



# Parish of The Sacred Heart and St Joseph



with the churches of  
The Sacred Heart, Hemsworth and Saint Joseph, Moorthorpe

Diocese of Leeds: Registered Charity No 249404

## Year C, Advent, Sunday 4, 18/19 December, 2021

*Getting in touch* Father Anthony G Fenton  
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			<b>Mass Intentions</b>
<b>Saturday</b> 18 December	Sacred Heart	5.00pm Mass	<i>Bridie McNally</i>
<b>Sunday</b> 19 December	St Joseph's Sacred Heart	9.00am Mass 10.45am Mass	<i>Parish Family</i> <i>Terry O'Brien</i>
Monday 20 December	St Joseph's St Joseph's	9.10am Morning Prayer 9.30am Mass	<i>Michael Murtagh</i>
Tuesday 21 December	St Joseph's	<i>9.30am Funeral Mass</i>	Patricia Maw
Wednesday 22 December	Sacred Heart Sacred Heart	9.30am Mass <i>11.00am Funeral Service</i>	<i>Doris Pyta</i> Carol Ann Weeks
Thursday 23 December	St Joseph's St Joseph's	9.10am Morning Prayer 9.30am Mass	<i>Parish Family</i>
<b>Christmas Eve</b> 24 December	Sacred Heart St Joseph's	<b>4.30pm Mass of Eve</b> <b>6.30pm Mass of Eve</b>	<i>Frank Cronin</i> <i>Donor's Intention (AG)</i>
<b>Christmas Day</b> 25 December	Sacred Heart	<b>10.00am Mass of Day</b>	<i>Jovito Gabriola</i>
<b>Sunday</b> 26 December	St Joseph's Sacred Heart Sacred Heart	9.00am Mass 10.45am Mass <i>1.00pm Baptisms</i>	<i>Steve McNally</i> <i>Derek, Stephn, Mark, Christoph Jones</i> <i>Alexzander Matysiak, Jakub Szwaja</i>

Government regulations require face-coverings to be worn in most in-door public places, including at all our Church Masses/Services, but not always in our Parish Hall/Rooms (eg if refreshments are being consumed).  
(The usual exemptions for age and some medical conditions apply.)  
To assist Track & Trace, all are invited to use the QR code in our Church Entrances, or book with us on-line.

This Sunday, at our 9.00am Mass, prior to his up-coming Baptism, we present and pray for Jakub Szwaja, son of, Piotr and Angelika  
And on the event of his Baptism, during our 10.45am Mass, we congratulate and pray for Noel Anthony Redfearn, with his parents, Vicki and Carl

Our Christmas Eve Masses will include special thought for our Children attending  
Do stay a little after our Eve Masses, to share greetings over a glass of juice/sherry

**Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament (in silence) -&- Also Sacrament of Reconciliation available**  
1st & 3rd Wednesday of each month, 5-6.00pm, at our Sacred Heart Church  
**Sacrament of Reconciliation only**  
1st & 3rd Thursday of each month, 10.00am, at our St Joseph's Church  
or by appointment with Fr Anthony

Follow us at "Parish of The Sacred Heart Hemsworth and St Joseph's Moorthorpe"

## From Fr Anthony

The words below (abbreviated) are taken from a Commentary on the Gospel of St Luke, written by St Ambrose.

The angel Gabriel announced the news of something that was as yet hidden. So, to assist the Virgin Mary's faith by a real example, he told her that an old and sterile woman had conceived, showing that everything was possible to God.

When Mary heard this, she did not disbelieve, she was not uncertain of the message. Where could she hurry to except to the hills, filled with God as she was? The grace of the Holy Spirit does not admit of delays. And Mary's arrival and the presence of her Son quickly showed their effects: *As soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting her child leapt in her womb and she was filled with the Holy Spirit.*

See the careful choice of words. Elizabeth was the first to hear the voice but her son John was the first to feel the effects of grace. She sensed the coming of Mary, he the coming of the Lord - the woman knew the woman, the child knew the child. Then both women prophesy, inspired by their unborn children.

