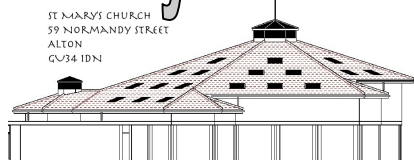


St Mary's Parish Newsletter



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TIMES OF MASSES & INTENTIONS

Sunday 30th November, 2025

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT (Year A)

Saturday	<i>Feria</i>	
	5.30pm	D'sed members of Kenny & Cahill families
Sunday	First Sunday of Advent	
St. Lucy's	9.00am	The People of The Parish
St Mary's	11.00am	Amy & Len Guikbert, RIP (KG)
Monday	<i>Advent Feria</i>	
	9.30am	Michael Halford, RIP
Tuesday	<i>Advent Feria</i>	
	NO MASS	
Wednesday	<i>St Francis Xavier</i>	
	9.00am	Rosary
	9.30am	Holy Souls (RG)
Thursday	<i>Advent Feria</i>	
	9.30am	Welfare of Eine Osman & Family
Friday	<i>Advent Feria</i>	
	9.30am	Augustine Thomas, RIP (RG)
Saturday	<i>Advent Feria</i>	
	5.30pm	Roy Light (SL)
Sunday	Second Sunday of Advent	
Medstead	9.00am	The People of The Parish
St Mary's	11.00am	Santiago Rodrigues, RIP (LR)
<i>Confessions: Saturday 4.45pm prior to Mass and by request.</i>		

Sunday, 30th November, 2025

Entrance Antiphon

To you, I lift up my soul, O my God. In you, I have trusted;
let me not be put to shame. Nor let my enemies exult over
me; and let none who hope in you be put to shame.

First Reading Isaiah 2:1-5

Responsorial Psalm

Let us go rejoicing into the house of the Lord.

Second Reading Romans 13:11-14

Gospel Acclamation

**Alleluia, Alleluia ! Show us Lord, your mercy and grant us
your salvation. Alleluia !**

Gospel Matthew 24:37-44

Communion Antiphon

**The Lord will bestow his bounty,
and our earth shall yield its increase.**

Christmas Services

Christmas Eve

5.00pm - Children's Christmas Mass

7.00pm - Christmas Carols

7.30pm - First Mass of Christmas

Christmas Day - 10am

St Stephen's Day - 10am

CHRISTUS
NATUS EST

CHRISTUS
NATUS EST



FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

30th November, 2025

Advent opens with a great cry, and a great promise:

"Oh that you would tear the heavens open and
come down! is the cry, of a people who need God."

The master is coming is the promise, not to breed
fear, but to answer our cry. Advent begins, not with
thoughts of the past, with the coming of the Lord
we celebrate at Christmas, but with the future, and

the wonderful promise that He is coming back. We are encour-
aged to treat every day as the day the Lord will come; we do not
do this out of fear for a Master who beats his servants, but out of
love of a Master who always treats us with love and mercy.

Nevertheless we must try always be watchful, because we can
grow sleepy and complacent, saying that we can leave this
prayer or that confession or the other change in the way we live
until tomorrow. Even as we look forward to the tomorrow of the
Lords coming, we must remember that it might be today!

Stay awake, so that you may be ready!

A Pope's Reflection

(Pope Benedict XVI)

