



THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF  
OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION,  
FOSTER AVENUE, BEESTON,  
NOTTINGHAM, NG9 1AE  
and  
ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI CHURCH,  
TAMWORTH ROAD,  
LONG EATON, NG10 1DH



Nottingham Roman Catholic Diocese Trustees Company No. 7151646 Charity No. 1134449

PARISH PRIEST: Fr. Christopher A Thomas, Presbytery, 25 Foster Avenue, Beeston, NG9 1AE

E – mail: [frcathomas@live.com](mailto:frcathomas@live.com) ☎: 0115 922 8145 Website: [www.theassumption.co.uk](http://www.theassumption.co.uk)

PARISH DEACON: Rev. Chris Stevens ([deacon@lecatholic.org.uk](mailto:deacon@lecatholic.org.uk) ☎: 0115 808 5428)

SAFEGUARDING REPS: **Clare Newman** – (Assumption) ☎: 07812 603083

**Carol Morris & Jane Watts** (St Francis) – ☎: 08445 880933

DIOCESAN CO - ORDINATOR: – **Clare McKenzie** – ☎: 0115 953 9850

TIMES OF MASSES AND OTHER SERVICES: SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT: B

Second Week of Advent: 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> December 2020 (Weekday Cycle Year I / Psalter Week II)

<b>Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<b><i>Advent Feria</i></b>	<p><i>Your Prayers are requested for those who are sick:</i></p> <p>Isobel Alana Barnes, Marica Borsos, Jessie Breame, Margaret Brown, Fr John Cairns, Pat Constable, Francesca Lina Craparotta, Jim &amp; Margaret Dougan, Fr Theodore Gomes, Ann Harrison, Fr Peter Harvey, Andrea Hoffman, Breeda Keaney, Anne – Marie Reid, Alan Roberts, Simpson Family, Evelyn Venning and John Wilcox.</p>
Mass;	Special Intention	
<b>Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<b><i>Second Sunday of Advent: B</i></b>	
10:00 am: Mass;	Ernest Strickland RIP (Marie)	
<b>Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<b><i>St Ambrose, Bishop &amp; Doctor (memoria)</i></b>	
10:00 am: Mass;	Special Intention	
<b>Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<b><i>The Immaculate Conception of the BVM (Solemnity)</i></b>	
10:00am: Mass (St Francis);	Intentions of Frances Katlin Goodhind	
<b>Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<b><i>Advent Feria</i></b>	
10:00 am: Mass;	Intentions of Isobel Barnes	
<b>Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<b><i>Advent Feria</i></b>	<p><b>HOSPITALS</b></p> <p>A number of priests are still trying to maintain an 'on – call' rota for City and QMC. This is strictly calls for Anointing of the Sick when someone is nearing the end of their life. The hospital will not call us out for a request for prayers or when someone has already died – these will be dealt with by a member of the Chaplaincy Team who may or may not be a Catholic minister. Holy Communion is not being taken into hospital by Eucharistic Ministers. Families should not contact a priest directly to visit their loved one in hospital – all requests need to go through the Ward and Chaplaincy Department. QMC 0115 924 9924 ext. 63799 or City 0115 969 1169.</p>
Mass;	Prop Populo; People of the Parish	
<b>Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<b><i>Advent Feria</i></b>	
10:00 am: Mass;	Sonia Price RIP (Twomey)	
<b>Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<b><i>Advent Feria</i></b>	
Mass;	Private Intention	
<b>Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<b><i>Third Sunday of Advent: B</i></b>	
10:00 am: Mass;	James Barnes RIP	
<p><b>THE ABOVE MASSES WILL ALL BE SAID PRIVATELY AS ALL PUBLIC ACTS OF WORSHIP ARE SUSPENDED UNTIL AT LEAST 2<sup>nd</sup> DECEMBER 2020!</b></p> <p><i>The Church of Our Lady of the Assumption and the Church of St Francis of Assisi are closed to members of the public, until further notice at least 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020. The Parish Hall of Our Lady of the Assumption and the Parish Hall at St Francis of Assisi will remain closed to members of the public, until further notice If you urgently wish to contact Fr Christopher please telephone 0115 922 8145 (at any reasonable time).</i></p> <p><i>For enquiries or to book a Mass, please also do this via the telephone. Stipends can be posted or given at a later date, but for the foreseeable future if you book, or have already booked a Mass Intention, then this Mass will be Celebrated in private.</i></p>		

Items for the newsletter can be given to Fr Christopher or e – mailed to [frcathomas@live.com](mailto:frcathomas@live.com) by Thursday of each week for inclusion in the next issue.

