



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

✠ May They Rest in Peace ✠

Please pray for the repose of the souls of

**Brian Cantillon, Valerie Bennett, Marie Bell
& John Flack**

who have recently died. May their souls rest in peace. Please remember to pray for their families at this difficult time.

A Christmas Message from Father Stephen

2020 has been a year like no other. Who could have foreseen the pandemic that has led to two lockdowns and so many restrictions on basic rights and freedoms we all took for granted? So many people have become seriously ill and a large number have died. Everybody has suffered loss, isolation, loneliness, lack of social interaction and contact with family and friends. The collateral damage has been appalling. But now we are preparing to celebrate Christmas and it is important to experience the joy and peace Christ brings and share it with others generously, compassionately and considerately. On behalf of Deacon Jeff and myself, may I wish you all a very happy and holy and safe Christmas and the hope for a better New Year 2021.

Father Stephen

Parishioners who need our Prayers

Please remember in your prayers all those in both parishes who are sick at home or in hospital, including:

Catherine Maschke,

Gerry Smith,

Joe Lucas,

John Moroney,

Ken Davies,

Madge McGrath,

David Gorman,

Carol Ross,

Jillie

Huntingford,

Imelda Atherton,

Eileen Millard,

Pauline Pritchard,

Deacon Philip White,

Sara Bull,

Lil Skinner,

William Kerin,

David Johnston,

Phil Shaw,

Eileen Roberts,

Irene Fitzpatrick,

Frances Ford,

Maureen Jones,

Paul Baker,

Moira Griffiths-Parr,

Andrew Whittingham-Jones,

John McNulty,

Susan McNulty,

Sister Kathleen Campbell

Please get in touch if there are any alterations.



Reflection on the Sunday Gospel

By Father Stephen

Luke's account of the Annunciation of the Lord 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. The focus is on Jesus as Son of the Most High and heir to the throne of David and the role of Mary. 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", 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 continues to be sustained by men and women who experience the overshadowing power of God's Holy Spirit, live in prophetic service of God's word, and bring forth God's presence in the world.

Christmas Carol Service

Sunday 20th December at 5:30pm
at Our Lady & St. John

Come and celebrate the last week of Advent with a short service of live readings and carols recorded by the parish choir. Places will be available on a first-come first-served basis.

The service will also be live streamed and as with our Masses, will be able to be viewed from our YouTube channel.

If you are attending the service in church, a mask must be worn at all times during the service and you are asked **not** to join in with the singing.



Cabinet Office

COVID-19: Guidance for the Christmas period

Between Wednesday, 23 December and Sunday, 27 December you may go to a place of worship with members of your Christmas bubble.

When coming to Mass remember to.....



HANDS

Use hand sanitiser on your way in and on your way out of church.



FACE

Wear a mask or face covering that covers both your mouth **and** nose, when entering church and during the duration your time inside the church.



SPACE

Ensure that you stay a safe distance away from people who aren't from your household **at all times** when in church.

Masses for the Week Commencing Sunday 20th December 2020

Sun 20th December	4th Sunday of Advent (Psalter Week IV)	9:30 am	Holy Family	Mass - Eileen Davies Anniversary
		11:15 am	OLSJ	Mass - Mary Brownrigg Birthday Rememberance
		5:30 pm	OLSJ	 Carol Service 
Mon 21st December	Ferial	9:30 am	OLSJ	Mass - Dan Miller R.I.P.
Tues 22nd December	Ferial	8:30 am	YouTube	Mass - Theresa Stubbings Anniversary
Wed 23rd December	Ferial	9:30 am	Holy Family	Mass - Jack Heery Anniversary
Thurs 24th December	Christmas Eve	9:30 am	OLSJ	Mass - Joan Roberts R.I.P.
		6:00 pm	OLSJ	Vigil Mass - Peter Fishwick R.I.P.
		Midnight	OLSJ	Midnight Mass - Parishioners
Fri 25th December	The Nativity of our Lord	9:30 am	Holy Family	Mass - Parishioners
		11:15 am	OLSJ	Mass - Barry Carroll R.I.P.
Sat 26th December	St Stephen	12 noon	Holy Family	Mass - Freda Stewart R.I.P.
Sun 27th December	The Holy Family (Psalter Week I)	9:30 am	Holy Family	Mass - Pat Rowlands R.I.P.
		11:15 am	OLSJ	Mass - The Lambe Family

A Note About Our Christmas Masses

Christmas Masses are always busy at the best of times, but this year with the COVID-19 restrictions in place, we are unfortunately only able to safely accommodate a small number of parishioners at Mass in both our parish churches. Places will be given on a first-come first-served basis. The churches will be open half an hour before Mass starts.

