

St Mary of the Annunciation Catholic Church

3rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

NEWSLETTER

For those who walk in darkness



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
office@stmarys-rc.leics.sch.uk
Headteacher: Miss P Jordan

De Lisle College

Thorpe Hill
Loughborough LE11 4SQ
01509 268739
enquiries@delisle.leics.sch.uk
Headteacher: Mr C Maher

Each time we come to Mass, just before Holy Communion, the priest lifts the Host and says, **“Behold the Lamb of God; behold Him Who takes away the sins of the world.”** These words are so familiar to us, it’s very easy to let them pass over our heads without reflection. But on this Sunday the Church asks us to pause and meditate on their profound meaning.

The phrase comes directly from today’s Gospel (John 1:29-34) when John the Baptist sees JESUS approaching and proclaims, **“Behold the Lamb of God.”** John recognised Who JESUS was and helped others to see it too.

So why does John call JESUS the Lamb of God? To understand this, we have to return to **Old Testament times** where **lambs were offered daily in the Temple**, morning and evening, **for the sins of the people**. This was central to Israel’s worship. Remember the story of the **Passover** (Exodus 12), when God commanded an unblemished male lamb be sacrificed, and the doorposts marked with its blood, so that the Angel of Death would ‘pass over’ God’s chosen people and spare their first-born. If there was no lamb’s blood, there was no deliverance, and death was the result. **So the lamb’s life was given so that others could live.** And yet those Old Testament sacrifices never removed sin, and they had to be repeated over and over again. But they pointed forward to **something** and **Someone** far greater.

So when John calls JESUS the Lamb of God, he is saying; *This is the One all the others were pointing to – not just another sacrifice, but THE sacrifice.* In other words, He is the **one Sacrifice** that will truly take away sin, once and for all. JESUS freely accepted this mission. His Sacrifice on the Cross was the whole purpose of His coming. The prophet Isaiah said, He is **“like a lamb that is led to the slaughter”** (53:7). And that Sacrifice although it happened once in history and almost 2,000 years ago, **its effects last forever.**

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St Angela Merici

Please pray for those who are sick

for those who have recently died:

May they rest in peace

and for those whose anniversaries occur at this time:

Dennis Thurland
Kathleen Pagett
Jude Jones
Christina O'Sullivan
Matthew Galvin
Pat Lavery

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 24th Vigil Mass
6.00pm Ranjith Esperiar (RIP)

Sun 25th Third Sunday in Ordinary Time
9.00am For the Parish
11.15am Lena & Tom Walsh (RIP)
4.00pm Italian Mass

Mon 26th Ss Timothy & Titus, Bishops
9.15am Pat Newby (RIP)

Tues 27th St Angela Merici, Virgin
9.15am Maria Katarzyna Paluch (RIP)

Weds 28th St Peter Nolasco, Confessor
6.30pm Marie Styvèn (RIP) (Latin)

Thurs 29th Feria
9.15am William & Edward Angrave (RIP)

Fri 30th Feria
6.00-6.25pm *Confessions*
6.30pm Intention for the living

Sat 31st St John Bosco, Priest
10.30am *Private prayer with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament*
-12.30pm *with Confessions 10.30-11.30am & Benediction 12.20pm*
2.30pm *Baptism*
6.00pm **Vigil Mass:** Antoni Zielinski (RIP)

Sun 1st Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
9.00am For the Parish
11.15am Martha Moson (RIP)
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*

THIS WEEK AT ST MARY'S

Mon 26th First Confession Class: 4.15pm in the hall
Weds 28th UCM (AGM): 2.00-4.00pm in the hall
Thurs 29th RCIA: 7.00pm in the parish library

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calls us so that by His grace, we may conquer sin. *“Without Me you can do nothing”* (John 15:5). The saints weren’t born saints. They are saints because they **persevered** and never gave up.

So if life feels dark, if you’re tired of falling into the same old sins – then you are exactly the one to whom the Light is sent. If you stay away, the darkness only deepens. JESUS says, *“Come to Me all you that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you”* (Matthew 11:28). He doesn’t wait for us to be strong before He calls. **He calls us so that by following Him we may become strong.** To take that step towards Christ is to already leave the darkness behind. And remember, where Christ’s Light is received, despair gives way to hope, sins are forgiven, and the way back to the Father is made clear.