**REQUIESCAT IN PACE:** Please remember in your prayers to pray for the repose of the soul of *Joan Lynch* who died on *Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020* at Melton Mowbray. Joan's Funeral will take place in Church on *Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020* at *11:00 am* followed by Burial at Beeston Cemetery. We remember her and her family at this sad time. May she rest in peace.

**POOR CLARES:** The Sisters were extremely grateful when I took your generous gifts to them. They are all well and avoiding the virus and want you to know that you are all in their prayers every day. My next visit will be earlier than usual because I want to make sure they receive your kind donations before Christmas – I will be going on *21<sup>st</sup> December 2020*. Thank you for your continued support – *Diane Wilson*.

**JAM CHUTNEY AND MARMALADE MINI SALE:** We were unable to have the Christmas Bazaar this year but old habits die hard and I still found myself making some preserves – though not as many as usual. Next Wednesday (*9<sup>th</sup> December 2020*) I will be selling them after Mass with takings going to our Church. – *Diane Wilson*

'The Diocese of Nottingham are inviting you to join others from across the diocese in preparing for and celebrating Christmas:

**PRAYING WITH OUR LADY THROUGH ADVENT:** We invite you to pray one extra Hail Mary each day in Advent, asking for Our Lady's prayers to help all of us as a Diocese, open our hearts and minds to welcome Jesus afresh this Christmas. She was the first person to welcome Him into her life and her intercession can help us to draw closer to Him and feel His presence with us anew this Christmas. Every other day you will be able to watch people from our Diocese pray the Hail Mary in different languages on the Diocesan social media sites, search for Diocese of Nottingham or Bishop Patrick McKinney on Twitter, Facebook and YouTube.

**LIVING ADVENT PODCAST:** Living Advent is a weekly podcast series throughout Advent exploring the virtues of Hope, Love, Joy and Peace with people from across the Diocese and how we can live them out. We speak to a young husband and father, a musician, a retired social worker and a police officer. You can find it on your usual podcast service by searching '*Living Advent Podcast*' or visit: [www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/podcasts](http://www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/podcasts) for links on how to stream or download it.

**DIOCESAN CAROL SERVICE:** Carol services are a wonderful family tradition of our Advent and Christmas celebrations and often are a great opportunity to invite those who are not regular Churchgoers to connect with our Parish or Chaplaincy community. This can be quite challenging to do this year so we are offering a Virtual Diocesan Carol Service. We will celebrate a short online carol service on *Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020* at *6pm* on Bishop Patrick's YouTube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/BishopPatrickMckinney> with readings, music, prayers and reflections. Please join us as a family and invite others to join us too. After the service grab a mince pie, something warm to drink and join us on zoom for our Family Christmas Quiz (6:45 – 7:15pm). The link and access code will be given out during the service.

**"BEING A DISCIPLE WEB SERIES:"** January is a time when we try and work at being a better person, why not explore how we can be a grow as a disciple of Jesus? On the *4 Thursdays of January 2021* we will explore a different aspect of what it means to be a Catholic disciple with Brendan Thompson the CEO of Catholic Voices in a web series on Zoom. Catholic Voices are an international organisation that shares the Good News in the global media. This will be a great foundation for Parishes, Chaplaincies and individuals to explore how we can support each other in growing as Catholic disciples. Register for the series here: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMrcuygqjwpGdNBRC5NIQ46Eu1bleEg246A> For information on how to access things on zoom visit: [https://www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/information/diocesan-commissions/01\\_commission-adult-formation/using-zoom](https://www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/information/diocesan-commissions/01_commission-adult-formation/using-zoom)

**CATECHIST NETWORKS:** Focused on Children's Liturgy and First Holy Communion Catechesis. We are offering 2 one hour networking sessions for catechists in the Diocese of Nottingham looking at online catechesis with children. The first will be for catechists who lead Children's Liturgy on *Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020* (<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJlkuipqzljGN037ne8J-JPZfVcPHqCQE5V>). and the second will be for catechists for First Holy Communion on *Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020* (<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwude2tpzguHdPg9k1xMv-yO8XUhdFyg4ib>). Both meetings will be an opportunity for catechists from around the diocese to meet together to discuss this important ministry and share best practice. Please follow the above links for more information and to register for these Zoom Meetings.

