

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’**

Sunday 2 January <i>Public Mass and live - stream</i>	SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY <i>Ecclesiasticus 24:1-2, 8-12; Ps 147; Ephesians 1:3-6, 15-18; John 1:1-18</i> 9.30am Church open 10am For you, the People of the Parish 4pm Live-stream Rosary and Benediction
Monday 3 January <i>No Mass today</i>	Memorial of the Most Holy Name of Jesus <i>1 John 2:29-3: 6; Ps 97; John 1:29-34</i>
Tuesday 4 January <i>No Mass today</i>	Christmas Feria <i>1 John 3:7-10; Ps 97; John 1:35-42</i>
Wednesday 5 January <i>No Mass today</i>	Memorial of St Charles of St Andrew: Passionist Missionary in Staffordshire during 1850s <i>1 John 3:11-21; Ps 99; John 1:43-51</i>
Thursday 6 January <i>Public Mass and live – stream</i>	SOLEMNITY OF THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD <i>Isaiah 60: 1-6; Ps 71; Ephesians 3: 2-3, 5-6; Matthew 2: 1-12</i> Mass will be celebrated at St Mary’s Academy in the morning. 5.30pm Church open 6pm Ray Cossburn RIP
Friday 7 January <i>Public Mass and live - stream</i>	Memorial of St Raymond of Penyafort, Priest, Patron Saint of Canon Lawyers <i>1 John 3:22-4: 6; Ps 2; Matthew 4:12-17, 23-25</i> 9.30am Church open 10am Christopher Rogers RIP
Saturday 8 January <i>Public Mass and live - stream</i>	10am to 10.30am Confessions, will be celebrated in the church. Please bring a face covering. FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD <i>Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11; Ps 103; Titus 2:11-14, 3:4-7; Luke 3:15-16, 21-22</i> 2pm Church open 2.30pm Dec’d Tierney and Clarke families
Sunday 9 January <i>Public Mass and live - stream</i>	9.30am Church open 10am Private Intention (GC) 4pm Live- stream: Rosary and Benediction

Parish Priest	Fr Martin Pratt	tel 01538 382385 stmary.leek@rcaob.org.uk
Parish Administrator	Mrs Geraldine Duffy-Jentz	administrator.stmary.leek@rcaob.org.uk
St Mary’s Catholic Academy	Mrs G Turner	tel 01538 493888
Painsley Catholic College, Cheadle	Mrs R Waugh	tel 01538 714944
Safeguarding Rep	Appointment pending	
	Archdiocese of Birmingham	tel 0121 230 6240
	NSPCC	tel 0808 800 500
Gift Aid Co-ordinator	Mrs M Lawton	ga.stmary.leek@rcaob.org.uk
Hospital Chaplaincy	University Hospital North Midlands	tel 01782 676400 ext 76400
	Macclesfield District Hospital	tel 01625 663386

Please pray for the sick Chris Rea, Kathryn Higginbotham, Brian Dale, Norman Syddall, Andrew Clifford, David Wright, Janusz Szura and those who are in self-isolation and have been diagnosed with Covid-19.
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.

The Pope’s Prayer Intention for January - For true human fraternity. We pray for all those suffering from religious discrimination and persecution, may their own rights and dignity be recognized, which originate from being brothers and sisters in the human family.

Anniversaries Jessie Iris Quinn, Edward Carding, Marie Rose Bird, Lida Kania, Ellen Coughlan, Waclaw Cztoch, Beryl Mary Davenport, Elizabeth Hirst, William Murfin, Vincent Harvey, Freda Milward Albert, Aleksander Menke, Joan Longthorn, George Clulow, John Nicholson, Elizabeth Barnes, Sister Zena Carus OCV, Muriel Galton, Pauline Teresa Pointon, Raymond Evan Cossburn, Winifred Mary Kearns, Wladyslawa (Gladys) Hryciuk, Rose Esther Birchenough, Ethel Titterton, Irene Collier.

Please pray for the Faithful Departed We remember in our prayers at this time Barbara Duffin and those who have died due to Covid 19. May the Lord grant them eternal rest and may they rise to glory!



Dear friends, Thank you so much for the cards, gifts and very generous Christmas offering. I am incredibly grateful to you for your kindness and support!

“Love one another as I have loved you” This Christmas season I have been enriched by you! Your kind-hearted support for our parish and our celebration of Christ’s birth have been uplifting and encouraging. Thank you for the practical preparations for our celebration: the donation of the Christmas tree, the lights, the arrangement of the Christmas tree and the Christmas Crib scene, the purchasing of Christmas cards, raffle tickets and the donation of prizes, the cleaning of the church, the flower arranging and the preparation for the music and singing at the Christmas Masses. Nowadays the Church describes this as co-responsibility. We are certainly a co-responsible parish! As we begin a new year, let’s continue to live and work together following the Lord’s encouragement to his first disciples, “Love one another as I have loved you.”

