



Parish of Our Lady Help of Christians & St Lawrence

39-41 West Street, Olney MK46 5HH

Diocese of Northampton

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4 th December 2022 Psalter Week 2	Second Sunday of Advent Year of Matthew (A) – Ferial Lectionary: Year I	
First Reading	Isaiah 11:1-10 <i>He judges the wretched with integrity.</i>	
Responsorial Psalm	In his days justice shall flourish and peace till the moon fails.	
Second Reading	St Paul to the Romans 15:4-9 <i>Christ is the saviour of all men</i>	
Gospel Acclamation	Alleluia, alleluia! Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight, and all mankind shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia!	
Gospel	Matthew 3:1-12 <i>Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.</i>	
Saturday 3 rd December +	5.45pm 6.30pm	Confession Vigil Mass – (For the Parish)
Sunday 4 th December +	10.30am	Mass – (Robert Harris & family Int.)
Monday 5 th December St Birinus Bishop - memoria		No Parish Mass today
Tuesday 6 th December St Nicholas, Bishop – op memoria	10.00am	Mass – (Patrick O’Riordan RIP)
Wednesday 7 th December St Ambrose, Bishop & Doctor	10.00am	Mass – (Br Herbert Kaden RIP)
Thursday 8 th December IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF BVM – Solemnity – Chief Patron of the Diocese	9.15am 10.00am	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament Mass – (Daughters of the Holy Spirit)
Friday 9 th December St Juan Diego Coatlatoatzin – op mem.	9.15am 10.00am	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament Mass – (Marjorie Ritchie RIP)
Saturday – 10 th December Our Lady of Loreto – op memoria		No Parish Mass this morning
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT ‘Gaudete Sunday’		
Saturday – 10 th December +	5.45pm 6.30pm	Confession Vigil Mass – (Peter Kemish RIP)
Sunday – 11 th December +	10.30am	Mass – (For the Parish)

NO MASS ON SATURDAY MORNING

CHRISTMAS CARDS NOW AVAILABLE IN THE PORCH

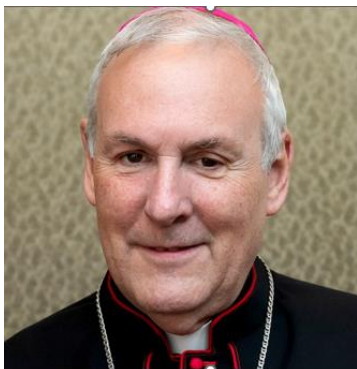
Brian Barrett RIP - Fr David and his family wish to thank you all most sincerely for your prayers, condolences and Mass offerings following the death of his dear father, Brian Barrett. Thanks also to those parishioners from Olney who attended the Requiem Mass for Brian last Thursday at St Joseph the Worker parish church, Luton – this was a source of great comfort to Fr David and his family. Please continue to pray for the repose of the soul of Brian and for healing and comfort to Eileen, the family and of course especially dear Fr David.

May the love of God and the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ bless and console them and gently wipe every tear from their eyes.



Christmas Talk and Carols Sunday 18th December at 6.00pm

In place of our parish Christmas Carol Service at Our Lady's, we will have a talk followed by some Carols and mince pies and mulled wine on **Sunday 18th December at 6pm** followed by seasonal refreshments in the parish hall. The talk will be given by one of our parishioners Julia Scott. She has written two novels for teenagers focusing on Pro-Life issues. A third is on the way. As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus who is our Life, this will be a wonderful way for us to get together, hear something hopeful, sing and celebrate. Proceeds from the evening will go to Willen Hospice. Everyone is welcome



Bishop David Oakley Our Missionary Diocese

Bishop David has recently put on YouTube a reflection on how our Diocese and our parishes can become more missionary. Look up Northampton Diocese on YouTube and you will find the talk entitled, "Our Missionary Diocese". This is a direct link to it:

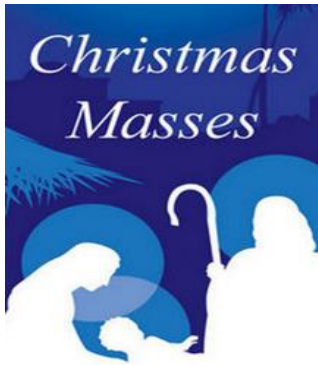
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AkvLWmHX-l8>



Daughters of the Holy Spirit – On Thursday of this week, the Daughters of the Holy Spirit will be coming together here at Our Lady's for their annual provincial meeting. We extend a very warm welcome to the Sisters as they gather together for prayer and discussion. **We begin with Mass at 10.00am** to which everyone is welcome. Please do keep the community of the Daughters of the Holy Spirit in your prayers this week, especially of course those here at St Joseph's Convent and those at Burlington Hall. **Come Holy Spirit!**



On **December 17th**, NYMO (Northampton Youth Mimicry Office) are hosting an extended Young Adults Brunch, with Adoration, Faith Formation, Food, Fellowship, Mass, and two amazing guest speakers, Joanna Bogle, and from the US, Meg Hunter-Kilmer. (Be sure to bring a Bible with you!) We invite you to join us for this free event, from 10am to start the day with Adoration, at Our Lady Help of Christians, Luton. For full details on location and times, please see nymo.org/brunch. Age 18-35.



