday, June 20th 2008, the Feast of St Alban the Proto-Martyr,  
and appointed to be read in all churches and chapels of the diocese  
on the weekend of July 13th, 2008, the Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.*