

## Treasures that the Church's celebrates in the Mystery of Christmas

Next to the yearly celebrations of the Paschal Mystery, the Church considers nothing more important than the memorial of Christ's birth and early manifestations. This is the purpose of the season of Christmas.

During Christmastide, the Church celebrates the mystery of the Lord's manifestation: his humble birth in Bethlehem which was made known to the shepherds, the first of Israel to welcome the Saviour; the Epiphany to the three wise men who had "come from the East" (Mt 2,1), the first of the Gentiles who recognised and adored Christ the Messiah in the child of Bethlehem; the theophany at the river Jordan in which the Father declares that Jesus is His "well-beloved Son" (Mt 3, 17) at the outset of his messianic mission; the miracle of Cana in which Jesus "manifested his glory and his disciples believed in him" (John 2,11).

Much of the richness and complexity of the mystery of the Lord's manifestation is reflected in displays of popular piety, which is especially sensitive to the childhood of Christ which reveals his love for us. Popular piety intuitively grasps:

- the importance of the 'spirituality of gift', which is proper to Christmas: 'a child is born for us, a son is given to us' (cf. Is 9, 5), a gift expressing the infinite love of God, who 'so loved the world that he gave his only Son' (John 3, 16);
- the message of solidarity conveyed by the event of Christmas: solidarity with sinful man, for whom, in Christ, God became man 'for us men and for our salvation'; solidarity with the poor, because the Son of God 'who' was rich but became poor for your sake, to make you rich out of your poverty' (2 Cor 8, 9);
- the sacredness of human life and the wonderful event that is every birth, since the Word of life came amongst men and was made visible through his birth of the Virgin Mary (cf. 1 John 1, 2);
- the messianic joy and peace to which man has aspired in every age: the Angels announce the birth of the Saviour of the world to the shepherds, the 'Prince of Peace (Is 9.5) and proclaim 'peace on earth to men of good will' (Lk 2, 14);
- the spirit of simplicity and poverty, humility and trust in God, suggested by the events surrounding the birth of Christ.

## Open Door Wednesdays

It is hoped that we will continue this parish project in the New Year opening on Weds 11th Jan..

We have a good number of volunteers to help with the catering side of things, but could do with another 6 or so to help with the staffing. That way we can call on volunteers to do a slot just twice a month. Our time slots are from 10.30 to 12noon; 12noon to 2pm and 2pm -4.30pm.

If you - or friends and neighbours - are able to help please email Fr Allen confirming the times and Wednesdays that you would be available between 11th January and 29th March. Email is stnicholas.boldmere@rcaob.org.uk

*Please offer as many time slots as you can. You won't be put down for more than once a week - or less often, if that suits - but it really helps when preparing the rota.*

## St Nicholas Fair

Thank you to all who assisted with, contributed to, or just came along to enjoy the Advent Fair.

Football and cold weather all rather worked against us numbers wise, but even so the income from the Fair was a respectable £887.62 - and additional donations of £95 were received for the *Open Door Fund* - a grand total of £982.62

Full details of what was taken by each stall - and raffle winners - are posted in the porch.

The money raised will all go to support the *Open Door Wednesday* project.

## Volunteer your skills at Lourdes 2023

to help look after our *Accueil* (assisted) pilgrims on the Diocesan Pilgrimage (27 May to 2 June).

Details of the pilgrimage and applications to join the Lourdes Nursing and Medical Team or the Handmaids and Brancardiers for the 2023 Diocesan Pilgrimage can be made at [bit.ly/3iQlykC](http://bit.ly/3iQlykC)

## Gift Aid helps your parish

If you are a tax-payer, the parish is able to claim back from the Government 25p for every £1 you donate to the parish. And it will not cost you any extra.

If you are able to help the parish in this way, then

1. please complete a Gift Aid declaration form, (available in the porch) and
2. make your future donations either by Standing Order, or using the parish Gift Aid envelopes we can provide you with, on request.



## St Nicholas Catholic Church, Boldmere

**Address:** 243 Jockey Rd., Boldmere, Sutton Coldfield, B73 5US

**Website:** [www.stnicholasboldmere.co.uk](http://www.stnicholasboldmere.co.uk)

**E-mail:** [stnicholas.boldmere@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:stnicholas.boldmere@rcaob.org.uk) **Telephone:** 0121 354 1763

**Parish Blog:** [www.stnicholasboldmere.wordpress.com](http://www.stnicholasboldmere.wordpress.com)

**Parish Priest:** Fr Allen Morris **Deacon:** Rev John Garvey

**Parish Safeguarding:** Mary Rose (0121 354 4730)

*Our Parish is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham: Registered Charity No. 234216*

**E**ternal God, in the psalms of David, in the words of the prophets, in the dream of Joseph your promise is spoken. At last in the womb of the Virgin Mary, your Word takes flesh.

