



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

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

Fourth Week of Advent / Christmastide: 20<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> December 2020 (Weekday Cycle Year I / Psalter Week IV)

<b>Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<b><u>Advent FERIA</u></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>
<b>Mass;</b>	<i>Pro Populo; People of the Parish</i>	
<b>Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<b><u>Fourth Sunday of Advent: B</u></b>	
<b>10:00 am: Mass;</b>	<i>David T Morgans Jnr. RIP (Anniversary)</i>	
<b>Monday 21<sup>st</sup> December:</b>	<b><u>Advent FERIA</u></b>	
<b>10:00 am: Requiem Mass;</b>	<i>Marianne Walton RIP</i>	
<b>Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> December:</b>	<b><u>Advent FERIA</u></b>	
<b>10:00am: Mass (St Francis);</b>	<i>Jim Dobbin RIP (Curtis)</i>	
<b>Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> December:</b>	<b><u>Advent FERIA</u></b>	
<b>10:00 am: Mass;</b>	<i>Special Intention</i>	
<b>Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<b><u>The Nativity of the Lord (Solemnity)</u></b>	
<b>4:30 pm: Mass (St Francis);</b>	<i>Winifred Lally RIP</i>	
<b>Friday 25<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<b><u>The Nativity of the Lord (Solemnity)</u></b>	
<b>Midnight: Mass</b>	<i>Pro Populo; People of the Parish</i>	
<b>9:30 am: Mass (St Francis);</b>	<i>Private Intention (KC)</i>	
<b>11:00 am: Mass;</b>	<i>Parish Family (Stevens)</i>	
<b>Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<b><u>St Stephen, Proto - Martyr (Feast)</u></b>	
<b>10:00 am: Mass;</b>	<i>Private Intention (SG)</i>	
<b>Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<b><u>The Holy Family (Feast)</u></b>	
<b>10:00 am: Mass;</b>	<i>Special Intention (PS)</i>	
<b>UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED THE ABOVE MASSES WILL ALL BE SAID PRIVATELY!</b>		
<p><b>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).</b></p> <p><b>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.</b></p>		

**HOSPITALS**

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.

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.

TIMES OF MASSES AND OTHER SERVICES: THE HOLY FAMILY: B

First Week of Christmastide: 27<sup>th</sup> December 2020 – 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2021 (Weekday Cycle Year I / Psalter Week I)

<b>Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<i><u>The Holy Family (Feast)</u></i>
10:00 am: Mass;	Special Intention (PS)
<b>Monday 28<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<i><u>The Holy Innocents, Martyrs (Feast)</u></i>
10:00 am: Mass;	Joyce Geidriatis RIP
<b>Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<i><u>St Thomas of Canterbury (Becket), Bishop &amp; Martyr (Feast)</u></i>
10:00am: Mass (St Francis);	Mrs Mary Smith RIP (Curtis Family)
<b>Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	<i><u>Sixth Day within the Octave of Christmas</u></i>
10:00 am: Mass;	David Powell RIP (Birthday) (Jane)
<b>Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> December:</b>	<i><u>Seventh Day within the Octave of Christmas</u></i>
10:00 am: Mass (St Francis);	Mr Bill Mc Cay RIP (Curtis Family)
<b>Friday 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021:</b>	<i><u>Mary, The Holy Mother of God (Solemnity)</u></i>
11:00 am: Mass;	John Frederick Dixon RIP (Teresa)
<b>Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> January:</b>	<i><u>Saints Basil the Great &amp; Gregory of Nazianzen, Bishops &amp; Doctors (memoria)</u></i>
Mass;	Holy Souls
<b>Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> January:</b>	<i><u>Second Sunday after Christmas</u></i>
10:00 am: Mass;	Kate Rae RIP (Calladine)

**REQUIESCAT IN PACE:** Please remember in your prayers to pray for the repose of the soul of *Marianne Walton* who died on *Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020*. Marianne's Funeral will take place in Church on *Monday 21<sup>st</sup> December 2020* at *10:00 am* followed by Burial at Chilwell Cemetery. We remember her and her family at this sad time. May she rest in peace.

