

Parish of Our Lady & St. Anne, Caversham

Parish Priest
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Fourth Sunday of Advent 21/22 December 2019

“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Emmanuel, a name which means God-is-with-us.”

Isaiah 7, 14/Matthew 1, 23

ADVENT COURSE

Week 4: The Saints in Art -23rd Dec.
The final talk takes place in the Cenacle at 19.30hrs on the Monday.

CAROLS BEFORE CHRISTMAS NIGHT MASS

The choir will be leading carols from 21.40hr before Christmas Night Mass at 22.00hr. Please arrive early and make sure that you get a seat.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Tuesday 24th December

18.00 Vigil Mass - children's Mass
21.40 Carols before Mass
22.00 Christmas Night Mass

Wednesday 25th December

09.00 First Mass of Christmas Day
11.00 Christmas Day Mass

OFFICE CHRISTMAS CLOSURE

The office will be closed from 23rd December and will re-open on Thursday 2nd January.

CHRISTMAS FLOWER FUND

Thank you for the generous donations that will allow the flower team to decorate the church for Christmas.

CHRISTMAS CRIB DONATIONS

Any donations made at the crib this year will be given to Friends of the Holy Land to support their work in the Middle East.

LAST WEEK'S COLLECTION

Gift Aid £152.52 Loose £523.04
Standing Orders £493.12

NATIVITY LIVE

The story of Christmas told on the streets of Caversham.

Starts at Caversham Baptist Church at 4pm. The journey will stop briefly by Our Lady & St Anne Church.

If you wish, come dressed as shepherds, sheep or other nativity characters.

Children need to be accompanied by an adult.

REST IN PEACE

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Shaun McCarvill who died recently.

May he rest in peace and those who mourn him find solace.

THANK YOU ...

... to those who organised the mulled wine as well as to all those who valiantly ate their way through mince pies and managed to drink a cup of mulled wine at the weekend. Between you, a wonderful £140 was raised which will be gratefully received by CIRDIC- Churches In Reading Drop In Centre.

VOLUNTEER If you would like to get involved with anything in the parish, contact the parish office.

GOING INTO HOSPITAL?

On admission to Royal Berkshire Hospital all Catholics should inform the hospital staff that they are Roman Catholic and if they wish to have Communion or see a Priest.

The diocesan Privacy Policy is available at <https://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/privacy-policy> or by request from the parish office.

Our Lady & St Anne Parish is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham, Charity No. 234216

Fourth Sunday of Advent (Year A – Matthew): The Church, having focused our attention on the second coming of Jesus as Lord and Judge at the close of the age, invites us now to focus our attention and our prayer on the events surrounding his coming among us in Bethlehem a little over two thousand years ago. Today the scripture readings share with us the long-term preparations God made for the sending of Messiah through the words of the prophet Isaiah as well as the immediate preparation for the birth itself through the angelic revelations to Mary's betrothed, Joseph. God was always keen to secure the freedom and independence of his people. At the time of Isaiah God made use of a foreign king, Cyrus king of Persia, who became an instrument of divine providence in releasing the Jews from their captivity in Babylon, restoring Jerusalem as a proud and independent city and enabling the returning exiles to prepare plans for the re-building of the Temple. And then the more specific promise comes from the mouth of Isaiah: a descendent of the royal house of David, and his name will indicate the startling reality his birth signifies, God will henceforth dwell with his people. "Emmanuel" means God with us. And these prophetic words of Isaiah were precisely the words which came immediately into Joseph's mind after he had been visited by an angel in his dream.

First Reading (OT): Isaiah 7, 10 – 14: The smaller kingdoms of the Near East were under threat from the expansionist ambitions of the Assyrian king. Ahaz was in the grip of fear as were the neighbouring states. God motivated him to ask him a favour and to appeal to him for protection. The king procrastinated and kicked for touch: he did not address a prayer to God. Isaiah reproved the king and others for their lack of confidence in God. Ahaz had essentially abdicated his authority and the consequences were drastic. Isaiah encouraged the people to put their trust in the maiden's son who will be called "Emmanuel". Was this a prophecy which had currency toward the end of the 1st century BC when messianic expectation had reached a fever pitch in Palestine? Would Joseph have been familiar with it from his sabbath-day attendance at the synagogue?

Second Reading (NT): Romans 1, 1 – 7: The widespread use of email may have dispensed with the use of visiting cards. They have not lost their uses however: name, address, email contact, landline/mobile number, and a logo all help to identify a stranger. I still have the visiting cards of our MP, local councillors and other activists whom I encountered in the run-up to 12 xii! Here is St. Paul's visiting card. It is contained in the opening lines of his letter to the Christians at Rome whom he had not yet met. It also introduces us to Paul and reminds us of how significant he was.

Gospel: Matthew 1, 18 – 24: This is Matthew's version of the Annunciation story.

Masses and Intentions

Fourth Week of Advent/Christmastide

Saturday 21st December 10.00 Frank Gratrix RIP
Advent feria

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Saturday 21st December 17.30

Sunday 22nd December 10.00
 18.30

Monday 23rd December 09.15
Advent feria

Tuesday 24th December 09.15
Advent feria (Christmas eve)

CHRISTMAS MASSES

18.00
 (children)

21.40

22.00

Wednesday 25th December 09.00
*Solemnity of the Nativity
 of the Lord*
 11.00

Thursday 26th December 10.00
Feast: St Stephen

Friday 27th December 10.00
Feast: St John

Saturday 28th December 10.00
Feast: Holy Innocents

Feast of the Holy Family

Saturday 29th December 17.30

Sunday 30th December 10.00
 18.30

Year A

John Anthony Dawson RIP
 Church musicians
 People of the parish
 Eileen Finn RIP

James O'Brien RIP

Harrison Lavell RIP

Carols

Mass of Christmas night
 First Mass of Christmas Day
 Mass of Christmas Day

Private intention

Betty & David Day
 (40th Wedding)

People of the parish

Year A

Evlyn Novell RIP

Sarah Louise Anscombe RIP
 Thanksgiving

Confessions:	Saturday	10.30 - 11.30 16.45 - 17.15
Exposition & Benediction:	Saturday	10.30 - 11.30
Evening prayer, Rosary:	Saturday	16.45