



Parish of Holy Cross, Our Lady & Saint Paul

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8th December 2024 - Second Sunday of Advent

CATECHESIS. THE SPIRIT AND THE BRIDE. THE HOLY SPIRIT GUIDES THE PEOPLE OF GOD TOWARDS JESUS OUR HOPE. 5. INCARNATE BY THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, FROM THE VIRGIN MARY. HOW TO CONCEIVE AND BEAR JESUS

Let us conclude with a practical reflection for our life, suggested by the Scripture's insistence on the verbs "to conceive" and "to bear". In the prophecy of Isaiah we hear: "*Behold a young woman shall conceive and bear a son*" (7:14), and the Angel says to Mary, "And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son" (Lk 1:31). Mary first conceived, then bore Jesus: first she welcomed him into herself, in her heart and her flesh, then she gave birth to him.

This happens also for the Church: first she welcomes the Word of God, letting it "speak tenderly to her" (cf. Hos 2:14), and "fill [her] stomach" (cf. Ez 3:3), in accordance with two Bible expressions, and then she gives birth to it with her life and preaching. The second operation is sterile without the first.

"How shall this be, since I have no husband?", Mary asks and the angel answers, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you" (Lk 1:34-35). When she is faced with tasks beyond her strength, the Church spontaneously asks the same question: "How is this possible?". How is it possible to proclaim Jesus Christ and his salvation to a world that seems to seek only well-being, in this world? The answer is also the same as then: "*You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you*" ... "and you shall be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8). This is what Jesus told the Apostles after he had risen, using almost the same identical words. Without the Holy Spirit, the Church cannot move forward, the Church does not grow, the Church cannot preach.

What is said about the Church in general also applies to us, to every baptized person. All of us sometimes find ourselves, in life, in situations beyond our strength and ask ourselves: "How can I cope with this situation?". It helps, in such cases, to remember and repeat to ourselves what the angel said to the Virgin: "*With God nothing will be impossible*" (Lk 1:37).

Brothers and sisters, let us too always resume our journey, with this comforting certainty in our hearts: "With God nothing will be impossible". And if we believe this, we will perform miracles. With God nothing will be impossible. Thank you.

OUR PARISH VISION & MISSION

We are a warm & welcoming community of faith rooted in the love of God revealed to us in Jesus Christ. Belonging is at the heart of what we do as members of the body of Christ. We believe worship is not just found in prayer, it’s something expressed in everything we do.

MASSES FOR THE WEEK			
Sunday	SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT	9:30am People of the Parish 11am Solano Fernandes R.I.P.	SP OL
<i>Tea & Coffee are served after both Sunday Masses</i>			
Monday	THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY	12pm People of the Parish	OL
<i>Access to Our Lady’s for weekday Mass is through the entrance to the right side of the church</i>			
Tuesday	Ferial	9:30am Anthony Nelson	OL
<i>Tea & Coffee are served in the Saint Joseph chapel after Mass on Tuesday mornings. Everyone welcome!</i>			
Wednesday	Ferial	9am Ann McManus R.I.P.	OL
Thursday	Ferial		
Friday	Saint Lucy	9:30am Alice & Arthur Cook R.I.P.	SP
Saturday	Saint John of the Cross		
Sunday	THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT	9:30am People of the Parish 11am Margaret & Bob Smart	SP OL

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Those who are sick
Irene Fortune, Anna Coughlan, Canon Philip Moor, Lily Baker, Christopher Browne, Rob Creer, Eileen & Julia Ward, Philip Smith, Clare McElroy & Teresa Denye

Those who have died
Michael Christopher Coughlan & Terence Hughes

POPE’S PRAYER INTENTION FOR DECEMBER 2024: *FOR PILGRIMS OF HOPE* - Let us pray that this Jubilee strengthens us in our faith, helping us to recognise the Risen Christ in the midst of our lives, transforming us into pilgrims of Christian hope.

SAINT JOSEPH LAMP the lamp burns for Raymond Michael Stevens (Speedy Recovery) at Our Lady’s and Doreen Davies R.I.P. at Saint Paul’s. Envelopes for intentions are at the back of each church. A £5 donation is requested.

PARISH

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT – Monday 16th December, 4:30pm at Saint Paul's & 6:30pm at Our Lady's. Please do join our school communities as they lead us in these beautiful reflections as we draw toward the end of our Advent journey & prepare for the great festivities of Christmas.

ST ANSELMS CHRISTMAS PARTY – will be held on Wednesday 11th December 2024 between 1pm to 3pm in the College. Parishioners are welcome, but please email Betty Long at rlong@st-anselms.com to confirm your attendance for catering purposes.

ADVENT EXPLORE with Shrewsbury Youth Mission Team as we prepare to welcome Jesus Christ, the reason for Christmas! Thursday 12th December, 7pm in Our Lady's church. We encourage all our young people who are in Year 7 or above to come, especially if you have just been confirmed, are preparing for or just thinking about it!

DECORATING OUR LADY'S CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS will take place after 11am Mass on Sunday 22nd December (4th Sunday of Advent). Everyone is welcome to come & help!

