

Fourth Sunday of Advent

First Reading 2 Samuel 7:1-5,8-12,14-16
Although Samuel is a “big man” in his day, he’s also sensitive enough to see that it isn’t right for him to be dwelling in a spacious house while God dwells “in a tent”, and he is determined to do something about it.

Responsorial Psalm 88:2-3,4-5,27,29
I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord.

Second Reading Romans 16: 25-27
Paul rejoices in Jesus, whose strength enables us to live out the Good News so that, reaching to the ends of the earth, it draws all people to become Jesus’ disciples. Glory is to be given to the Father through Jesus Christ for ever.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!
I am the handmaid of the Lord: let what you have said be done to me.

Alleluia!

Gospel Luke 1:26-38
Luke retells the glorious story of the incarnation. Through Mary’s unconditional acceptance of the angel’s message, Jesus has come into our world as one of us and is like us in all things, apart from sin.

Parish of Corpus Christi

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



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Sunday 24th December 2023

Sunday Year B

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Weekday Cycle II

The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so, the child born of you will be holy and will be called Son of God.”

The incarnation is the most extraordinary, mind-dazzling, significant and fascinating event in human history. It has fired the imagination of artists of every kind. Poets, sculptors, writers, and biblical experts have used striking imagery to put this unimaginable truth into human language. They’ve spoken of it as “a divine kiss of peace”, an “explosion of God’s extraordinary love for us”, a “fresh bond of intimacy” between God and humanity, between the mighty God and God’s tiny creatures. At the heart of this astonishing story stands a woman who is totally one with us in our humanity.

The annunciation uniquely focuses, not upon a great man, such as a general, a politician or a renowned scholar, but upon a young teenager called Mary. Almost from early childhood she has been hidden away in a tiny village called Nazareth located on the very edges of the mighty Roman Empire. She is the kind of person who might be dismissed as a “Little Miss Nobody”. St John’s Gospel records that when Philip, one of Jesus’ first disciples, was told that the long-awaited Messiah had come and was living in Nazareth, his cool reaction was, “What good ever came from Nazareth?”

The story of the annunciation begins with the arrival of an unexpected visitor at Mary’s little cottage. An angel, the bearer of startling news, reveals that she is to conceive, carry in her womb, give birth and finally be mother to the long-awaited Messiah.

From the beginning of this Mass, we agreed that if we’re looking for someone to guide us through the final days of Advent, into our Christmas celebrations, and finally into the living-out of the Christmas message in the year ahead, we could not do better than turn to our Blessed Lady.

Strangely enough, it is sometimes argued that we can’t take Mary as a model. After all – so the argument goes – she saw Jesus in the flesh, lived with him for thirty years and was endowed with special privileges. Think of her immaculate conception or her glorious assumption into heaven.

Service Times & Intentions

Saturday Vigil (St Michael’s)	23 Dec	5.30pm	People of the Parish
Sunday (Sacred Heart)	24 Dec	9.00am	Elizabeth Awuah RIP
Sunday (St Helen’s))	24 Dec	11.00am	Rowland and Harriet Swallow RIP
Sunday Christmas Vigil (St Michael’s)	24 Dec	5.30pm	Shaun Barrett RIP
Midnight Mass (St Helen’s)	24 Dec	Midnight	Margaret and Mint Burkinshaw RIP
Christmas Day (Sacred Heart)	25 Dec	10.00am	People of the Parish
			NO WEEKDAY MASSES THIS WEEK
Saturday Vigil (St Michael’s)	30 Dec	5.30pm	People of the Parish
Sunday (Sacred Heart)	31 Dec	9.00am	Christine and Catherine Haigh RIP
Sunday (St. Helen’s)	31 Dec	11.00am	Barry Cooper RIP

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

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is always available upon request.

The Rosary is every **Wednesday** at 1.30pm in Sacred Heart, Goldthorpe

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at Goldthorpe each Thursday 7.00-8.00pm

However, it is none of these things that make her our model. It is, rather, the fact that her life centred upon the Father, on trying to discern his will for her, on daily turning to him in prayer, on alertness to the needs of others, and her readiness to help them in their needs.

It is precisely the same things that God is asking of us: not that we should become someone else, but rather that we should remain as we are. God wants us as we are, loves us as we are, with our strengths and weaknesses, our failings and our successes, because God made us as we are, and God has no regrets.

In the days before Jesus' coming, people generally acknowledged God's almighty power. A prophet like Isaiah could picture God holding the whole world in his hands and encompassing the heavens with an outstretched palm. But even Isaiah could never have begun to imagine what we celebrate at Christmastime – this same God coming to live among us as one of us – coming as a tiny baby, a bundle of weakness and helplessness and, in the end, dying in shame on a wooden cross. He comes into our world, just as we did, by being born of a woman. Without a woman's cooperation, there would have been no incarnation. Without Mary's cooperation, there would be no Christmas. It is that thought that leads many people, even small children, to try to reflect her love by practical acts of kindness to their sisters and brothers.

If we take time, make time – even just a few minutes each day in this often hectic period - to recall how Mary treasured and pondered “these things” in her heart, we too will ponder them, and come to appreciate why the wonder of Christ's birth – even at the end of a difficult year like 2023 - calls for celebration, for rejoicing, and for gentle, loving wonder, in the company of Mary. It is she who best teaches us how to love Jesus; it is she who shows us, despite our littleness, to love Jesus as she did by making him the love of our lives.

And so as Pope St John Paul II put it, “the faithful, living in the spirit of the liturgy, by thinking about the inexpressible love with which the Virgin Mother awaited her son, are invited to take her as model and prepare themselves to meet the Saviour”.

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Prayers for the Sick

We pray for our sick and/or housebound parishioners. We remember especially Margaret Thornton, Ethel O'Connor, Julia Hill, Christine and Bill Mays, Marie Bray (nee Walsh), Percy Winterton, Carole Dyson, Bernadette Hoult, Michael Bennett, Janette Barber, 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, Michael Foy, Shirley Broadhead, Norah Preuss.

Requiescant in Pace

We pray for the souls of Kath Hardy, Ethel O'Connor and Thomas Pidgeon who died recently. Please keep their families and friends in your prayers

Bonus Ball - Goldthorpe and Hoyland

The winning number was 8. The winners in Goldthorpe was G Bailey, winning £25. The winner in Hoyland was L Redfern, winning the rollover of £50.

Christmas Offerings

The Collection over the three Christmas masses is for the parish priest. A big thank you from Fr Declan for your generosity, as well as all the cards, gifts and good wishes. A big thank you to all those who helped prepare our three churches for the Christmas period, and to those who give their time to the parish in so many ways, throughout the year.

Change to Mass

First of all, Saturday morning mass at St Michael's has been discontinued. There has been no congregation at the mass for a few weeks and it is costly to heat the space for nothing.

Secondly, please note there will be no weekday masses for the week after Christmas.

Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust

Your crib donations this Christmas time will be for the benefit of the Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust, formerly the Hallam Bethlehem Fund. Thank you.

Hallam Bridge

There are a few copies of the latest edition the Hallam Bridge, the news from Hallam Diocese, at the back of church.

The file will be available for everyone on the Diocese website: hallam-diocese.com

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
O Mary, Mother of Perpetual Help	Pray for us