Teach us to welcome Jesus, the promised Emmanuel, and to preach the good news of his coming, that every age may know him as the source of redemption and grace.



## Church services: Advent & Christmas

**Advent Penitential Service:**  
Tues 20th  
December, 7pm

**Christmas Eve**  
• **Masses at 3 & 6pm** are prepared for families with children in KS1 and KS2 (who are invited to come in Nativity costume - *simple designs are available on our parish blog*)  
• **9pm Mass** in the Night

**Christmas Day:** Mass at 9am and 11am

**Mon 26th Dec: St Stephen** - 10am

**Tues 27th Dec: St John** - 10am

**Weds 28th December:**  
**Holy Innocents** - 10am

**Fri 30th December:**  
**Holy Family** - 10am

**Sat 31st December:**  
**Holy Mary, Mother of God** - 6pm

**Sun 1st January:**  
**Holy Mary, Mother of God** - 9 & 11am



## DECEMBER 2022: PARISH MASSES THIS WEEK

Day	Time	Notes
Sa 17	6pm	Thomas Quinlisk RIP
Su 18	9am	4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT For the parish
	11am	
M 19	10am	Decsd family of Hughie & Elizaabeth McGrath
T 20	10am	Decsd family /friends of Evelyn
	7pm	<b>Advent Penitential Service</b>
W 21	10am	Decsd family of Margaret O'Gorman RIP
Th 22	10am	
F 23	7pm	Decsd of Powell, Foster and Hodgetts families
Sa 24	3pm	MASSES OF CHRISTMAS DAY Thomas O'Gorman RD (Bird)
	6pm	
Su 25	9am	Maria and Paul Nguyen RIP (Nguyen)
	11am	Fran O'Meara RIP (Devane)

**Penance/Reconciliation:** Friday 7.30pm, Saturday 5pm

**Anointing of the Sick:** Usually on last Friday of month at 11am

**Please pray for parishioners who are sick** including Stephen Burke; Brenda Davies; Lesley Devlin; Lyn Hunt; Joan James; Jean Lawlor; Joanne McShane & Teresa Monteiro. Please pray for Michael Hodgetts who has died recently & Tom Hempenstall, Bernie Morton, Tess Lawrence, Teresa Keane, Patricia Bligh, Christine O'Reilly, Peter Becque & all whose anniversaries occur at this time. **Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, may they rest in peace.**

## RESOURCES FOR PRAYER FOR THE SEASON OF CHRISTMAS.

1. Parish prayer on Zoom (links on parish website homepage)  
**Morning Prayer:** Zoom meeting Monday to Saturday at 8.30am;  
**Lectio** Sunday at 4pm; **Rosary** Mon at 7pm.
2. Readings of the day and much more at [Universalis.com](http://Universalis.com)
3. Sunday's Scripture readings: food for prayer during the week.
4. During this year we are in Year A of the Sunday Lectionary, and most of Sunday readings are read from the Gospel of Matthew. Why not (re-) read Matthew's Gospel with its rich account of the birth of Jesus.
5. Taylor Mayfield's *Unto us a child is born* looks at Isaiah, the Nativity and our Jewish neighbours.

*Please take this newsletter home with you. Returning to the Sunday Scriptures in prayer during the week is a great way to deepen the nourishment we receive from Mass.*

## The Introductory Rites

Word of wisdom, *Alleluia*,  
Come renew us. *Maranatha!*

Word we long for, *Alleluia*,  
Word we thirst for. *Maranatha!*

Key of David, *Alleluia*,  
Son of Mary, *Maranatha!*

Promised Saviour, *Alleluia*,  
True Messiah, *Maranatha!*

Cry of prophets, *Alleluia*,  
Hope of ages, *Maranatha!*

Light of nations, *Alleluia*,  
Light in darkness, *Maranatha!*

Risen Saviour, *Alleluia*,  
Lord of glory, *Maranatha!*

You we long for, *Alleluia*,  
You we thirst for, *Maranatha!*

Here among us, *Alleluia*,  
Living in us, *Maranatha!*

## Penitential Act



## The Liturgy of the Word

### Isaiah 7:10-14

The Lord spoke to Ahaz and said, 'Ask the Lord your God for a sign for yourself coming either from the depths of Sheol or from the heights above.' 'No,' Ahaz answered 'I will not put the Lord to the test.'

