

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

Tel 01538 382385

Email stmary.leek@rcaob.org.uk

Facebook @stmaryleek

**“Our vision is to be a Catholic Parish living Christ’s command,
‘Love one another as I have loved you’.**

- Saturday 23 December** 10am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament: Confessions
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT: Day of prayer for expectant mothers
2 *Samuel 7:1-5, 8-12, 14, 16; Ps 88; Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38*
6.15pm Mass Barbara Duffin RIP
- Sunday 24 December** 10am Mass For you, the People of the Parish
SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: Christmas Day
Isaiah 9:1-7; Ps 95; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14
6.15pm Vigil Mass Eric Duffin RIP
9pm Polish Vigil Mass
- Monday 25 December** 12 Midnight Midnight Mass Mabel and Harold Kelsall RIP
10am Christmas Day Mass Michael G Taaffe RIP (MT)
- Tuesday 26 December** **Feast of Stephen, deacon, first Christian martyr, patron saint of Altar Servers**
Acts 6:8-10, 7:54-59; Ps 30; Matthew 10:17-22
10am Mass for Altar Servers Michael Stafford RIP
- Wednesday 27 December** **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
- Thursday 28 December** **Feast of the Holy Innocents, Martyrs**
1 John 5:2-2; Ps 123; Matthew 2:13-18
9.40am Rosary 10am Liturgy of the Word and Holy Communion
- Friday 29 December** **Feast of St Thomas of Canterbury, bishop, martyr, patron saint of the English pastoral clergy**
Colossians 1:24-29; Ps 22; Luke b22:24-30
9.40am Rosary 10am Mass Sheila Bird RIP (BD)
- Saturday 30 December** **FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH**
Genesis 15:1-6, 21:1-3; Ps 104; Hebrews 11:8, 11-12, 17-19; Luke 2:22-40
6.15pm Mass Patrica Simpson RIP (PW)
- Sunday 31 December** 10am Mass Margaret Fowler RIP (Pat)
1.30pm Polish Mass
4pm Rosary and Benediction
- Monday 1 January** **SOLEMNITY OF THE MARY MOTHER OF GOD: World Day of Peace**
Numbers 6:22-27; Ps 66; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:16-21
9.40am Rosary 10am Mass Donor’s Intention

Parish Priest	Fr Martin Pratt	tel 01538 382385 stmary.leek@rcaob.org.uk
Parish Administrator	Mrs Alice Murray	
St Mary’s Catholic Academy	Mrs G Turner	tel 01538 493888
Painsley Catholic College, Cheadle	Mrs R Waugh	tel 01538 493777
Safeguarding Rep	Mr Malcolm Sproat	sg.stmary.leek@rcaob.org.uk
	Archdiocese of Birmingham	tel 0121 230 6240
	NSPCC	tel 0800 800 500
Gift Aid Co-ordinator	Mrs M Lawton	ga.stmary.leek@rcaob.org.uk
Hospital Chaplaincy	University Hospital North Midlands	tel 01782 676400
	Macclesfield District Hospital	tel 01625 663386

Parish Safeguarding The Parish operates in accordance with Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and the National and Archdioceses policies & procedures at all times. Our Parish Safeguarding Representative is Malcolm Sproat. He can be contacted at: sg.stmary.leek@rcaob.org.uk or alternatively the Diocesan Safeguarding team can be contacted on 0121 230 6240/ safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk if you have any concern.

The Pope’s Prayer Intention for December For persons with disabilities. We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.

Please pray for Vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life Can you set aside one day each month to pray for Vocations? If so, could you sign the list at the back of church, please.

Please pray for the sick Jenny Kirkham, Moyra Chadwick, Chris Rea, Kathryn Higginbotham, Norman Syddall, Andrew Clifford, Janusz Szura- Zwierski, Fr Anthony Dykes.

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 for this week: Alice Mary Astles, Lucy Foster, Edward Szczotka, Beryl Edna Wheatley, Gladys May Wood, Barbara Duffin, Sister Genevieve Bermingham I.B.V.M., Jessie Higgins, John William Watson, Irene Stephanie Dale, Eric Arthur Duffin, 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, Bruce Hargreaves, Freda Cecilia Halpin, Anthony Frederick Davenport, Ann Wallace, Franciszeh (Frank) Klucznik

Dear friends, I want to wish you a very Merry Christmas! I hope that this Christmas brings you and your families God's blessings!

"Love one another and I have loved you" Let's put our mission statement into action this weekend with great enthusiasm!

This year, because Christmas Day is on Monday and is a Holy Day of Obligation, the Church asks us to be generous in our devotion and in our act of witness by being at Mass in church for both the Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas! Let's be part of the Church and show our pride in being Catholic Christians by being at Mass and giving a positive act of witness.

The Masses for the Fourth Sunday of Advent are:

Saturday evening at 6:15pm

Sunday morning at 10am

The Masses for Christmas Day are:

Sunday evening at 6:15pm

Sunday evening Polish Mass at 9pm

Monday at 12 Midnight

Monday at 10am

A huge THANK YOU! I am incredibly grateful to everyone who came to church on Thursday morning for Sweep and Clean. The church looks great and in good order for the celebration of Christ's birth.

Christmas Prayer Tree This year we will have prayer tree located near the Nativity Scene. Its purpose is for parishioners to write the name of a deceased loved one onto a wooden angel decoration and hang onto the Christmas Tree in their memory. I am grateful for the suggestion as well as donations of the tree, the decorations and the wooden angels.

