

News from the Parishes of Holy Family, Pensby and Our Lady & St. John, Heswall

As Advent draws to a close, Mary, the third figure of expectation occupies centre stage. Today's Gospel also provides a transition and an introduction to the Christmas cycle which extends to Epiphany. Apart from Epiphany and one Christmas Mass, the readings are taken from Luke's carefully composed infancy narratives, which also foreshadow the major themes of his Gospel and Acts. Jesus, Saviour and Messiah; his prophetic mission; the outpouring of God's spirit, joy over God's actions; the presence and importance of women in God's saving action; God's concern for the poor and marginalised and the forgiveness of sin. Luke arranges these readings around two diptychs of John and Jesus, each comprising a narrative of annunciation and conception, and of birth, naming and the promise of future generations.

Luke's annunciation narrative follows a pattern: appearance of an angel, fear, message, objection and confirmatory sign of God's presence. This reflects Old Testament birth announcements and prophetic calls. Two themes shape this narrative: the focus on Jesus as Son of the Most High and heir to the throne of David (first reading) and the role of Mary which has so captured Christian art and imagination through the ages. Though told as a parallel to the announcement of John's birth, the birth of Jesus is accentuated by Luke. Mary is greeted as "so highly favoured", that is the recipient of God's special love; she is a virgin and the Holy Spirit will overshadow her. She alone will give Jesus a name and destiny and her consent opens the way for the coming of the child called the Holy One and Son of God.

Mary is a model of expectation for members of the Church today. Mary describes herself as a "handmaid", a "servant"), but is a significant figure in salvation history as are many others described as "servants" of the Lord: Moses, David, Isaiah, Paul.

At the annunciation, Mary is one who like Moses, stands in awe of God's presence; like the prophets, she accepts a commission from God and lives out of faith in God's word ("let what you have said be done to me"). The Church, throughout the ages and today, is sustained by men and women who experience the overshadowing power of God's spirit, live in prophetic service of God's word, and bring forth God's presence in the world.

During this season it is good to read meditatively Luke 1 and 2, placing yourself in the scene, identifying with different characters and asking how their stories touch your life today.



On behalf of Deacon Jeff and myself, may I wish you all a very happy and holy Christmas and a peaceful New Year 2018. Thank you for all your cards and gifts and for all you do throughout the year.

Father Stephen



Week 1

24th December - 31st December

OUR LADY & ST JOHN, HESWALL

Sat 23 rd December	Ferial	6:00 pm	Mass – Tim Dwyer
Sun 24 th December	4 th Sunday of Advent	11:15 am	Mass – John O’Hanlon
	Christmas Eve – Vigil Mass	6:00 pm	Mass – Kay Gibbins R.I.P.
	Christmas Eve – Midnight Mass	11:30 pm	Mass – For Peace on Earth
Mon 25 th December	Christmas Day	11:15 am	Mass – People of the Parish
Tues 26 th December	St. Stephen	10:00 am	Mass – In Thanksgiving
Wed 27 th December	St. John	10:00 am	Mass – Private Intention
		10:30 am to 8:30 pm	Adoration - Come and spend some quiet time with Our Lord
Thurs 28 th December	The Holy Innocents	10:00 am	Mass – Vin & Mary Williams Margaret & Joseph Hall
Fri 29 th December	St Thomas Beckett		No Mass (Mass at Holy Family at 10am)
Sat 30 th December	Sixth Day of the Christmas Octave	6:00 pm	Mass – Josephine Burbridge R.I.P.
Sun 31 st December	Feast of The Holy Family	11:15 am	Mass – Intentions of Kathleen Dohm Aged 105

HOLY FAMILY, PENSBY

Sun 24 th December	Christmas Eve	9:30 am	Mass - Tom Coyle R.I.P.
			No Evening Mass Today (Vigil Masses at OLSJ)
Mon 25 th December	The Nativity of Our Lord Christmas Day	9:30 am	Mass – For the Parish
Tues 26 th December	St. Stephen		No Mass (Mass at OLSJ at 10am)
Wed 27 th December	St. John		No Mass (Mass at OLSJ at 10am)
Thurs 28 th December	The Holy Innocents	10:00 am	Service of Word and Sacrament
Fri 29 th December	St Thomas Beckett	10:00 am	Mass - Holy Souls (November List)
Sat 30 th December	Sixth Day of the Christmas Octave	12 noon	Mass - Peter Lumley R.I.P (Anniversary)
Sun 31 st December	Feast of The Holy Family	9:30 am	Mass - Patricia McLeod R.I.P (Anniversary)



