

**21ST DECEMBER 2014 - FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT  
28TH DECEMBER 2014 – THE HOLY FAMILY**



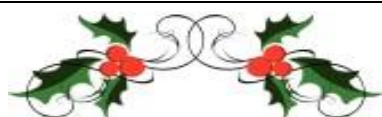
Here we enter a new stage of Advent: having spent so much time on the Second Coming, now we look back, to remember the details of the Lord's First Coming. Today we focus on the character of Mary, and hear of the angel Gabriel being sent to her, to invite her to take her part in the mystery of the Incarnation, the revelation of the mystery kept secret for endless ages. This mystery springs from the House of David, and so we lead into the Gospel by hearing of the establishing of that house. An interesting idea is that the first reading talks of David wishing to build a house for the Lord; through the prophet he is told not of the house that he would build, but the House which is his line: eventually, in Mary (betrothed to Joseph) the House of David does itself become the house of the Lord, the womb wherein he has a dwelling place.

**Liturgy & Activities This Week**

*Sunday Cycle B; Weekdays of Advent/Christmastide; Divine Office Week 4*

**Sunday Missal:** page 122; Preface page 35

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| Sunday<br><i>A Day of Special Prayer for Expectant Mothers</i> | 9.15am Mass (SJ) - with Children's Liturgy and followed by Christmas Draw<br>10.15am Mass (SC) - with Children's Liturgy<br>11.15am Mass (SB) - with Children's Liturgy<br>3pm Reconciliation Service (SC) |
| Monday   | 9.30am Mass (SJ)<br>6.30pm Churches in Harwood Carol Singing – Longsight Lodge & Bramdean estate   |
| Tuesday  | 7pm Mass (SB)  |
| Wednesday<br><i>Christmas Eve</i>                              | 9.30am Mass (SJ)<br>5pm First Mass of Christmas (SC)<br>6.30pm First Mass of Christmas (SJ)<br>8.30pm First Mass of Christmas (SB)   |
| Thursday<br><i>Christmas Day</i>                               | 9.15am Mass (SJ)<br>10.15am Mass (SC)<br>11.15am Mass (SB)   |
| Friday<br><i>St Stephen</i>                                    | 9.30am Mass (SJ)   |
| Saturday<br><i>St John the Evangelist</i>                      | 12noon Mass (SJ) –Patronal Feast<br>5pm Mass (SC)<br>6.30pm Mass (SJ)  |



**Thank you to all who have helped prepare our churches for the Christmas Season**

**THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD**

We celebrate this great Feast on Thursday, though it begins with our Masses on Wednesday 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.



**A Happy and Holy Christmas  
to all parishioners,  
their families and friends  
from  
Fathers Cooke, Gee & Parkinson**

*Parish Priest and Rural Dean: Rev Canon Michael Cooke*

*Assistant Priests: Rev Joseph Gee & Rev Francis Parkinson*

**Parish Office: St John's Presbytery, The Crescent, Bromley Cross, Bolton BL7 9JP**

**Tel: 01204 301927 E-mail: office@sbsj.org.uk Website: www.sbsj.org.uk**

*Salford Roman Catholic Diocesan Trustees Registered Charity – 250037 Diocesan website: www.salforddiocese.net*

## Prayers Please

**Sick:** Gladys Hall, Kevan Dunleavy, Mary Leigh, Joan Coles, Isabelle Owen, Laura Shuttleworth, Tony Winstanley, Eunice Brierley, Cecilia Guest, Bernard Holder, Eileen Murphy, Maureen Kennedy, Joan Pearce, Peter Cranmer, Anthony Axford, Pauline Bowling, Caroline Garside, Sarah Parkinson, Mary Long, Dylan Crosby, Pat Hall, Linda Southern, Mary Joan Tornai, Bernard Neyland, Rosemary Davies and all who are sick or recovering from serious illness.

**Lately Dead:** Robina Lomax, Kathleen Hopwood, Jean Jones, Violet (Betty) Jack, Mark Taylor

**Anniversaries:** Katie Murray, Joan Murray, Hannah Kilroy, Marie Murray, Joe Cassidy, Patrick Murray, Teresa Murray, Joan Stronge, Michael Clarke, Oswald Kenyon, May O'Brien, Patrick O'Brien, John Fitzgerald

**Mass Intentions:** A Private Intention, To St Joseph in Thanksgiving, Katie Murray, Joan Murray, Hannah Kilroy, Marie Murray, Joe Cassidy, Patrick Murray, Teresa Murray, Joan Stronge (Anniversary Christmas Eve), Violet (Betty) Jack, Duffy and O'Toole families, Deceased members & friends of the Lamoury and Thomas families, Agnes & George Beeching, Lucy Hesford, Michael Clarke, Jack Wakes, Gerard Murphy (Christmas Remembrance), Gladys Hall, Jean Jones, Joe & Leila Parker (Christmas Remembrance), Rosemary Davies (for successful treatment), John McCormick (Christmas Remembrance), Vera & Fred Boatfield (Christmas Remembrance), Joyce Knight, Oswald Kenyon, May O'Brien, Patrick O'Brien, John Fitzgerald, Deceased members of the Fitzgerald & O'Brien Families

**Congratulations:** To Maison George Samuels who was baptised at St Columba's last Sunday. We pray that he and his family will continue to grow in faith.

