

FIRST READING

2 Samuel 7:1-5.8-11.16

Once David had settled into his house and the Lord had given him rest from all the enemies surrounding him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, "Look, I am living in a house of cedar while the ark of God dwells in a tent." Nathan said to the king, "Go and do all that is in your mind, for the Lord is with you." But that very night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: "Go and tell my servant David. Thus the Lord speaks: Are you the man to build me a house to dwell in? I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be leader of my people Israel; I have been with you on all your expeditions; I have cut off all your enemies before you. I will give you fame as great as the fame of the greatest on earth. I will provide a place for my people Israel; I will plant them there and they shall dwell in that place and never be disturbed again; nor shall the wicked continue to oppress them as they did, in the days when I appointed judges over my people Israel; I will give them rest from all their enemies. The Lord will make you great; the Lord will make you a House. Your House and your sovereignty will always stand secure before me and your throne be established for ever."

RESPONSORIAL PSALM **I will sing forever of your love, O Lord.**

1. I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord;
through all ages my mouth will proclaim your truth.
Of this I am sure, that your love lasts for ever,
that your truth is firmly established as the heavens.
2. 'I have made a covenant with my chosen;
I have sworn to David my servant:
I will establish your dynasty for ever
and set up your throne through all ages.'
3. He will say to me: 'You are my father,
my God, the rock who saves me.'
I will keep my love for him always;
for him my covenant shall endure.

SECOND READING

Romans 16:25-27

Glory to him who is able to give you the strength to live according to the Good News I preach, and in which I proclaim Jesus Christ, the revelation of a mystery kept secret for endless ages, but now so clear that it must be broadcast to pagans everywhere to bring them to the obedience of faith. This is only what scripture has predicted, and it is all part of the way the eternal God wants things to be. He alone is wisdom; give glory therefore to him through Jesus Christ for ever and ever. Amen.

**Alleluia, alleluia! I am the handmaid of the Lord:
let what you have said be done to me. Alleluia!**

GOSPEL

Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, "Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you." She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, "Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end." Mary said to the angel, "But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?" "The Holy Spirit will come upon you" the angel answered "and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too : your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God." "I am the handmaid of the Lord," said Mary "let what you have said be done to me." And the angel left her.

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Holy Family Church

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Priests: Fr. Peter Draper, Fr. John Moriarty (Tel: 725193)

Sunday Mass: 11.00 am.

Weekday Mass: Thur: 9.15am. (Other weekdays: 9.15am at St. Anthony's)

Sacrament of Reconciliation: on request

Holy Family Primary school: 727471 **Covenant Books:** 735993

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“Yes”

'If Jesus is the representative of the total givenness of God to creation, then perhaps Mary is the representative of humanity, showing us how the gift is received.' [1] 'When Mary says 'Yes' she makes her commitment without knowing much about what it will entail or where it will lead. When the mystery of God's love breaks through into my consciousness, do I run from it? Or do I respond from my deepest, truest self, and say a "yes" that will change me forever?' [2]

'Our truest self is who we always are in God. It is a gift, waiting to be unwrapped, waiting to be consciously received. The Presence needs to be recognized, honoured, and drawn upon to become a Living Presence. Once we surrender to this Christ mystery, this divine incarnation in our oh-so-ordinary self and body, we begin to see it in every other ordinary place, too.' [1]

'How do we say yes to a life we did not choose? This yes is not something we can always summon on our own. It is not a response we can manufacture by our own strength of will.' [3] We need only remember that we are saying our 'Yes' to God who is 'a presence that spares us from nothing but unexplainably sustains us in all things.' [4]

"Be not afraid," the angel tells Mary. "What fear do you need to let go of in order to offer your yes? How might it be to ask for the courage you need, and to open yourself to the ways this courage wants to meet you? You will know it by the strength that rises from within you to meet it, by the release of the knot in the centre of your chest that suddenly lets go. You will recognize it by how still your fear becomes as it loosens its grip, perhaps never quite leaving you, but calmly turning into joy." [3]

Our yes response will then be "What aspect of God, what aspect of Love, am I being called to incarnate in the world today? [1]

