



Time & Intentions for Sundays and Weekdays Masses



DATE	TIME	DEDICATION	INTENTION	CHURCH
Sun 21 st Dec.	9 am	Fourth Sun of Advent	Ron Parker (LD)	Holy Family
Sun 21 st Dec.	11.15 am	Fourth Sun of Advent	Frances O'Brien (LD) Parishioners	Our Lady V
Mon 22 nd Dec.				The church is closed
Tue 23 rd Dec.	9 am	Weekday of Advent	S.I.: C.W.	Our Lady V
Wed 24 th Dec.	3 pm	Christmas Eve	MASS IN SPANISH	Our Lady V
	7 pm	Christmas Vigil	Anna & David Caush (BA)	Holy Family
Thu 25 th Dec.	9 am	Christmas Day	Joseph & Catherine Jackman	Holy Family
	11.15 am	Christmas Day	Dee Kelly	Our Lady V
Fri 26 th Dec.	12 noon	St. Stephen		Our Lady V
Sat 27 th Dec.	12 noon	St. John, Apostle		Our Lady V
Sun 28 th Dec.	9 am	Feast Holy Family	Ron Parker (LD)	Holy Family
Sun 28 th Dec.	11.15 am	Feast Holy Family	Dee Kelly	Our Lady V

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Confessions: Tue 9.30am to 10am; Sat 11am to 12

Holy Rosary & Divine Mercy Devotion: Tuesdays 9.30 am OLOV.

Baptisms, Weddings: by appointments. [Wednesday Club:](#) / [Tuesday Nursery:](#) You are welcome!

We pray for all who are sick and elderly:

Marie Tyrer, Ray Sherwood, Betty Maurey, John Evans-Freeke, Henry Henderson, Anne and Mike Quinn, Ronnie Baybut, Geoff Morrissey, Michael Hyland, Paul Blackford, Harry Caine, Sophie Caine, Christine Watts, Deacon John and Ann Crooks, Joan Callaghan, Natalie Kavanagh, Sue Swift, Hannalor Mainey, Betty Costello, Pauline Hayes, Irene Halsall, Mark Fieldsend.

We pray for those whose Anniversary occurs at this time: Edward Dempsey, Gerry Breanan, Lilian Williams, Maureen Carney.



The Parishes of Holy Family Ince Blundell Our Lady of Victories, Hightown

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Parish Priest: Fr Sergio Haro

Archdiocese of Liverpool, Reg. Charity Number 1199714

OLOV, Hightown: Sort Code: 40-29-12, Account: 01544993

Holy Family: Sort Code: 40-29-12, Account: 71545094



Fourth Sunday of Advent(A): 21st December 2025



Finally, on this the Fourth Sunday of Advent, our Gospel Reading permits us to begin our contemplation of the mystery of the Incarnation we celebrate at Christmas: "Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about" (Matthew 1:18).

The Gospel of Matthew tells the story of the birth of Jesus from Joseph's perspective. Today's Gospel passage is the second movement in this story. In the preceding verses of the first chapter of Matthew's Gospel, the Evangelist has listed the genealogy of Jesus, tracing his lineage through King David to Abraham. In the chapter to follow, Matthew tells of the visit from the Magi, the Holy Family's flight into Egypt, and Herod's massacre of the infants in Bethlehem. (The other stories which we associate with Christmas, the Annunciation, the Visitation, the angel and the shepherds, are found in the Gospel of Luke).

We must not gloss over too quickly the difficult circumstances described in today's Gospel. The way that Joseph and Mary face these circumstances tells us much about these holy people and their faith in God. Joseph and Mary are betrothed to be married. This is sometimes described as an engagement period, but it is more than that. Betrothal in first century Jewish culture was in fact the first part of the marriage contract. A breach of this contract was considered adultery. Mary is found to be with child. If adultery is proven, the punishment might be death. Joseph has rights under Mosaic law but chooses to act discreetly in his plans to break the marriage contract, so as to protect Mary. Then God intervenes.

The message of the angel of the Lord given to Joseph in his dream tells us much about the child that Mary bears and his role in God's plan. He is conceived by the Holy Spirit. His name will be Jesus, which in the Hebrew means "Yahweh saves." He will be the fulfilment of the prophecy heard in today's first reading from Isaiah: "... The virgin shall be with child ... and shall name him Emmanuel [God with us]." Joseph does as the angel of the Lord directs. He takes Mary to be his wife and accepts the child in her womb as his own. Joseph and Mary are both cooperative with God's plan. They are both models for us of what it means to be faithful servants of God.