*Today, the first Sunday of Advent, the Church begins a new
Liturgical Year, a new journey of faith that on the one hand
commemorates the event of Jesus Christ and, on the other, opens
to its ultimate fulfilment. It is precisely in this double perspective
that she lives the Season of Advent, looking both to the first
coming of the Son of God, when he was born of the Virgin Mary,
and to his glorious return, when he will come "to judge the liv-
ing and the dead", as we say in the Creed. I would now like to
focus briefly on this evocative theme of "waiting", for it touches
upon a profoundly human aspect in which the faith becomes,
so to speak, completely one with our flesh and our heart.
Expectation or waiting is a dimension that flows through our
whole personal, family and social existence. Expectation is
present in thousands of situations, from the smallest and most
banal to the most important that involve us completely and in
our depths. Among these, let us think of waiting for a child, on
the part of a husband and wife; of waiting for a relative or
friend who is coming from far away to visit us; let us think, for a
young person, of waiting to know his results in a crucially
important examination or of the outcome of a job interview;
in emotional relationships, of waiting to meet the beloved, of
waiting for the answer to a letter, or for the acceptance of
forgiveness.... One could say that man is alive as long as he
waits, as long as hope is alive in his heart. And from his
expectations man recognizes himself: our moral and spiritual
"stature" can be measured by what we wait for, by what we
hope for. Every one of us, therefore, especially in this Season
which prepares us for Christmas, can ask himself: What am I
waiting for? What, at this moment of my life, does my heart long
for? And this same question can be posed at the level of the
family, of the community, of the nation. What are we waiting for
together? What unites our aspirations, what brings them
together? In the time before Jesus' birth the expectation of the
Messiah was very strong in Israel – that is, the expectation of an
Anointed one, a descendent of King David, who would at last set
the people free from every form of moral and political slavery
and find the Kingdom of God. But no one would ever have
imagined that the Messiah could be born of a humble girl like
Mary, the betrothed of a righteous man, Joseph. Nor would she
have ever thought of it, and yet in her heart the expectation of
the Savior was so great, her faith and hope were so ardent, that
he was able to find in her a worthy mother. Moreover, God
himself had prepared her before time. There is a mysterious
correspondence between the waiting of God and that of Mary,
the creature "full of grace", totally transparent to the loving
plan of the Most High. Let us learn from her, the Woman of
Advent, how to live our daily actions with a new spirit,
with the feeling of profound expectation that only
the coming of God*

Diaries, Calendars & Christmas cards

are now available to purchase from the Repository.

Saints of the week

December 3rd Saint Francis Xavier

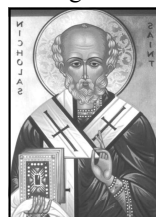
Jesus asked, "What profit would there be for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?". These words were repeated to a young philosophy teacher who had a highly promising career in academics, with success and a life of prestige and honour before him. Francis who was 24 at the time, and living and teaching in Paris, did not heed these words at once. They came from a good friend, Ignatius of Loyola, whose tireless persuasion finally won the young man to Christ. Francis then made the spiritual exercises under the direction of Ignatius, and in 1534, joined his little community, the infant Society of Jesus. At Montmartre they vowed poverty, chastity, obedience, and apostolic service according to the directions of the pope. From Venice, where he was ordained a priest in 1537, Xavier went on to Lisbon and from there sailed to the East Indies, landing at Goa, on the west coast of India. For the next ten years he laboured to bring the faith to such widely scattered peoples as the Hindus, the Malaysians, and the Japanese. He spent much of that time in India, and served as provincial of the newly established Jesuit province of India. Wherever he went, Xavier lived with the poorest people, sharing their food and rough accommodations. He spent countless hours ministering to the sick and the poor, particularly to lepers. Very often he had no time to sleep or even to say his breviary but, as we know from his letters, he was filled always with joy. Xavier went through the islands of Malaysia, then up to Japan. He learned enough Japanese to preach to simple folk, to instruct, and to baptize, and to establish missions for those who were to follow him. From Japan he had dreams of going to China, but this plan was never realized. Before reaching the mainland, he died. His remains are to be found in the Church of Good Jesus in Goa. He and St Theresa were declared co-patrons of the missions in 1925.

Reflection: All of us are called to go and preach to all the nations. Our preaching is not necessarily on far distant shores but to our families, our children, our husband or wife, our co-workers. And we are called to preach not with words, but by our everyday lives. Only by sacrifice, the giving up of all selfish gain, could Francis Xavier be free to bear the Good News to the world. Sacrifice is leaving yourself behind at times for a greater good, the good of prayer, the good of helping someone in need, the good of just listening to another. The greatest gift we have is our time. Francis Xavier gave his to others.

