



St Mary's Catholic Church

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Newsletter for Sunday 8th December 2019

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Psalter Week 2

'O Mary Conceived Without Sin'

The Solemnity of the **Immaculate Conception of Our Lady** falls on 8th December. But since this year it falls on a Sunday, the Feast is transferred to tomorrow (Monday). This Solemn Feast is often confused with the conception of JESUS in the womb of Our Lady. However, the dogma of the Immaculate Conception refers to Mary's Conception in the womb of *her* mother St Anne. The Dogma as proclaimed by **Blessed Pope Pius IX** in 1854 said:

"The Most holy Virgin Mary was, in the first moment of her conception, by a unique gift of grace and privilege of Almighty God, in view of the merits of JESUS Christ, the Redeemer of Mankind, preserved free from all stain of Original Sin."

In 1830, twenty four years before the proclamation, Our Lady appeared to **St Catherine Labouré** who was a Daughter of Charity at the Rue de Bac convent in Paris. She gave her the mission of arranging for and promoting what later became known as the **Miraculous Medal** which is still very famous today. But what is less well known is that it was originally known as the **Medal of the Immaculate Conception**. On the one side of the medal Our Lady is standing on a globe crushing the head of the serpent (Satan) with her foot. Satan and his followers are helpless before her (Genesis 3:15). Our Lady also holds out her hands as the **Mediatrix of All Graces**. Rays are coming from the rings on her hands and then there is the inscription, "**O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee.**" On the reverse side of the medal is a cross with a large "M" representing Mary beneath it. Beneath the cross are two hearts, one surrounded with thorns which represents JESUS, and the other heart pierced by a sword represents Mary, recalling the words of Simeon that a sword of sorrow would pierce her soul (Luke 2:35). The entire image is surrounded by twelve stars (Apocalypse 12:1). Our Lady said that those who wear the medal properly blessed and repeat the prayer above, "*O Mary conceived without sin ...*" will have great graces, especially if they wear it round the neck. It was due to the great number of miracles, conversions and graces received by the wearing of the medal it became known as the "Miraculous Medal".

Then just four years after Pius IX had proclaimed the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, Our Lady appeared to **St Bernadette** at Lourdes in 1858, and when asked who she was she replied, "*I am the Immaculate Conception.*" So the apparitions in Paris in 1830 and the Miraculous Medal prepared for the dogma of the Immaculate Conception to be proclaimed in 1854, and the apparition at Lourdes in 1858 confirmed it. St Catherine Labouré died in 1876, but when her body was disinterred in May 1933 at the time of her beatification, like St Bernadette, it was found to be incorrupt. She was canonised in 1947. If anyone would like a blessed Miraculous Medal, please ask me.

Fr Paul Gillham, IC

MASS TIMES AT ST MARY'S

Sat	7 th	6.00pm	Vigil Mass
Sun	8 th	<u>Second Sunday of Advent</u>	
		9.00am	Parish Mass
		10.30-10.55am	<i>Confessions + on request</i>
		11.00am	Parish Mass
		4.00pm	Italian Mass
Mon	9 th	9.15am	Immaculate Conception of Our Lady (Solemnity)
		12 noon	Latin Mass (old rite)
Tues	10 th	9.15am	The Blessed Virgin Mary of Loretto
Weds	11 th	9.15am	St Damasus I
Thurs	12 th	9.15am	Our Lady of Guadalupe
		11.00am	Yrs 5 & 6 Confessions
Fri	13 th	6.45am	Rorate Mass
		7.00pm	Service of Reconciliation
Sat	14 th	9.15am	St John of the Cross
		10.00-11.00am	<i>Eucharistic Adoration and Confessions</i>
		2.30pm	<i>Convalidation of Marriage</i>
		5.30-5.55pm	<i>Confessions + on request</i>
		<u>Vigil of 3rd Week of Advent</u>	
		6.00pm	Vigil Mass
Sun	15 th	<u>Third Sunday of Advent – Gaudete Sunday</u>	
		9.00am	Parish Mass
		10.30-10.55am	<i>Confessions + on request</i>
		11.00am	Parish Mass

THIS WEEK AT ST MARY'S

Tues	10 th	6.45-7.15pm	Holy Rosary – Church
Weds	11 th	12 noon	Senior Citizens – Lunch out
		7.30pm	UCM – Dinner out
Thurs	12 th	7.00pm	RCIA – Library

NB: Due to the government regulations regarding personal data (GDPR), we are only able to publicise the Mass intentions in the printed edition of the newsletter.

BAMBINELLI SUNDAY: Next weekend (Third Sunday of Advent) all children are invited to bring their figure of the Baby Jesus from your family crib for blessing. This will be done at all Masses next weekend. This is a tradition begun by Pope St John Paul II. It's a beautiful teaching moment for families on the true meaning of Advent. Adults may, of course, bring their Baby Jesus too!

Fr Paul

GENERAL ELECTION: The Catholic Bishops of England and Wales have issued a statement regarding the General Election. "Catholics should back only candidates who uphold rights of unborn children," they said in a statement issued Friday after their November 2019 plenary meeting in Leeds. They have called on us to vote only for candidates who will uphold "the innate dignity of every human being; defending both the child in the womb and the good of the mother." The Bishops have also called for "dignified care for those who are terminally ill" and asked Catholics to vote for candidates who would resist "the false compassion of assisted suicide or euthanasia." They have also stressed the "cherishing of marriage, recognizing the essential place of the family in the service of life and of society," freedom of religion and "the right of parents to educate their children in accordance with their faith." Copies of the full statement are at the back of the church.