Fr Paul Gillham, IC

This Sunday there will be Pastoral Letter from Bishop Patrick on his Mission Plan for the Diocese.

Candlemas: Next **Monday 2nd February** is Candlemas or the Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple, and marks the traditional end of Christmastide. There will be two Masses: 9.15am (School Mass) and 6.30pm. The evening Mass will be Solemn with a Procession and by candlelight. **Tuesday 3rd February is the feast of St Blaise**, the patron saint of throats. Throats will be blessed after Masses on Monday and Tuesday.

Fr Paul

Enabling Our Mission Campaign: As many of you know, our parish is currently involved in the diocesan Enabling Our Mission Campaign which aims to support our mission of becoming more outward looking, while also striving to ensure that the fewer priests now available for active ministry across the Diocese are best able to serve our communities. There will be another opportunity to find out about it this **Sunday 25th January** after the 11.15am Mass (in the Church). Thank you.

Fr Paul

Holocaust Memorial Day: Annual Act of Commemoration, **Tuesday 27th January 2026**, 12:30pm in Queens Park, by the bandstand. Everyone welcome. If the park is closed due to strong winds, the Commemoration will be at the United Reform Church, Frederick Street, also at 12:30pm. Soup and refreshments afterwards at the URC whether the event is in the park or at the church.

Gregorian Chant Workshop, Saturday 14th February, 10am-4pm:

St Mary’s choir are hosting a Gregorian Chant workshop here at St Mary’s. It will be led by Gregory Treloar, previously Diocesan Director of Music, looking at the basics of notation and learning a variety of chants for parish use. The day will finish with a Sung Vespers at 3.30pm. Singers from across the diocese are welcome to sign up and join the choir for the day, for which there is a suggested donation of £10. Please bring your own lunch. For more information, or to register for the day, please contact Martins: martinsobi19@gmail.com.

The Knights of St Columba quiz, 7.30pm Saturday 31st January, Sacred Heart Parish Hall:

All profits from the evening will go to The Carpenters Arms. Cost: £7 per person, £3 for children and students, to include a cheese supper, wine and soft drinks. If you would like to go please call Will Holland on **07811 353 248** to help plan the catering.

We have received a letter of thanks from Missio for the £378 collected on World Mission Sunday.

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.

This Sunday, the Third in Ordinary Time, was established by Pope Francis in 2020 to be the **Sunday of the Word of God**. The Bible isn't just a nice book to read - it's God speaking to us right now. When we read it prayerfully, with humility and trust, the Lord forms our consciences, strengthens our faith, and leads us more deeply into the truth. As Catholics, we always read the Scriptures with the mind of the Church, guided by Sacred Tradition and the teaching authority of the Church. So may be inspired to take the Scriptures more seriously by opening our Bibles more often, listening more carefully at Mass, and allowing God's Word to challenge, console, and correct us, so that our lives may increasingly reflect the truth we profess.

Fr Paul

Serving the Lord: We are a small friendly team who regularly clean the church on Friday mornings. We are desperately looking for more volunteers to help us. Cleaning takes place from 9.30am; if you can spare a little time, please talk to Emily or Elvira, or sign up on the cleaning volunteer sheet at the repository. Thank you

From the Saints

"Nothing great is ever achieved without much enduring."

St Catherine of Siena (1347-1380)



Fr David's Bible Studies resume from **Tuesday 3rd February at 7.00pm** in the parish library, exploring the **Book of Daniel**. All welcome; just bring your Bible.

SPUC Youth Conference: **27th February to 1st March 2026** at Yarnfield Park Conference Centre. A wonderful experience to meet other pro-life young people. Bursaries available to cover the costs. Please apply to SPUC directly via the website. See the **SPUC noticeboard** for full information.

Last Week's Finance

Collection: £1026 (of which £218 was G/A)

Standing orders: £894 @ 31/12 (of which £746 was G/A)

Attendance: 726

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