If you are unable to attend any of the Masses over Christmas, they will be all live-streamed on our YouTube channel, to watch from home.

We apologise in advance if we have to turn you away from either of our churches, if we are full, but the safety of our parishioners is paramount. We hope you understand.

Masses for the Week Commencing Sunday 27th December 2020

Sun 27th December	The Holy Family (Psalter Week I)	9:30 am	Holy Family	Mass - Pat Rowlands R.I.P.
		11:15 am	OLSJ	Mass - The Lambe Family
Mon 28th December	The Holy Innocents	10:00 am	OLSJ	Mass - Leonora Williams R.I.P.
		1:00 pm	Holy Family	Erica Donnison & Joshua Prescott Wedding Service
Tues 29th December	St. Thomas Becket	10:00 am	YouTube	Mass - Gary Lannigan R.I.P.
Wed 30th December	6th Day of the Christmas Octave	9:30 am	Holy Family	Mass - John Sherry R.I.P.
Thurs 31st December	7th Day of the Christmas Octave	9:30 am	OLSJ	Mass - Maureen Mutch R.I.P.
Fri 1st January	Mary the Mother of God	10:00 am	Holy Family	Mass - Michael McGurk R.I.P.
Sat 2nd January	Ss Basil the Great & Gergory Nazianzen	12 noon	Holy Family	Mass - Cantillon Family
Sun 3rd January	Second Sunday After Christmas (Psalter Week II)	9:30 am	Holy Family	Mass - Pauline Wright R.I.P
		11:15 am	OLSJ	Mass - Susan Dinan



**Don't Forget -
Track and Trace**

In line with the latest government guidelines, we continue to ask anyone coming to church for Private Prayer to sign in when they arrive. If you have the Government Covid-19 App, you can scan the QR code on your way into church or you can give your name and contact telephone number to a steward, who will keep a written record of your details for 3 weeks.

Thank you for your help and understanding.

You will only be contacted if someone has tested positive for Coronavirus.



Monthly Assam Collection

The monthly collection will start again this **Sunday, 3rd January** at Holy Family Church. The usual blue envelopes are at the back of church and these (or any envelope marked 'Assam') can be placed in the general bucket collection.

If this is not possible for you and you wish to donate in any other way, please ring Fred Taylor



First Forgiveness & First Holy Communion 2021

If you have a child who will be 8 years old in this Academic Year, he or she will be eligible to celebrate these important sacraments in 2021. Children in Year 3 at our parish school, Ladymount will follow a programme of preparation there. For children who are in other schools there will be a Parish Programme of Preparation taking place with the catechists from Our Lady and St John.

If you wish your child to take part in the parish programme, please contact Father Stephen on 342 6581 or email father.stephen@ourladyandstjohn.org.uk.

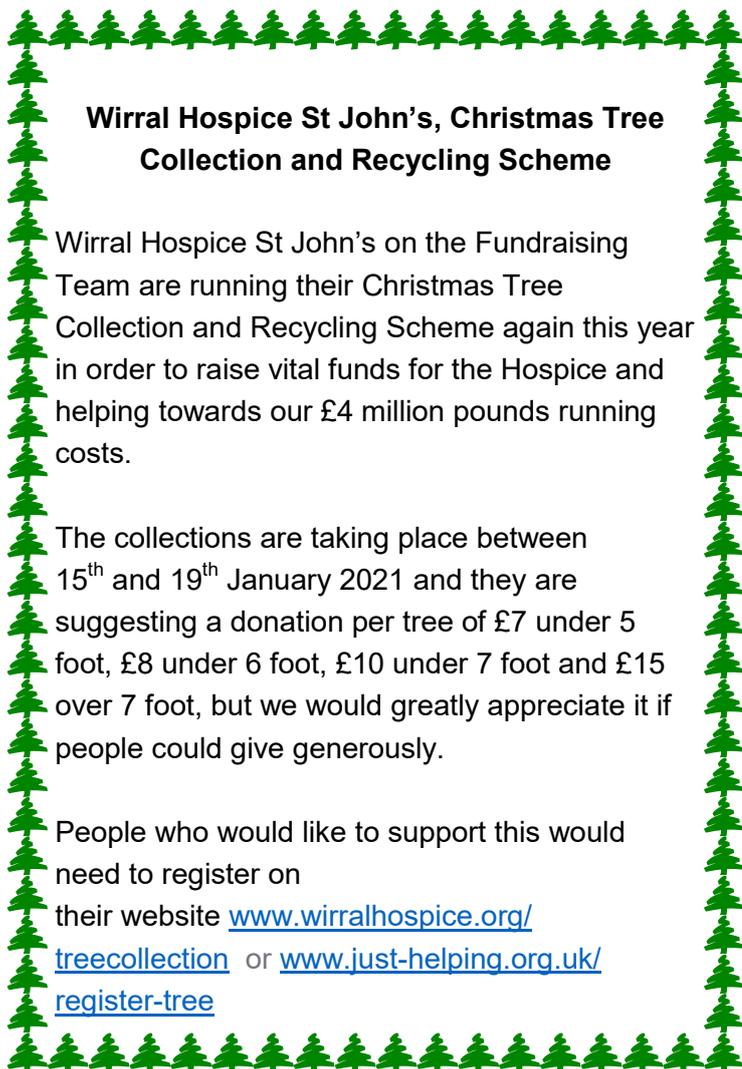
There will be more details to follow, on how the programme is going to work this year, both for the children who began their preparation last year, and those who would like to join the programme this year.

