

# PARISH OF OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL SUCCOUR

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The Northampton Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust. Registered Charity No. 234091



24<sup>th</sup> December 2017

FOURTH SUNDAY  
OF ADVENT

4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT

## TIMES OF MASS AND LITURGIES THIS WEEK

<b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent</b>	8.00am	Mass in Extraordinary Form (Tridentine)
<b>FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b>	10.00am	Mass – Int. People of the Parish
<b>CHRISTMAS EVE – NATIVITY OF OUR LORD</b>	6.00pm	<b>Vigil Mass of Christmas</b>
	10.00pm	<b>Carols &amp; Readings</b>
	10.30pm	<b>Mass of Christmas Night</b> – Int. Arthur Comper RIP & Anthony Comper RIP
<b>CHRISTMAS DAY – NATIVITY OF OUR LORD</b>	8.00am	<b>Mass in Extraordinary Form (Tridentine)</b>
	10.00am	<b>Mass of Christmas Day</b>
Tuesday ST STEPHEN, Deacon & Protomartyr	<b>NO MASS</b>	
Wednesday ST JOHN, Apostle & Evangelist	<b>NO MASS</b>	
Thursday THE HOLY INNOCENTS, Martyrs	<b>NO MASS</b>	
Friday ST THOMAS BECKET, Martyr & Bishop	9.00am	Mass – Int. Thanksgiving
Saturday Sixth Day of Christmas Octave	9.30am	Mass
	10.15am – 11.00am	Confessions
<b>Sunday within the Octave of Christmas</b>	8.00am	Mass in Extraordinary Form (Tridentine)
<b>HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY &amp; JOSEPH</b>	10.00am	Mass – Int. People of the Parish

## LITURGY OF THE WORD WITH OUR CHILDREN Is taking a break for the next two Sundays.

There is a special Calendar for 12 Days of the Christmas Season for our families with young children. Please speak with Fr Andy if you would like one of these Calendars – there are only a few remaining.

**Thank you to all those who attended the meeting for families preparing for FIRST RECONCILIATION AND COMMUNION held last month.**

We will enrol the children at Sunday Mass early in 2018.  
Please keep these children and their families in your prayers.

**CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES and details of other Liturgies in Our Lady's Church and the other Churches in our Local Pastoral Area are available in the porch.**



## Money Matters

**Last Week's Offertory Collection – £268.95**

Christmas Flowers for  
Our Lady's Church – £129.77

**The Offertory Collection taken during Christmas Masses is your gift to the parish clergy**

*Thank you for your generosity*

**DECEMBER 2017 edition of The Vine**

The Diocese of Northampton newspaper is available. **It's free of charge!**

**Are you new to the parish?**

If so, you are very welcome! Do introduce yourself to Father Andy after Mass, and please complete a parish registration form.



Tea, coffee and cold drinks are served in  
The Guild Room after both of  
our Sunday Masses.  
*All are welcome!*

**Infant Baptism and Marriage.** By appointment with Fr Andy after completing the necessary preparation. **The Church requires** notice of at least six months prior to the Sacrament of Matrimony being celebrated.

**MISSIO 2018 CALENDARS**  
Are available in the porch for anyone who would like a copy. Please help yourself.

**On Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December** we will held a **special collection** for the work of **Providence Row**. Founded by Fr Daniel Gilbert, the parish priest of St Mary Moorfields, and the sisters of Mercy, Providence Row has been providing assistance to people who are homeless since 1860. Just £5 will provide a warm welcome of a hot shower, breakfast, a cup of tea and that all important first conversation. You can find out more at [www.providencerw.org.uk/advent](http://www.providencerw.org.uk/advent). Your prayers and generous donations are still much appreciated.

## WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER – AMERSHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER

Planning is going ahead for your local Women's Day of Prayer to be held on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2018. If anyone would like to join me in representing Our Lady's Church please ring Elizabeth Beckwith on 01494 433363. We are particularly looking for younger women.

