



CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY & ST. AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY



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Christmas Season 25th December 2023



God's all-inclusive hospitality

If people were asked what they most like about Christmas, I suspect many would mention sitting at table for Christmas dinner with family. It's a moment for rising above any family tensions and joyfully celebrating together our deeper bonds. Absent and deceased family members are remembered and sometimes relatives and friends who are alone are invited to share this special family meal. On Christmas Day we want people to feel they belong and are included.

Jesus, whose birth we celebrate at Christmas, had a deep sense of the hospitality of God, His Father, who invited all to sit at his table. It seems Jesus rarely refused an invitation to a meal, with the result that some called him a glutton and a wine drinker! But what was really unusual was his willingness to sit at table with the outcasts of society. This was Jesus's way of saying that all are invited to experience unconditional love and acceptance as members of God's family. When we come to the Lord's Table we experience God's welcome for all, and commit ourselves to be messengers and channels of God's all-inclusive hospitality. Being present at Christmas Mass is also a special moment. If you have returned home for Christmas; or if you don't normally come to Mass, a warm welcome to you. I pray that in our families and parish we will experience the joy of God's loving welcome, through Jesus whose birth we celebrate today. Happy Christmas! Fr Denis

Christmas Reflection

I behold a new and wondrous mystery. My ears resound to the Shepherds' song, piping no soft melody, but chanting full forth a heavenly hymn. The Angels sing. The Archangels blend their voice in harmony. The Cherubim hymn their joyful praise. The Seraphim exalt His glory. All join to

praise this holy feast, beholding the Godhead here on earth, and man in heaven. He who is above, now for our redemption dwells here below; and he that was lowly is by divine mercy raised. Bethlehem this day resembles heaven; hearing from the stars the singing of angelic voices; and in place of the sun, enfolds within itself on every side, the Sun of Justice. And ask now how; for where God wills, the order of nature yields. For He willed, He had the power, He descended, He redeemed; all things move in obedience to God.

"But what shall I say? What shall I utter? *Behold an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger*. Mary is present, who is both Virgin and Mother, Joseph is present, who is called father. He is called husband, she is called wife. The names indeed are lawful, but there is no other bond. We speak here of words, not of things. He was espoused to her, but the Most High overshadowed her. Hence, Joseph, doubting, knew not what to call the Infant. He would not dare to say that it was conceived in adultery; he could not speak harshly against the Virgin; he shrank from calling the Child his own. He knew well that here was something unknown to him; how or whence was this Child born? And being anxious because of this, there came to him a message, by the voice of an angel, which said: *Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Spirit*."

"He, who sits upon the sublime and heavenly Throne, now lies in a manger. And He Who cannot be touched, who is simple, without complexity, and incorporeal, now lies subject to the hands of men. He, who has broken the bonds of sinners, is now bound by an infant's bands."

From a sermon of St. Cyril of Alexandria.

[YOUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR:](#)



We pray for the sick and housebound in the parish, especially so at this time of year; Celia Sheehan and for those who care for and support them. We remember those who have died recently, Michael Hill, and those whose anniversary occurs at this time: Arthur Smith; James McTigue; Rosa Gelmini; Ermelinda Lowrey; Matthias Hofmeister; Shirley Balls; Dora Noonan; Patrick Dowdall; Francis Mckenna; Norina Brever;

Rena Nedic; Joseph Smyth; Ethel Brown; Jean Blows; Edward Faulkner; Caterina Scarlino;

Please note that mass intentions may not always be read out, but the intention is offered.

