



St Mary of the Annunciation Catholic Church

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Newsletter for Sunday 29th November 2020

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Psalter Week 1

Watch!

Although we are coming towards the end of the secular year, we are just beginning our new Liturgical Year with the **First Sunday of Advent** in preparation for the Christmas season. This year we are going to be reading the **Gospel according to Mark**, but we begin in a rather surprising place – chapter 13, where just before His Passion, JESUS speaks of the end of the world and of His Second Coming. This is because during Advent we are making *two* acts of preparation: 1) for the **First Coming** of Christ at Christmas, and 2) His **Second Coming** at the end of time. Advent means ‘coming’.

In today’s Gospel (Mark 13:33-37), Our Lord warns us to be vigilant and to keep watch, because no one knows when Christ will return. In contrast to many false prophets who are always predicting the end of the world, JESUS never gives a date or timeline. He constantly says, “*You do not know the day or the hour.*” But He *will* come, and of that we can be absolutely certain. So we need to stay awake and watch because, “*He must not find you asleep.*” This is a warning to us, but it need not frighten us. If we are truly living out our faith, we are prepared to meet Our Lord. Doing God’s Will is the primary component of being watchful. A good question to ask ourselves is, “*If Christ were to come right now, would I be afraid, and if so, afraid of what? Would I be running over to the confessional?*” If so, that’s what you need to change. It’s what you need to work on.

I would recommend to you all **spiritual reading** during this time of Advent. It is a time of **penance** and we should be seeking God with greater zeal. Fifteen minutes spiritual reading a day can change a person. You could read the Bible, The Imitation of Christ, the life of a saint, sermons of the saints and so on. The priests will be only too willing to give suggestions if people ask. Make this a priority and say, “*I’m not going to watch TV or play a computer game until I’ve done my spiritual reading or until I’ve said my Rosary.*” Try and perform one act of charity each day. Ensure you receive Holy Communion **worthily** by making a good Confession first. As St Paul says, “*Now is the day of salvation*” (2 Corinthians 6:2).

Our Lord is coming on a day and a time unknown to us. Our efforts to be prepared for this encounter will most certainly be the most important thing we have ever done.

Fr Paul Gillham, IC

FROM THE SAINTS: “In vain, then, do we attempt to compute definitely the years that may remain to this world, when we may hear from the mouth of the Truth Himself that it is not for us to know this” (*St Augustine of Hippo, 354-430*).

MASS INTENTIONS AT ST MARY'S

Sat	28th	6.00pm	Michael Smith RIP (Anniversary)
Sun	29th	<u>First Sunday of Advent</u>	
		9.00am	Alan Tinker RIP (Anniversary)
		11.15am	Chris Dover RIP (Anniversary)
Mon	30th	<u>St Andrew, Apostle (Feast)</u>	
		9.15am	Holy Souls
		12.30pm	<i>Funeral Service: Irene (Peggy) Hicks RIP (by invitation only)</i>
Tues	1st	9.15am	Deceased Members of the Myers Family
Weds	2nd	6.30pm	Ian Yeoman RIP (Latin old rite) – PUBLIC MASS
Thurs	3rd	9.15am	For the Parish
Fri	4th	12.30pm	<i>Requiem Mass (Old rite): Ian Yeoman RIP (by invitation only)</i>
		6.30pm	First Friday – For our Deceased Relatives and Friends – PUBLIC MASS
Sat	5th	9.15am	Deceased Members of the McEnery & Concannon Families
		10.30am-	Private prayer with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.
		12.30pm	Confessions available 10.30am-11.30am
		6.00pm	Charles Connolly RIP (Anniversary) – PUBLIC MASS
Sun	6th	<u>Second Sunday of Advent</u>	
		9.00am	Katie Mercer RIP – PUBLIC MASS
		11.15am	For the Parish – PUBLIC MASS

MASS INTENTIONS: Although the times of Masses have been left on the weekly calendar, the priests will not necessarily offer them at those specific times. However, the Masses will all be celebrated for the particular intentions on the days advertised.