Live-Streamed Masses on YouTube

Remember if you are unable to get to Mass, **all Masses including all our Christmas Carol Service and all our Christmas Masses will be live-streamed via our YouTube channel.**

The link to our YouTube channel is

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyzzNjNscAoxuWubVYv04Lw>



Wirral Hospice St John's, Christmas Tree Collection and Recycling Scheme

Wirral Hospice St John's on the Fundraising Team are running their Christmas Tree Collection and Recycling Scheme again this year in order to raise vital funds for the Hospice and helping towards our £4 million pounds running costs.

The collections are taking place between 15th and 19th January 2021 and they are suggesting a donation per tree of £7 under 5 foot, £8 under 6 foot, £10 under 7 foot and £15 over 7 foot, but we would greatly appreciate it if people could give generously.

People who would like to support this would need to register on their website www.wirralhospice.org/treecollection or www.just-helping.org.uk/register-tree

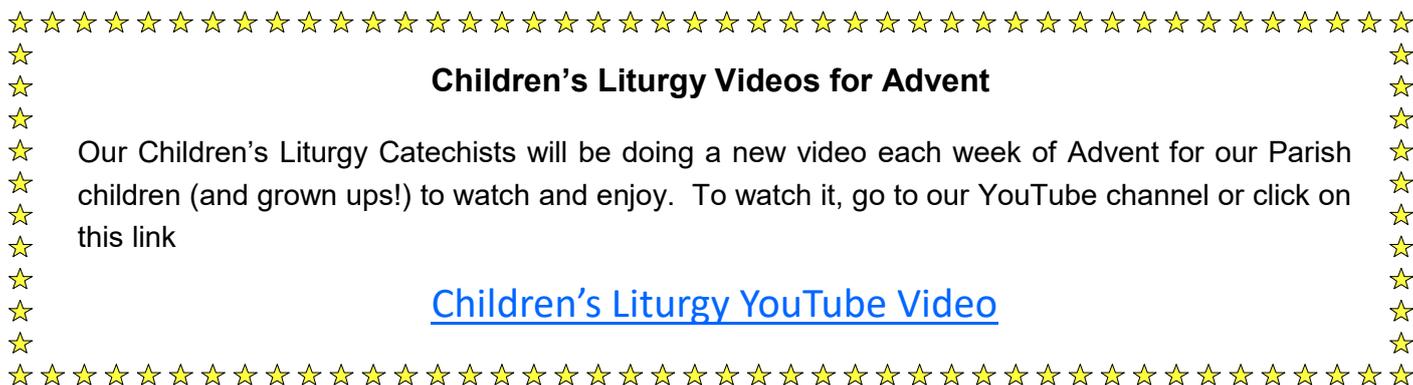
PARISHIONER CARER VACANCY

The Burchell Family are looking for a career to come and look after their father, parishioner, Charles Burchell.

Since February, Charles' health and dementia have slowly deteriorated. He's still living at home, but they would like to have a live-in carer to ensure that there is always someone there with him and to do the cooking, cleaning and helping Charles with his personal care.

They would like a carer to stay there about 4 nights a week (they have cover for the other three). The person does not need to have qualifications, but personal or professional experience in dealing with elderly care or dementia would be an advantage.

