

The Catholic Parish of St Mary, Leek
This parish is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham Registered Charity No 234216
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**“Our vision is to be a Catholic Parish living Christ’s command,
‘Love one another as I have loved you’.**

Saturday 10 December
Public liturgy and live-stream

10am to 10.30am Confessions, the Sacrament of Reconciliation
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT, Gaudete Sunday, Bambinelli Sunday
Isaiah 35: 1-6, 10; Ps145; James 5: 7-10; Matthew 11: 2-11
6pm Angela Bird RIP

Sunday 11 December
Public liturgy and live-stream

10am For you, the People of the Parish
4pm Rosary and Benediction

Monday 12 December
Public liturgy and live-stream

Memorial of Our Lady of Guadalupe
Numbers 24: 2-7, 15-17; Ps 24; Matthew 21: 23-27
9.40am Rosary 10am Holy Souls (HB)

Tuesday 13 December
Public liturgy and live-stream

Memorial of St Lucy, Virgin, Martyr
Zephaniah 3: 1-2, 9-13; Ps33; Matthew 21: 28-32
9.40am Rosary 10am Joe Clarke RIP (CF)

Wednesday 14 December
Public liturgy

Memorial of St John of the Cross, Priest, Doctor of the Church
Isaiah 45: 6-8, 18, 21- 25; Ps 84; Luke 7: 19-23
9.40am Rosary 10am Liturgy of the Word and Holy Communion (Eucharistic Service)

Thursday 15 December
Public liturgy and live-stream

Advent Feria
Isaiah 54: 1-10; Ps 29; Luke 7: 24-30
9.40am Rosary 10am Dennis Wilkes RIP

Friday 16 December
Public liturgy
Please note change of time

Advent Feria
Isaiah 56: 1-3, 6- 8; Ps66; John 5: 33-36
9.30am Mass will be at St Mary’s Academy. Parents and parishioners are welcome.

Saturday 17 December
Public liturgy and live-stream

10am to 10.30am Confessions, the Sacrament of Reconciliation
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
Isaiah 7: 10-14; Ps 23; Romans 1: 1-7; Matthew 1: 18-24
6pm Piotr Zwierski RIP

Sunday 18 December
Public liturgy and live-stream

10am Joseph Delicata RIP
4pm Rosary and Benediction

Parish Priest
Parish Administrator
St Mary’s Catholic Academy
Painsley Catholic College, Cheadle
Safeguarding Rep

Fr Martin Pratt
Mrs Geraldine Duffy-Jentz
Mrs G Turner
Mrs R Waugh
Appointment pending
Archdiocese of Birmingham
NSPCC
Mrs M Lawton
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Can you spare a day this month to pray for Vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life? If so, could you sign your name on the monthly prayer calendar at the back of the church. Let’s ask the Lord of the harvest to send labourers to his harvest.

The Pope’s Prayer Intention for December: For volunteer not for profit organisations: We pray that volunteer non-profit organisations committed to human development find people dedicated to the common good and ceaselessly seek out new paths to international cooperation.

Please pray for the sick: Jenny Kirkham, Moyra Chadwick, Chris Rea, Kathryn Higginbotham, Norman Syddall, Andrew Clifford, Janusz Szura.

Due to data protection legislation, in order for a name to be printed in this newsletter, the consent of the person who is unwell needs to be given.

Anniversaries: Francis John Burn; Alice Marina Berrisford; Kathleen Moss; Jack Jackson; Albert (Bob) Prince; John Harold Crimes; Mary Millicent Hudson; Dennis Wilkes; Winifred Joyce Mellor; Mary Szczotka; Frances Roberta Turner; Freda Priestman; Julia Hermit



Dear friends, this is the Third Sunday of Advent and is sometimes known by its traditional title, Gaudete Sunday. The Latin word, "Gaudete" is taken from the first word of the Entrance Antiphon for today's Mass meaning, "Rejoice" (Phil 4:4).

Today is also known as Bambinelli Sunday. A custom started by Saint Pope John Paul II when the Christ Child from Christmas Nativity scenes is blessed, it has now spread to all parts of the Church. During today's Masses, your Bambinelli will be blessed at the conclusion of the Bidding Prayers.

As we continue to celebrate this holy Season, let's encourage each other to ...

... **be at Mass** Saturday evening at 6pm and Sunday morning at 10am. For weekday Mass check the Parish Newsletter.

... **go to Confession** Saturday from 10am. If you can't make this, please contact Fr Martin at the presbytery.

... **pray for 5 minutes everyday** There are no rules about prayer. Set aside 5 minutes every day to be in God's presence.

- **The "Walk with Me" prayer books** are available in church – there is brief reflection for each day of Advent and Christmas. This year, the daily meditations are based on the Psalm at Mass.
- **Dynamic Catholic** has two Advent experiences this year to help you prepare for the Best Christmas Ever. Sign up and receive short, inspiring videos in your email inbox every day for free to help you focus on what makes Christmas important. www.dynamiccatholic.com
- **Bishop Robert Barron**, the Bishop of Winona-Rochester, USA, has a daily Bible Reflection based on the Mass readings. Sign up for free daily emails at www.wordonfire.org

... **share your time, talent and treasure**

- Could you make a donation to help the parish SVP group reach out to lonely and isolated parishioners?
- Could you help the Leek Food Bank? There is a need for the following items: hair shampoo and conditioner; shower gel; anti-perspirant; toothbrushes. Tinned soup, tinned meat, tinned fish, tinned vegetables, tinned fruit; rice pudding, custard; UHT milk; tinned potatoes; jam; instant noodles
- Could you support CAFOD's World Gifts project? There are leaflets in church.
- Could you help with Sweep and Clean on Thursday 22 December after Mass?

