

**NEWSLETTER FOR ST BRENDAN, HARWOOD, ST COLUMBA, TONGE MOOR  
& ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, BROMLEY CROSS**

**23<sup>RD</sup> DECEMBER 2012 – FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**



It's only in this last week before Christmas that we begin to hear about the "Christmas story" itself. For the past weeks we have been preparing ourselves to greet the Lord, when he comes. Now we prepare to remember how he first came, by listening to the prophecies of his coming, and by hearing of the events before his birth. We meet the woman, Mary, who herself had been prepared for the coming of the Messiah. She has received the angel's greeting, and his strange news, and has accepted her role in God's plan. Now she hurries to her kinswoman, Elizabeth, who herself bears John the Baptist in her womb. John, just as we heard last week, alerts us to the presence of the Lord, as he leaps for joy in his mother's womb. His joy is that God has kept his promise, and is with his people.

**Liturgy & Activities This Week**

*Sunday Cycle C; Weekday Cycle 1; Divine Office Week 4*

**Sunday Missal** page 119; Readings 124; Preface 35

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| Sunday                                     | 9.15am Mass (SJ) – with Children's Liturgy<br>10.15am Mass (SC) – with Children's Liturgy<br>11.15am Mass (SB) – with Children's Liturgy<br>2pm Baptism (SJ)<br>3pm Reconciliation Service (St Columba's)<br>6pm Carol Service at Tottington Rd Methodist Church<br><i>A Day of Special Prayer for Expectant Mothers</i> |
| Monday<br><i>Christmas Eve</i>             | 9.30am Mass (SJ)    10am Mass & Novena (SC)<br>6.30pm First Mass of Christmas (SJ)<br>7.30pm First Mass of Christmas (SC)<br>8.30pm First Mass of Christmas (SB)   |
| Tuesday<br><i>Christmas Day</i>            | 9.15am Mass (SJ)<br>10.30am Mass (SC)<br>11.15am Mass (SB)   |
| Wednesday<br><i>St Stephen</i>             | No Mass today  |
| Thursday<br><i>St John the Evangelist</i>  | 9.30am Mass (SJ)<br><br><b><i>This is the Patronal Feast for St John's Parish</i></b>  |
| Friday<br><i>Holy Innocents</i>            | No Mass today  |
| Saturday<br><i>St Thomas of Canterbury</i> | 6pm Mass (SC)<br>6.30pm Mass (SJ)  |
| Next Sunday<br><i>The Holy Family</i>      | 9.15am Mass (SJ) – with Children's Liturgy<br>10.15am Mass (SC) – with Children's Liturgy<br>11.15am Mass (SB) – with Children's Liturgy   |

**Father McCauley**

Christmas Day marks the end of an era at St Columba's with the retirement of Father McCauley after 25 years as parish priest here. We wish him a long and happy retirement – and the health to enjoy it.

**THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD**

We celebrate this great Feast on Tuesday, though it begins with our Masses on Monday evening. We have (hopefully) prepared throughout Advent and now our Feast is here.

We welcome the new-born Jesus, the child of Bethlehem, the Son of God and the Son of David. He is the Light of the World and our Saviour. He is the Word made flesh, Emmanuel, God-with-us.

The Church gives us the various feasts of the Christmas Season (Christmas Day itself, The Holy Family, The Epiphany and the Baptism of the Lord) to help us explore in different ways the significance of this historical event and the wonder of the gift that is given.

Let us make full use of the season, to pray about and reflect upon the mystery of the Incarnation, especially in this Year of Faith.



**A HAPPY AND HOLY CHRISTMAS  
TO ALL PARISHIONERS  
THEIR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS  
FROM FATHERS COOKE, GEE  
& MCCAULEY**

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## Prayers Please

**Sick:** Gladys Hall, Kevan Dunleavy, Mary Leigh, Joan Coles, Isabelle Owen, Laura Shuttleworth, Ethel Caton, Tony Winstanley, Bernard Edmundson, Jonathan Rimmer, Eunice Brierley, Elizabeth Patterson, Bernard Callaghan, Kathleen Humphreys, Betty Boyle, Eileen Jones, Cecilia Guest, Joseph Walton, Jean York, Caroline Vickers, George Cowley, Alice Coyne, Robin Tootill, Elzie Ball, Tricia Jennings, Mick Collins, Bernard & Rita Holder, Michael, Baby Rose, Calum Russell, Margaret Edge, Frank Brazel, Eileen Murphy, Brendan O'Grady, Pauline Bowling, Paul Buckley, Margaret Walsh, Joan Plumbley, Emma Turner, Vincent Wood, Margaret Wood, Joan Rankin, Guy Ryan, Maria Stott, Fiona Preston, Kathleen Hopwood, Catherine Crowley, John Barrett, Bea Gilmore, Tara Vinden, Roy Smith, Isabelle Karzynski, Fiona Oldham (nee Clappison), Amanda Calcutt, Leila Parker, Emma Jiminez (baby), Bernard Cummings, Stephen Tootill, Maureen Kennedy, Catherine Cooke, Canon Byrne, Vera Evans, Archbishop Patrick Kelly, Denise Carolan and all who are sick or recovering from serious illness.