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

**Tuesday 8th December, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception:
Extra Public Mass at 6.30pm**

**Church open for Private Prayer on the following days:
Sunday 29th November: 3-5pm, Monday 30th November: 9.30-10.30am**

PLEASE PRAY for those who have recently died: Andy Newbold, Michael Murphy (Terry's brother) Frances Ebong and Irene (Peggy) Hicks. **May they rest in peace**

and for those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Henry Ostrowski, Eric Beasley, Paul Atkin, Petro Coviello, Dominko Horvathova, Raymond Beasley, Giovanni Picciano, Ray Savage, Barnardo Messoro, Sarah Gardem, Beverley Ryder, Robert Di-Niro, Margaret Sheaf, Michael Smith, Alan Tinker, Chris Dover and Charles Connolly

CHRISTMAS APPEAL: As you know, **the Grub Club team** has not been able to run any sessions this year, although we have supported some families financially during holiday times. Conscious of the increasing pressures on families, we are starting a **Christmas Cheer Appeal to try to raise £2000** to support as many disadvantaged families as we can to provide some small extras this Christmas. (This amount will supplement the small amount that remains in the Grub Club account). This appeal will run in St Mary's and Sacred Heart parishes. We have contacted eight local primary schools to ask head teachers how many families they believe would benefit. **We hope to reach at least 65 families.**

If you would like to help, please send your donation in an envelope marked 'Grub Club' to the church office at St Mary's or at the presbytery at Sacred Heart. For online donations: Grub Club account at Lloyds Bank. Sort code - 30-96-26. Account - 38441468.

Thank you for your support. *Catherine Brady (Grub Club chair) and Frank Fay (treasurer)*

SATURDAY 5th DECEMBER, 10.30-11.00am: Our Christmas food bank collection for John Storer House will be at this time in the car park. **Staff at JSH have suggested if possible that we contribute 'Christmas Goodies'**, which could include chocolates, sweets, chocolate biscuits, tins or sachets of cocoa, jars of coffee, tea, long life milk, selection boxes, Christmas crackers, boxes of toiletries, tinned meat. If you have the time an idea is to present your donations in a gift-wrapped box, however donations in the usual way are very greatly appreciated. This year many families will be dependent on the food bank for all the little extras that make the Christmas table special. **St Mary's School are joining us in this collection**, each class is donating an item and these will be added to our contributions. A big thank you to the school. Kindly note items for the collection must not be left in the church buildings. Parishioners from St Mary's continue to give marvellous support to this venture. With grateful thanks to all.

Jane Monaghan

PUBLIC MASSES: It has now been confirmed that public worship can recommence from 2nd December with the same safety measures that were in place prior to 5th November. Therefore, the next public celebration of Mass at St Mary's will be the Latin Mass **on Wednesday 2nd December** at 6.30pm. For weekend Masses particularly, I would recommend you continue to book online or by phone. See elsewhere in the newsletter for details.

Fr Paul

SAFEGUARDING: The Bishop's Conference of England and Wales have issued a statement on safeguarding after their recent meeting. Please see the parish website for the link. If anyone would like a copy please ask at the Parish Office.

SISTERS FROM ST ELIZABETH'S CONVENT, BELARUS: You may remember the visit of two Sisters from St Elizabeth's Convent in Belarus a couple of years ago. They send their prayers. Due to Covid-19, this year they are launching their very first Online Christmas Market, where you can purchase Christmas presents and souvenirs. The website address is <https://catalog.obitel-minsk.com/christmas-market>. Every item purchased at the Online Market is a donation towards one of the Convent's ministries.

LAST WEEK'S FINANCE:	
Envelopes: £220	Loose Plate: £238
Kwediboma: £9	Grub Club Donations: £260
Standing orders: £776 of which £679 is gift-aided	Thank you

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.*

A SPIRITUAL COMMUNION: My Jesus, I believe that You are truly present in the Most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things and I desire to possess You within my soul. Since I am unable at this moment to receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as being already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

YOUTH 2000 is a Catholic spiritual initiative for young adults aged (16-35 years). It exists to draw young people across the UK into a community of other young Catholics and to help them deepen their relationship with Jesus. In non-Covid times, they host retreats and festivals throughout the year which are packed full of inspiring talks, amazing worship and 24-hours of adoration, but since March 2020 they have moved our mission online. They are currently hosting an array of courses and events which young people can get involved with. Upcoming is "Share the Joy" advent service on the 13th December, they are also launching an online eFestival for the New Year: NEWonline. In the early 2021 they will be launching a "Time for God" book study as well as an alpha course so there is plenty to get involved with. Details of all our courses and events can be found on our website: <https://www.youth2000.org/>

PRE-BOOKING PLACES FOR MASS: Online bookings can be made on the diocesan website at <https://massbooking.uk> Telephone bookings can be made by calling **07554 603972 on Tuesday or Wednesday between 2pm and 4pm or Thursday and Friday between 5pm and 7pm. Please do not ring the Presbytery.** Due to the higher demand at weekend Masses, a pre-booked seat is not guaranteed if you arrive after Mass has begun. May I take this opportunity to remind you that **the Sunday obligation is still suspended, and therefore I would encourage some of you to take advantage of attending Mass during the week if possible** to help ease the numbers at the weekend. Thank you.

Fr Paul