The infant leapt and Elizabeth was filled with the Spirit. The mother was not filled before her son: her son was filled with the Holy Spirit and in turn filled his mother. John leapt and so did Mary's spirit. John leapt and filled Elizabeth with the Spirit; but we know that Mary was not only now filled, but her spirit rejoiced. Elizabeth had been filled with the Spirit after she conceived, but Mary before, at the moment the angel had come to her. "Blessed are you," said Elizabeth, "who believed".

You too, my people, are blessed, you who have heard and who believe. Every soul that believes - that soul conceives and gives birth to the Word of God and recognises his works.

Let the soul of Mary be in each one of you, to proclaim the greatness of the Lord. Let the spirit of Mary be in each one of you, to rejoice in God. According to the flesh only one woman can be the mother of Christ, but in the world of faith Christ is the fruit of all of us. For every soul can receive the Word of God, if only it is pure and preserves itself in chastity and modesty.

The soul that has been able to reach this state proclaims the greatness of the Lord, just as Mary did, and rejoices in God its saviour just like her.

The Lord's greatness is proclaimed, as you have read elsewhere, where it says *Join me in magnifying the Lord*. This does not mean that anything can be added to the Lord's greatness by human words, but that he is magnified in us. Christ is the image of God, and so any good or religious act that a soul performs magnifies that image of God in that soul, the God in whose likeness the soul itself was made. And thus the soul itself has some share in his greatness and is ennobled.

Baptism Thanksgiving & Blessing of Children  
at our 9.00am and 10.45am Masses  
Sunday 9 January



All with children, whether their children were baptised in our or another Parish, are especially invited to join with us.

## Things happening in our Parish

**Mass Times Cards** These, printed on **small (A6) card**, give times of our Christmas Masses. Do please take one **or more** - to pass on, to invite some who have not much been coming to Mass, or any who might be thinking of becoming a Catholic, or who might just like to come.

**Parish Christmas Cards** printed on **larger (A5) card**, are for all of our Parish Family, to put one among their Christmas cards at home. Within, many are named as wishing to exchange Christmas greetings with all of our Parish Family. Please do take one today and, if you visit a housebound Parishioner, please take one for them with our Parish Newsletter.

**Infection Worries** Any who are particularly vulnerable to infections, and therefore avoiding gatherings in numbers, do consider whether you might comfortably join with us at a weekday Mass, when we usually have no more than a dozen and almost invariably less than twenty, at Mass. Our Christmas week Masses (27-31 Dec) will be at the usual weekday times: Monday and Thursday, 9.30am, at St Joseph's - at The Sacred Heart, Wednesday 9.30am and Friday 8.30am.

**Autumn Draw** If you have any of the following numbers and have not yet claimed your prize, please make your claim (with the winning ticket) at one of our Masses asap: White - 341, 371, 646; Pink - 666; Blue - 11, 936

**Please note** that our First Reconciliation Programme is to begin mid-January. As it is a tightly timed Programme, once it begins we are not able to take new starters. If any parents have not returned an application form, but wish their child to join the Programme, they need to obtain an application form from Fr Anthony and return it to him, completed, by 2 January at latest. *Do note that the First Communion Programme, later in the year, will be only for Children who already have prepared for and celebrated their First Confession.*



**By Diocesan Tradition** Offerings at Mass, on Christmas Eve and Day, are your gift to the priest of our Parish

## Note - last Advent Project collections this weekend.

**Advent Project** This year we are raising money towards our Leeds Diocese Peru Fund, which has long assisted Parishes and Catholic projects, in Lima especially.

**Please add to the retiring collection being taken at our weekend Masses, throughout Advent.**

Total for Project to 5 Dec £581.63



Notices for our Parish Newsletter need to be received by Wednesday 12.00noon, at the latest.

## Sacraments

**Baptism** Our Preparation Programme, for Parents of Children to be baptised, will next take place 7.00-8.30pm, in our Sacred Heart Hall, **Weds 9 & 16 Mar**. To join a Programme, Parents need to talk with Fr Anthony, after one of our weekend Parish Masses, to arrange an initial meeting with him.

The Programme is for any expecting, as well as Parents with baby born.