Holy Hour: Saturday 5.15 - 6.15 pm

Confessions: Saturday 5.45 - 6.15 pm

Or by appointment with Fr. Denis

Family Mass: 1st Sunday 10.30 am

Mass is online over the Christmas season, all accessible through the Parish Facebook page: Catholic Church of the Holy Trinity and St Augustine of Canterbury. For more information, please go to the Parish website

<https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/baldock>

Christmas & New Year Masses

<u>Saturday 23rd December</u>	6.30pm - Vigil Mass Stewart Anthony RIP
<u>Sunday 24th December</u>	9.30am - Mass Claudia Pater
CHRISTMAS EVE <u>Sunday 24th December</u>	4.30pm - Vigil Mass of Christmas, Family Mass Annie Anthony
	8.40pm - Carols & Readings. 9.00 pm - The Mass of The Nativity of The Lord
CHRISTMAS DAY <u>Monday 25th December</u>	9.30am - Mass and Blessing of the Children's Presents Michael & Breda Rock
ST STEPHEN'S DAY <u>Tuesday 26th December</u>	10.00am - Mass
HOLY FAMILY MASSES <u>Saturday 30th December</u>	6.30pm - Vigil Mass Teresa McHugh & Maura Heaney Intention
<u>Sunday 31st December</u>	8.30am - Mass Ann Jewell RIP 10.30am - Mass Blessing of the Children's Presents Mary & Paul Watkins
NEW YEAR'S DAY Mary the Holy Mother of God <u>Monday 1st January 2024</u>	10.00am - Mass Michael & Breege Kerrane RIP
THE FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD <u>Saturday 6th January</u>	6.30pm - Vigil Mass
<u>Sunday 7th January</u>	8.30am - Mass 10.30am - Mass

Keeping it Sustainably Small

I was only writing the 2022 Newsletter about 6 weeks ago, I am sure 🤪 that's how fast the year has gone for me. To continue the sustainability

theme of the 2022 version, we've kept the newsletter to one doubled sided sheet again. As is the norm for the Christmas one sheet, a **Huge Thank You** to everyone who has supported the Parish over the last 12 months. In the same order as 2022, I'll start with the Church secretaries, The Choir; Church Organists, Young at Heart team; Parish Finance Committee; Parish Council; Parish Hall Committee; Building Committee; Tea and Coffee after Mass team; Parish Gardens & Grounds clearers; Church Cleaners; First Communion & Confirmation Catechists; Extraordinary Ministers; Mass Readers & Bidding Prayers team; Collection Counters; Children's Liturgy Catechists, & us, the Eds! Of course, finally, you the Parish, who make our Church what it is.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!



**Q WHERE DO YOU KEEP A CHRISTMAS TREE?
A BETWEEN A CHRISTMAS TWO & A CHRISTMAS FOUR!**

Christmas General Knowledge Quiz

1. WHO PLAYED SCROOGE IN THE MUPPET CHRISTMAS CAROL?
2. DONALD TRUMP MADE A CAMEO APPEARANCE IN WHICH CHRISTMAS FILM?
3. WHAT CHRISTMAS DECORATION WAS ORIGINALLY MADE FROM STRANDS OF SILVER?
4. WHICH ICONIC BRAND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COLOUR OF SANTA'S SUIT?
5. WHICH COUNTRY DONATES THE CHRISTMAS TREE ON DISPLAY TRAFALGAR SQUARE?
6. WHAT IS THE FIRST LINE OF THE POEM "A VISIT FROM ST NICHOLAS"?
7. HOW MANY REINDEER DOES SANTA CLAUS HAVE?
8. IN THE SONG "THE 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS", IF YOU WERE TO ADD UP ALL OF THE GIFTS, HOW MANY WOULD YOU HAVE? (I'LL ACCEPT 2 ANSWERS)
9. CANDY CANES ARE SAID TO REPRESENT WHAT?
10. NATIONAL LAMPOON'S CHRISTMAS VACATION CENTRES AROUND WHICH FAMILY?

Quiz Answers

1. Michael Caine.
2. Home Alone
3. Tinsel
4. Coca Cola.
5. Norway.
6. 'Twas the night before Christmas.
7. 9 (Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner, Blitzen, Rudolph).
8. 78/364.
9. A Shepherd's Crook.
10. The Griswolds