**POOR CLARES:** This coming *Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> December 2020* I will be making my last visit of the year to the Sisters at Bulwell – to take them some Christmas cheer and gifts from our Parish. If you have anything you wish to send please can you either give them to Father Christopher or let me have them. I am going earlier than I usually do to ensure they can enjoy our gifts at Christmas. Thanks to you all for your continued support throughout this difficult year from myself and the Poor Clares – *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](#) (24<sup>th</sup> September 2020). In the light of the recent breakthrough in vaccine development they have now issued a follow up statement (3<sup>rd</sup> 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/>

**“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)

**ACT NOW AND ASK YOUR MP TO OPPOSE INTRODUCING ASSISTED SUICIDE:** The assisted suicide lobby have launched a large campaign to put pressure on the Government to reconsider the legalisation of assisted suicide. It is vital that it is clear to the Government that the public want them to continue to hold strong against this pressure from assisted suicide campaigners and reject their demands. Right To Life UK have set up an easy to use tool which will enable you to email your MP asking them to make it clear to the Government that it should not give into demands from the assisted suicide lobby to reconsider the legalisation of assisted suicide. It only takes 30 seconds to email your MP by visiting the link below: <https://righttolife.org.uk/StopAssistedSuicide>. – *Daniel Turner: Right To Life UK*



**CHRISTMAS TREE:** The Christmas Tree has now been put up in Church next to the Sacred Heart Statue. As we did last year and, in the spirit of the Christmas Tradition, we will try to put some presents under the tree, remembering those in particular for whom Christmas is not going to be such a joyful time. It is hoped therefore that these presents would be particularly useful to the needy and homeless and we can pass them on to the Canaan Trust. If I could appeal to you then, for things such as hats, gloves, scarves, socks, toiletries, soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, disposable razors, hygienic wipes, combs and deodorant. These items do not need to be gift wrapped as they can then be more easily sorted and distributed.

**CELEBRATION OF MASS:** Although we are still in Tier 3 after the latest Government announcement we can still Celebrate Mass publicly. 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. ***PLEASE NOTE: that you can only book on the Mass Booking System up to 7 days ahead, so some of the Masses will not be visible yet.*** 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 for The Assumption (Tel: 07850 978788), or at Long Eaton by calling Christina Boott on 07875 625974; but I would ask that you only use this option if you are unable to book online. Except for the Christmas Octave, 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. **IT IS IMPORTANT** to arrive in good time to allow the Stewards to check you in and show you to your places. Stewards will assist you upon arrival and upon leaving the 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.***



**THE ASSUMPTION AND ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI PARISHES**  
**YOUTUBE<sup>GB</sup> CHANNEL:** From *Christmas Eve* there will be a *Service of Carols and Readings*. This is being prepared by the Music Group and children from English Martyrs' Primary School. To access the channel please visit

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCP-xc-Pr6P30\\_j7mrtqCbhA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCP-xc-Pr6P30_j7mrtqCbhA).

**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 the 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 2020** to the **1<sup>st</sup> January 2021** 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). Please refer to the Mass Schedule above and the Mass Booking page at: <https://massbooking.uk/>.

*In spite of all that is happening now and, what has gone on throughout this year, I wish you all Best Wishes and Prayers for Happy, Holy and Peaceful Christmas and every good wish for a better 2021! – Fr Christopher Thomas*

### *The Fourth Sunday of Advent.*

This is last Sunday of Advent before Christmas and our time of preparation is reaching its conclusion. And so today we may ask ourselves: Are we ready for Christmas? Jesus is hoping that we are! He has something He wants to tell each one of us this Christmas, something He wants to give us, something wonderful He wants us to do. Just like Mary in today’s Gospel passage, He has a word, a message for each one of us and if we are ready for it, as Mary was ready, it will bring Christ into our lives and into the world in a new, life – changing way, just as the angel’s message brought Christ into Mary’s womb so long ago.

But are we ready? How can we know that we are ready? There are three signs by which we can gauge our readiness for the special grace of Christmas. It is not by seeing if our shopping list has every item ticked off. It is not by seeing if our Christmas decorations are all up. And it is not by making sure that all our Christmas cards have made their way out the door. Those are good things, but they are the secondary, exterior things. The real preparation for Christmas happens on the inside; that is where we find the three signs.