**Lately Dead:** Elizabeth Walton, Josephine Whitehead, Gerard Dobson, Joyce Mortimer, Father David McGarry, Peg Burke

**Anniversary:** James and Annie McGrath, Anna Mikolajewski, Sheila Smith

**Mass Intentions:** In honour of St Anthony for a Special Intention, Gerard Dobson, Thanksgiving for a Golden Wedding, Cynthia Winstanley, The Noon family, Josephine Whitehead, Gerard Murphy (Christmas Remembrance), James and Annie McGrath, Joyce Knight, Anna Mikolajewski, The Cambridge and Carter families, Deceased members of the Lamoury and Thomas families, Elizabeth Walton, Bernard Burke, Deceased members of the Royle family, Patricia Anne Allen, A Special Intention to the Holy Family for the Smith family, The SVP (all members and their families past and present), Fr Gerard Haugh, Peg Burke, Esther Spencer, Leila Parker & family, Frances & Thomas Cocker, Terence Cocker, Ron Higson, Louisa & Peter Higson, For all who have supported the Dobson family, Sheila Smith, Irene Connaughton

### Cycle of Prayer Part 1 (of 6):

We pray especially for: openness to the Word of God; migrants and refugees; expectant mothers

**Congratulations:** To Laura Jane Minshall who was baptised at St John's last Sunday. We pray that she and her family may continue to grow in faith.

**Christmas Draw:** Thank you to all who organised and supported this draw which raised £1,054.

**Carol Service:** Bolton FM are recording a carol service at Tottington Road Methodist Church this Sunday (23 December) at 6pm. All are welcome.

**Fairtrade Stall (SB):** There will not be any Fairtrade goods on sale this month. The next date will be the last Sunday in January.

**Gerard Dobson:** Pauline, Susan and Clare extend their grateful thanks to the parishioners for the wonderful support received following the death of Gerard. To Fr Cooke for a very dignified Mass; the Headteacher, Staff and children from St John's Primary School; all who attended Mass; to John Howarth for his sensitive and caring organisation of Gerard's funeral; and especially to Danny and Eileen Ramsden for being there for Pauline throughout Gerard's illness and beyond. Holy Mass will be offered for you all.

**Thank You:** Thanks for all your prayers and get well messages for Bill. I'm pleased to say he is now home from hospital. *Blythe O'Shea & family*

**Harbour Room Book Club:** Many thanks to all our members who helped to make our Christmas gathering such an enjoyable occasion. Thank you to all those who donated raffle prizes and cakes, helped to set up the room, helped to clear up and wash up after. Congratulations to raffle winners! A very Happy Christmas and New Year to you all. See you next year! *Madeleine*

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### HOWARTH'S FUNERAL SERVICE

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### Think Vocation

Mary visited Elizabeth when she knew she was to be the Mother of Our Lord. The spirit of Our Lady is the spirit of visitation. Let us think of the many people who are sick or housebound and unable to come to Mass on Sundays. Through the priest or minister of Holy Communion they are able to welcome Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament into their homes. May the Lord bless all those who are sick or infirm at this present time.

### St Brendan's 100 Club

|     | <i>October winners</i> | <i>November winners</i> | <i>December winners</i> |
|-----|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| £25 | L. Heyes (59)          | T. Taylor (23)          | J. Eaton (19)           |
| £15 | M. Kwiatkowski (137)   | S. Currie (28)          | G. Condon (134)         |
| £10 | V. Hodgkinson (87)     | C. Owen (27)            | A. Jardine (111)        |

**St Columba's:** With the retirement of Father McCauley, the Bishop has decided that this is the right time to implement the plan previously discussed in our parishes and deanery, namely that the parish should now be linked with St Brendan's and St John's and come under my care (assisted by Father Joseph Gee). We will need to work out the practicalities of this in the weeks and months ahead and I just want to assure parishioners of St Columba's that this will all be done in consultation with you (and the other two parishes). I am away for the first two weekends after Christmas, so Salesian priests from Thornleigh will be providing the weekend Masses (and there will be nothing mid-week). I look forward to celebrating Mass with you on the weekend of 12/13 January and to working with you in the future. *Fr Michael Cooke*