

St Mary of the Annunciation Catholic Church

SECOND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS



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

Hastings Street
Loughborough LE11 5AX
01509 212621

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Headteacher: Miss P Jordan

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Headteacher: Mr C Maher

NEWSLETTER

Christmas is not over yet

A happy and blessed New Year to you all! And thank you to everyone who helped make the Christmas services so special. But let us not think that with the ushering in of the New Year, Christmas is over. The secular world was already taking down its Christmas decorations on 26th December, but the Church reminds us quietly but firmly, **Christmas has only just begun!** Traditionally it runs all the way to the Feast of the **Presentation of Our Lord on 2nd February**, more commonly known as **Candlemas**. And fittingly, on this Second Sunday of Christmas, the Church gives us once again the timeless **Prologue to St John's Gospel**, (1:1-14) which we also heard proclaimed at Mass on Christmas Day.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. With these simple words, **St John the Apostle and Evangelist** takes our minds beyond time itself into the depths of eternity. Before there was a manger, before the universe was created, and before there was time, the Word already was. He is not a creature or a messenger, but God Himself.

All things were made by Him, and without Him was made nothing that was made. That includes you and me. Nothing exists apart from His Will – an uncomfortable truth for modern ears, because we like to think we're in control of everything! But everything that exists does so because the Word wills it to exist. This does not mean He wills evil, because evil is not a 'thing'. Evil is the lack of the good in the same way that darkness is the absence of light. St John continues, ***The light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.*** Here, darkness is not merely the absence of light, but the rejection of it. ***He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.*** And that's the irony of our modern times. We have so much knowledge and have made so much technological progress, and yet we understand far less. Why? Because **God is essential to true understanding**, and without faith, we are building on sand. **St Augustine** put it well: ***Believe in order to understand.*** Then knowledge can become wisdom.

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Please pray for those who are sick,

for those who have recently died:

Yvonne Gibbs

Monika Harkins

Neal Sheppard

May they rest in peace

and for those whose anniversaries occur at this time:

Joseph Simpson,

Roy Dakin,

Dorothy Boyce,

Jim Moreland,

Brian Smith,

Brida Salvatore,

Maria Cuff

PLEASE NOTE

Due to government regulations regarding personal data (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 3th **Christmas Feria**
6.00pm Ger Minogue (RIP)

Sun 4th **Second Sunday of Christmas**
9.00am Domenico Romano (RIP)
11.15am *Wedding Anniversary*
4.00pm Italian Mass

Mon 5th **Christmas (before Epiphany) Feria**
9.15am Mandy Giorgio (RIP)

Tues 6th **Epiphany of the Lord (Holyday of Obligation)**
9.15am For the Parish (Attended by St Mary's School)
6.30pm Brian Smith (RIP)

Weds 7th **Wednesday after the Epiphany**
6.30pm Alexandrina Nyajena (RIP) (Latin)

Thurs 8th **Thursday after the Epiphany**
9.15am Philomena Duffy (RIP)

Fri 9th **Friday after the Epiphany**
6.00-6.25pm *Confessions*
6.30pm Intention for the living

Sat 10th **Saturday after the Epiphany**
10.30am *Private prayer with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament*
-12.30pm *with Confessions 10.30-11.30am & Benediction 12.20pm*
6.00pm **Vigil Mass:** May Hollingsworth (RIP)

Sun 11th **Baptism of the Lord (Feast)**
9.00am For the Parish
11.15am Josephine Merwick (RIP)
2.30pm *Baptism*
4.00pm Italian Mass

Rosary *Mon, Tues, Thurs after 9.15am Mass; Wed, Fri at 6.00pm;
First Saturday of each month after 10.00am Mass*

Tuesday is the Solemnity of the Epiphany and is a Holyday of Obligation. Masses will be at 9.15am and 6.30pm.

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“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” This sentence changes everything. The Child in the manger at Bethlehem is no mere moral teacher or prophet. He is the Eternal Son, ***“consubstantial with the Father”*** as we say in the Creed. **God has come to visit us in Person.** And having assumed our human flesh, He will never abandon it.

With the New Year in front of us, the Word still speaks, the Light still shines, and the choice remains the same as it was in Bethlehem two thousand years ago. ***“As many as received Him, He gave the power to be made the sons of God.”*** Through grace, we are not merely forgiven our sins. We are made the **adopted sons and daughters of God** and share in the very life of God Himself. This is the foundation of any new beginning. So there remains just one question for each of us to ask ourselves: will I open my heart to receive Him?

Fr Paul Gillham, IC

The Closing of the Holy Year: The Holy Year is drawing to its close. Over the past couple of weeks, the Holy Doors of the major basilicas in Rome have been gradually closed and sealed. The Holy Year will officially end this Tuesday 6th January, the Solemnity of the Epiphany, when Pope Leo will solemnly close the Holy Door of St Peter's Basilica. This symbolic act brings to completion a year marked by mercy, prayer, and deeper conversion. We have been blessed to have had St Mary's nominated as one of the Jubilee Churches in the Nottingham Diocese.

Thank you to all who helped prepare the church for Christmas: our cleaners, flower arrangers, brass polishers, and decorators.

Thank you also to all who helped enhance the liturgy: our altar servers, readers and musicians, as well as our stewards who kept everything running smoothly. All the services were well attended.

Finally, thank you again for all your greetings, good wishes and gifts to Fr David and myself. As always we are most grateful.

Fr Paul

Last Rites does not mean Last Minute!

As soon as a person begins to be in danger of death because of illness, injury or old age, the time for anointing has surely already come.

Fr Paul



Picture: Mazur/cbcew.org.uk

New Archbishop of Westminster:

Please keep in your prayers the new Archbishop-elect of Westminster, Richard Moth. He is currently Bishop of Arundel and Brighton, and on 14th February will be enthroned as Archbishop of Westminster, succeeding Cardinal Vincent Nichols who is retiring. Archbishop Moth will become the head of the Catholic Church in England and Wales and will no doubt receive the red Cardinal's hat in due course.

Fr Paul

A special blessing:

The Church has a custom of blessing homes on the solemnity of the Epiphany. Chalk blessed at all Masses on Tuesday will be available for you to take, together with the instructions to inscribe the blessing on your home.

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.

This Tuesday 6th January, we celebrate the Solemnity of the Epiphany, when the Magi or Wise Men from the East – traditionally named Melchior, Caspar, and Balthasar – presented their gifts to the Christ Child. Their offerings reveal Who JESUS really is: gold honours Him as King, frankincense proclaims His divinity, and myrrh foreshadows His Passion and Death. The Magi, being Gentiles, represent the revelation of Christ to all nations, showing that Christ came for everyone, not only to Israel. Their visit reminds us to bring our own gifts – our faith, our lives, and our love to Him.

From the Saints

“Christian, remember your dignity, and now that you share in God’s own nature, do not return to your former baseness by sin.”

(Pope St Leo the Great, ca 391-461)



Next weekend there will be a mandatory Second Collection for the Sick and Retired Priests of the Diocese.

Please consider switching your weekly offering to Standing Order and adding Gift Aid if possible.

Last Week's Finance

1st Collection: £648 (of which £115 was G/A)

Attendance: 629

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

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