**WALK WITH ME ADVENT 2020 BOOKLETS:** Reflections on the Daily Readings from the First Sunday of Advent through to the Baptism of the Lord. Now available and individually wrapped for £ 1.00.

**OUR LADY OF LOURDES CATHOLIC MULTI – ACADEMY TRUST SITUATIONS VACANT:**

Please be aware that OLOLCMAT has the following new vacancies at the following Schools within the OLOL CMAT: HR Officer – Trust Central Office; Cover Supervisor – Christ the King School; Teaching Assistant – Blessed Robert Widmerpool School; Teacher of English – All Saints’ School; Teacher of Maths – All Saints’ School; Teacher of Science – Trinity School and; Classroom Teacher – St Patrick’s School, Mansfield. The link for the vacancies is: <https://www.ololcatholicmat.co.uk/vacancies-and-recruitment/>.

**CELEBRATION OF MASS:** Despite being in Tier 3 after the latest Lockdown we can now Celebrate Mass publicly once again. Please be aware though that you will still need to book for Masses using the Diocesan booking system. Details of how to book for Mass can be found on the Diocesan Website by following the link: <https://massbooking.uk/> where you will first need to Sign Up (if you haven’t already done so) in order to book for Mass. This is a pre – booking system and is the only way of regulating those who come to Church. The latest time to book for a Mass will be **TWO HOURS** before. If you do not have access to or are unable to use a computer you may book for Mass, by telephone, by calling Marie Calladine (Tel: 07850 978788), but I would ask that you only use this option if you are unable to book online. For the time being Mass will be available at The Assumption, Beeston on *Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays* and *Fridays* and, at St Francis, Long Eaton on *Tuesdays*, all at **10:00 am**. The Sunday obligation continues to be suspended, so if you are unsure about coming along, do not feel under any obligation to do so; and if you or someone in your household, displays symptoms of Covid19, then please do stay at home. Please arrive in good time to allow to the Stewards to check you in and show you to your places. Stewards will assist upon arrival and upon leaving Church so that everyone is kept safe.

The need to wear face coverings in Churches in England is still mandatory and the distribution of Holy Communion will continue to take place at the end of Mass and not at the usual time. Once you have received Holy Communion you will be required to leave the Church immediately. For more detailed guidance please refer to the previous week’s Newsletter.

***PLEASE BE AWARE THAT YOU WILL NOT JUST  
BE ABLE TO TURN UP AND ATTEND MASS.***

***For the time being and until further notice  
SUNDAY OBLIGATION REMAINS SUSPENDED.***

**CHRISTMAS MASSES:** Although the ‘obligation’ to attend Mass on Sundays and Holydays of Obligation will remain suspended for the time being, many individuals and family groups will want to come to Mass at Christmas. We know that traditionally there are twelve days of Christmas, which in the current climate has been reduced to a ‘Christmas window of five days’ when up to three households may be able to gather together. It all seems a long way from the perennial words of Roy Wood from 1973 (I Wish It Could Be Christmas Every Day – Wizzard)! Well, like Easter, the Nativity of the Lord is one of the two Solemnities in the Ordinary Form of the Church’s Liturgical Calendar which has its own Octave. And so, the Church regards each day in an Octave as if it were the Solemnity itself. So, for example, the prayers for Mass during the Christmas Octave refer to each day as if it were still Christmas Day. Despite having days within the Octave that are Feasts, St Stephen, St John the Evangelist, the Holy Innocents, the Holy Family and the concluding Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God, each of these days is, as the Roman Missal states, a “*day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord.*” Effectively, Christmas Every Day. This means that, Liturgically, each of the days from 25<sup>th</sup> December to the 1<sup>st</sup> January is ‘Christmas Day’. We can therefore, come and celebrate the mystery of Christmas at any of the Masses during the Octave days. This would allow you, this year, to plan for a day within the Octave when you would like to come to Church to celebrate your Christmas Mass. We are, of course, still very much limited by the seating availability over this period, but it would be good to see whole pews booked (seating up to a maximum of 6 people). I would therefore, like to outline the Mass schedule for the Christmas period as follows:

## *Times of Masses and Services for Christmas*

<b>Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<i>The Nativity of the Lord (Solemnity)</i>
<b>St Francis:</b>	4:30 pm; Vigil Mass for Christmas
<b>Friday 25<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<i>The Nativity of the Lord (Solemnity)</i>
<b>The Assumption:</b>	Midnight; Midnight Mass for Christmas
<b>St Francis:</b>	9:30 am; Christmas Morning Mass:
<b>The Assumption:</b>	11:00 am; Christmas Morning Mass:
<b>Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<i>St Stephen, Proto - Martyr (Feast)</i>
<b>St Francis:</b>	10:00 am; Mass
<b>Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<i>The Holy Family (Feast)</i>
<b>The Assumption:</b>	10:00 am; Mass
<b>Monday 28<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<i>The Holy Innocents, Martyrs (Feast)</i>
<b>The Assumption:</b>	10:00 am; Mass
<b>Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<i>St Thomas of Canterbury (Becket) Bishop &amp; Martyr (Feast)</i>
<b>St Francis:</b>	10:00 am; Mass
<b>Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<i>Sixth Day within the Octave of Christmas</i>
<b>The Assumption:</b>	10:00 am; Mass
<b>Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> December:</b>	<i>Seventh Day within the Octave of Christmas</i>
<b>St Francis:</b>	10:00 am; Mass
<b>Friday 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021:</b>	<i>Mary, The Holy Mother of God (Solemnity)</i>
<b>The Assumption:</b>	11:00 am; Mass
<b>Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> January:</b>	<i>Second Sunday After Christmas</i>
<b>The Assumption:</b>	10:00 am; Mass

## *The Second Sunday of Advent*

All of us have experienced negative moments. Sometimes we experience negativity because no matter what we do we can't seem to avoid suffering; painful things just keep happening to us and to those we love. Sometimes we experience discouragement because we can't seem to avoid sin; we just keep falling into the same patterns of greed, lust, impatience and laziness. Sometimes we experience cynicism when we look at society and see so much that is wrong, so much injustice and degradation and violence. Today, as we start the Second week of Advent, God has something to say about negativity, discouragement and cynicism. He is saying: negativity, discouragement, cynicism will all come knocking at your door, but do not let them in! Do not let yourself be afraid, because I am your Lord and Saviour and I have not forgotten about you!

Advent gives us just four weeks of spiritual preparation for the great Feast of Christmas and so it is important to try and understand the wisdom and invitation of the Advent Season. I think that one of the ways in which we do this is that we recognise that we are not whole. We recognise that something significant is missing in our lives. We need God and we need the Church. That really describes what the Season of Advent is all about. Our world and our culture and our society, our country and our families are not whole. Something is missing. That is so true when we look at the world around us today. We have wars, we have threats of violence, we have persecution and, now we have a global pandemic. We have political strife. We have respected celebrities falling almost daily. Something is deeply wrong. Something, or more correctly, someone is missing. But we need to admit that this is also true inside of us. Not just out there, but in here. Our lives can be a mess. They can be out of order: with no focus, no purpose and no meaning. We might see the remedy to that by working harder, trying to accumulate more money or investing better or buying more things or turning to unhealthy addictions. But isn't it true that we learn the hard way, that very often these things only make our lives more of a mess. This Season of Advent invites us to acknowledge all of this. It invites us to say, "God, the world is a mess. And my own life is less than whole. Something, someone, is missing. We, I, really need you." It sounds easy, but it is really quite hard. Because that is not the logic of today. The logic of today is, "I'm alright; I'm okay." Advent invites us to say, "I'm not alright. I am not okay." Advent invites us to claim that the world is a mess, that life really does have messed up parts to it and that I am not whole. But we don't stop there. We say, "I need someone to rescue me. I need a rescuer. I need someone to intervene. I need a Saviour." Christmas is the Birthday of the Saviour. And if you don't think you need one, then it may as well be the Birthday of Jack Frost!