December 6th, Saint Nicholas

The absence of the "hard facts" of history is not necessarily an obstacle to the popularity of saints, as the devotion to Saint Nicholas shows. Both the Eastern and Western Churches honour him, and it is claimed that after the Blessed Virgin, he is the saint most pictured by Christian artists. And yet historically, we can pinpoint only the fact that Nicholas was the 4th century bishop of Myra, a city in Lycia, a province of Asia Minor. As with many of the saints, however, we are able to capture the relationship which Nicholas had with God through the admiration which Christians have had for him—an admiration expressed in the colourful stories which have been told through the centuries. Perhaps the best-known story about Nicholas concerns his charity toward a poor man who was unable to provide dowries for his three daughters of marriageable age. Rather than see them forced into prostitution, Nicholas secretly tossed a bag of gold through the poor man's window on three separate occasions, thus enabling each daughter to be married. Over the centuries, this particular legend evolved into the custom of gift-giving on the saint's feast. In the English-speaking countries, Saint Nicholas became, by a twist of the tongue, Santa Claus—further expanding the example of generosity portrayed by this holy Bishop.

Reflection: The critical eye of modern history makes us take a deeper look at the legends surrounding Saint Nicholas. But perhaps we can utilize the lesson taught by his legendary charity, look deeper at our approach to material goods in the Christmas season, and seek ways to extend our sharing to those in real need.



Flowers for the Church at Christmas

Collections will be taken for the next three weekends for flowers to decorate the Church for the Christmas season.
Thank you for your generosity.

Christmas Gifts for Parishioners

With your generosity, for the last few years, we were able to distribute Christmas Gifts to our Parishioners who, for various reasons are unable to attend Mass. Those who received these packages were so very grateful to think they hadn't been forgotten. We are therefore asking if you could please, once again, show your generosity and donate small gifts that can be given as a reminder that, although out of sight, they are still part of the St. Mary's Parish Family. **Suggested items:**

Small bars or boxes of Chocolates; **Small** packets of Christmas biscuits; Bar of Scented soap or hand cream
Small Puzzle book; Small packet of Pot Pourri
Ladies or Gents Cotton Handkerchiefs
Or any other item you feel may be suitable.

There will be a box at the back of the Church in which to place your gifts. Thank you for your generosity

Simple Things to Pray For During Advent:

1. Pray for attentiveness to what truly matters, without being distracted by trivial things.
2. Pray for opportunities to learn something new regularly.
3. Pray for discernment of how God would like you to set your priorities and the ability to focus on them consistently to fulfil His purposes in your life.
4. Pray for the grace to be able to rest, become aware of God's presence, and enjoy it.
5. Pray for strong relationships with other people in the bond of loving community.
6. Pray for peace in all situations, no matter what the circumstances.
7. Pray for an enlivened imagination that helps you contribute to the world in creative ways.
8. Pray for freedom from all that burdens you - past mistakes, fears, destructive habits, hurts other people have inflicted, and more.
9. Pray for joy and a sense of humour.
10. Pray for confidence in God's love for you and trust in His power to work things out for the best in your life.
11. Pray for a clear mind and the ability to clearly communicate what you value to others.
12. Pray for purity so you can grow as a person and encounter God more fully.
13. Pray for openness to the Holy Spirit's guidance.
14. Pray for a genuine awareness of God's grace in your life and the humility to extend grace to others.
15. Pray for a passion to pursue justice.

FOOD BANK COLLECTION

Next collection

weekend 6th/7th December

Items needed: Breakfast Cereal, Tinned Fish, Coffee, Tea, Long-life Fruit Juice, Milk, Toiletries.



S	A	T	R	U	B	U	G	R	L
D	H	D	I	L	U	R	N	M	A
L	D	U	O	N	R	S	I	E	R
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E	I	O	S	R	E	A	D	Y	L
L	N	W	I	V	E	S	R	S	I
E	G	Y	D	E	A	R	A	K	M

FLOOD WIVES FIELDS AWAKE	EATING HUSBANDS WOMEN BURGLAR	DRINKING ARK MILLSTONE READY
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Please remember in your prayers

Baby Polly Phillips, John D., Sr. Joan Henry
Mary McGinty, Maria Proli, Sister Terry, Francesca Adams,
Mary McGrath, Annie Tomlinson, Rita Rawling, Kate Cradock,
Alex Smith, Jonathan & Lindy Wiltshire, Simon Wilder,
Mary Sturgess, Theresa Davies, Flavia Stampa Gruss,
Kay Hulbert Pam Barbour