



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 ☎: 0115 922 8145 Website: www.theassumption.co.uk

PARISH DEACON: Rev. Chris Stevens (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: THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT – GAUDETE SUNDAY: B

Third Week of Advent: 13th – 19th December 2020 (Weekday Cycle Year I / Psalter Week III)

Saturday 12th December:	<i>Advent FERIA</i>	<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 & 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;	Private Intention	
Sunday 13th December:	<i>Third Sunday of Advent: B</i>	
10:00 am: Mass;	James Barnes RIP	
Monday 14th December:	<i>St John of the Cross, Priest & Doctor (memoria)</i>	
10:00 am: Mass;	Tom Kent RIP (Twomey)	
Tuesday 15th December:	<i>Advent FERIA</i>	
10:00am: Mass (St Francis);	Trevor Jones RIP	
Wednesday 16th December:	<i>Advent FERIA</i>	
11:00 am: Requiem Mass;	Joan Lynch RIP	
Thursday 17th December:	<i>Advent FERIA</i>	<p>HOSPITALS</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;	Private Intention	
Friday 18th December:	<i>Advent FERIA</i>	
10:00 am: Mass;	Elizabeth Reilly RIP (SVP)	
Saturday 19th December:	<i>Advent FERIA</i>	
Mass;	Pro Populo; People of the Parish	
Sunday 20th December:	<i>Fourth Sunday of Advent: B</i>	
10:00 am: Mass;	David Morgan Jnr RIP (Anniversary)	
<p>UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED THE ABOVE MASSES WILL ALL BE SAID PRIVATELY!</p>		
<p>The Parish Hall of Our Lady of the Assumption and the Parish Hall at St Francis of Assisi are 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).</p> <p>For enquiries or to book a Mass Intention, please see me after the one of the Scheduled Public Masses or contact me by telephone. Mass Stipends and Parish Collection Envelopes can be posted or given at a later date.</p>		

Items for the newsletter can be given to Fr Christopher or e – mailed to 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 23rd November 2020* at Melton Mowbray. Joan's Funeral will take place in Church on *Wednesday 16th December 2020* at *11:00 am* followed by Burial at Beeston Cemetery. Also, please remember to pray for the repose of the soul of *Marianne Walton* who died on *Wednesday 9th December 2020*. We remember them both and their families at this sad time. May they 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 *21st December 2020*. Thank you for your continued support – *Diane Wilson*.

UPDATE ON COVID-19 AND VACCINATION: In September 2020 the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales issued a statement [COVID-19 and Vaccination](#) (24th September 2020). In the light of the recent breakthrough in vaccine development they have now issued a follow up statement (3rd December 2020) which can be found on the CBCEW website along with the original September statement. Bishop Patrick has asked that make this information available to you and include the link to this information to be found on the CBCEW website Link: <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/our-work/health-social-care/coronavirus-guidelines/update-on-covid-19-and-vaccination/>

HOME MISSION SUNDAY: You will know that Evangelisation is an essential work of the Church. At all levels and through every avenue we can utilise, we are called to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. We do so, in order that others may come to know the beauty of encountering Him. Because of the broad and varied expressions of this Mission, every now and then, we need to refocus on what we are trying to achieve. This is what Home Mission Sunday is about. During the first lockdown, the Bishops decided to move Home Mission Sunday from September to 13th December 2020, in the hope that it would be a better time to engage the Faithful in this important work. Providentially this year, we are marking Home Mission Sunday at a time when we are all trying to encourage as many people as possible to return to the practise of their faith, now that there is the possibility of being physically present for Mass once more. The resources for Home Mission Sunday this year are intended to inspire and equip communities, families and individuals to share their faith, in this period leading up to Christmas and beyond. They can be found at: <https://homemission.org.uk/home-mission-sunday/>.

'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 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 18th 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/tJMrcuygqjwpGdNBRC5NIO46Eu1bleEg246A> For information on how to access things on zoom visit: https://www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/information/diocesan-commissions/01_commission-adult-formation/using-zoom

SCHOOL GOVERNORS: The election process for two Parent Governors at English Martyrs’ School is now underway and parents will have received information on how to submit their vote(s). The School community have been blessed to have had six parents nominated for the election. Voting will be completed on the morning of *Friday 18th December 2020* and so parents are asked to vote in good time. I was also heartened to have had a number of enquiries about becoming Foundation Governors. Thank you to those people and everyone, for your continued support and enthusiasm for our school – *David Boott*

CELEBRATION OF MASS: Despite being in Tier 3 after the latest Lockdown we can now Celebrate Mass publicly once again. Please book 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 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 Newsletters.

