

St Mary of the Annunciation Catholic Church

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



St Mary of the Annunciation Catholic Church

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Served by the Rosminians

Parish Priest

Fr Paul Gillham, IC

On attachment

Fr David Jones, OLW

Safeguarding Rep

Jane Monaghan

01509 262123

Parish Catholic Schools

St Mary's Primary

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Loughborough LE11 5AX
01509 212621

office@stmarys-rc.leics.sch.uk

Headteacher: Miss P Jordan

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Thorpe Hill
Loughborough LE11 4SQ
01509 268739

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Headteacher: Mr C Maher

NEWSLETTER

Getting ready for the mystery of Christmas

We have arrived at the **Fourth Sunday of Advent**, which means we are now very close to Christmas, when we celebrate the Birth of Our Lord and Saviour JESUS Christ into this world. What we are about to celebrate is a **mystery**, and it's impossible to fully understand. **God the Son**, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, becomes true man and enters our world, but without ceasing to be God. He was not born in the usual way - there was no man involved. He was **conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary**. This mystery is the heart of our Faith, and we call it the **Incarnation** – God taking our humanity to Himself.

So think about what this means. **The infinite enters the finite**. The Creator of the universe – He who made the angels, the stars, the oceans, every living thing, plants, animals and human beings out of nothing, and even time itself, enters time and allows Himself to be enclosed for nine months in the womb of the Virgin Mary. The All-Powerful God, Who wants for absolutely nothing, chooses to depend on a **human mother** for life, warmth and care. The Eternal God Who holds all creation together in Himself, is held in Mary's arms. He becomes a small and helpless infant, so as thirty-three years later, He could die on the Cross and save us. Such is His unmeasurable love for us.

Because this mystery is so great, at the Christmas Mass, during the **Creed** at the words, *"And by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man"* we kneel. We kneel at these words because standing is not enough! **Kneeling is our way of honouring the profound mystery of the Incarnation**. We cannot fully comprehend it, but we show reverence for the moment when God humbled Himself to become as one of His creatures.

St Joseph, who features in today's Gospel (Matthew 1:18-24), stands quietly at the centre of all this. God trusted him to protect Mary and

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Martyrdom of Thomas of Canterbury

Please pray for those who are sick

and those who have recently died:

Yvonne Gibbs
Monika Harkins
Neal Sheppard

May they rest in peace

(See next page for anniversaries)

PLEASE NOTE
Due to government regulations regarding personal data (UK-GDPR), we are not able to publish name details of Mass intentions for the living in this online version of the newsletter.

MASS INTENTIONS AT ST MARY'S

Sat 20th <i>6.00pm</i>	Vigil Mass Intention for the living
Sun 21st <i>9.00am</i> <i>11.15am</i>	Fourth Sunday of Advent For the Parish Wladyslaw Moson (RIP)
Mon 22nd <i>9.15am</i>	Advent Feria In Thanksgiving to the Sacred Heart & Holy Spirit
Tues 23rd <i>6.00pm</i>	Advent Feria Vivincia Castillo (RIP, Anniversary)
Weds 24th <i>5.30pm</i> <i>6.00pm</i>	Vigil of the Nativity of the Lord (Solemnity) <i>Carols</i> Family Vigil Christmas Mass: Vera Hurry (RIP)
Thurs 25th <i>12 midnight</i> <i>10.30am</i>	NATIVITY OF THE LORD <i>Holy Day of Obligation</i> Holy Souls For the Parish
Fri 26th <i>10.30am</i>	St Stephen, Deacon & Martyr <i>Mass for Altar Servers</i> Greg O'Connor (RIP)
Sat 27th <i>6.00pm</i>	St John, Apostle & Evangelist Vigil Mass: Henryka & Piotr Abucewicz (RIP)
Sun 28th <i>9.00am</i> <i>11.15am</i> <i>4.00pm</i>	The Holy Family Norah Thurland (RIP, Anniversary) Andy Newbold (RIP) Italian Mass
Mon 29th <i>9.15am</i>	St Thomas of Canterbury, Bishop & Martyr Eva & Domenico Lallo (70th Wedding Anniversary)
Tues 30th <i>9.15am</i>	Sixth Day within the Octave of Christmas For the Parish

Please note:
There will be no Confessions on Friday 26th December, and no Confessions or Exposition on Saturday 27th December.