24 th December - Christmas Vigil Mass	6.30pm
24 th December – Mass During the Night	9.30pm
25 th December - Mass at Dawn	8.00am
25 th December – Mass during the day	10.30am



Caritas: Love for Christmas Campaign

Caritas are running a Love for Christmas Campaign. Any gifts must be new and need to be dropped off at the church by December 11th. See poster in church and the following message:

We would like to invite you, along with your colleagues and family members to join in this campaign of kindness and generosity by collecting donations of much needed gifts to put smiles on the faces of young families, children and the elderly living in isolation or poverty, as well as young people leaving the care system and living alone and young carers who do so much all year round for others and have little time to actually be a child.

Immaculate Conception of the BVM Chief Patron of our Diocese



On Thursday we celebrate this wonderful solemnity, that Mary, whose conception was brought about in the normal way, was conceived without original sin or its stain—that’s what “immaculate” means: without stain. When we meditate on the Immaculate Conception, we might ponder the angel Gabriel when he greeted Mary with the beautiful words “Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you” (Luke 1:28). Today we pray especially for Bishop David, Bishop Emeritus Peter, for the Priests, Deacons, Religious and people of our Diocese: *Mary, Immaculate Virgin, our Mother, chief patron of our Diocese, we praise and honour you and give ourselves to you. Protect us from all harm and pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death.*

The Bishop will celebrate Mass at the Cathedral at 7.00pm that day. All are welcome.

Bishop David’s homily given at the Mass for the Solemnity of The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary 8th December 2021



“I am the handmade of the Lord” said Mary, “Let what you have said be done to me.” And the angel left her. – Luke 1: 38

“At the end of today’s Gospel there is a simple statement, and the angel left her. Of course, there is much to ponder on what has happened during the encounter between the angel and Mary. But these words, and the angel left her, speak to me of the reality of my discipleship, and probably yours. How lovely it would be, to have the archangel Gabriel around throughout our lives, revealing the word of the Lord to us, answering our questions, supporting and reassuring us. Sadly, this is not our experience. We do not have the sense of being carried along on a

wave of obvious blessing. We are invited to receive our vocation and to move onwards, often into a space where we feel we are on our own. And yet, of course, the Lord never leaves us alone. He always supports us, even when this is not very apparent.

And so, to the beginning of the annunciation. The angel appeared to Our Lady in the sixth month, not June but the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy. I remember the day my little sister was born. There were lots of running around, towels and water. Our faith is never a theoretical business, but grounded in the realities of human life, one might say the messiness of it all and so, it is with Our Lady. Mary's experience of vocation and holiness is tied to God's unfolding revelation and this takes place within the context of a people with its own story and culture.

Gathered here today in the Cathedral, we represent our diocesan family throughout the communities of this local church. We too have a calling from the Lord, we are to bear fruit as missionary disciples. This is part of an unfolding story of salvation, and this moment follows on from the revelation to Zechariah that his wife is to bear the precursor, the one who will prepare the way. In that moment, Zechariah is unbelieving and unable to speak. Mary is believing and then able to speak, and she speaks precisely as a mother with a child in her womb.

As we celebrate the principal patronal feast of our diocese, we too are called to speak God's word. This demands the openness of faith. May we never become dumb in the words of joyful proclamation and charitable action, which is evangelisation at its best. So, let's think now about the ability to gift ourselves to others, or another way of looking at this, our capacity for generosity. This begins with a docility to the Holy Spirit, a willingness to embrace what the Lord wants for us.

We may understand generosity by reflecting on the Annunciation and Our Lady's response to what is asked of her. She does not become a part-time mother, but one that gives herself completely to the work of motherhood. Neither is this vocation reduced to a series of tasks. More fundamentally, Mary's relationship with her vocation creates a relationship between herself and Jesus. It is the same with ourselves. What we do must always spring like a fountain from who we are. Generally speaking, this is what does happen. This is why Jesus tells us, *'In the same way, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.'* (Mt 7.17-18)

It seems to me, a problem for disciples is striving to act in certain ways, an acting that is challenged by the fact it is not rooted in who the disciple really is. Our Lady is good at mothering, precisely because she has the capacity to be a mother in her being. This is not about the constant struggle we all have with virtue and holiness. But we cannot reduce our discipleship to what we are doing. Just think about the saints for a moment. When they abandoned themselves to God, great things happened, the fruits of grace rather than effort. And this can be so for us today, when like Our Blessed Lady, we are open to what the Lord wants to do through us.

May Our Lady, Help of Christians, Mary, Immaculate, Our Lady of Loreto, St Lawrence, St Joseph, St John Henry Newman, St Rita, St Birinus, St Nicholas, St Ambrose, St Juan Diego Coatlatoatzin, pray for us all.

With our love and prayers – Fr David & Deacon Peter