## Connections to Church Teaching and Tradition

In *Christifidelis laici*, Pope John Paul II writes that, in her work in the world, the Church is confronted by contradictions of human nature, sin, and the Evil One. Still, the apostolic exhortation states, the Church lives in hope, for as today's Gospel states, God sent Jesus to us. *Christifidelis laici*, 7, states, "Despite all this, then, humanity is able to hope. Indeed it must hope: the living and personal Gospel, Jesus Christ himself, is the "good news" and the bearer of joy that the Church announces each day, and to whom the Church bears testimony before all people."

In both the First Reading and the Gospel, we see what God has done for us. The reading from the Second Book of Samuel details how God took David from the pasture, made him a leader, was with him wherever he went, and how David's house will endure forever. We see how God continues to be with us as the angel Gabriel announces to Mary that she will bear the Son of the Most High. God's love came first and enables us to love. In the encyclical *Dives in caritas* (DCE), Pope Benedict XVI explains that God continues to make his love known to us in the liturgy, and from that love we spread God's love to others. DCE, 17, states: "In the church's liturgy, in her prayer, in the living community of believers, we experience the love of God, we perceive his presence and thus we experience the love of God, we perceive his presence and thus learn to recognise that presence in our daily lives. He has loved us first and he continues to do so; we too, then, can respond with love. God does not demand of us a feeling which we ourselves are incapable of producing . . . since he has 'loved us first,' love can also blossom as a response within us."

**We are now well into the season of ADVENT.** To help nourish us journey this four-week journey until 31<sup>st</sup> December, both *Walk with Me* and *My Day by Day Advent 2017* prayer booklets are available at a price of £1.00 each.

## 'A BIBLICAL WALK THROUGH THE MASS'

A five week course for Lent 2018. This programme explores where the words and gestures we use in the Mass each week come from, explaining their significance, giving insights for getting the most out of every Mass – and much more. This course will run at St Joseph's, Chalfont St Peter on Wednesday evenings starting on 21 February at 7.45pm for 8pm. It will run simultaneously on Thursday mornings starting on 22 February at 9.30am. If you wish to enrol, please contact St Joseph's Parish Office (office@stjosephs.org.uk or 01753 886581) to sign up. Payment of £20 per person needs to be made by Monday, 15 January so your books can be ordered.

## Lectionary for Mass

Not until 2023 will Christmas Eve again fall on the Fourth Sunday of Advent. The proximity of these two solemnities highlights the theme of today's readings – the revelation of God's mystery. The biblical word mystery is not about a puzzle to be solved or something impossible to understand. Rather it concerns a magnificent thing that will now be revealed in the last days to those who have faith.

In the First Reading, David desires to build a house for God, but through the prophet Nathan, God tells David that he never asked for a house and plans always to dwell among the people as he did during their desert wanderings. At the time, God promises to build a house (or a dynasty) for David and to give him a son who will be an everlasting king and whom God will treat like his own son. What astonishing favour David receives from God!

The Gospel builds upon the imagery of this David story. The angel Gabriel tells Mary that she is God's favoured one and that she will give birth to a son who "will be called Son of the Most High" and who will be given "the throne of his ancestor David" (Luke 1:32). How utterly confused this young girl must have been! Yet she quickly gives her fiat (Latin for "let it happen") to the angel's words.

In the Second Reading, we are invited to join in a doxology, a prayer of praise to God that celebrates God's hidden plan for humanity. This plan is gradually revealed through the prophets and the covenants and is fully manifest in the person of Jesus. That manifestation is what we celebrate at Christmas.

## Liturgy and Life

- (1) During the Christmas season, how can you consider the ways that God manifests his love in your life? (2) How can Mary's yes to God's love inspire you? (3) How can you be more open to the miracles that occur in your life?



*Wishing you all  
A Holy and Joyful Christmas and  
Peace for the New Year!  
Fr Andy*