This is the message of the Gospel, where we hear St John the Baptist's voice ring out with hope in the wilderness of negativity: The Lord is coming! This is the message of Isaiah, who preaches comfort to God's sinful people, reminding them that He is like a shepherd who gathers the lambs of His flock, us, into

His arms. This is the message of the Second Reading: even if it seems that God is absent, has forgotten about us or is powerless to help us, we know that He is simply waiting for the right moment to send us His grace. For God, a thousand years are like a day, St Peter reminds us, and a day is like a thousand years; what seems like a long wait for us is in reality just the blink of an eye. Advent is our yearly reminder that God has not forgotten about us, no matter how we may feel. In fact, He never stops thinking of us and He is leading us with care to our everlasting reward.

The prophets in today's readings teach us that it is not enough for the Lord to make a beeline toward us. We need to clear a straight path towards Him as well. Our sins are the roadblocks and setbacks in the journey. In today's First Reading Isaiah reminds us that we can help the Lord reach us or we can hinder Him, but He is coming one way or the other. Salvation history, from the Fall to the Incarnation, was a long, difficult and twisted road. Mankind was lost in sin and groping in the dark to regain its bearings. The Lord's interventions before coming in Person were all to keep people moving and facing in the right directions with, it has to be said, mixed results.

They were expecting to meet Him at the end of the journey, not during the journey. Today the Lord tells Isaiah to encourage Israel after all their struggle and difficulty with the good news that not only are they getting closer, but the Lord is coming closer to them to help them along the way. They have paid the prices for their sins and are ready to be reconciled with the Lord. With all the imagery of making a straight path, filling in the valleys and levelling the peaks, not only is the Lord encouraging them to make their way to Him, but He is also creating that path for them to follow. A direct path between two people is good for both. In the Incarnation and Birth of Our Lord, we meet Our Lord on the way and He makes the way easier and accompanies us.

In today's Second Reading St Peter reminds us how we can make straight the way for the Lord and how the Lord makes the way straight for us. It is a long road because Our Lord is patient with sinners and wants their salvation and some need time to get back on course. With sin the road doesn't get longer; it often just gets harder. When we go off track and take useless detours and stumble along the way, sometimes we can find ourselves turned around completely. The Lord will appear unexpectedly and everything will change, for better or for worse, depending on our attitude towards Him. God was born as Jesus Christ. Our humanity is His humanity and a meeting point no one could have expected in our journey towards eternity. That meeting seeks to transform our lives, not condemn them. Our Lord wants to make it a good moment, not a bad one; but the decision is ultimately ours: we make straight the path to Him if we strive to live "holy and saintly lives," eager for His day to come as a day of righteousness. And that Day is not just at the end of time when He returns in glory, but, as His Birth reminds us, the moment we are born of water and the Spirit in Baptism. From that moment, we are back on the path to eternity with Him at our side and that path is made straight if we keep pressing on.

In today's Gospel John the Baptist starts telling Israel, and us, to get ready, fulfilling two prophecies of the Old Testament. The prophet Malachi said someone would prepare the way for the Lord. That someone, as the prophecy in today's First Reading, reminds us, would encourage his listeners to make straight the way of the Lord: enter John the Baptist. Mark tells us how the way of the Lord was made straight by John: a baptism of repentance, as opposed to what we now know as the Sacrament of Baptism, for the forgiveness of sins. An attitude of repentance and a desire for forgiveness is what makes the Lord's path straight. So, John invited the people of his time to repent from their sins, so that they would be ready to welcome Jesus their Saviour.

God has not forgotten about us and He never will; this is the source of our comfort and courage in the midst of all of life's trials. And He wants to come with fresh blessings for each one of us this Christmas. According to the prophet Isaiah, there are two things we can do to get ready to receive those blessings: to fill in every valley and to make low every mountain. The valleys stand for our sins of omission, the things we should be doing but aren't. For example, if we aren't spending quality time with our family, we need to fill in that valley. If we aren't spending at least a few minutes each day in prayer with God, we need to fill in that valley. The mountains are the selfish and sinful habits that we have built up; the sins of commission. If we like to gossip and spread criticism, we need to tear down that mountain. If we are leading a double life, indulging in hidden sins or lies that are poisoning our souls, we need to lay low that mountain. If we are arrogantly treating our work colleagues, friends or family members like lower class people, we need to topple that mountain. The mountains and valleys inhibit God's grace from travelling into our hearts; they are the roadblocks that keep out God's mercy and peace and wisdom. Advent is the season to smooth out and clear up the roads to our hearts. And Christ wants to help us do that; if only we will give Him that chance.