

CATHOLIC CHURCH IN LONGDENDALE

PARISH NEWSLETTER

ADVENT IV (B) Dec 20th 2020



May the almighty and merciful Lord
grant us joy with peace,
amendment of life,
room for true repentance,
the grace and consolation
of the Holy Spirit,
and perseverance in good works.

Amen

Hail Mary, full of grace

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DATE **OTHER** PARTSH MASS Sun 20th ADVENT IV (B) 9.15 (BB) for the parish 11am (HAD) J&P Cowden (WG) Mon 21st Advent feria / St Peter Canisius 9.30 (HAD) Bernard Farnsworth RIP (fam) Tues 22nd Advent feria 9.30 (HAD) for the welfare of Mt St Bernard's abbey (EF) Weds 23rd Advent feria / St John of Kanty 9.30 (HAD) Gertrude McSherry RIP (JM)

CHRISTMASTIDE

Christmas Eve 6pm (HAD) for the parish

Advent feria

8pm (BB) D&J Smith (D&CN)

9.30 (HAD) Elizabeth Heffron RIP (JM)

Fri 25th Christmas Day: BANK HOLIDAY

9.15 (BB) E & B Laidlaw RIP (fam) 11am (HAD) Derek Orr's welfare

Sat 26th St Stephen, martyr

Thurs 24th

9.30 (HAD) Carl Evans RIP (NE)

Sun 27th HOLY FAMILY (B)

9.15 (BB) D Bone RIP (SMH) 11am (HAD) M&J Gavan RIP (SL)

FOURTH ADVENT (B)

Psalter Week 4

Introduction: Our God comes close to us in his covenant of love, made flesh in Jesus.

First Reading: 2 Sam 7: David's kingdom foreshadows the reign of Christ.

Resp.Ps. I WILL SING FOREVER OF YOUR LOVE O LORD

Second Reading: Rom 16: God's mystery for our salvation is made clear.

Gospel: Lk 1: Listen! You are to conceive & bear a son.

SICK AND HOUSEBOUND and ANNIVERSARIES OF DEATH

Please remember to support and pray for those listed as sick and housebound in our parish:

Mary Perry, Peter James, Adrian McHugh, Fr John Cairns, Cn Michael Moore, Pauline Anderson, Eileen Berry, Isabella Phillips, Monica Krommendijk, Una Wilkinson, Nella Lewykyj, Evelyn Matthewman, Neil Appleton, Alice Canning, Mary Mycio, Dorothy Yarwood

Please recall in prayer our deceased priests and parishioners whose anniversaries occur about this time: Revv Peter Taylor, Paddy Balfe, David Ryan, Con Moynihan, Les Lemon, Doug Walford; James Burns, Bernard Farnsworth, John Walsh, Ellen Sharkey, Patricia Porter, Margaret Asher, Carl Evans, James Pollitt:

Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord, may they rest in peace. Amen

PARISH NOTES

THIS WEEKEND we find ourselves celebrating the fourth & final Advent Sunday. We are invited - on this Sunday when we keep company with Mary and the Archangel Gabriel in Nazareth - to pray for expectant mothers-to-be.

MASS BOOKING SYSTEM Thanks to Angie (BB) (07977202639) and Sophie (HAD) (07907 884 105) who administer this system. Please ring them to book a place at BB or Friday or Sunday, or St Charles on Sunday.

It is important to mention to any folk—especially those not regularly found at public worship-whom you think might want to come to Christmas Masses, that they must book ahead.

THE SUNDAY READINGS offer much enlightenment as ever. Deacon Owen offers these helpful thoughts: Through the birth of Christ, the eternal King, God fulfils his promise to David, that David's line will rule forever as a symbol of God's love for his people. Mary becomes the perfect follower of Christ by hearing and keeping God's Word, by saying "Yes" to becoming the mother of the eternal King and Saviour. Paul concludes Romans with a hymn of praise to God's wisdom and glory: our following Christ is part of the way God wants things to be.

SAINTS ALIVE

Monday: St Peter Canisius: a Jesuit 16th c preacher and teacher, who wrote an influential catechism.

Wednesday: St John of Kanty: 15/16th c Polish priest, philosopher and physics teacher.

THE DIOCESAN NEWSPAPER has arrived and is found in the usual places.

CHRISTMAS TIMETABLE

Thursday 24th December (Christmas Eve): 6pm (HAD) 8pm (BB)

Friday 25th December (Christmas Day)
9.15 (BB)
11am (HAD)

HAD TOTE Congratulations to latest winners Mary Revell (£30) and Diane Wilson (£20).

