



St Elizabeth's Catholic Church Scarisbrick

A Mission of the Douai Abbey Parishes Trust
(Registered Charity № 1063237)
Within the Archdiocese of Liverpool

Parish Priest: Fr Hugh Somerville Knapman OSB

— 19 DECEMBER 2021 — SUNDAY 4 OF ADVENT (C)

SATURDAY 18/12 6.30PM	MASS (Vigil)	Benefactors <i>Confessions at 6pm</i>
SUNDAY 19/12 9.30AM	MASS	† George Charnock
MONDAY 20/12 9.30AM	MASS	† Holy Souls
WEDNESDAY 22/12 9.30AM	MASS	† Margaret & George Wright <i>Confessions at 9am</i>
THURSDAY 23/12	<i>(No Mass today)</i>	
CHRISTMAS EVE 6.30PM 7PM	CAROLS MASS	The People of the Parish
CHRISTMAS DAY 9.30AM	MASS	Benefactors
SUNDAY 19/12 9.30AM	MASS	† Winnie Church

From the Pastor's Desk

IN THIS LAST WEEK of Advent the focus of the Church's liturgy turns to the imminence of the great feast of our Saviour's birth in human flesh. The readings will demonstrate how Christ's coming was the fulfilment of prophecy, but not always the prophecies the Jewish rabbis had been focussing on. At the time of his birth, the expectation was for a king who would lead a victorious army and bring about a political liberation. After all God had done this many times in the history of his chosen people, helping them defeat their enemies and rescuing them from exile and slavery, even if only after a period to allow them to learn the lesson of their dependence on God.

In the event, God fulfilled the prophecies most rabbis did not pay much attention to, or in ways they did not expect. The Messiah would be the son of a virgin. He would be born in tiny Bethlehem, the home town of King David's father, Jesse. He would be of the house of David, but only by adoption through Joseph. His true "blood" line would be divine, and the rabbis were certainly not expecting God to humble himself so much as to come as the Messiah himself. The rabbis expected a mighty, but very human, Messiah. The Messiah turned out to be God himself, incarnate as a man; in this the true meaning of the Old Testament title *Emmanuel*—God with us—would be revealed.

God comes to us, answers our prayers, rescues us from our messes, in ways we do not often expect, perhaps even in ways we would not have imagined. Sometimes he lets us, like Israel, wait a while so that we might learn the lesson our trials can teach us. Whatever happens in life, good or bad, the foundational lesson remains that we are always dependent on God. Most of us go through the day without ever realising, let alone acknowledging that truth. Until we do, all our plans for renewing our lives or our Church will remain plans. Outcomes depend on an inner renewal that puts God first in our lives.

The Omicron variant of Covid is spreading like wildfire. However, deaths from Covid are not. There has been only a small increase in hospitalizations. So, we should have hope, *and* be prudent in our personal hygiene and use of preventive measures like masks and sanitiser, avoid big crowds and keep to our homes if we feel unwell for any reason. Probably most of the congregation has been triple-jabbed. Church remains the safest public space around.

So let us pray that we can celebrate the Christmas we were promised, with family and in church. Please pray, too, that the boiler part will arrive by Wednesday so that we can have heating for Christmas. That is a gift we will appreciate, I am sure.

Fr Hugh

Covid Update

The Covid numbers are rising alarmingly, though not deaths or hospitalizations thank God. The archdiocese has asked for us to be especially vigilant. We need to be for many reasons, not least that we can ensure we *do* have a Christmas worthy of the name this year.

Therefore, masks are compulsory in church except when singing or receiving Holy Communion. Using sanitiser remains crucial. The last 6 rows in the side aisle will be reserved for those who need some distance; we will increase that number if necessary.



If you feel ill with anything, please do not come to church. 🤒

Since the diocese expects lateral flow tests to be done before any home visits, *we will not be doing Communion rounds for the time being* to ensure everyone's safety. Fr Hugh will try to drop by with a card to everyone on the list before Christmas.

Boiler Update

The engineers still await a part to finish the repair of the church boiler. There is a good chance it will be with them on Wednesday. *Please pray that this is done for Christmas!*

The sick and others needing prayer

Jim Charnock, Sarah Gibbons, Terry Turner, Sue Carver, Philip & Eva Molyneux, Joan Fawson, and others we might know.

A number of parishioners or relatives of parishioners are facing considerable medical challenges at present. You may well know this but it bears repeating so that we can ensure we keep them in our prayers this Advent.

Anniversaries this week (within the last 10 years)

George Charnock, Ronald Bibby, James Olverson. May they rest in peace.

St Mary's School Holiday Nursery Provision

In 2022 St Mary's plan to extend their Early Years and Nursery provision to include a childcare option during school holidays. Please pass this information on to family and friends who may be interested and ask them to contact school.

Printer Cartridges

Please put your used printer cartridges in the green collection box in the church porch. The parish will receive from between 50p and £2 per cartridge.

Christmas Cards

Christmas cards are still available at the back of church for one last Sunday.

Parish Choir

More members of the choir are still warmly encouraged. The choir is currently preparing for Christmas. If you would like to join, please see Kath Wilson or Bernie Halsall for more information, or enquire at the parish office.

Parish Office

The office will be closed from Christmas until the New Year.

Christmas Masses

On Christmas Eve there will be carols at 6.30pm, followed by Mass at 7pm. The Mass on Christmas morning will be at 9.30am.

Please do come to carols before Mass on Christmas Eve if you can. Goodness knows we could all do with the lift to our spirits from singing our favourite carols.



GET IN TOUCH

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