

The Catholic Parish of St Mary, Leek
This parish is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham Registered Charity No 234216
Compton, LEEK, Staffordshire, ST13 5NH

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**“Our vision is to be a Catholic Parish living Christ’s command,
‘Love one another as I have loved you’.**

Saturday 14 December 10am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament: Confessions

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT: *Gaudete Sunday*

Zephaniah 3:14-18; Is 12: Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:10-18

6.15pm Mass Michael Kail RIP (PC)

Sunday 15 December 9.30am Morning Prayer from the Divine Office

10am Mass Dennis Wilkes RIP (PW)

1.30pm Mass in the Polish Language

4pm Rosary and Benediction

Monday 16 December **Avent Feria**

Numbers 24:2-7, 15-17; Ps 24; Matthew 21:23-27

9.40am Rosary 10am Mass Michael Kail RIP (GC)

Tuesday 17 December **Advent Feria**

Genesis 49:2, 8-10; Ps 71; Matthew 1:1-17

9.40am Rosary 10am Mass Bridget Knox RIP (SVP)

Wednesday 18 December **Advent Feria**

Jeremiah 23:5-8; Ps 71; Matthew 1:18-24

9.40am Rosary 10am Liturgy of the Word and Holy Communion

Thursday 19 December **Advent Feria**

Judges 13:2-7, 24-25; Ps 70; Luke 1:5-25

9.40am Rosary 10am Mass Joan Greenwood RIP

Friday 20 December **Advent Feria**

Isaiah 7:10-14; Ps 23; Luke 1:26-38

11am Whole School Mass in church

Saturday 21 December 10am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament: Confessions

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT: *O Rex Gentium. Day of prayer for Expectant Mothers*

Micah 5:1-4; Ps 79; Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-45

6.15pm Mass Mrs Barbara Duffin RIP (CC)

Sunday 22 December 9.30am Morning Prayer from the Divine Office

10am Mass Piotr Zwierski RIP

1.30pm Mass in the Polish Language

4pm Rosary and Benediction

Parish Priest

Fr Martin Pratt

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Parish Administrator

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Mrs R Waugh

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Safeguarding Rep

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Gift Aid Co-ordinator

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Hospital Chaplaincy

University Hospital North Midlands

tel 01782 676400

Macclesfield District Hospital

tel 01625 663386

Parish Safeguarding The Parish operates in accordance with Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and the National and Archdioceses policies & procedures at all times. Our Parish Safeguarding Representative is Malcolm Sproat. He can be contacted at: sg.stmary.leek@rcaob.org.uk or alternatively the Diocesan Safeguarding team can be contacted on 0121 230 6240/ safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk if you have any concern.

Children of primary school age must be accompanied by an adult if they need to leave the church to use the toilets during Mass or other Church services. Also, please do not let children of this age go near the votive candle stands unaccompanied, and do not let them run round the car park. It is important that we do everything to ensure that accidents do not happen. Thank you for your help in keeping our children safe.

The Pope’s Prayer Intention for December For pilgrims of hope. We pray that this Jubilee Year strengthen our faith, helping us to recognize the Risen Christ in our daily lives, and that it may transform us into pilgrims of Christian hope.

Please pray for Vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life Can you set aside one day each month to pray for Vocations? If so, could you sign the list at the back of church, please.

Please pray for the sick Moyra Chadwick, Chris Rea, Kathryn Higginbotham, Norman Syddall, Andrew Clifford, Janusz Szura- Zwierski, Fr Anthony Dykes, Madeline Horter, Anne Malkin.

Due to data protection legislation, in order for a name to be printed in this newsletter, the consent of the person who is unwell needs to be given.

Prayers for the Faithful Departed We pray for the repose of the souls of Mary Cope and Fr Jacob Lewis, a retired priest of the Archdiocese of Birmingham.

Anniversaries for this week: John Harold Crimes, Mary Millicent Hudson, Dennis Wilkes, Winifred Joyce Mellor, Mary Szczotka, Frances Roberta Turner, Freda Priestman, Julia Hermit, Monsignor Alfred Sperling (PP 1884-1923), Alfred Whitworth, Richard James Halpin, John Bosco McCarron, Eileen Mary McNulty, Sheila Syddall, Freda Cecilia Halpin, Kenneth Worthington, Wictoria Wersockas, Margaret Chant, Margaret Schonau, Joseph Delicata, Peter Nowell, Michael Noel Kelly, Joan Greenwood, Alice Mary Astles, Lucy Foster, Edward Szczotka, Beryl Edna Wheatley, Gladys May Wood, Barbara Duffin

Dear friends, "Love one another as I have loved you!" It has been a remarkable few days and I am very grateful to you for your support and loyalty to the parish.

Last weekend, I was encouraged by the magnificent turnout for both Masses considering the awful weather. The act of witness you made by being at Mass last weekend encouraged me. Thank you! It was a real example of you teaching me! Please keep giving me a good and example and pray for me!

Last Sunday's Carol Service was a uplifting occasion for everyone! Again, there was a good congregation, supporting this occasion and the children and young people who took part. I am sure that you saw the photographs on the Facebook page!

I am always very grateful to those who clean our beautiful church. It fills me with great pride that you share this responsibility. Having a beautiful and well kept church is another act of witness demonstrating our devotion to both Christ and the church building.