**Gaelic Coffee Morning:** The SVP would like to say thank you to all those who organised and attended the coffee morning at St John's last Sunday. A total of £65 was raised.

**St John's Christmas Draw:** The draw will take place this Sunday (21 December) after the 9.15am Mass.

**Urban Outreach:** Thank you for the tremendous response for the appeal for savoury crackers. We managed to collect 189 and received a donation of £100 which enabled us to achieve our target of 300 packets. These have been passed onto our Churches in Harwood contact ready to take to the hamper packing.

Thank you, also, to the support shown to our Christmas coffee morning at St John's last Friday. A fantastic sum of £265.50 was raised towards the work of Urban Outreach.

**Almanacs:** The new Diocesan year book is on sale at £3

### St Brendan's, St Columba's & St John's Go Christmas Crackers!

At St Brendan's Church, Harwood on Sunday 28 December (4pm). Folk music & festivities for all our parishes. Free entrance, mince pies & mulled wine.

**Come & join the fun!**

**Harbour Room Book Club:** Thank you to all members of the Book Club who made our last meeting so enjoyable. Congratulations to our raffle winners and thanks to all those who offered raffle prizes, helped to organize the refreshments and contributed in so many positive ways. A special acknowledgement to Cath and Mavis! A very Happy Christmas to all our members. See you in January for our next meeting on the 28th. All the best, *Madeleine*

**Carol Singing:** Churches in Harwood will be Carol Singing on Monday (22 December) at Longsight Lodge at 6.30pm and then going around the Bramdean Estate. All are welcome to join in.

## 28TH DECEMBER 2014 - THE HOLY FAMILY

*Sunday Cycle B; Weekdays of Christmastide; Divine Office Week 1* **Sunday Missal:** page 143; Preface page 36-37

As an example for us to follow, the Holy Family can seem a little too perfect: when we consider the more dramatic events of the Christmas and Easter story, it can seem so far removed from us. And yet, as today's Gospel reminds us (especially in the shorter version), there were also the so-called 'hidden years' - the many years of family life in Nazareth, spent in ordinary things. During that time, we hear how Jesus grew and matured, and in the glimpse of that family life we see our example. The family is a basic unit of our Christian society, despite coming under threat nowadays. Our celebration of this feast, and the Word of God we proclaim, announces that there is a lasting value in the ideals of family life, and the relationship between husband, wife, parents and children. Whatever the changing details of each age, honour, understanding and love always remain the recipe for the perfect, and holy, human family. It is love that we put on over all the other clothes of changing cultures and places, to guarantee the life of the family in imitation of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

### Marriage Matters ([www.twoinoneflesh.org.uk](http://www.twoinoneflesh.org.uk))

When Mary and Joseph had done everything that the Law required, they went back home. Little is said about them as a couple. Did Mary 'give way to her husband, as you should in the Lord'? Did Joseph 'love his wife and treat her with gentleness'? Did they choose daily to love each other over and above everything else? Do we?

### Masses & Feasts This Week

**Sunday:** 9.15am (SJ); 10.15am (SC); 11.15am (SB);  
2pm Baptism (SB); 4pm Folk Afternoon (SB)

**Monday:** 9.30am Mass (SJ) – *St Thomas Becket*

**Tuesday:** 7pm Mass (SB)

**Wednesday:** 9.30am Mass (SJ)

**Thursday:** 12noon Mass (SB) – *Mary, Holy Mother of God*

**Friday:** 9.30am Mass (SJ) – *St Basil the Great & St Gregory Nazianzen*

**Saturday:** 11am-12noon Adoration & Reconciliation (SJ)  
5pm Mass(SC); 6.30pm Mass (SJ)

**Next Sunday-** 9.15am (SJ); 10.15am (SC);  
11.15am (SB); 2pm Baptism (SB)- *The Epiphany*

This Newsletter is sponsored by

**HOWARTH'S FUNERAL SERVICE**

Peel House  
638 Blackburn Road, Astley Bridge, Bolton.  
BL1 7AL  
01204 309609