THE CHRISTMAS TOTES are drawn these days. When a helpful group of schoolchildren came to St Charles to help decorate the tree, Mike W asked then them to draw the numbers. The lucky winners:

1st £100 Harold Midwood 2nd £100 Pat Litchfield 3rd £50 Jayne Greenall

BB/GAM Christmas Tote results available from midday Sunday. Many thanks to those who throughout the year support the parish through our totes.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS Thanks you for your great generosity in supporting the floral decoration of our churches for the Christmas Season. Even more thanks to the gifted hands who prepare the displays for God's glory and our delight.

THE NATIVITY TRAIL A large selection of the school-children's imagery produced for this initiative festoons St Charles church. Come and admire! Our thanks to Caroline Phillips and the local team of worthy Christians who coordinated this Advent enterprise.

PRE-CHRISTMAS DECORATION Huge thanks to the many willing hands who gave time & talent to decorate our churches. The cribs, the window-decorations, the banners and wonderful imagery have all helped to engender the mood of Hopefulness which is the key to the season—especially this viral year.

MASS INTENTIONS Whilst I am grateful for your intentions, which have been regularly generous, sometimes there is a build-up or a back-log. This may meant missing a preferred date / church, or waiting a while for your intention to appear in the newsletter. Please let me know at once if you think an intention has been overlooked or lost.

AN INVITATION TO JOIN "CAROLS ON THE DOORSTEP" During the run up to Christmas many of us like to go to a Carol Service or Community Carol Singing event. This year we cannot do that but that does not have to stop us having a good sing with our neighbours and our community. On Sunday 20th December at 5:30pm the whole country has the chance to join in Carols on your Doorstep. All you need to do is have a radio at hand. That can be a DAB radio, Freeview on your TV (725) or the Premier Radio phone app. Premier Radio will play 3 or 4 carols for everyone to sing along to. A carol sheet will be available from Premier Radio.

A SEASON WITHIN A SEASON While still in Advent for another five days, we are into the fourth day of the pre-Christmas Octave - a unique and special time, marked not least by the Great O Antiphons". These Antiphons, from the last to the first, acquire a familiar ring to speakers of English. We sing them, in that reverse order, in the hymn "O come, O come, Emmanuel".

In Latin, the more cryptically-minded can take the first letter of each of the titles given to Jesus, again from last to first, to get E R O C R A S. That is, ero cras, "I will be tomorrow". It is possible to believe that this is a coincidence or even that there is something undignified about playing with letters in the face of God. On the other hand, in the Eastern Church, acrostics are used as a vital part of the liturgy: they are characteristic in particular of the form of hymn called a kontakion. Perhaps this civilised habit rubbed off, many centuries ago, on the muddy, half-barbarian West. In any case, even the Jews did it: there are several psalms which are a sequence of meditations strung together in alphabetical order. If the earth and stars, the sun and moon, are singing the praises of the Lord, there is surely nothing wrong in making the letters of the alphabet do the same.

The Antiphons end on the 23rd, seemingly a day early. But this is a reminder that on truly important days we are still Jews, and the day starts at nightfall of the evening before. The 24th of December has no Vespers. The Vespers of that evening are the First Vespers of Christmas. And in many Christian countries children will be sitting staring out of the window waiting for the first star to appear so that the celebrations can begin.

ODDMENTS

- The prayer in the box on p.1 is part of the priest's prayers when oreparing to say Mass. It's a lovely prayer; I don't want to keep it to myself!
- Looking forward to 10.02 on Monday, the moment when the winter solstice occurs, and we rejoice that the sun is beginning all over again its journey north from Capricorn to Cancer. How much we long for the light again!
- However, how thoughtful of God to arrange for the trees to shed their leaves during the darker months, to allow the light to reach us as generously as maybe; and see the naked branches uplifted as if in prayer.
- Noticed the birds' nests revealed by the leafless branches, the same nests I marvelled at being constructed and homed during Lockdown I, with its spring sunshine;
- Also during Lockdown1 I recall marvelling at the emergence of the Magnolia flowers. And my afternoon Rosary Rambles this week I've delighted in seeing those same Magnolias in vibrant bud. "Come Lord Jesus";
- More than a few parishioners reporting being invited to receive the vaccination, and accepting the
 invitation with a cheerful heart. There is helpful advice on the vaccination on the CBEW website.
 This is an extract:

'Each of us has a duty to protect others from infection with its danger of serious illness, and for some, death. A vaccine is the most effective way to achieve this unless one decides to self-isolate. Each Catholic must educate his or her conscience on this matter and decide what to do, also bearing in mind that a vaccine must be safe, effective, and universally available, especially to the poor of the world.

Catholics may in good conscience receive any of the vaccines developed for the good of others and themselves. Also in good conscience, one may refuse a particular vaccine but continues to have a duty to protect others from infection.'

AND FINALLY Curious note in the diocesan Ordo for next Friday, Christmas Day: 'No Friday abstinence today'. Bet no one consulted the turkeys...