Then Isaiah said: 'Listen now, House of David: are you not satisfied with trying the patience of men without trying the patience of my God, too? The Lord himself, therefore, will give you a sign. It is this: the maiden is with child and will soon give birth to a son whom she will call Immanuel, a name which means "God-is-with-us."'

### Psalm 23(24):1-6



The Lord's is the earth and its fullness,  
the world and all its peoples.

It is he who set it on the seas;  
on the waters he made it firm.

Who shall climb the mountain of the Lord?

Who shall stand in his holy place?  
The man with clean hands and pure heart,  
who desires not worthless things.

He shall receive blessings from the Lord  
and reward from the God who saves him.

Such are the men who seek him,  
seek the face of the God of Jacob.

## Romans 1:1-7

From Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus who has been called to be an apostle, and specially chosen to preach the Good News that God promised long ago through his prophets in the scriptures.

This news is about the Son of God who, according to the human nature he took was a descendant of David: it is about Jesus Christ our Lord who, in the order of the spirit, the spirit of holiness that was in him, was proclaimed Son of God in all his power through his resurrection from the dead. Through him we received grace and our apostolic mission to preach the obedience of faith to all pagan nations in honour of his name. You are one of these nations, and by his call belong to Jesus Christ. To you all, then, who are God's beloved in Rome, called to be saints, may God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send grace and peace.

## Gospel Acclamation

*Alleluia, alleluia!* The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel, a name which means 'God-is-with-us'. *Alleluia!*

## Matthew 1:18-24

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph; being a man of honour and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to divorce her informally. He had made up his mind to do this when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.' Now all this took place to fulfil the words spoken by the Lord through the prophet: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel, a name which means 'God-is-with-us.' When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do: he took his wife to his home.

## Homily

### The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;

he descended into hell;  
on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand  
of God the Father almighty;  
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

## Prayer of the Faithful

Priest: We pray to the Lord.

All: Through our lives and by our prayers,  
your kingdom come.

## The Liturgy of the Eucharist

### The Offertory

*NB A collection is taken for the Bethany Food Bank today.  
The next collection will be on January 8th*

The Angel Gabriel from heaven came,  
his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;  
'All hail,' said he, 'thou lowly maiden Mary,  
most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!

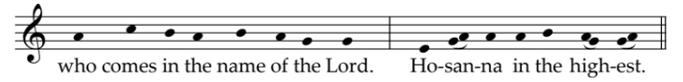
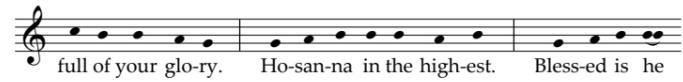
'For lo a blessed Mother thou shalt be,  
all generations laud and honour thee,  
thy son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold;  
most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head,  
'To me be as it pleaseth God,' she said,  
'My soul shall laud and magnify his holy name':  
most highly favoured lady. Gloria!

Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ was born  
in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas mom,  
and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say  
'Most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!

## The Eucharistic Prayer

### Sanctus



### Mystery of faith



## The Communion Rite

### The Lord's Prayer

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## Communion thanksgiving

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here,  
until the Son of God appear.  
*Rejoice, rejoice,  
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer  
our spirits by thine advent here;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
and death's dark shadows put to flight.

O come, thou Key of David, come  
and open wide our heavenly home;  
make safe the way that leads on high  
and close the path to misery.

## Prayer after Communion

## Concluding Rites

**Resources to help support your prayer and your family's prayer during Advent and Christmas** are on the homepage of the parish website

- Blessing your family **Crib**;
- **A table grace** for Christmas Day

## Receiving the love and mercy of God

Advent Penitential services are being celebrated in our local parishes hub at Holy Cross and St Francis on Monday 19th Dec and here at St Nicholas, on Tuesday 20th Dec – both at 7pm.

*Parents whose children are currently preparing for Confirmation are strongly encouraged to bring their children to one of these services as part of their preparation for that Sacrament.*

### A passage of scripture to help prepare for Confession

One of the scribes asked Jesus, "Which commandment is the most important of all?"

Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." And the scribe said to him, "You are right, Teacher. You have truly said that he is one, and there is no other besides him. And to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbour as oneself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."

And when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not