CONFIRMATION Any young person who is in Year 8 or above at school and wishes to enrol in this year's Confirmation programme please get an information flyer from the back of church. The sessions for this year's confirmation programme will continue on Thursday 9th January) at 7pm in Our Lady's. If you know someone who would like to be confirmed but hasn't yet joined tell them to come & bring a friend or three!

MICHAEL CHRISTOPHER COUGHLAN R.I.P. – Thank you to everyone for your kind words & prayers after the death of my father. Celebrating his Requiem Mass & burial last week was the hardest thing I have done. It was lovely to have the support of people here in the parish whether you were able to come to Manchester or were praying for us at home. Please do continue to keep myself, Mum & my brother Kevin in your prayers. Fr Michael

Donations in his memory totalled £308.42, generously someone has offered to match the total, meaning that both CAFOD & Holy Family SVP conference in Sale Moor will receive that amount.

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES – Cards with the Mass times on for Christmas are available for you to take home this weekend. Take an extra one, give it to a friend & invite them to join us for Christmas.

CHRISTMAS CARDS AND GIFTS are now available at the Piety stall at each church. There are also copies of CAFOD's world gifts catalogue available as well for you to take home.

WEEKLY RAFFLE – Congratulations to last week's winner with ticket no. 627. Many thanks for all your support and funds raised will go towards the Christmas Raffle to be held on Sunday 22nd December. *Donations for prizes would be greatly appreciated e.g. Wine, Spirits, Chocolates and Biscuits.* Please hand in to the helpers at the back of Our Lady's.

CAFOD CHRISTMAS FUN RUN, WALK OR WHEEL will take place on Friday 27th December at Wavertree Athletics Centre, Wellington Road, Liverpool L15 4LE, 10 am registration, 11am start line. Further details on cafod.org.uk/news/events/liverpool-fun-run.

BECOMING A CATHOLIC – For anyone who has been baptised as a Catholic, as a member of another Christian community or never been baptised at all, we will be running the Catholicism course. Our next meeting is now in the New Year (Monday 6th January 2025) at 6pm in the Saint Joseph chapel at Our Lady's.

STRONGER TOGETHER COMMUNITY GROUP empowers members to address daily life challenges in a supportive environment. Tuesday mornings (9:30am-12pm) in Saint Joseph's parish centre, North Road. The group is facilitated by Caritas Diocese of Shrewsbury.

KNIGHTS OF SAINT COLUMBA - the order believes in charity, unity & fraternity, over many years they have helped priests, parishes & our Catholic schools & many projects internationally. Membership is open to Catholic men who are aged 18 & over. Please contact Tony Connolly on 07950 392193.

CATENIANS - The Birkenhead circle meets each month at Prenton Golf Club to enjoy each other's company and to support one another and our families. Membership is open to Catholic men who are aged 18 & over. If you would like to know more, please contact p.davenport.123@btinternet.com

EASY FUNDRAISING - thanks to your generosity in using Easy Fundraising, our latest payout is £24.38. As you are shopping for your Christmas presents online, don't forget to use the Easy Fundraising donation reminder so that the parish can collect even more free donations as you shop!

PARISH FINANCE - 1st December 2024

**Offertory £496.85 (cash); £17.50 (Standing Orders);
£19 (card/contactless); Zambia/Eye Fund/Caritas £24**

Thank you for your continuing generosity.

To donate online,
please scan the
QR code.



STANDING ORDERS - You can set a standing order up through your online banking or via the form which is available from the parish office. If you are a UK taxpayer, please gift aid these payments.

BONUS BALL SCHEME - There was no winner in the draw held on 30th November, the prize money rolls over to next week's draw.

CHARITY

CARITAS DIOCESE OF SHREWSBURY - there will be a collection **next week** in support of Caritas. This will be in addition to the retiring collections at the Christmas Masses. Caritas work supporting many families in our area with Christmas being one of their busiest periods. Let us help them to continue their vital work through our financial support.

CAFOD WORLD GIFTS - the catalogue is now available to take home at the back of churches. Don't forget to get your order in ASAP for standard postage, alternatively you could send one as an e-Gift.

TESCO STRONGER STARTS: OUR LADY & SAINT EDWARD'S PRIMARY SCHOOL - each month Tesco in Bidston Moss supports three local charitable schemes. This month they are supporting OLSE Fitness for Fun, with the aim to promote cycling to & from school where possible. You can vote for this scheme of one of our parish primary schools by picking up the blue tokens & putting it in the box marked Our Lady & Saint Edward's. The charity with the most votes can receive up to £1500 toward their scheme. If you shop in Tesco, please vote for the project of one of our primary schools!

WIRRAL FOODBANK - Thank you for your continued support. Donations can be left at the back of Saint Paul's or outside the Saint Joseph chapel in Our Lady's.

STAMPS - The stamps are sent off to the RNIB to support their work with those suffering sight loss. There is a box at the back of church for any used stamps you have.

GLASSES - Please donate any old glasses to support the work of the Eye Fund. Boxes for donations are at the back of each church.

TABLET BLISTER PACKS - please donate used ones to support the Marie Curie charity.