Adapted [1] Richard Rohr [2] Kathleen Norris [3] Jan Richardson [4] J.Finley

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Year B

20th December 2020

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DIARY AND MASS INTENTIONS

for the week beginning Saturday 19th December 2020

Sat 6.00pm	<i>St. Ant</i>	Ann Bolton	
Sun 9.30am 11.00am 5.00pm	<i>St. Ant</i> <i>H. Family</i> <i>St. Ant</i>	Daniel Carberry For our parish Private intention	<i>Fourth Sunday of Advent</i>
Mon 9.15am	<i>St. Ant</i>	Juliet Marianne Aitken	
Tue 9.15am	<i>St. Ant</i>	Michael & family	
Wed 11.30am	<i>St. Ant</i>	<i>Funeral Mass:</i> Michael Gildea	
Thur 9.15am 4.00pm 6.00pm 8.00pm	<i>H Family</i> <i>St. Ant</i> <i>St. Ant</i> <i>H. Family</i>	Private intention For the Draper family For the Moriarty family Vera Deakes	<i>Christmas eve</i> <i>Christmas vigil Masses</i>
Fri 9.30am 11.00am	<i>St. Ant</i> <i>H. Family</i>	For our parish Private intention	<i>CHRISTMAS DAY</i>
Sat 6.00pm	<i>St. Ant</i>	Michael Gildea	<i>Feast: St. Stephen</i>
Sun 9.30am 11.00am 5.00pm	<i>St. Ant</i> <i>H. Family</i> <i>St. Ant</i>	Laura Englishby Private intention For our parish	<i>Feast of THE HOLY FAMILY</i>

BIDDING PRAYER INTENTIONS

We pray today for all who bear witness to the message of Christ by word and example, - parents, grandparents, parish workers, teachers and community leaders. We pray for those who dedicate their lives to caring for the homeless, the poor and the rejected.

During this remaining Advent period, we pray for the time, the space and the grace to reflect on the meaning and purpose of our lives as we await with expectation the joy of the Christmas birth.

For children yet to be born, that their lives may be protected.
For people who dread Christmas, because of bereavement or loneliness, that our support may help them.

We pray for the sick and the housebound of our parish and for those who care for them, particularly: Mildred and Harold Slack, Bill O'Shaughnessy, Malaya, Ray Mannion, Bill York, Lawrence Dunnagan, Trevor Hughes, Claire, Joyce Hilton, Vera.

those who have died recently: Beryl Jacob, Edna Widdowson (Angela's sister), Daniel Carberry, Thomas Bell, Michael Gildea, Frank Baron;

and those whose anniversaries occur around this time: Elizabeth Waterfield, Louis Baron, Lena Cragg, Helena Hodgson, .Helena Hodgson, Henry Hearne, Michael, McCann, Peter Russell, Norah McGrath, Samantha Szmit, May they rest in peace.

Mass At Christmas

At *Holy Family* there will be a Vigil Mass at 8pm and Mass at 11.00am on Christmas morning.

At *St. Anthony's* there will be Vigil Masses at 4.00pm and 6.00pm and then Christmas morning at 9.30am.

Please note:

- When the church has reached its limit we shall have to close the doors.
- The Mass on Christmas Day is usually much less busy than the Christmas Vigil Mass.
- If you are coming as a family 'bubble' please come at the same time to ensure best allocation of places.
- You need to be wearing a mask or face covering of some sort.
- Upon entering the church, please sanitise your hands and scan the QR code if you have the smartphone app.
- Offertory collection basket is as you enter, or ask for a standing order form.

Advent

'O come Emmanuel' - Advent reflection—today

Preparing for Christmas through song, Scripture and prayer – Taize style. Please join us at Holy Family this afternoon at 3.30pm.

1. Advent Jesse Tree

- telling the Biblical story from Creation to the first Christmas in 25 colourful 'decorations' to be hung on our tree in church. Members of the parish are invited to colour these decorations or add a message. Return it to us and it will be displayed on the Jesse Tree.

2. Advent video reflections on Youtube and facebook

Tied in with this, members of the parish have recorded a series of 24 short YouTube Advent readings, again featuring the 'Jesse Tree bauble', followed by a brief time of reflection. The lighting of the Advent wreath candles each Sunday are shown separately.

Church decorating: This weekend we'd be grateful for help after 11.00am Mass is putting up the decorations in church. Thank you.

Food Bank News: Last Thursday Marian Millar, Judi Patten and their team (Beryl Spencer, Rachel Hesketh, Rosy Townsend and Peter Bell) completed and despatched 230 large bags of groceries and Christmas food. As we thank them for their hard work we extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who donated gifts of food and money to make this possible. It has been a great joy for us all in this season of Advent to provide a ray of hope for people we are called to serve. "Glad Tidings" for them.

Masses received this week: Juliet Marianne Aitken, Jim Bashall, Michael Gildea, Michael & family, Sean, Caroline, John & family, Vera Deakes, Margaret Smethurst.

CAFOD World Gifts

World Gifts, CAFOD's range of virtual gifts, make a real difference to families living in poverty across the world. While we have the coronavirus pandemic and lockdown here, we can still be good neighbours to our sisters and brothers overseas by giving World Gifts as Christmas presents to family and friends. The Keep Clean Kit gift for £6 and the Vegetable Garden gift for £10 are just two gifts that will help vulnerable families affected by the pandemic to protect and feed themselves. Let's spread joy and hope around the world this Christmas. Visit cafod.org.uk/worldgifts