



CATHOLIC CHURCH IN LONGDENDALE



PARISH NEWSLETTER

ADVENT IV (C)
Dec 19th 2021



*Ave Maria, gratia plena,
Dominus tecum.
Benedicta tu in mulieribus,
et benedictus fructus ventris tui,
Jesus.*

*Sancta Maria, Mater Dei,
Ora pro nobis peccatoribus,
Nunc et in hora mortis nostrae.
Amen*

Blessed art thou amongst women!

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DATE**MASS****OTHER**

Sun 19th

ADVENT IV

9.15 (BB) Derek Orr RIP (fam)

11am (HAD) Tim Greenhalgh RIP (fam)

Mon 20th

Advent feria

9.30 (HAD) Tom Berry's welfare (A&LK) 2pm HAD school carols in church

Tues 21st

Advent feria / St Peter Canisius

9.30 (HAD) Carl Evans RIP (fam) (school Mass in church)

Weds 22nd

Advent feria

9.30 (HAD) Jean Ashworth's welfare (A&LK)

Thurs 23rd

Advent feria

9.30 (HAD) G McSherry RIP (JM) 2.30 (oratory) Reflection on the Readings

Fri 24th

Advent feria

9.30 (HAD) for the parish

CHRISTMASTIDE**Christmas eve**

4pm (BB) Elizabeth Heffron RIP (JM)

6pm (HAD) M&L Farrell (welfare) (A&LK)

Sat 25th (Christmas Day)

9.15 (BB) David Bone RIP (AC)

11am (HAD) M & C Wild (welfare) (A&LK)

Sun 26th**THE HOLY FAMILY**

9.15 (BB) B & E Laidlaw RIP (fam)

11am (HAD) the Callon family



*And blessed is the fruit
of your womb*

SICK AND HOUSEBOUND and ANNIVERSARIES OF DEATH

Please remember to support and pray for those listed as sick and housebound in our parish: Peter James, Pauline Anderson, Isabella Phillips, Monica Krommendijk, Joe Singleton, Una Wilkinson, David Healey, Josie & Peter Cowden, Denise Walsh, Nella Lewyckyj, Jacob Ibbotson, Evelyn Matthewman, Neil Appleton, Alice Canning.

Please recall in prayer our deceased priests and parishioners whose anniversaries occur about this time: Revv Charles Payne, Paddy Balfe, David Ryan, Con Moynihan, Les Lemon, Douglas Walford; Joan Delaney, John Burkinshaw, James Burns, Bernard Farnsworth, John Walsh, Adrian McHugh, Eileen Berry, Ellan Sharkey: *Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord, may they rest in peace. Amen*

PARISH NOTES

THIS SUNDAY is the fourth and last Sunday in the season of Advent. It is the season within the pre-Christmas octave. Mary and her cousin Elizabeth come into focus as we light the fourth Advent-wreath candle, and listen again to Mary's canticle the Magnificat.

On this Sunday we are asked to pray especially for expectant mothers everywhere.

ST CHARLES TOTE Recent winners: £30 : D Wilson; £20 : J Dickson. Thank you to all who support our parishes through the totes, and greater thanks to those who administer them. Watch out for the Big Draw (and raffle) being drawn today.

CAFOD is combining efforts with the DEC to launch the **Afghanistan Crisis Appeal**. In Afghanistan, 8 million people are on the brink of famine because of drought, collapsing economy, food shortages, conflict, and COVID. CAFOD is supporting sister Caritas agencies to reach communities most in need with food, clean water, and fuel. During Advent, when we open ourselves to the needs of others, let's do all that we can to save lives. You can donate on the CAFOD website: cafod.org.uk/AfghanistanAppeal. Please pray for the people of Afghanistan.

A WORD OF PRE-CHRISTMAS-OCTAVE ENCOURAGEMENT FROM BISHOP PATRICK

We have eight days of intentional spiritual preparation for Christmas to make good use of, beginning on 17th December. This is very helpfully reflected for us in the prayers and readings of the daily office as well as in the prayers of the Mass for each of these days. In the office the invitatory antiphon for each day, from 17th to 23rd very much gives direction to our prayer, 'The Lord is at hand: come, let us adore him.' It changes on the 24th to, 'Know today that the Lord will come in the morning you will see his glory.' In the breviary, this period has the feel that, in our excitement as a Church, we are very much counting off these days to Christmas. For example, on 21st December there are just five days left and, in the Benedictus antiphon for Morning Prayer, we join as a Church in praying, 'Do not be afraid. You will see our Lord on the fifth day.' On the 23rd there is a palpable sense of readiness and so we pray, 'Behold, everything is fulfilled which the angel promised the Virgin Mary.' The same sense of growing excitement is found in the prayers of Mass for each of these days.