Christmas churchgoing surges as nearly half of Brits plan to attend, according to new poll

A new poll suggests that nearly half of UK adults have planned to attend a church service or event this Christmas, with Gen Z leading the trend. The research which questioned just over 2,000 UK adults was commissioned by Christian humanitarian charity Tearfund. It found 45 per cent of respondents said they planned to attend church over Christmas, which is up from 40 per cent the previous year. Gen Z respondents have led the way, with 60 per cent saying they would attend.

Among non-Christians, attendance intentions rose from 30 per cent to 34 per cent. They were most likely to report leaving church feeling joyful, peaceful or hopeful. The charity said the findings reveal about the importance of church at Christmas time. Stuart Lee, Tearfund's director of global fundraising and communications said: "These figures underline something deeply significant: **churches remain at the heart of community life at Christmas. "People are turning to their local churches for spiritual connection and for practical help.** From food banks to warm spaces, churches are stepping in where they are needed most." Respondents cited tradition, atmosphere and spiritual reflection as key reasons for attending. Of those planning to go, 39 per cent said it was part of their Christmas tradition, while more than a quarter viewed the season as a meaningful time for spiritual reflection. The poll also pointed to the scale of practical support offered by churches, with 42 per cent of adults revealing they or someone they knew had been supported by a church at Christmas. This included access to food banks, warm spaces and free meals. Nearly a quarter said they or someone they knew had received a free Christmas Day meal from a church. Lee said Tearfund saw the same pattern globally, describing church partners in the Central African Republic (CAR) whose Christmas attendance doubled or tripled as communities gathered for food, unity and hope. ... "Many people come to this celebration, and we support them with food and drink ... When speaking to Premier Christian News, Lee said that churches understood their communities and the work isn't limited to Christmas day. He said churches remained present "long after Christmas was over".

Source: <https://premierchristian.news/>

The Importance of displaying a Nativity Scene in Church and at Home

The First Nativity Scene recorded in history was created by St Francis of Assisi in Greccio, Italy in 1223. Before that time, many churches had built Nativity Scenes, but these early manglers were covered with gold, silver and jewels. They were much fancier than the original manger where the Christ child was laid. St Francis wanted people to remember that Jesus was born in a humble stable. He asked a farmer friend of his to help by bringing an ox, a donkey, a manger, and some straw to a nearby cave. On Christmas Eve, St Francis and the people of Greccio met in this cave. By candlelight, they acted out the story of Jesus' birth. St Francis hoped that this would encourage people to remember the Gift of God to all human beings as the child born in a manger, and not all the materialistic gifts exchanged.

WEDNESDAY 24TH DECEMBER CHRISTMAS VIGIL MASSES:

3 pm: Holy Mass - OLOV Hightown in Spanish

7 pm: Holy Mass - Holy Family Ince Blundell in English.

THURSDAY 25TH DECEMBER: CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES:

9 am: Holy Mass - Holy Family Ince Blundell

11.15 am: Holy Mass - OLOV Hightown



WITH PRAYERFUL GOOD WISHES FOR A
PEACEFUL CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

Believe

From Father Sergio

LITURGY OF THE WORD FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT CYCLE A

First reading: Isaiah 7:10-14

In those days: The LORD spoke to Ahaz: 'Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.' But Ahaz said, 'I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test.' And Isaiah said, 'Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Emmanuel.'

The word of the Lord

Second reading: Romans 1:1-7

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an Apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ. To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The word of the Lord

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel — which means, God with us. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Gospel: Matthew 1:18-24

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to send her away quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, 'Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

'Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel' — which means, God with us.

When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife.

The Gospel of the Lord

Source: Universalis App - New Lectionary

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 24(23)

R:/ Let the LORD enter; he is the king of glory.

The LORD'S is the earth and its fullness,
the world, and those who dwell in it.
It is he who set it on the seas;
on the rivers he made it firm. **R:/**

Who shall climb the mountain of the LORD?
Who shall stand in his holy place?
The clean of hands and pure of heart,
whose soul is not set on vain things. **R:/**

Blessings from the LORD shall he receive,
and right reward from the God who saves him.
Such are the people who seek him,
who seek the face of the God of Jacob. **R:/**

The Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.
I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation he came down from
heaven,
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin
Mary and became man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored and
glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.