

## 4th Sunday of Advent

**First Reading** Isaiah 7:10-14  
The people should not put God to the test, but they will be given a miraculous sign.

**Responsorial Psalm** 23:1-2, 3-4, 5-6  
Let the Lord enter! He is the king of glory.

**Second Reading** Romans 1: 1-7  
The promise of God is revealed in God's Son and it is his Good News that the faithful are to take out to the world.

## Gospel Acclamation

### Alleluia, alleluia!

The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel, a name which means 'God-is-with-us'.

### Alleluia!

**Gospel** Matthew 1:18-24  
The world is turned upside down but we need not be fearful.

## Parish of Corpus Christi

Sacred Heart (Goldthorpe), Sacred Heart & St Helen (Hoyland) and St Michael & All Angels (Wombwell)



**PARISH PRIEST:** Fr Declan Brett.

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Roman Catholic Diocese of Hallam Trust • Registered Charity Number 512021

Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2022

Sunday Year A

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Weekday Cycle II

*"Do not be afraid."*

## Service Times & Intentions

<b>Saturday Vigil</b> (St Michael`s)	<b>17 Dec</b>	<b>5.30pm</b>	People of the Prish
<b>Sunday</b> (Sacred Heart)	<b>18 Dec</b>	<b>9.00am</b>	Boleslaw Przybysz RIP
<b>Sunday</b> (St Helen`s)	<b>18 Dec</b>	<b>11.00am</b>	Margaret & Mint Burkinshaw RIP
Tuesday (St Helen`s)	20 Dec	10.00am	Audrey O`Neill RIP
Wednesday (Sacred Heart)	21 Dec	2.30pm	Funeral Service for Jean Power
Thursday (St Helen`s)	22 Dec	10.00am	Peter, Yvonne and Damian Flynn RIP
Friday (Sacred Heart)	23 Dec		Private Intention
Saturday (St Michael`s)	24 Dec	10.00am	Nikki Whitehouse (Illness)
<b>Saturday Vigil</b> (St Michael`s)	<b>24 Dec</b>	<b>5.30pm</b>	People of the Parish
<b>Sunday</b> (St Helen`s)	<b>25Dec</b>	<b>Midnight Mass</b>	Peter Hutchinson RIP
<b>Sunday</b> (Sacred Heart)	<b>25 Dec</b>	<b>10.00am</b>	Christine Haigh RIP

**Divine Mercy Chaplet** is at 3.00pm on Fridays at St. Michael's Church

**The Sacrament of Reconciliation** is always available upon request.

**Rosary** each Wednesday in Goldthorpe at 1.30pm.

There are times when we think we know where life is going; we've mapped out what the future is going to hold. People excitedly tell others of their plans, how they will get their qualifications, then make their way up the career ladder. Or how they are planning to get married, create a home, have children. But something unexpected puts all their plans in disarray. It's happened to plenty of people in the last couple of years during the Covid-19 pandemic: lockdown changed lives, and illness and death upended ambitions. It's at moments like these that people have to make different life-changing decisions and the strength of their character is shown, overcoming their fears, sticking to their principles and standing by others. In today's Gospel, Joseph is betrothed and is expecting to marry Mary. Then he finds that she is pregnant. We are told how he discovers this; it would have been a shattering blow. All his plans for the future are in disarray. Yet as a man of honour he decides not to shame Mary but divorce her informally, for betrothal then in Jewish culture was a serious legal contract. At first, Joseph seems to see things as they are: Mary is having a baby outside wedlock, and this is unacceptable. But it takes an angel for Joseph to see things as they *really* are – as God sees them. To do this, Joseph has to put aside his fears: "do not be afraid", the angel tells him. So Joseph first has his world turned upside down, and then makes a choice about what he will do next that will go against the customs of his people, against what he has accepted all his life as the way to behave. It is an extraordinary challenge, but Joseph has both the strength of character and the faith in God to do it. It is not the life he has chosen, or at least not the way he expected life to turn out. Joseph highlights what comes with responsibility and what comes with love. Above all, he is open to listening to God through a messenger.

While Joseph's situation is unique – unique in the history of salvation – his story is one that so many of us can identify with. Everything he thought was sure – that he had found love with Mary, and could look forward to a certain future – is suddenly undone. Nor can life go back to normal. Suddenly, God is asking of him something more momentous than Joseph might ever have envisaged. In the Gospel story of the annunciation, when the angel appears to Mary, she has to make a choice and

she accepts the role that God wants of her. In Joseph's case, what God asks of him could be said to be even harder: he is being asked to stand by Mary's choice. What his life will be in the future is a consequence of her decision. We have to face those decisions ourselves in life, too. A husband who stands by his wife when she gives up a well-paid job to take on a much lower-paid but worthwhile career; a wife who accepts that her husband can no longer take the suffering of more chemotherapy treatment and instead chooses palliative care.