YEAR OF THE WORD: 2020 is the tenth anniversary of the Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Benedict XVI on the Word of the Lord and the 1,600th anniversary of the death of St Jerome who said, "Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ." A number of very helpful resources can be found on the 'God who Speaks' website including an 'Advent course' and also a guide to reading St Matthew's Gospel over 44 days. Please see www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/the-god-who-speaks/.

CHRISTMAS HAMPERS for Joseph's Storehouse (Loughborough Food Bank). Please **can all donations be in by tomorrow Monday 9th December** and left in the Carpenter's Arms box which is underneath the blue display board on the left-hand side as you enter the church. Please see the posters on the notice boards for suggested items. Thank you. **Please note: the hampers are still being distributed even though the food bank will be closing from 19th December.** *Jane Monaghan*

PARISH SAFEGUARDING REPRESENTATIVE: This is a voluntary role which needs to be filled as soon as possible. You will be supported by the Diocesan Safeguarding Office and training will be provided. You will support Fr Paul by providing the safe recruitment of volunteers in the parish, and by verifying DBS applications to submit to the Catholic Safeguarding Advisory service. If you would like to know more or see a role description, please contact Sue Clarke on 01509 267248.

THE CHRISTMAS FAIR last Saturday raised £1,513. Well done, and thanks to all those who worked so hard in preparation and to all who supported it. A good time was had by all. Thank you also to the children from St Mary's School who sang a selection of Christmas carols. *Fr Paul*

KWEDIBOMA HEALTH CENTRE: £2,900 has been sent to Kwediboma to help to build the Antenatal Clinic. Many thanks for your support. The Sisters send their thanks and blessings to you all. *Terry Spicer*

Please pray for those whose anniversaries occur at this time: James Callan, Cyril Dale, Arthur Makey, Christina Johnstone, Teresa Denton, James Slevin, baby James Allcock, baby Stephanie Allison, Rose Arulmuthu, Mavis MacGuire, Mary Bassford, baby Kenneth Allcock, Josephine Brown, Peter Davis, Vera Savage, Lawrence Rayburn, Teresa Crescenzo, David Hately, Peter Stonehouse, Rev Sr Mary Dominic Thomas and Rev Fr Kit Cunningham.

and for those who have died: Brian Saddington, Rita Laferla, Beverly Ryder and Rosa Tidy. **May they rest in peace**

PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS TO THE PRIESTHOOD AND RELIGIOUS LIFE

- LEADER:** Please kneel for our prayer for vocations. Let us ask God to give worthy Priests to His Holy Church and Brothers and Sisters to Religious Orders.
- ALL:** O God, we earnestly beseech You to bless this diocese with many priests, brothers and sisters, who will gladly spend their entire lives serving Your Church and making You known and loved.
- LEADER:** Bless our families. Bless our children.
- ALL:** Choose from our homes those who are needed for Your work.
- LEADER:** Mary, Queen of the Clergy!
- ALL:** Pray for us. Pray for our priests and religious. Obtain for us many more. *Amen.*

PRAYER TO SAINT MICHAEL: Holy Michael, the Archangel, defend us in the day of battle. Be our safeguard against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God thrust down to hell Satan and all the wicked spirits who wander through the world for the ruin of souls. *Amen.*

FROM THE SAINTS: “Mary and Eve, two people without guilt, two simple people were identical. Later however, one became the cause of our death, the other the cause of our life” (*St Ephrem, 306-373 AD.*)

DID YOU KNOW THAT? A person who is preparing for the Sacrament of Baptism is known as a ‘Catechumen’.

RECONCILIATION SERVICE FOR ADVENT: This will take place next **Friday 13th December** at 7pm. We will have Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament during which you can make your personal confession. Examinations of Conscience are at the back of the church to help you if needed.

Fr Paul

RORATE MASS: Something special for Advent - a Rorate Mass is a Votive Mass in honour of Our Lady during Advent and takes its name from the Advent antiphon *Rorate caeli*: “*Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the just. Let the earth be opened and send forth a Saviour.*” It is celebrated early in the morning only by candlelight. The dawn represents the birth of Christ and with His coming the journey from darkness to light. It is very atmospheric and prayerful. I am going to do this at St Mary’s on **Friday 13th December at 6.45am (No 9.15am Mass)**. I know that’s early, but I know of other parishes where it has proved to be very popular. I will celebrate this Mass only, from the Offertory to Communion, facing towards the tabernacle (liturgical East) which is an ancient reminder of the coming of Christ. This could be a really beautiful occasion in our preparations for Christmas. If you are able, make the sacrifice to get up early. What a wonderful way to begin the day before work, school or university. *Fr Paul*

FILIPINO APPEAL: Last week I was visited by Atty Maria Theresa D. Constantino, the Municipal Mayor of Malungon in the Philippines who was on a trip to England. She wanted to take the opportunity to thank St Mary’s Parish for the tremendous response to the Appeal to help the earthquake victims in the Philippines last month. As advertised previously, you raised an amazing £1,007. Thank you.

Fr Paul

The next **second collection** will be on **14th/15th December** for **Poor & Needy Parishes NRCDT**

LAST WEEK'S FINANCE		
First Collection: £750	Christmas Fair: £1513	Exaireo: £615
Standing Orders: £ 667 @ 29/09	<i>Thank you</i>	