If you would like to know any further information about this employment please contact Charles' son, Brendan on 07760 178200 or bb101@cam.ac.uk



Children's Liturgy Videos for Advent

Our Children's Liturgy Catechists will be doing a new video each week of Advent for our Parish children (and grown ups!) to watch and enjoy. To watch it, go to our YouTube channel or click on this link

[Children's Liturgy YouTube Video](#)

Fourth Sunday of Advent (Year B)

Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

"God sent the angel Gabriel to... Nazareth. He had a message for a young woman... Her name was Mary."

The angel Gabriel was God's messenger to Mary. Find some words from today's gospel in the wordsearch below.



- Mary
- Angel
- Gabriel
- Peace
- Blessed
- Jesus
- God's Son
- Servant

M	A	R	Y	B	F	L	P	O
R	N	B	L	E	S	S	E	D
S	E	R	V	A	N	T	A	U
A	P	S	D	B	D	G	C	K
N	R	T	L	S	J	M	E	A
G	A	B	R	I	E	L	B	M
E	V	T	I	O	S	E	S	D
L	C	M	N	E	U	C	T	A
E	S	G	O	D	S	S	O	N

What message of good news or God's love will you share this week? Write your message below.

Find Advent and Christmas prayers at cafod.org.uk/prayers

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ADVENT REFLECTION 2020

Week 4: Christmas Present

CHRISTMAS PRESENT

Our daughter Annie, who died of natural causes in June 2020, was a scripture scholar. In an article written in December 2018 for Church Army, where she was Lead Training Tutor, she examined several different meanings of the words *Christmas Present*:

"In recent weeks I've been reflecting on how Jesus' coming into the world teaches us about presence, and how Jesus is the presence of the Father, God-with-us.

One of the Hebrew words translated as 'presence' in the Old Testament is 'paniyim', which can also be translated as 'face'. I love this, because it reveals something of the nearness of God's presence and the close, personal encounter we can have with God face-to-face. As Psalm 67:1 tells us, to experience God's presence is to experience the light in God's shining face.

'Present' is one of those wonderfully rich words that can have all sorts of meanings.

When we think of Christmas presents, we think of gifts; Jesus certainly is the self-gift of the Father to the world. But to be present also means to be: here, to be near, to turn up, to exist in this moment, now, to be accessible. Isn't it wonderful that Jesus' coming means all these things as well?

When I look at Jesus' life and ministry, I'm struck by how totally present he was to everyone and in everything. Whether in prayer to the Father, in conversation with the people he encountered, in proclaiming the kingdom, in ministering to people's needs, in listening to their concerns, in suffering, in dying and in rising, Jesus was fully present in each particular moment.

I wonder if this Christmas we can practise being fully present in this particular moment, to these particular people in this particular place, without thinking of what comes next?

Can we accept this moment as a gift from God, to be lived to the full?"

'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary 'let what you have said be done to me'. Luke 1:38

SAYING 'YES' TO GOD

In this final week of Advent, as we prepare to welcome the Christ child into our midst, we are challenged to reflect on the truth Jesus brings and to consider our response, inspired by Mary's unconditional 'Yes' to God's plan. May we too say 'Yes' to his message and respond to his calling with joyful and willing hearts.

In the peace and stillness of a retreat, or even in just 10 minutes quiet time alone in prayer, we can cast aside the busyness of Christmas preparations and find time to say our 'Yes' to God.

In 2004 Annie reported on retreats from her time as a member of the Sheffield University Catholic Chaplaincy, highlighting the value of slowing down to listen attentively to God and also the joy of spending quality time with others.

Holy Island Retreat: Celtic spirituality

"During the retreat, the example of the Celtic Saints taught us the importance of silent meditation and the need to come apart from time to time to truly listen to God. It was a fantastic opportunity to come away from our hectic lives and to spend some time apart with God in the beauty of a wonderfully Holy Island."

Sisters of Zion Retreat, Harbourne:

I have called you by your name: you are mine!
"So often we hurry through life, rushing from one task to the next, barely pausing to reflect or listen to the voice of the Lord, but in this time of prayer, as we searched in the silence, we put aside all distractions to seek God's face. Later, we sat by the fire and shared laughter and companionship.

Saturday morning began in prayer, contemplating God's unconditional love for us and his willingness to reform us when we fail."

The mystery, which was kept secret for endless ages, is now made clear. Romans 16:25