Joseph's story also highlights the importance of listening. We are all influenced by our culture, our past experiences, our expectations. But Joseph was prepared to listen to the angel. Are we prepared to recognise those among us who are credible messengers, who might have something to say that is totally unexpected? Can we put aside our preconceived notions, and be open and humble enough to listen to those around us, and to discern what God might be saying and what God is calling to us to do? The Gospel stories around the birth of Jesus frequently refer to fear. When the angel appears to Mary explaining that she will conceive the Son of God, when angels appear to the shepherds in the fields announcing Jesus' birth, as well as when the angel appears to Joseph, the message is the same: do not be afraid. All of them were shocked by what they saw, and what they were told, but faith in God helped them muster courage to deal with what befell them. When we are faced with the most tremendous challenges, can we also find the courage to heed the message: do not be afraid?

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### **Prayers for the Sick**

We pray for our sick and/or housebound parishioners. We remember especially Marie Bray (nee Walsh), Peter Gillott, Jan Dextor, Percy Winterton, Kath Hardy, Carole Dyson, Bernadette Hault, Janet O'Brien, Michael Bennett, Janette Barber, Claire Selby, Paddy McNicholas, David Hardy, Tess Lynch, Justin Phillip Collins, Hannah Prentiss, Pat Hermitage, Thomas Collins, Norma Marshall, Val Armstrong, Terry Mullins, Matthew Deakin, Margaret Booker, Kath Cragg, Michael Foy, Shirley Broadhead, Norah Preuss, Mavis Guilcher.

### **Requiescat in Pace**

We pray for the repose of the soul of Jean Power who died recently. Please keep her family and friends in your prayers. The funeral service will be held on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> December at 2.30pm in Sacred Heart, Goldthorpe.

### **Red Mission Boxes**

Please bring in your Red Mission Boxes at your earliest convenience. If you are a UK Taxpayer, please consider using Gift Aid and make sure your name is on the box that you leave, or empty your own box and bring to church, making sure your name is on your donation. This allows the Missio Co-ordinator to log your donation and therefore claim the Gift Aid. Thank you for your support and for your continued prayers for missionaries around the world.

### **Knights of St. Columba Christmas Appeal for Barnsley Hospital**

This year the Knights are hoping to help the elderly patients in Barnsley Hospital. Items such as slippers and toiletries would be gratefully received and all age groups appreciate chocolate! If you can help, please leave your donation at the back of church.

### **Bonus Ball - Goldthorpe and Hoyland**

The Bonus Ball last Saturday was number 54. There was no winner in Goldthorpe so next week will be a rollover of £50. In Hoyland the winner was P Tomlinson, receiving the usual £25

### **World Youth Day 2023**

Next year the Hallam Diocese are taking a group of 20 young people to World Youth Day. The costs involved are extremely high due to the cost of living, petrol and the usual high prices countries charge when they host WYD's. If you are able to help towards the costs, please see the poster at the back of church, contact Sue McDonald at [youth@hallam-diocese.com](mailto:youth@hallam-diocese.com) or donate via the church collection, marking it specifically for WYD. Thank you.

### **Sacred Heart, Goldthorpe**

This year the parishioners at Sacred Heart have decided that instead of sending personal Christmas cards there will be one collective card for everyone to sign and have a collection Box for donations for a chosen charity of Fr Declan's. This year it will be the Hallam Bethlehem Fund.

### **Book Sale at Goldthorpe**

A huge thank you to everyone who supported the book sale on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> Dec by donating or buying pre-loved books. We are delighted to say we raised £36.50 for parish funds. Look out for another sale in 2023!  
Amanda Campbell and Ann Stones

### **Christmas Mass Times**

24 <sup>th</sup> December Christmas Eve	St Michael's	5.30pm
Midnight Mass	St Helen's	12.00am
Christmas Day	Sacred Heart	10.00am

### **Prayer for Vocations**

Loving and generous Father: it is you who call us by name and ask us to follow you. In particular, you call some to serve you as ministers in your church. Bless our Diocese of Hallam by raising up faith-filled and dedicated priests, deacons and religious. Bless our families and choose from our homes those who are needed for your mission.

Blessed John Anne	Pray for us
Blessed Robert Ludlam	Pray for us
Blessed Nicholas Garlick	Pray for us
Blessed William Richardson	Pray for us
0 Mary, Mother of Perpetual Help	Pray for us