Year of Prayer, 2024 We are now in the Year of Prayer and our preparation for the Jubilee Year of 2025. Pope Francis has an audacious vision for this year long preparation. His vision is, "I would greatly desire that we devote 2024, the year preceding the Jubilee event, to a great "symphony" of prayer. Prayer, above all else, to renew our desire to be in the presence of the Lord, to listen to him and to adore him ... In a word, may it be an intense year of prayer in which hearts are opened to receive the outpouring of God's grace and to make the "Our Father," the prayer Jesus taught us, the life programme of each of his disciples"

Specially printed prayer cards are available at the back of church; there is one for everyone. During this Year of Prayer can you set aside 5 minutes to pray? Could you pray for our Parish Prayer intentions:

- the children and young people of parish preparing for First Holy Communion and Confirmation;
- for the sick and housebound parishioners;
- for families;
- for parents as the first teachers of the faith;
- for children suffering from sickness;
- for peace and justice.

Please do take your prayer card and let's be a parish joining in the great symphony of prayer!

Administration of Holy Communion Due to the prevailing risk of the virus, the norm for receiving communion remains on the hand. For those who wish to receive Communion on the tongue, please come to the Altar at the end of the congregational procession, as the Minister of Holy Communion will need to sanitise his/her hands after every person receiving on the tongue.

Winter Weather Team I am asking for help ahead of any winter weather and for a team of volunteers to move snow and apply grit in the car park and along the two walkways to the church. Many of the people who used to do this aren't able to help any longer. If you can help, please let Fr Martin know.

Sacramental Preparation The third Mass Attendance and Activity sheet is available for collection this weekend.

Going into hospital If you are going into hospital, there is now no obligation for the hospital to inform its chaplaincy department of your admission. When admitted to hospital, please ask the hospital to be in contact with their chaplain. Alternatively, be in contact with me and I make contact with the chaplain for you.

Christmas Nativity Scene This year marks the 800th anniversary of St Francis of Assisi establishing the first Christmas Nativity Scene at Greccio near Rieti. On 29 November, 1223, St Francis was returning from Rome having received confirmation of his Rule to establish the Franciscan Order from Pope Honorius III when he stopped at Greccio. He was reminded his visit to the Holy Land and the similarity of the geography around Bethlehem. We are told from the Franciscan archives that 15 days before Christmas of 1223, St Francis asked a local man to help him bring to life the Christmas Nativity Scene. On Christmas Day of that year, Franciscan Friars and people gathered together. When St Francis arrived, a live nativity had been arranged and the priest celebrated Mass.

Pope Francis writes, "The Nativity scene offers us another life lesson. In today's at times frenetic pace, it is an invitation to contemplation. It reminds us of the importance of pausing. Because only when we know how to recollect ourselves can we welcome what truly matters in life. Only if we leave the din of the world outside our home can we open ourselves to listen to God who speaks in silence...."

The Nativity scene is more timely now than ever, when every day, throughout the world, so many weapons and violent images that penetrate our eyes and hearts are being produced. The Nativity scene instead is an artisanal image of peace. This is why it is a living Gospel....

I hope that setting up the Nativity scene will be for you all an opportunity to invite Jesus into your lives. When we make the Nativity scene at home it is like opening a door and saying: "Come in, Jesus!" It is making this closeness concrete, this invitation to Jesus to come into our lives. Because if he abides in our lives, life is reborn. And if life is reborn, it is truly Christmas."

The Christmas Nativity Scene has been set up in the Market Square. Please do go and look at it and say a prayer there. Don't walk passed. Make a Holy Moment by visiting the Crib. Please do set up a Christmas Nativity Scene at home. Make it a family activity. Be sure to make a daily Holy Moment of praying for your family at the Christmas Nativity Scene.

Dates for your diary

Saturday 6 – Sunday 7 January The celebration of the Epiphany of the Lord.

Sunday 7 January 10am Mass with parents, families and Godparents of the children baptised at St Mary's during 2023.

Monday 8 January 2pm Whole School Mass for the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord

Saturday 13 January 6:15pm Family Mass

Monday 15 January 12noon We are leading prayers for Christian Unity at Trinity church, Derby Street

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 BRCDTR St Mary's, Leek. If you are not already taking part 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!

Mass 7 January 2024 During Mass on 7 January 2024 I have invited the parents and Godparents of the children Baptised during 2023 to 10am Mass, during Mass there will be a blessing for the parents and after Mass there will be a Sunday social when there will be an opportunity to meet.

Polish Mission WIADOMOŚCI PARAFIALNE PARAFIA RZYMSKO-KATOLICKA Matki Bożej Częstochowskiej i św. Maksymiliana Marii Kolbe Lokalna Polska Misja Katolicka w Stoke on Trent Masterson Street - Stoke on Trent ST4 3QB - ENGLAND Registered Charity no. 1119423. INFORMACJE O NASZEJ PARAFII DOSTĘPNE TAKŻE NA: www.parafia Stoke on Trent.pcmew.org Ks. prob. Jacek Jabłoński tel: 017 824 111 95 mob: 07799297021, mail: stoke@pcmew.org

Mass times for Christmas at St Mary's Sunday 24 December 2100hrs Christmas Vigil Mass; there will be no Mass at 130pm on 24 December.

Collection Gift Aid £151.00 Non Gift Aid £86.25 Total £237.25

The collection on Christmas Day (the Vigil Mass, Midnight Mass and Day Mass) will be one of the two annual collections for the Parish Priest and forms a major part of his income.

Have a Merry Christmas! With my prayers and best wishes, Fr Martin