



## 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 20<sup>th</sup> December 2020 FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

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

**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 2<sup>nd</sup> January**

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**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 2<sup>nd</sup> January**

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**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.*

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**VIRTUAL CAROL SERVICE:** This Sunday **20<sup>th</sup> 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 31<sup>st</sup> 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 6<sup>th</sup> 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 19<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> 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**

| <b>LAST WEEK'S FINANCE:</b>                                   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| First Collection: <b>£428</b> of which <b>£121</b> gift-aided | Grub Club: <b>£20</b> |
| Standing orders: <b>£776</b> of which <b>£679</b> gift-aided  | Kwediboma: <b>£32</b> |
| <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 **4<sup>th</sup> January**.