



St Mary of the Annunciation Catholic Church

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Newsletter for Sunday 31st January 2021 FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

JESUS the Exorcist

Last weekend at Mass I mentioned that one of the primary themes of Mark's Gospel which we are reading this year is the idea of **JESUS as exorcist**. In today's Gospel reading (Mark 1:21-28) we have the first of those stories with Our Lord setting a man free who is possessed by an evil spirit. As Our Lord approaches the man, the evil spirit cries out in a panic, *"What do You want with us JESUS of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know Who You are: the Holy One of God."* And JESUS says, *"Be quiet! Come out of him!"* And the man is immediately set free. This is an important incident because **one of the signs of the coming of the Messiah would be that He would overthrow the devil and drive out demonic forces** (Genesis 3:15). And this was the first of many such encounters in the Gospel.

It is very popular today to deny the existence of the devil, but the Gospel teaches us that he and the demonic world are very real indeed, and being **fallen angels** they want us to share in their eternal damnation. Sceptics also like to say that stories of possession in the Bible are nothing more than cases of epilepsy or psychological disorders which at the time were mistaken for something more sinister. There is no doubt Our Lord, Who is God, believed in the reality of Satan and the evil spirits, and He would certainly be able to tell the difference between demonic possession and physical or psychological disorders. In fact, he cured them all. The frequent exorcisms He performed are a sign of His power over evil and a proof of His authority to set people free. He has overthrown the power of sin and death and He wants us to share in that victory.

Genuine demonic possessions are very rare, so we should never worry about it, but we all suffer from **temptations**. **Pope Francis** says we shouldn't approach the devil or talk to him because, *"like a rabid chained dog, he'll bite if you try to caress him. His proposals are nothing but lies, but we fools believe him."* Things such as horoscopes, Ouija boards, clairvoyants and fortune tellers are dabbling with evil and we must have nothing to do with them. Neither is there any such thing as "white" magic.

We are in this special **Year of St Joseph** who is invoked as **"Terror of Demons"**. St Joseph's fatherhood has power and the two greatest people that ever lived on this earth, JESUS and Mary, subjected themselves to him. Now in Heaven, St Joseph's intercessory power is a serious threat to the kingdom of darkness. The **lily** he holds in his hand (see St Joseph's statue in the church) is like a sword of purity which will slay every form of filth and darkness if we invoke him. In the words of Fr Donald Calloway, an authority on St Joseph: *"one word from his mouth routs the forces of darkness as an axe levels a field of trees."*

St Joseph, Terror of Demons, protect us.

Fr Paul Gillham, IC

MASS INTENTIONS AT ST MARY'S

Sat	30th	6.00pm	Andy Newbold RIP – PUBLIC MASS
Sun	31st	<u>Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time</u>	
		9.00am	For the Parish – PUBLIC MASS
		11.15am	Philip Concannon RIP – PUBLIC MASS
		4.00pm	Italian Mass – PUBLIC MASS
Mon	1st	9.15am	Peter Barrow RIP – PUBLIC MASS
Tues	2nd	<u>Candlemas (Feast)</u>	
		9.15am	Intention for the living (GE)
		6.30pm	Barry Hallam RIP (Latin, old rite) – PUBLIC MASS
Weds	3rd	9.15am	Fr John Whelton IC, RIP
Thurs	4th	9.15am	George Houston RIP
Fri	5th	6.30pm	<i>First Friday:</i> For our deceased relatives and friends – PUBLIC MASS
Sat	6th	9.15am	Frances Margerison
		10.30am-	Private prayer with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.
		12.30pm	Confessions available 10.30am-11.30am
		6.00pm	Russell Lomotos RIP – PUBLIC MASS
Sun	7th	<u>Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time</u>	
		9.00am	Intention for the living – PUBLIC MASS
		11.15am	For the Parish – PUBLIC MASS
		4.00pm	Italian Mass – PUBLIC MASS

MASS INTENTIONS: Although the times of Masses are all displayed in this newsletter, the PRIVATE Masses (ie those not open to the public) will not necessarily be offered at those times. But 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.**