**Confirmations** Our Children who are preparing for Confirmation are to next meet, along with their Parents, in our Sacred Heart Hall,

**Sat 8 Jan, 9.30-11.30am**

**First Reconciliation** Our Children who are to prepare for First Reconciliation will first meet, along with their Parents, in our Sacred Heart Hall,

**Sat 15 Jan, 10.00am-12.00nn**

Please note that once the Programme begins, it will not be possible for late comers to join this next Programme for Reconciliation, nor the First Eucharist Preparation Programme to follow later during 2022.

**Marriage** Usual minimum notice, six months. Contact Fr Anthony.

## But seriously

### DO YOU KNOW?

One of the most popular English Carols is *In the Bleak Midwinter*. It is from the words of the English poet, Christina Rossetti, who wrote it as a poem sometime before 1872. It was recognised as a Carol when it was published in *The English Hymnal* of 1906, to the tune of Gustav Holst.

*One of the internationally best known and loved of Christmas Carols is Silent Night, Holy Night, that in 2011 was declared an 'Intangible cultural heritage' by UNESCO. But how many of us know the names of the priest who composed the lyrics, and his friend who composed the melody?*

### AND SERIOUSLY!

It was Christmas and the judge was in a merry mood as he asked the prisoner,

'What are you charged with?'

'Doing my Christmas shopping early,' he replied.

'That's no offence,' said the judge, 'How early were you doing it?' 'Before the store opened,' he answered.



## Parish Monies

**Offertory Monies** **Many Thanks**  
5 December

Loose	£186.92
Envelopes	£279.38
Advent Project	£113.57

## Donations to our Parish

Can also be made by texting -  
**CHURCH SHSJ to 70500**  
to contribute £5 - weekly  
- fortnightly - other;  
- or by using the **Donate Button**  
on our Parish Website Home Page.

## GOD OF SURPRISES

### Recognising the Treasure when you find It

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? (Psalm 22:1)

There is nothing wrong, for example, in experiencing our own weakness, although this may feel very unpleasant, or in feeling that we are separated from God, out of touch with ourselves and with other people, unloving and unloved. Rightness and wrongness are applicable, not to these inner states, but only to our reactions to them. It is in the judgements and decisions which follow from these moods that we can act either creatively, by acting against the mood, or destructively, by going along with it. Feelings of separation from God and from others will tend to make us focus our attention on ourselves to the exclusion of God and others, producing gloomy thoughts of hopelessness and despair. In consolation, when we experience an increase of faith, hope and love, our attention will be more focused on God's goodness, which will show up our sinfulness even more clearly, but in such a way that we shall know we are accepted by God, warts and all, giving hope and confidence.

The fourth guideline is not saying that we should never make a decision in desolation, but is saying that we should not go back on decisions made in time of consolation. Desolation is a time for decisions which move us in the opposite direction from the movement of the desolation, therefore the importance of more prayer, more going out to others, etc. I have known many people who have made the most important decisions of their lives following on periods of desolation because they acted against the desolation and spent time in examining its causes. Their decisions did not spring from the desolation itself, but from their opposing its movement by staying with the decisions they had made in consolation, opposing the movement of the desolation and examining its causes.

In examining the causes of desolation one of the first questions we should ask is whether the mood is not caused by tiredness, physical or mental. God is a God of tenderness and compassion. If, instead of abandoning prayer when afflicted by desolation, we show our mood to God, he will teach us, so that we begin to know a time for resting and a time for working, a time for praying and a time for playing. If the desolation is not caused by tiredness, then resting or recreation will not change it and we must look for other causes.....

To be continued.....

Abridged from: *The God of Surprises* – Gerard W. Hughes

*God grant me the serenity  
to accept the  
things I cannot change,  
courage to change the  
things I can,  
and wisdom to know the  
difference.*



**Please Keep  
In Prayer**

All whose **Anniversaries** occur about this time  
All who have **died recently**  
especially Eileen Snell, Carol Ann Weeks, Patricia Maw,  
Adrian Tyrrell, and their families.