Mass Intentions (continued)

Weds 31st	St Sylvester I, Pope
6.30pm	Eva & Domenico Lallo (70th Wedding Anniv) (Latin)
7.15pm	Te Deum & Solemn Benediction
Thurs 1st	Mary Mother of God (Solemnity)
10.30am	For the Parish
Fri 2nd	Ss Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen <i>First Friday</i>
6.00-6.25pm	<i>Confessions</i>
6.30pm	For our Deceased Relatives & Friends
Sat 3rd	Christmas Feria <i>Five First Saturdays</i>
10.00am	Manuel Martinez (RIP)
10.30am	<i>Private prayer with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament</i>
-12.30pm	<i>with Confessions 10.30-11.30am & Benediction 12.20pm</i>
6.00pm	Ger Minogue (RIP)
Sun 4th	Second Sunday of Christmas
9.00am	Domenico Romano (RIP)
11.15am	George & Margaret Evans (60th Wedding Anniversary)
4.00pm	Italian Mass

(continued from front page)

the Child JESUS. Again, Joseph didn't and couldn't fully understand the mystery, but he trusted God and obeyed. He guarded Mary and protected her dignity and cared for the Child JESUS as his own. **He reminds us that faith often means trusting God even when we can't see the full picture.**

Finally, **Fr David and myself wish you all a very merry Christmas.** May your homes be filled with peace and your hearts with faith. And may the Christmas liturgies be for you all, a true **encounter** with this holy mystery.

Fr Paul Gillham, IC

Carol Service: Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Carol Service last Sunday. It was a terrific occasion and the church was full. Our sincere thanks go to the readers, those who provided refreshments in the hall afterwards, and above all to our musicians, who worked so hard to bring everything together. It was also wonderful to have the combined choirs of St Mary's and Sacred Heart Primary Schools joining us. Thank you also to their teachers who made that possible.

Fr Paul

Altar Servers: The 10.30am Mass on **St Stephen's Day, Friday 26th December** will be a special Mass for our altar servers on the Feast Day of their patron. Some will be enrolled into the Guild. All are welcome to attend.

Fr Paul

On New Year's Eve (31st December) there will be the usual Latin Mass at 6.30pm. It will be followed at 7.15pm by the traditional Te Deum and Benediction in thanksgiving for the past year. There is a Plenary Indulgence attached to this devotion.

Christmas Church Cleaning will be on Monday 22nd December at 10.15am, after morning Mass. Please come and help if you can. Everything will be provided; just turn up, or call 07715 398543 if you would like more info. Thank you.

Ehira

Please pray for those whose anniversaries occur at this time:

Pep Calardo, John Moore, Sue Moreland, Ian Merriman, Palma Chomik, Christine Temple, Tony Ready, Mary Cochrine, Peter Harvey, Veronica Hammond-Young, Eileen Sutton, Linda Wagstaff, Estrella Hunter, Patrick Tunney, Carmen DeSousa, Gary Moore

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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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.

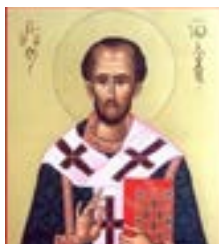
Why do we celebrate the feasts of so many martyrs in the days immediately after Christmas? Because the Church wants to link the joy of Christ's birth to the cost of following Him. The day after Christmas, we recall St Stephen, who was stoned for bearing open witness to Christ; on the 28th, we remember the Holy Innocents, who shed their blood because Christ had entered history; and on the 29th, we celebrate St Thomas of Canterbury, martyred in his own cathedral for defending the rights of the Church against King Henry II. These feasts remind us that the Incarnation is not a sentimental story. It's a saving event that brings forth both faith and opposition. This year, the feast of the Holy Innocents is displaced by the Sunday celebration of the Holy Family.

**The office will be closed until week commencing 5th January.
There will be no newsletter next week.**

From the Saints

"This day, He Who Is, is born; and He Who Is becomes what He was not."

St John Chrysostom (ca 347-407)



CHRISTMAS MASSES

Weds 24th December

5.30pm: Carols

6.00pm: Family Vigil Mass

Thurs 25th December

12.00am: Midnight Mass

10.30am: Solemn Mass

Frs Simon and Charles

would like to thank all those who sent them cards and wish everyone a happy and blessed Christmas.

The Christmas Collection will be for parish funds.

If you wish to make a personal offering to the priests, please give it directly, or place it in one of the white envelopes marked IOC. Thank you.

Last Week's Finance

Collection: £750 (of which £169 was G/A)

Standing orders: £852 @ 30/11 (of which £740 was G/A)

Attendance: 608

Thank you

St Mary's bank account details for online donations

Bank: Lloyds

A/c name: St Mary of Annun Lough RCP

Sort code: 30-95-21

A/c no: 00481028

Alternatively, scan this QR code to donate securely from your phone

