

**The Catholic Parish of St Mary, Leek**  
**This parish is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham Registered Charity No 234216**  
**Compton, LEEK, Staffordshire, ST13 5NH**  
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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 24 December**  
*Public liturgy and live-stream*

**SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD**  
*Isaiah 62: 1-5; Ps 88; Acts 13: 16-17, 22-25; Matthew 1: 18-25*  
6pm Vigil Mass – Ada and Ken Worthington  
12 Midnight Mass – For you, the People of the Parish

**Sunday 25 December**  
*Public liturgy and live-stream*

**SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD**  
10am Mass During the Day, Michael G Taaffe RIP (MT)

**Monday 26 December**  
*Public liturgy and live-stream*

**Feast of St Stephen, the first Martyr, Patron Saint of Altar Servers**  
*Acts 6: 8-10, 7: 54-59; Ps 30; Matthew 10: 17-22*  
10am Mass for Altar Servers, Holy Souls (HB)

**Tuesday 27 December**  
*Public liturgy*

**Feast of St John, Apostle, Evangelist**  
*1 John 1: 1-4; Ps 96; John 20: 2 -8*  
9.40am Rosary    10am Liturgy of the Word and Holy Communion (Eucharistic Service)

**Wednesday 28 December**  
*Public liturgy*

**Feast of the Holy Innocents, Martyrs**  
*1 John 1: 5-2:2; Ps 123; Matthew 2: 13-18*  
9.40am Rosary    10am Liturgy of the Word and Holy Communion (Eucharistic Service)

**Thursday 29 December**  
*Public liturgy and live-stream*

**Feast of St Thomas Becket, Bishop, Martyr, Patron of Pastoral Clergy, England and Wales**  
*Colossians 1: 24-29; Ps 22; Matthew 10: 28-33*  
9.40am Rosary    10am Nancy and Don Brough RIP

**Friday 30 December**  
*Public liturgy and live-stream*

**Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph**  
*Colossians 3: 12-21; Ps 127; Matthew 2: 13-15, 19-23*  
9.40am Rosary    10am Sheila Bird RIP

**Saturday 31 December**  
*Public liturgy and live-stream*

10am to 10.30am Confessions, the Sacrament of Reconciliation  
**SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD**  
*Numbers 6:22-27; Ps 66; Galatians 4: 4-7; Luke 2: 16-21*  
6pm Vigil Mass, Piotr Zwierski RIP

**Sunday 1 January**  
*Public liturgy and live-stream*

10am Mr Eric Arthur Duffin RIP

**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

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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 Faithful Departed** - We pray for the repose of the soul of Sheila Bird. Reception at church will be on 4 January at 5pm and Funeral Mass will be on 5 January at 10am.

**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** Hugo Victor Wood; Laraine Moran; Mary Yates; Winifred Lorna Heath; Michael Gerard (Mick) Taaffe; Margaret Gertrude Lymer (Peggy); Clara Folga; Annie May Skaer; Percy Wardle; Ellen Kavanagh; John (Jack) Charles Piggott; John William Clulow; Leslie Gower Brown; Leonard G E Shakespeare; John Gregore Kelsall; Freda Cecilia Halpin; Anthony Frederick Davenport; Ann Wallace; Franciszeh (Frank) Klucznik; Kevin Sheridan; Mary Kelsall; Sydney Fairclough



Dear friends, I wish you a Merry Christmas and promise to pray for you and your families as we gather for Mass this weekend.

**An Introduction to the Christmas Season** This joy-filled season is one of the highlights of the Church's liturgical calendar, Easter being the highest of highpoints! Together with Easter, Christmas shows our belief in God who intervenes directly in the material world around us: both the birth of Jesus and the Resurrection demonstrate this. Popular culture and modern society "allows" God to be part of ideas and thoughts, but not in the material world. God operates everywhere! If God does not operate in the world around us, then he isn't God. But God can and does operate in our world. By the birth of Jesus and the resurrection, God has ushered in a new creation and given hope to us.