Christmas Masses These are the times for this year's Christmas Masses at St Mary's ...

Saturday 24 December	6pm Vigil Mass
Sunday 25 December	12am Midnight Mass 10am Mass During the Day

The Sacrament of the Sick In recent weeks I have celebrated the Sacrament of the Sick for a number of parishioners. For your personal formation, I share with you some key information about this Sacrament of the Church, this act of worship which continues Christ's mission.

According to *Ritual for the Anointing of the Sick*, the appropriate matter for the sacrament is olive oil, or in case of necessity, vegetable oil. This oil should be blessed by the bishop or by a priest with this faculty. The anointing is done on the forehead and the hands. The sacramental form of words is as follows: "Through this holy anointing may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit. / May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up."

The minister of this sacrament must be a priest or bishop. Pastors have the duty to instruct the faithful about the benefits of this sacrament. The faithful (particularly family members and friends) should encourage sick people to call for the priest so that they can receive the Anointing of the Sick (cf. CCC, 1516).

The Anointing of the Sick is meant for all those who have been baptized, have reached the age of reason and are in danger of death from serious illness or from old age as they become increasingly frail. It cannot be administered to someone after death.

To receive this sacrament fruitfully, those receiving it should be reconciled to God and to the Church, at least in desire, and repent of their sins with the intention of confessing them in the sacrament of Penance, if and when this becomes possible. Therefore the Church asks that, if possible, the person should receive the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation before being anointed.

The subject must have at least the habitual and implicit intention to receive the sacrament. In other words, the sick person must have the desire (never having expressed otherwise) to die a good Christian death, with the supernatural help that this entails.

Even though the Anointing of the Sick can be administered to those already unconscious, every effort should be made to administer it while they are still conscious, so that they can better prepare to receive the grace of the sacrament. It should not be given to those who remain obstinately impenitent in public mortal sin (*Code of Canon Law*, canon 1007).

If someone who has been anointed recovers from their illness they can be anointed again in the case of a new serious illness, and the sacrament can also be repeated during the same illness if the person's situation again deteriorates (cf. *Code of Canon Law*, canon, 1004, 2).

Parish pilgrimage to Knock The proposed pilgrimage to Knock will take place from 22 – 26 May 2023. The fare is £659 per person, plus £150 for single supplement. The five day trip will be based at the Knock House Hotel a short distance from the shrine, in includes return flights from Manchester to Knock, 10kg luggage allowance, priority boarding, and trips to Ballintuber Abbey, Croagh Patrick and Westport. There is a minimum number of 20 people to make the pilgrimage possible. If you would like to go, please be in contact with Fr Martin as soon as possible, please.

Sacrament of Reconciliation / Confession There will be Penance Services for Advent Friday 16 December, 6pm, St Augustine's Meir, Tuesday 20 December, 7pm, St Giles, Cheadle

Altar Serving at St Mary's During the week, I received a very welcome certificate marking the Platinum Anniversary of the Parish's affiliation to the Guild of St Stephen for Altar Servers. The Guild or Archconfraternity of Altar Servers was established in 1904 by Fr Hamilton McDonald. In 1905 Pope Pius X gave official Church recognition to the establishment of the Guild. By 1934, Pope Pius XI enabled all Guilds of Altar Servers in the then British Empire to be part of the Archconfraternity.

Traditionally, the ministry of Altar Server has been taken up by children who have received their First Holy Communion. If you would like to be part of a team that helps both me and the people of the parish take part in Mass, please let me know.

Dear friends, I need your help ...

... Thursday 22 December Sweep and Clean immediately after Mass

... Stewards for the Christmas Masses: I am appealing for your help to ensure that the Christmas Masses are uplifting occasions for everyone. If you can help with welcoming parishioners to the church, distributing Mass sheets and hymn books, and ushering at Holy Communion, please let me know.

Christmas Raffle Raffle Tickets are available! We had a great response last weekend! We are raising money to repair the driveway to the presbytery. Can you take some tickets and sell them to your neighbours please? The draw will take place on Sunday 18 December.

Christmas cards The new Christmas cards have arrived. These latest editions have the scene depicted in the stained-glass window. My thanks to Andrew for the photographs. The cards are on sale for £4 for a pack of 10 cards.

Christian Unity Week The annual week of prayer will take place next month. Here are some key dates:

Sunday 15 January; Exchange Sunday, Monday 16 January; Prayers at Trinity Church, Sunday 22 January 4pm; United Service here at St Mary's

Dates for your diary Thursday 22 December Sweep and Clean after Mass

Christmas collection The collection at the three Christmas Day Masses is for the Parish Priest and forms a major part of his income. There are Christmas Offering envelopes available for this collection at the back of the church.

Collection Gift Aid £ 444.80 Non-Gift Aid £119.36 Total £564.16 Standing Orders November £1,226.50

With prayers and best wishes for you and your family. Fr Martin