Here is a reading from St Pope Leo the Great which the Church uses on Christmas Day. Dearly beloved, today our Saviour is born; let us rejoice. Sadness should have no place on the birthday of life. The fear of death has been swallowed up; life brings us joy with the promise of eternal happiness.

No one is shut out from this joy; all share the same reason for rejoicing. Our Lord, victor over sin and death, finding no man free from sin, came to free us all. Let the saint rejoice as he sees the palm of victory at hand. Let the sinner be glad as he receives the offer of forgiveness. Let the pagan take courage as he is summoned to life.

In the fullness of time, chosen in the unfathomable depths of God’s wisdom, the Son of God took for himself our common humanity in order to reconcile it with its creator. He came to overthrow the devil, the origin of death, in that very nature by which he had overthrown mankind.

And so at the birth of our Lord the angels sing in joy: Glory to God in the highest, and they proclaim peace to men of good will as they see the heavenly Jerusalem being built from all the nations of the world. When the angels on high are so exultant at this marvellous work of God’s goodness, what joy should it not bring to the lowly hearts of men?

Beloved, let us give thanks to God the Father, through his Son, in the Holy Spirit, because in his great love for us he took pity on us, and when we were dead in our sins he brought us to life with Christ, so that in him we might be a new creation. Let us throw off our old nature and all its ways and, as we have come to birth in Christ, let us renounce the works of the flesh.

Christian, remember your dignity, and now that you share in God’s own nature, do not return by sin to your former base condition. Bear in mind who is your head and of whose body you are a member. Do not forget that you have been rescued from the power of darkness and brought into the light of God’s kingdom.

Through the sacrament of baptism, you have become a temple of the Holy Spirit. Do not drive away so great a guest by evil conduct and become again a slave to the devil, for your liberty was bought by the blood of Christ.

Praying during the Christmas Season Let’s continue to make 5 minutes of prayer every day. Here is the prayer of St Clare of Assisi:

Christ is the one whose beauty all the heavenly hosts behold forever,
 whose love inflames our love, the contemplation of whom is our refreshment,
 whose graciousness is our delight,
 whose gentleness fills us to overflowing,
 whose remembrance makes us glow with happiness,
 whose fragrance revives the dead, the glorious vision of whom will be the happiness of all the citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem ...
 Happy the soul to whom it is given to attain this life with him, to cleave with all one’s heart to him.

Pope Francis wants us to be a Synodal Parish The Pope wants us to walk together, focused on Christ and knowing that we are valued members of the Church each capable of making a contribution to its life and mission. Every parish in the Church is being asked to take part in this two-year process. Very soon I will give you a questionnaire to discuss and complete. There are no right or wrong answers. You can complete it individually or with family and friends. The purpose is that everyone knows you are a valued member of the Church and our parish.

Staying safe in church Both the number of vulnerable people attending Mass and the number of people who attend Mass and return home to vulnerable relatives, have deemed it necessary to continue with the cautious approach which is already in place. Here is a summary of the Covid safety rules.

- The Government’s revised Covid guidelines mean that in churches we must carry on as we have been, sticking carefully to the precautions and remembering that no-one should be doing anything in church or for church that they consider too risky for them. The news is not encouraging but things can change very quickly.
- Face coverings are now mandatory
- Sanitise hands on entry and exit
- Keep a 1m distance if you can
- Ventilation is important. Please bring a coat!
- Lateral flow testing: please test yourself each week so that if you know you have the virus you stay at home
- Feeling ill: if you feel unwell, please stay and home and do not risk passing on the virus to others
- Vaccination: HAVE YOUR JABS! This keeps others safe too and is not just about the individual who is vaccinated. We Christians have a duty to take care of others and to neglect any of these ways of reducing infections is to neglect our neighbour. We are all in this together.

The Celebration of the Sacraments

Baptisms and weddings may be celebrated (with precautions above). Please see Fr Martin after a weekend Mass.

Confession is available on Saturdays from 10am – 1030am. Confession will be celebrated face to face in the narthex also by appointment. Please bring a face covering.

Funerals - We shall have a gradual and phased reintroduction with the following routines:

NHS Track and Trace	Use of hand sanitizer	Social distancing	Use of face coverings
Limit of 50 people	A team of volunteer cleaners and stewards		The organ cannot be used and no singing

Unfortunately, the Polish Mass and face to face parish meetings remain suspended

Christmas Raffle Thank you so much for buying Christmas raffle tickets to secure our live-streaming on the Parish Facebook page with new equipment. The draw took place on Sunday 19 December and the winning numbers are: **392, 460, 589, 614, 484, 483**. Please check your numbers and collect your prizes from the back of the church.

200 Club The latest draw took place last Sunday. I shall be in contact with the winners in due course.

At Facebook Mass we can’t have a collection Thank you to those who have used the “Donate” button on the Parish Website. If you would like to donate by standing order, please send an email to me at the Parish Office at stmary.leek@rcaob.org.uk.

Have a great week! With prayers and best wishes, Fr Martin