Week 2

31st December 2017 – 7th January 2018

OUR LADY & ST JOHN, HESWALL

Sun 31 st December	Feast of The Holy Family	11:15 am	Mass – Intentions of Kathleen Dohm Aged 105
Mon 1 st January 2018	Mary the Mother of God	10:00 am	Mass – Philip Walker
Tues 2 nd January	Ss Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen	9:00 am	Mass – Deceased Members of the Legion of Mary
Wed 3 rd January	Wednesday of the Christmas Season	12:15 pm	Roger McGoldrick Funeral Mass
		9:30 am to 8:30 pm	Adoration - Come and spend some quiet time with Our Lord
Thurs 4 th January	Thursday of the Christmas Season		No Mass or Service
Fri 5 th January	Friday of the Christmas Season	10:00 am	Josephine Burbridge Funeral Mass
Sat 6 th January	Saturday of the Christmas Season	6:00 pm	Mass – Intentions of Frances Firth
Sun 7 th January	Epiphany of the Lord	11:15 am	Mass – Anna Romaniuk Anniversary

HOLY FAMILY, PENSBY

Sun 31 st December	Feast of The Holy Family	9:30 am	Mass – Patricia McLeod R.I.P (Anniversary)
		5:00 pm	Mass – For the Parish
Mon 1 st January 2018	Mary the Mother of God		No Mass (Mass at OLSJ at 10am)
Tues 2 nd January	Ss Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen		No Mass (Mass at OLSJ at 9am)
Wed 3 rd January	Wednesday of the Christmas Season	9:00 am	Mass - Tom Coyle R.I.P.
Thurs 4 th January	Thursday of the Christmas Season	9:00 am	Service of Word and Sacrament
Fri 5 th January	Friday of the Christmas Season	12 noon	Mass – Edna Shaw Requiem Mass
Sat 6 th January	Saturday of the Christmas Season	12 noon	Mass – Margaret Middlehurst
Sun 7 th January	Epiphany of the Lord	9:30 am	Mass – Norah & Lawrence Chadwick R.I.P. (Anniversaries)

Sick: Please remember in your prayers all those in both parishes who are sick at home or in hospital, including Catherine Maschke, Peter Curtis, Carol Saunders, Gerry Smith, Joe Lucas, Leonora Reilly, John Marmion, Iris Christian, John Moroney, Mary Latimer, Father Peter Kelly, Michael Murphy and Frances Firth. *Please get in touch if there are any alterations.*



The next Monthly Prayer Breakfast will take place on

Saturday 13th January @ 8:30am

in the Meeting Room at OLSJ. The refreshments this month are being provided by the parishioners of St. Peters. No need to book, just turn up. Everyone welcome.

Food Bank Donations: Thank you to both parishes for all your donations over the past week. The contributions are as follows; Holy Family 28.26 kgs and OLSJ 23.83 kgs.



Many thanks to everyone for the generous donations towards Christmas Flowers at Holy Family. The church will look spectacular.

The Holy Family Grand Christmas Raffle will be drawn after Mass this morning. Will you be lucky? Thanks for all your support.

Assam Collection at Holy Family: Please note that the next Assam collection will be taken after all masses on **Sunday, 7th January 2018.**

Communion Rotas for the Housebound OLSJ: Please collect your initialled copy at the back of church, which has been prepared for the next six months.

The OLSJ Stitchcraft Group has now closed for Christmas, it will restart **Tuesday, 9th January 2018** 10.00am - 12.30pm newcomers welcome.

Holy Family 200 Club

Week 12

1 st Prize	£25	No. 11	M. Melling
2 nd Prize	£10	No. 181	V. Buckley
3 rd Prize	£5	No. 174	J. Wrigley

Lately Dead of the Parish

Please pray for the repose of the souls of **Roger McGoldrick (OLSJ), Josephine Burbridge (OLSJ) & Edna Shaw (Holy Family)** who have died recently.

- **Roger's** Funeral Mass takes place at OLSJ on **Wednesday 3rd January at 12:15pm.**
- **Josephine's** Funeral Mass takes place at OLSJ on **Friday 5th January at 10:00am.**
- **Edna's** Funeral Mass takes place at Holy Family on **Friday 5th January at 12 noon.**

May their souls Rest in Peace. Please remember to pray for their families at this difficult time.



Wirral Hospice
St John's

Many thanks to everyone from both Parishes for supporting the Christmas Card & Gift Evening we had in aid of St John's Hospice. With donations, raffle, entrance fee and items sold on the night we raised **£381.40.** Thank you.

Thank You from the Charity Change a Child's Life
Paul Kenny and I, at Change a Child's Life are very grateful for the money raised from the parish. The final total was £664.84 from Holy Family and £816.39 from Our Lady and St John. We are purchasing 280 chickens for the children at Maria Immaculata School, Nairobi, Kenya. This will make a huge difference to the children's diet and welfare, and enable the school to become self-sufficient. Without having to purchase eggs and meat for the children, the Sisters can use the money saved to benefit the children in other ways. We also thank the parishioners for continuing to collect books for the new school library that we will be opening next year. Many thanks, Lisa Brocklebank.

Thank You so much for your generous donation of 55 backpacks and for supporting Mary's Meals. For many of the children who receive a donated backpack, it will be the only gift that they have ever been given. On behalf of the 1,230,171 children around the world receiving Mary's Meals every day, I thank you with all my heart for your kindness. Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow (Founder of Mary's Meals)