The first sign of readiness is mentioned in the First Reading. In this Reading, God makes a solemn promise to King David, the greatest King of the Old Testament, that a descendent of his will rule an everlasting Kingdom. That, of course, is a prophecy about Jesus, whose “kingdom will have no end,” as we pray each week in the Creed. We can imagine how overjoyed and deeply grateful David must have been when God made to him this promise. Every king’s greatest dilemma is how to make his kingdom last and grow after his death. And so, God’s promise relieves David’s greatest worry and fear – that is the power of God’s Word. But King David was only ready to hear that promise and receive that joy after, as the Bible tells us he was, “settled into his house and the Lord had given him rest from all the enemies surrounding him.” David’s house was in order and his country was at peace and so he was able to hear God’s Word. That is a symbol of the spiritual life. His palace, the place where he lived, symbolises our own soul, our interior lives. His country, with its freedom from enemy occupation, symbolises our activities, our external actions. Are there still some evil, self – centred desires dominating our souls: vengeance, greed, lust, arrogance, a lack of forgiveness? Are there still some evil, sinful habits or patterns that dominate our activities: dishonesty, gossip, self – indulgence, infidelity, laziness? When we compromise with these tendencies and temptations, they interfere with our ability to receive God’s joyful, peace – giving Word. But it is not too late to “settle in our house” and let “the Lord give us rest from the enemies that surround us.” God offers us His grace and His mercy so that we can put our house in order.

The second sign that we are ready for Christmas is also given to us by King David in the First Reading. Once his house was in order and his enemies were pushed beyond the borders, he didn't get lazy. Instead, he started to think about what else he could do for God. He realized that the Ark of the Covenant, the golden chest containing the Ten Commandments, the Manna and Aaron's staff, the holy place where God's presence was made manifest, was still housed in a tent, while he was living comfortably in a palace. And so, he asked the prophet Nathan if he should build a temple. God, however, didn't want him to build a temple – that was left to David's son, King Solomon, but it was the right question to ask. When David asked, "What more can I do for you and your people, Lord?" God revealed His will and His plan; He sent the magnificent prophecy of the Messiah. To be ready for God's revelation this Christmas, we too need to be asking that question: "What more can I do for God and His Church? What is God asking of me?" Each one of us is called not only to receive God's grace, but to be instruments of that same grace to others. Just as God had a mission for the Blessed Virgin Mary, so He has a mission for us; she was the first Christian, the first person to bring Christ into the world; we are her spiritual children, called to bring Christ into the corners of our world where His light still doesn't shine. Are we asking that question? Do we want to be active Christians? To be ready for Christmas, we need to be.

The third sign that we are ready for Christmas is found in today's Second Reading. In this very long sentence from the New Testament Letter to the Romans, St Paul is praising God for His mysterious and wonderful plan of salvation, which was "kept secret for endless ages," but is now, "so clear that it must be broadcast to pagans everywhere." When we hold a Bible in our hands, we are holding these "secrets," this revelation of the mystery of God, hidden for so long. But how often do we hold a Bible in our hands? How often do we open its pages to read, reflect and meditate on these sacred and inspired words? Maybe because Bibles are so common nowadays and we are so familiar with them, we tend to take the Bible for granted. But we must not – not if we want to be ready to hear, understand and obey God's message to us this Christmas. In today's Gospel, Mary gives us the perfect example of how we ought to treat the Sacred Scriptures. When God's messenger greeted her, St Luke tells us that, "She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean." Each chapter of the Bible is like a message from God for our souls, a message that can sometimes disturb us, but one which should prompt us to ask the question, "What does this greeting mean to me?" Pope Benedict XVI said in a speech soon after his election that personal, heartfelt and prayerful reading of the Bible will "bring to the Church – I am convinced of it – a new spiritual springtime." God wants to bring a new spiritual springtime into each of our souls. To be ready for it, we must take time each day to ponder His Sacred Word, opening our hearts to Him in prayerful reflection on the Bible.

Putting our house in order by accepting God's grace and mercy, asking what more we can do for God and the Church and wanting to do it, and pondering the Sacred Scriptures – these are sure signs that we are ready for Christmas, sure signs that we are ready to receive God's personal gift for each one of us on that holy day. If those signs are already present in our lives, we can rejoice, looking forward to receiving Christ at Christmas as eagerly as He is looking forward to giving Himself to us. But if we lack some of the signs, or one of them, let us ask God for the grace not to be distracted between now and the great celebration, but to use the time well, so that when Christmas comes, we will indeed be ready.