*Also:* All those **sick** or **infirm**, especially:

Margaret Hinchliffe, Isabelle Blake, Elizabeth Olbison, Catherine Brown, Karen Dearing, Betty O'Donnell  
Liz Allen, Elizabeth Taylor, Monica Lowe, John O'Brien, Nicola Glew, Jerry O'Mahony, Raymond Ward  
Tim Byrne, John Lovely, Amanda Armer, Pennamma Abraham, and all our household

The Word: Year C, Advent, Sunday 4: Commentary on the Readings

**Gospel: Luke 1:39-45**

Luke's account of the birth and infancy of Jesus is built on the comparison and contrast between the two stories of John the Baptist and Jesus: the annunciation to the parents, the birth of each child, the joy on earth and in heaven, the circumcision, the growth of the child. In each incident John is shown to be great, but Jesus greater still. Only in the incident narrated in today's gospel do the two families meet, the two stories cross. We see the two mothers together, marvelling at the destiny of their children. The journey from Nazareth to even the nearest of the towns in the hill country of Judah (traditionally Elizabeth's home is located at Ain Karim, now on the outskirts of Jerusalem) would have been arduous, a week's walk for a fit young woman. This special exertion and generosity shows Mary's love and care for her elderly relative, as well as the natural excitement of the two in sharing their motherhood. Luke has already told us that Mary was filled with the Holy Spirit. Now Elizabeth too is filled with the Holy Spirit as they participate in and exchange the praise of God for the gift of their children.

**First Reading: Micah 5:1-4**

On this final Sunday of Advent all the focus is on Mary as she prepares to give birth to her Son. The prophecy of Micah reminds us that God's standards are utterly different from human standards. Bethlehem was an insignificant little hilltop town, the home of the smallest clan of Judah, in an insignificant and oppressed country. Yet it had two moments of greatness, one when David was anointed king there, the other when Jesus was born. David was the youngest of his father's sons, left to look after the sheep when all the others were summoned to meet the great prophet Samuel. He stands in the long tradition in the Bible that God chooses the younger or less distinguished: Abel instead of Cain, Jacob instead of Esau, Joseph from among Jacob's sons rather than his elder brothers and Mary had no roof

over her head for the birth of her child. We cannot dare to estimate any person's value in God's eyes, but amid all our striving, all the pushing and shoving for priority, we do have a lurking suspicion that those nearest to God, most marked by the image of God, are the humblest and least distinguished of people. Mary was among them.

**Second Reading: Hebrews 10:5-10**

As we prepare for Christmas we are reminded that Jesus came to trump the disobedience of Adam by his own perfect obedience. It was not someone suffering which is the key to the redemption of the world, as though suffering had some value in itself, or paid some penalty. The medieval theology which suggested this tied itself in knots about the recipient of this payment: God or the devil? Neither recipient works out! In Romans Paul is quite clear that the redemptive factor was Jesus' obedience even to the point of suffering on the Cross: 'Just as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience are many to be made upright.' Adam is the image of human disobedience, the disobedience of us all. Today's reading from Hebrews tells us that Jesus was given a body to express his obedience. By his bodily obedience, the guarantee and expression of his full humanity, he brought all bodily men and women back to God. By our bodies we express our obedience, in sickness and in health. Jesus too, in his baby's body, his child's body, his youthful body, his fully mature body, expressed his obedience to his Father. In so doing he prepared for the ultimate expression of loving obedience on the Cross.

*Courtesy of 'The Wednesday Word Trust'*

**The Word: Year C, Feast of The Holy Family**

1st Reading: 1 Samuel 1:20-22,24-28

2nd Reading: 1 John 3:1-2,21-14

Gospel: Luke 2:41-52

**Prayer of the Church**

**Psalter: Week 4**

- Sun** Of Advent Sunday
- Mon** Of Advent 20 Dec
- Tue** Of Advent 21 Dec
- Wed** Of Advent 22 Dec
- Thu** Of Advent 23 Dec
- Fri** Of Advent 24 Dec
- Sat** Of Christmas Day



**This Week's Feasts & Saints**

- Mon** Advent 20 Dec
- Tue** Advent 21 Dec
- Wed** Advent 22 Dec
- Thu** Advent 23 Dec
- Fri** Christmas Eve
- Sat** Christmas Day