My thanks to everyone who supported Mary's Funeral on Monday evening and Tuesday morning.

It is Advent! The Church's New Year!

Mass during Advent – I invite you to be at Mass during this Holy Season. As Catholics, the Church calls on us to be at Mass Sunday by Sunday by Sunday.

I encourage you – as far as you can – to be at Weekday Mass. The Bible readings during this Season point us towards Christ who always accompanies. From Tuesday of this week, the Bible readings at Mass form for us a waiting room giving us the Biblical preparation ahead of the celebration of Christmas.

If you cannot be at Mass, the parish newsletter always gives indications to the Biblical readings for each day: please do read the bible readings at home.

Confession during Advent – towards the end of October, Pope Francis met with the Franciscan priests whose mission is to celebrate Confessions for pilgrims and visitors to St Peter's Basilica. That meeting was to mark the 250 years that the Franciscans have undertaken this crucially important apostolate. For me, Confession is an important ministry and one which we should all take time to do correctly.

During the meeting with Confessors, Pope Francis encouraged Confessors who administer Confession in St Peter's and all priests who celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation to be men of mercy, "cheerful, generous, ready to understand and to console. In a short anecdote about priest who inspired the Pope, he concluded his address to priests saying that he hopes, one day, to be judged for being extravagant with God's mercy.

Here are some resources for your personal prayer

Walk with Me – the new prayer books with daily reflections are at the back of the church

Best Advent Ever – sign up at www.dynamiccatholic.com/advent for daily reflections

Advent Gospel Reflections from Bishop Robert Barron – sign up at www.wordonfire.org

Be Still and Know – daily devotionals from Premier Christian Radio – sign up at www.premier.org.uk

Advent prayer The other evening I walked through Market Square and said a prayer for all the people of our parish at the Christmas Nativity scene, praying for God's blessing on our parish, on the children and young people especially those preparing for First Holy Communion and Confirmation, and for those who – for whatever reason – have stopped coming to church that they will know that they are always welcome. Here is another extract from Pope Francis's Apostolic Letter on the meaning and importance of the Christmas crib.

"Setting up the Christmas creche in our homes helps us to relive the history of what took place in Bethlehem. Naturally, the Gospels remain our source of for understanding and reflection on that event. At the same time, its portrayal in the creche helps us to image the scene. It touches our hearts and makes us enter into salvation history as contemporaries of an event that is living and real in a broad gamut of historical and cultural contexts.

In a particular way, from the time of its Franciscan origins, the nativity scene has invited us to "feel" and "touch" the poverty that God's Son took upon himself in the Incarnation. Implicitly, it summons us to follow him along the path of humility, poverty and self denial that leads from the manger of Bethlehem to the cross. It asks us to meet him and serve him by showing mercy to those of our brothers and sisters in greatest need."

Advent display For Advent, the season of hope, the following resources are available to help us prepare for the Jubilee of Hope 2025: Cafod Advent candle prayer cards, with a prayer for each week of Advent; a guide to the symbolism of the Advent wreath; an Advent quiz for the family; a colouring page of the Advent wreath for children and a Cafod World Gifts catalogue for charitable giving. Please take a look.

Are you looking forward to Christmas? Here's an extract from Matthew Kelly's book, *33 Days to Eucharistic Glory*. "Consecration is to devote yourself to God and make yourself 100 percent available to carry out His will on earth. It is an act of unconditional surrender to God. Through the act of consecration, we dedicate ourselves abundantly, wholeheartedly, and completely to the will of God, surrender our distractions and selfishness, and promise to faithfully respond to God's grace in our lives ... I believe it is time we consecrated ourselves to Jesus in the Eucharist – it is time for a Eucharistic Consecration."

Friday 20 December 2pm Church cleaning for Christmas Can you join us and help us with cleaning the church for Christmas, please?

Christmas at St Mary's Come and join us for Christmas. You will be most welcome. Here are the Mass times:

Tuesday 24 December	615pm Christmas Vigil Mass	9pm Polish Mass
Wednesday 25 December	Midnight Mass	10am Mass

Tuesday 24 December 615pm Christmas Vigil Mass I am keen that the young people of our parish have the opportunity to take part especially at Christmas. I invite the children and young people to be involved in the Christmas Vigil Mass. Can you help in these ways, please? If you can help, tell Fr Martin and sign the list. We need help with the following:

- Welcome parishioners as they arrive at church
- 4 Readers for the Bidding Prayers
- 6 candle bearers
- 2 to bring the offertory gifts

Thursday 26 December 11am Mass for the Altar Servers On 26 December, the Church celebrates the feast day of St Stephen, the first martyr who is the patron saint of altar servers.

St Mary's Parish 200 Club It is time to renew our subscriptions for the 200 Club. Each number is £1 per month. There is a draw on the last Sunday of each with two cash prizes. If you are in, you may win. Please – we ask – can you use the specially prepared 200 Club envelopes

Mass attendance 7-8 December Saturday Mass 36 Sunday Mass 82

Collections 7-8 December Gift Aid £25.00 Non Gift Aid £132.90 Total £157.90 Poor Parishes Collection £50.30

Have a good week! With my prayers and best wishes, Fr Martin