PLEASE PRAY for those who have recently died: Bishop Patrick O'Donoghue (Emeritus of Lancaster), Brother Paul Greaves (Mount St Bernard's), Mrs M Shephard (nee Watkinson), Vera Hurry, Emidio Chiavetti and Carmela Brunetti. **May they rest in peace**

and for those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Bernard Hudson, Giuseppina Russo, Pat Lavery, Rose Keeping, Tony Benincasa, Francis McHugh, Maurice Keetley, Eliza Aldiss, Adelaide Taylor, Paul Rose, Gladys Orton, Marta Rebacz, Patrick Doyle and Anna King

CANDLEMAS: Tuesday this week is Candlemas or the Purification of Our Lady or the Presentation of the Lord. By whichever name you prefer to call it, it is the end of Christmastide (40 days of Christmas) and so the Christmas tree and crib will be taken down the following day. It is also the day we bless the candles for the year. Therefore, to enable me to do this, the Latin Mass this week will be on Tuesday at 6.30pm instead of Wednesday. So no public Mass on Wednesday this week.

Fr Paul

RACIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY is today. The Bishops of England and Wales have said, "The effects of the pandemic, the killing of George Floyd, and the powerful message on fraternity and equality by Pope Francis in 'Fratelli Tutti' speak of the need to actively oppose racism and pursue racial justice with renewed vigour." Please visit <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/racial-justice-sunday-2021/> for more information and a message from Bishop McAleenan.

ASH WEDNESDAY falls on **17th February**. Due to the pandemic the Vatican has decreed that this year ashes must be distributed by **sprinkling them over the head**, thus avoiding any physical contact. Although strange to us in this country, it is the norm in Italy and in some other countries too. When I was a student in Rome, ashes were always distributed in this manner, including the Pope's Mass.

Fr Paul

40 DAYS FOR LIFE NOTTINGHAM invite you to pray for an hour or more during a 40-day vigil running for 12 hours daily during Lent (17th Feb-28th March). You can sign up now at www.40daysforlife.com/nottingham, or contact 40daysforlifennotts@gmail.com. Bishop Patrick will celebrate Mass to mark the start of this year's campaign on **Thursday 11th February** at the Cathedral at 7.00pm. You can also follow the Mass online through the Cathedral website.

HELPING THE CHILDREN: Do you have a laptop, tablet or iPad less than 3 years old, not used, that you could donate to St Mary's School? As you may have seen on the media, some children are unable to access online learning because they don't have the technology. Devices can be handed into the school on Hastings Street, 9-4pm. The school will be able to wipe your device. Thank you.

ST MARY'S SCHOOL ROSARY: The children and the school community of St Mary's pray the Rosary each Wednesday lunchtime and extend an invitation to all parishioners to join in the reflections on the mysteries of the Rosary. If you are able it would be lovely to know our parish family are praying with us from home.

ST FRANCIS' CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY, Melton Mowbray (part of the St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi-Academy Trust) has a vacancy for a **part time non-teaching Deputy Headteacher**. Please visit www.aquinas-cmat.org/vacancies/ for further information. Closing date: **12th February 2021.**

A NEW PARLIAMENTARY MOTION (EDM 1340) is calling on the Government to introduce new guidance on fetal pain. The evidence that babies can feel pain in the womb, and during many abortions, highlights the humanity of the unborn child and provides another important reason to introduce legislation to protect the unborn child from abortion. Right To Life UK have set up a tool which makes it easy to contact your MP, and ask them to sign this motion calling on the Government to introduce new guidance on fetal pain. It only takes 30 seconds using this easy-to-use tool which can be accessed on the following web page: www.righttolife.org.uk/FetalPainMotion.

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.

FROM THE SAINTS: "It is a mark of the evil spirit to take on the appearance of an angel of light. He begins by whispering thoughts that are suited to a devout soul, and ends by suggesting his own (*St Ignatius of Loyola, 1491-1556*).

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 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

LAST WEEK'S FINANCE	
Collection: £349 of which £31 was gift-aided	
Standing orders: £788 (@31/12) of which £702 is gift-aided	
SPUC: £168	
Mass attendance: 157	<i>Thank you</i>