***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 25th December to the 1st 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:

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

The Third Sunday of Advent - Gaudete Sunday.

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near.” From St Paul’s Letter to the Philippians our Entrance Antiphon for this Third Sunday of Advent, traditionally called Gaudete – rejoice – Sunday. And we are called to rejoice on this Third Sunday of Advent. “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.” “Joy,” that is the word we are encouraged to concentrate upon on this Third Sunday of Advent. And yet, joy is the most sought after and yet, the most elusive virtue of all it would seem. Joy is most associated with the great Feast for which we are now preparing. When the whole world, in less than two weeks’ time will proclaim, “Joy to the world; the Lord is come.” Joy is the infallible sign of God’s presence and, we Catholics should be known for our joy. Hilaire Belloc wrote, “*Wherever the Catholic sun doth shine, There’s always laughter and good red wine. At least I’ve always found it so. Benedicamus Domino.*”

But we have to acknowledge that these days there seems to be a lack of joy; both in the Church and in the world. And this is understandable. This past year that we are about to conclude has been a year of darkness for many. There has been a lot of suffering and sadness and shock and disappointment and anger. A lot of darkness; anything but joy. And one can legitimately wonder at times if indeed the *Catholic sun doth shine* any longer through this gloom.

And yet today we anticipate what we will hear at Midnight Mass from the Prophet Isaiah, “The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.” As on this Gaudete Sunday we yearn for Christmas joy, we remind ourselves that we are a people of light, not a people of darkness.

If we study the history of the Feast of Christmas it gives us an added explanation of this feast of light and joy. Anthropologists tell us that every ancient religion celebrated a great feast about the time when the day had the least sunlight every year; the shortest day of the year. The day that the sun ends its annual decline and begins its yearly cycle of triumph over darkness. Now we of course know that day to be the 21st December; the shortest day of the year, the day with the least amount of sunshine. We know that after that dark day, the light, the sun, begins to prevail and increase once again.

So did it not make absolute sense for the early Christians to decide that the birth of the Son, would coincide with the pagan feast of the rebirth of the sun. And so we have Christmas, the birth of the light of the world, Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This annual feast for which we prepare reminds us that we are not stuck in the darkness; we bask in the light. And the bleaker the darkness may have been in our lives, the more eagerly we embrace the light.

So where do we get this light, this joy? Well over the centuries we have learned some important lessons about this light and joy. For one, we know that we can’t buy it. Two, we have learned that it comes very often from giving and not receiving. Three, we have learned that this joy and light depends upon who we are, rather than what we have or what we possess or what we do. And finally, we have learned that this joy and light comes from within, not from without. Joy comes from God, as Isaiah tells us in today’s First Reading, “I exult for joy in the Lord, my soul rejoices in my God.” And God gave it to us in the light and the joy of that first Christmas in the gift of His Only Begotten Son, born as a baby at Bethlehem. Therein is the true light and the true joy. The challenge of Christmas is to allow that baby to be reborn in our hearts again this Christmas.

God has tried to change the world from darkness and from sadness to light and joy many times. He saw a world destroying itself by sin. So, He sent the flood to purify it; that didn’t work, the world went back to its sin. God saw a world enslaved, so He sent Moses to liberate it and set it free; that didn’t work, the world just went back to its chains. He looked again at the world and He saw it in ignorance. So He sent the prophets to teach and to enlighten; that didn’t change the world, it went back to its ignorance. So how did God change the world?

Well to change the world, you have got to change people and nothing, nothing, nothing changes people more than a baby. Nothing changes lives more than the arrival of a baby. Nothing transforms a man and a woman more than a baby. Nothing upsets routine and challenges our selfishness more than a baby. Nothing rearranges priorities more than a baby. Nothing teaches love and care and tenderness more than a baby. So guess what? God sent His only begotten Son as a baby. And that baby has changed the world and that baby will change lives if we allow Him to be reborn in our souls this Christmas. He will change darkness and sadness into light and joy. The challenge becomes to let Him be reborn in our hearts this Christmas. There and only there alone, is the secret to light and joy.

On the first Christmas when God came down in the person of Jesus, He filled the world with glad tidings of great joy. His whole life was orientated towards God the Father in joy, prayer and thanksgiving. We are often so caught up in our daily problems that we fail to reflect the joy of that marvellous truth: “that God loved the world so much that He sent His only Son, so that whoever believes in Him might not die but may have eternal life.” Joy is the infallible sign of God’s presence among us.