The Season of Christmas has an eight day period which continues the celebration of Christmas day known as an Octave.

There are some key celebrations during the Christmas season: the eighth day of the Octave is New Year's Day and in Church we honour Mary, the Mother of God. This title was given to St Mary during the Council of Ephesus in the fifth century. Friday 6 January will be the

Epiphany of the Lord and is a Holy Day of Obligation. Epiphany means revelation and it is the revelation of the Lord to the Magi or Wise Men which is recalled. There will be two Masses: Thursday 5 January at 2pm at School will be an Early Vigil Mass, and Friday 6 January at 7pm. The final celebration of the Christmas Season is the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord which will be kept on the weekend of 7 – 8 January. This moment is depicted in the stained glass window above the font in our church.

Let's continue 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.

- **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](http://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.

**Christmas Raffle 2022** I am incredibly to everyone who has supported this year's Christmas raffle by buying tickets or donating prizes. The prizes have been listed on the St Mary's Friends Facebook page and the majority of them have now been claimed. We are hoping to raise some money to pay for the resurfacing of the first part of the driveway to the presbytery with the proceeds of this year's raffle. Thank you for your generous support.

**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, it includes return flights from Manchester to Knock, 10kg luggage allowance, priority boarding, and trips to Ballintubber 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.

**Altar Serving at St Mary's** Monday 26 December is the Feast Day of the great St Stephen and he's the patron saint of Altar Servers. Mass for the Altar Servers will be at 10am on Boxing Day. 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.

**St Mary's Parish Administrator** The Catholic Parish of St Mary, Leek, seeks to appoint a part-time Parish Administrator located at the Parish Office, Compton, Leek. 10 hours per week, Monday and Friday, paid at £10.90 per hour. For full details, please contact Fr Martin. Closing date for letters of application and current CV is Friday 13 January, 2023. Applications to be sent to Fr Martin Pratt, St Mary's Presbytery, Compton, LEEK, ST13 5NH

**St Mary's Catholic Academy** – CAFOD Live Simply Award The amazing pupils of our Catholic School have worked incredibly hard, and they have been awarded the CAFOD Live Simply Award! As part of this award they have campaigned to Parliament, written to Prime Ministers and Heads of Government in different countries, shared assemblies at school, created posters, cooked, shopped sustainably, reviewed and made changes to school procedures. The CAFOD Assessor stated that the children were faith-filled and were living out their mission. The assessor highlighted how the children have far exceeded the Live Simply expectations. Well done!

**200 Club** It's time to renew your subscriptions to the 200 Club. Please fill out one of the envelopes at the back of the church and enclose cheques of £12 for your annual membership. Cheques should be made out to BRC DTR St Mary's, Leek.

Since the pandemic the numbers subscribing to the 200 Club have substantially reduced. Please consider joining the parish 200 Club this year as it raises valuable funds for the running of St Mary's church and the costs associated with our Masses. There are two monthly cash prizes to be won!

**SVP** The parish SVP group would like to thank parishioners for their recent donations. The SVP have been able to deliver another 18 meals during the last week and would like to pass on their love and prayers to those who have donated money.

**Dates for your diary** Monday 26 December Altar Servers' Mass

Thurs 5 / Fri 6 January, Epiphany of the Lord, Holy Day of Obligation.

There will be two Masses: Thursday 5 January at 2pm Early Vigil Mass at St Mary's Academy

Friday 6 January at 7pm Parish Mass in church

Saturday 7 January 6pm Family Mass Sunday

15 January Exchange Sunday

Monday 16 January 12 noon at Trinity Church, we are leading prayers for Christian Unity

Sunday 22 January 4pm United Service here at St Mary's 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.

<b>Collection</b>	Gift Aid £80.00	Non-Gift Aid £67.00	Total £147.00
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**With prayers and best wishes for you and your family this Christmas, Fr Martin**