

THE BLESSED SACRAMENT CATHOLIC CHURCH

Copenhagen Street

Clergy: Mgr. Séamus O'Boyle (Parish Priest) Fr David Lucuy
Fr Larry Milby

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Parish Office opening times: Tuesday-Friday 10.00am -2.00pm



FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT - *Christmas Eve*

24th December 2017

Final Answer?



“Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you Do not be afraid, for you have found favour with God.” Imagine for one moment, that instead of the Angel Gabriel speaking those words to Mary, that they had been spoken directly to you. How would you feel? It would of course be a life changing moment ... a moment filled both with great excitement and of great uncertainty. In that moment you would know that life would never be the same again. In that moment you would know that God had great plans for you. How must Mary have felt? It must have taken huge courage for her to agree to conceive God's Son. By saying 'yes' to God's plan she was allowing her whole life to be turned upside down. By saying 'yes' she was

to turn her back on the security of the normal life she had planned with Joseph, her husband-to-be.

God's call to Mary is what we refer to today as the “Annunciation” which means an announcement or a calling. There are other places in the Bible where we see people called unexpectedly from the normality of their hum-drum lives to serve God. The calling is always a two-way thing. God requires a response. Of course we don't have to respond to God's call if we don't want to. Mary didn't have to say 'yes' to God's plan. She could have declined and lived out her years in trouble free comfort.

God still calls people today. Sometimes the call is insistent, as many who have been called to religious vocation will testify. Often the call is less obvious, and yet we are told that God has called each of us, and that for each of us there is a role to play. We are favoured and chosen just as Mary was. The main difference is that Mary responded fully to her unique role, whilst we remain hesitant and half-hearted, plagued by doubts as to our worth. Answering God's call isn't a comfortable business. Answering God's call might involve difficult decisions and hardship; but it might also be hugely rewarding, exciting and invigorating. How do we see God's call? Do we see it as a great burden, or as a great gift? Although Mary was young and uneducated, she had the faith to see that what the Angel Gabriel was offering her in calling her for God was a great gift.

The call is to us all. How does God call each of us? What talents skills and characteristics do we each possess that God can use? Advent is a time in which we can look for the ways in which God is calling us a time in which we can decide on the answer will give



*‘And is it true,
This most tremendous tale of all,
Seen in a stained-glass window's hue,
A Baby in an ox's stall?
The Maker of the stars and sea
Become a Child on earth for me?’*

(John Betjeman)

Yes, it is true! We wish all our parishioners and visitors a blessed and peaceful Christmas and every grace in the Year of Our Lord 2018.

Sr Miriam, Fr Séamus, Fr David & Fr Larry

BAPTISM PREPARATION: The next classes for parents wishing to have their infants baptised will take place on Wednesdays 10th & 17th January 2018 at 7pm in St John's Church in Duncan Terrace. You should please attend on both evenings.

LAST SUNDAY'S OFFERTORY COLLECTION: Envelopes £387.10 Loose £314.39 Sick & Retired Priests Fund £234.05 Thank you for your generosity.

REQUESTS FOR PRAYERS:

Please remember to pray for those who have died recently and for all those whose anniversaries are about this time. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

HEALING FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK: especially Doreen Clayton, Tom Hunt, Sophia O'Donnell, Monica Smith (O'Leary), Cassie Robinson, Tessa Charlton, Michael Hehir, Emmanuel Tala, Mary Wallace, Nina & Jocelyn Hillgarth, Filomena Barbo, Colin Harris, Peggy Walsh, Nora Moran, Maria Carrano, May Cullen., Gordana Tancevska, Irene Bryan, Phuong Quach, Albert Boateng, Anne & Thomas Griffin, Freddie Mudd, Margaret Cross, Catherine Barnes, Ellen Hunt, Hazel Hoyte, Angela Neary, Jackie Payne, Brian Mpunga (15yrs old)

| MASSES THIS WEEK: | | | |
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| DATE | FEAST DAYS | TIME | INTENTION |
| Sunday 24 th December | FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT <i>(Parish Mass Book p 90)</i> | 8.30am | Private Intention |
| | | 11.00am | All our Parishioners |
| | CHRISTMAS EVE <i>(Parish Mass Book p 97)</i> | 6.30pm | Children of the Parish |
| Monday 25 th Dec. | CHRISTMAS DAY <i>(Parish Mass Book p 100)</i> | 8.30am | Private Intention |
| | | 11.00am | All our Parishioners |
| Tuesday 26 th Dec. | <i>St Stephen</i> | 10.30am | Private Intention |
| Wednesday 27 th Dec. | <i>St John the Evangelist</i> | 10.30am | Private Intention |
| Saturday 30 th Dec. | <i>6th Day in the Christmas Octave</i> | 10.30am | Ellen Howerd RIP |
| Sunday 31 st December | THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH <i>(Parish Mass Book p 105)</i> | 8.30am | All our Parishioners |
| | | 11.00am | Intentions of Natasha Greenidge |

Weekday Masses: Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday 10.30am

Weekend Masses: Saturday 10.30am, Sunday 8.30am & 11.00am

Confessions: Sunday 8am-8.20am: 10.30am – 10.50am

Weekday Mass at St John the Evangelist Monday - Friday at 10.00am – All welcome

Confessions at St John's on Saturday 10.30-11.15am and 5.15-5.45pm