



St Mary of the Annunciation Catholic Church

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Served by the Rosminians: Fr Paul Gillham, Parish Priest

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Newsletter for Sunday 20th December 2020 FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

A Virgin Shall Conceive and Bear a Son

On this final Sunday of Advent we are less than a week away from the celebration of Our Lord's birth, and so the Church reminds us in today's Gospel of the **Annunciation**, that nine months earlier our Saviour was conceived in the womb of His Blessed Mother, Mary. What is announced in today's Gospel is what all the Old Testament prophets had spoken of, **that a Virgin would conceive and bear a Son, and His Name shall be called Emmanuel** (Isaiah 7:14) which means "*God is with us.*" Mary did not conceive in the normal way since she "*did not know man.*" She conceived by the power of the **Holy Spirit** so that the One she would bear would be the Son of the Most High, the God man, the Word made flesh. Just as the Fall of man had been a free act, so too Mary's cooperation in our Redemption had to be a free act. **St Bernard** (1090-1153), in one of his homilies, dramatically describes this moment with the whole of Heaven and Earth holding their breath, so to speak, as they await her reply to the Angel Gabriel. Will she say 'yes' or will her humility hold her back? Then comes her response, her '*fiat*', "*Be it done unto me according to thy word.*" At that moment the Eternal Word was conceived in her womb, but her virginity remained intact. It has been the constant teaching of the Church that Mary enjoys **perpetual virginity**, before, during and after the birth of Our Lord. His birth was completely miraculous.

This has been a very difficult year, an '*annus horribilis*'. But we find hope in the coming of Our Lord. Amidst all the turmoil of this past year, God has protected our faith and kept our hope in the power of His mercy and grace alive. As Christmas draws near, let us remember all those who haven't experienced His goodness and mercy, those who reject Him or who are afraid of following Him for whatever reason. Let us pray for all those who are suffering, for the persecuted, for the lonely, the poor, the bereaved and those who will not experience the peace and joy of the Christ Child lying in the manger at Bethlehem this Christmas. For us who do believe, we know we do not have to face the trials and burdens of life alone. With the **Incarnation**, we have a God Who *knows* what it is to suffer and Who gives it meaning while showing us the way to eternal life and happiness.

On behalf of Fr Simon, Fr David and myself, I wish you all a very happy and blessed Christmas.

Fr Paul Gillham, IC

FROM THE SAINTS: "The One Who is our very life descended into our world, and bore our death, and slew it with the abundance of His own life. Thundering, He called out to us to return to Him in Heaven" (*St Augustine of Hippo, 354-430*).

MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS AT ST MARY'S

Sat	19 th	6.00pm	Evelyn Woodhouse RIP – PUBLIC MASS
Sun	20 th	<u>Fourth Sunday of Advent</u>	
		9.00am	Evelyn Woodhouse RIP – PUBLIC MASS
		11.15am	For the Parish – PUBLIC MASS
Mon	21 st	9.15am	John Barson – PUBLIC MASS
Tues	22 nd	9.15am	Giovanni Brunetti RIP (Anniversary)
Weds	23 rd	6.30pm	Vivincia Castillo RIP (Anniversary) – PUBLIC MASS
Thurs	24 th	<u>Christmas Eve</u>	
		9.15am	Clarice Ryder RIP
		5.00pm	Christmas Vigil Mass: Lidia & Fernando Buttarazzi RIP – PUBLIC MASS
		9.00pm	Christmas Vigil Mass: Holy Souls – PUBLIC MASS
Fri	25 th	<u>THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD (SOLEMNITY)</u>	
		12 midnight	For the Parish – PUBLIC MASS
		9.00am	Family Intention – PUBLIC MASS
		11.15am	Wladyslaw Moson RIP (Anniversary) – PUBLIC MASS
Sat	26 th	<u>St Stephen (Feast)</u>	
		10.30am	Intention for the living – PUBLIC MASS
		6.00pm	Intention for the living – PUBLIC MASS
Sun	27 th	<u>The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph (Feast)</u>	
		9.00am	Norah Thurland RIP (Anniversary) – PUBLIC MASS
		11.15am	For the Parish – PUBLIC MASS
Mon	28 th	<u>The Holy Innocents, Martyrs (Feast)</u>	
		9.15am	Family Intention – PUBLIC MASS
Tues	29 th	<u>St Thomas Becket, Bishop, Martyr (Feast)</u>	
		9.15am	Frances Ebong RIP
Weds	30 th	6.30pm	Intention for the living (GE)
Thurs	31 st	9.15am	The Stewards (GE)
		6.30pm	Te Deum & Solemn Benediction – PUBLIC SERVICE
		<u>MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD (SOLEMNITY)</u>	
Fri	1 st	10.30am	First Friday: For our deceased relatives and friends – PUBLIC MASS
Sat	2 nd	9.15am	Terry Monaghan RIP
		6.00pm	For the Parish – PUBLIC MASS
Sun	3 rd	<u>Second Sunday of Christmas</u>	
		9.00am	For the Sick of the Parish – PUBLIC MASS
		11.15am	Cliff Brookes RIP – PUBLIC MASS

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.