THE O ANTIPHONS refer to the seven antiphons that are recited (or chanted) preceding the Magnificat during Vespers of the Liturgy of the Hours. They cover the special period of Advent preparation known as the Octave before Christmas, Dec. 17-23, with Dec. 24 being Christmas Eve and Vespers for that evening being for the Christmas Vigil. The importance of O Antiphons is twofold: Each one highlights a title for the Messiah, and each one refers to the prophecy of Isaiah of the coming of the Messiah.

1. **O Sapientia:** O Wisdom, O holy Word of God, you govern all creation with your strong yet tender care. Come and show your people the way to salvation. Isaiah had prophesied, The spirit

of the Lord shall rest upon him: a spirit of wisdom and of understanding, a spirit of counsel and of strength, a spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord, and his delight shall be the fear of the Lord. (Is.11:2-3), and Wonderful is His counsel and great is His wisdom. (Is. 28:29).

2. **O Adonai:** *O sacred Lord of ancient Israel, who showed yourself to Moses in the burning bush, who gave him the holy law on Mt Sinai: come, stretch out your mighty hand to set us free.* Isaiah had prophesied, But He shall judge the poor with justice, and decide aright for the lands afflicted. He shall strike the ruthless with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked. Justice shall be the band around his waist, and faithfulness a belt upon his hips. (Is. 11:4-5); and indeed the Lord will be there with us, majestic; yes the Lord our judge, the Lord our lawgiver, the Lord our king, he it is who will save us. (Is. 33:22).

3. **O Radix Jesse:** *O Flower of Jesse's stem, you have been raised up as a sign for all peoples; kings stand silent in your presence; the nations bow down in worship before you. Come, let nothing keep you from coming to our aid.* Isaiah had prophesied, But a shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse, and from his roots a bud shall blossom. (Is. 11:1), and on that day, the root of Jesse, set up as a signal for the nations, the Gentiles shall seek out, for his dwelling shall be glorious. (Isaiah 11:10). Remember also that Jesse was the father of King David, and Micah had prophesied that the Messiah would be of the house and lineage of David and be born in David's city, Bethlehem (Mic. 5:1).

4. **O Clavis David:** *O Key of David, O royal Power of Israel controlling at your will the gate of Heaven: Come, break down the prison walls of death for those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death; and lead your captive people into freedom.* Isaiah had prophesied, AI will place the Key of the House of David on His shoulder; when he opens, no one will shut, when he shuts, no one will open. (Is. 22:22), and His dominion is vast and forever peaceful, from David's throne, and over His kingdom, which he confirms and sustains by judgment and justice, both now and forever. (Is. 9:6).

5. **O Oriens:** *O Radiant Dawn, splendour of eternal light, sun of justice: come, shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.* Isaiah had prophesied, The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shown. (Is. 9:1).

6. **O Rex Gentium:** *O King of all the nations, the only joy of every human heart; O Keystone of the mighty arch of man, come and save the creature you fashioned from the dust.* Isaiah had prophesied, For a child is born to us, a son is given us; upon his shoulder dominion rests. They name him Wonder-Counsellor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace. (Is. 9:5), and He shall judge between the nations, and impose terms on many peoples. They shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks; one nation shall not raise the sword against another, nor shall they train for war again. (Is. 2:4) .

7. **O Emmanuel:** *O Emmanuel, king and lawgiver, desire of the nations, Saviour of all people, come and set us free, Lord our God.* Isaiah had prophesied, The Lord himself will give you this sign: the Virgin shall be with child, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel. (Is. 7:14). Remember Emmanuel means God is with us.

If one starts with the last title and takes the first letter of each one -

Emmanuel, Rex, Oriens, Clavis, Radix, Adonai, Sapientia - the Latin words *ero cras* are formed, meaning, *Tomorrow, I will come*. Therefore, the Lord Jesus, whose coming we have prepared for in Advent and whom we have addressed in these seven Messianic titles, now speaks to us in renewed hope. So, the O Antiphons not only bring intensity to our Advent preparation, but bring it to a joyful conclusion.

As we pray these antiphons, we can pray with thanksgiving for the loving hands that have prepared and installed the wonderfully artistic O Antiphon banners on the pillars at St Charles.

KEEP CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS *Please take home and display the window-posters to tell passers-by of your delight in the celebration of the Incarnation.*

AND FINALLY *I hope that on Tuesday at 15.58 you join me in standing still for a split second before tilting Northwards in keep anticipation of a gentle crescendo of enlightenment. And hopefulness! Come Lord Jesus! Come Son of God! Return, Sol Invicta!*