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

Christmas Eve: 5.00pm (Vigil Mass), 9.00pm (Vigil Mass)

Christmas Day: 12.00am (Midnight Mass), 9.00am (Dawn Mass), 11.15am (Day Mass)

PLEASE NOTE: there will be no private prayer or Confessions on Saturday 2nd January

A BIG THANK YOU on behalf of the whole parish to all our stewards who have enabled us to open for public Masses and funerals and to have additional Masses over Christmas. Without these volunteers generously giving their time, none of this would have been possible. A particular thank you to Emily and Elvira for organising it all and doing the rotas including the pre-Christmas big clean of the church. Thank you also to our altar servers and to Felix for coordinating them, and to all our musicians.

Fr Paul

GRUB CLUB APPEAL: The total donations for Grub Club families amounted to £3420. This is a huge tribute to parishioners from St Mary's and Sacred Heart who have responded so generously. The comments from head teachers and receiving families have reinforced our understanding of the huge need out there. They are so grateful. Thank you for your kindness.

Catherine, Frank and the parish CSA team.

LOUGHBOROUGH FOOD BANK AT JOHN STORER HOUSE A huge thanks to all for the numerous donations to the Loughborough Food bank. Our donations, which will go towards the 350 weekly food parcels distributed across Chamwood, mean that families will each receive provisions enough for a Christmas dinner with added extras. And included in each parcel will be a message stating which church/parish the goods are from, ie with the compliments of St Mary's Catholic Parish Loughborough.

Jane Monaghan

CHRISTMAS CAKES, JAMS & CHUTNEY SALE: A massive thank you to everyone who supported the cake sale. We raised a total of **£140** which will be split between 'The Missions' and our local 'Grub Club'. I would like to send a special thank you to Emily, Elvira and my daughter Bridget for co-ordinating the sale; I couldn't have done it without you.

Marie Brookes

PLEASE NOTE: there will be no private prayer or Confessions on Saturday 2nd January

PLEASE PRAY for those who have recently died: Sr Ursula O'Keeffe, Philip Mascarenhas, Terry Oliver and Marie Hardy. **May they rest in peace**

and for those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Virginia Stocks, Brian Stack, Francis Boyne, Lily O'Neil, Anthony Field, Dorothy Ginns, Margaret Dawson, Rita Sivaguru, Edouardo Romaniello, Mary Black, Denis Carnell, Christopher Hubbard, Giuseppe Calardo, Doreen Wesseldine, John McGeechan, Giovanni Brunetti, John Moore, Maria Calabrese, Mary Wade, Liz Prentice, Wladyslaw Moson, Sue Moreland, Anne America, Cynthia Kilyon, Ian Merriman, Gladys Collins, Christine Temple, William Lindley, Irene Hollis, Norah Thurland, Edward Fitzpatrick, Horace Walmsley, Mary Coceraine, Veronica Hammond-Young, Louis Madge, Peter Harvey, Sheila Lucas, Tony O'Malley, Jerzy Piekarski, Eileen Sutton and Vivincia Castillo

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.*

VIRTUAL CAROL SERVICE: This Sunday **20th December at 4.00pm**, Dominic and Lucy Remedios will be hosting a Carol Service online via Zoom. All parishioners with internet access are welcome to join the service, which will include readings as well as carols. If you would like to take part, please email Dominic – dominic.remedios@icloud.com – and ask him to send you the Zoom link. **NB:** Although not essential, having Zoom installed on your computer will make access to the call easier. It is free to download.

NEW YEAR: On New Year's Eve **Thursday 31st December**, there will be the traditional Te Deum and Solemn Benediction at 7pm in thanksgiving for the past year. Do come if you can. A plenary indulgence is attached to the public recitation of the Te Deum on this day. Please note that Mass on **New Year's Day** for the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God will be at 10.30am. On the Solemnity of the Epiphany (**Wednesday 6th January**), there will be the traditional Blessing of Chalk at both Masses. *Fr Paul*

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. You will also be able to book on Saturday 19th and Sunday 20th December between 2pm and 5pm. Please do not phone 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*

CHRISTMAS COLLECTION: This year the Christmas Day offering will be for Parish funds and will be used to support the priests, and maintenance of the presbytery and church. If you wish to make a personal offering for the priests, please use the IOC (white) envelopes. Thank you.

The second collection this weekend is for the Apostleship of the Sea

LAST WEEK'S FINANCE:	
First Collection: £428 of which £121 gift-aided	Grub Club: £20
Standing orders: £776 of which £679 gift-aided	Kwediboma: £32
<i>Thank you</i>	

PLEASE NOTE there will be no newsletter next weekend due to the Parish Office being closed for Christmas. It will be open again week commencing **4th January**.