

Dear Parishioners,

### Pope Francis proclaims "Year of St Joseph"

With the Apostolic Letter "Patris corde" ("With a Father's Heart"), Pope Francis recalls the 150th anniversary of the declaration of Saint Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church. To mark the occasion, the Holy Father has proclaimed a "Year of Saint Joseph" from today, 8 December 2020, to 8 December 2021.

Let us recite the prayer given by Pope Francis:

*Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,  
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

*To you God entrusted his only Son; in you Mary placed her trust;  
with you Christ became man. Blessed Joseph, to us too,  
show yourself a father and guide us in the path of life.  
Obtain for us grace, mercy, and courage, and defend us from every evil.  
Amen.*

Regards, Fr. George Thomas Parish Priest



A Prayer for Gaudete Sunday

*Dear God, you know that our hearts long for the joy and gladness promised by life with you. Help us to remember that you are with us always, and that our hearts will rest only when they rest with you.*

*Holy Spirit, guide the choices we make throughout this week. Help us endure hardship. Remind us to be patient. Stifle our tendency to complain. Help us realize how much we owe the creator for all we have and all we are.*

*Father in heaven, we offer thanks to you for sending John the Baptist to prepare the way for the coming of the savior. Help us to heed the Baptist's message to repent and to renew our commitment to live in holiness.*

*Come Lord Jesus. So often we are impatient for your coming, yet we are fearful of living our lives as one with you. Come and ease our anxiety. Come and reward our patience. Come and remove our sorrow. Our communities and our world eagerly awaits the day of your birth.*

	<p><b>Mother of God Greencoat Road Leicester LE3 6NZ</b></p> <p><b>☎(0116) 287 5232</b> <b>✉<a href="mailto:mogparish@gmail.com">mogparish@gmail.com</a></b> <b><a href="http://www.motherofgodleicester.co.uk">www.motherofgodleicester.co.uk</a></b></p> <p><i>NRCDT- Registered Charity</i></p>	<p><b>Parish Priest: Fr. George Thomas <a href="mailto:gchelackal@gmail.com">gchelackal@gmail.com</a></b></p> 
<p>Our Schools: Christ the King Primary - 0116 2857261 - <a href="http://www.ctlk.org/p_Home.ikml">www.ctlk.org/p_Home.ikml</a> English Martyrs' Secondary - 0116 2428880 - <a href="http://www.emschool.co.uk/">www.emschool.co.uk/</a></p>		
 <p>THIRD SUNDAY OF <i>Advent</i></p>	<p><b>Third Sunday of Advent</b></p> <p><b>13<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> December 2020</b></p> <p><b>Gaudete Sunday</b></p>	

**Mother of God Church, Leicester  
LE3 6NZ, UK**

In church public worship now available on all days,  
**Live-streaming** of all liturgical celebrations everyday  
Kindly note the Mass timings for ordinary days:

Weekdays	(Saturday)	(Sunday)
Monday – No service	10:00 am English Mass 05:45 pm Malayalam Mass	10:30 am English Mass 04:00 pm Malayalam Mass
Tuesday – 10:00 am English Mass		
Wednesday – 06:00 pm English Mass		
Thursday – 10:00 am English Mass		
Friday – 10:00 am English Mass		

Live <http://Facebook.com/gchelackal>  
<http://motherofgodleicester.co.uk>

*Confessions are available after Mass*

Please book online and reserve your seats for Masses  
<https://massbooking.uk/parish.php?p=868>  
20 family pews and 15 individual seats are available.

Fr. George Thomas,  
Parish Priest,  
Mother of God Church

### Words of the Holy Father

To prepare the way of the Lord's coming, it is necessary to take note of the requirements of conversion to which the Baptist invites us... One cannot have a relationship of love, charity and fraternity with one's neighbours if there are "gaps", just as one cannot travel a road with many potholes... We cannot give up in the face of negative situations of closure and rejection: we must not allow ourselves to succumb to the mentality of the world, because the centre of our life is Jesus and His word of light, love and solace. It is He!

**Pope Francis December intention: For a life of prayer.** We pray that our personal relationship with Jesus Christ be nourished by the Word of God and a life of prayer.

## Readings and Gospel for Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December.

### 1st Reading - Isaiah 61:1-2A, 10-11

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, to announce a year of favor from the LORD and a day of vindication by our God. I rejoice heartily in the LORD, in my God is the joy of my soul; for he has clothed me with a robe of salvation and wrapped me in a mantle of justice, like a bridegroom adorned with a diadem, like a bride bedecked with her jewels. As the earth brings forth its plants, and a garden makes its growth spring up, so will the Lord GOD make justice and praise spring up before all the nations.

### Responsorial Psalm - Luke 1:46-48, 49-50, 53-54

**My soul rejoices in my God.**

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked upon his lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed: **R.**

The Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name. He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation. **R.**

He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has come to the help of his servant Israel for he has remembered his promise of mercy, **R.**

### 2nd Reading - 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Brothers and sisters: Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophetic utterances. Test everything; retain what is good. Refrain from every kind of evil. May the God of peace make you perfectly holy and may you entirely, spirit, soul, and body, be preserved blameless for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will also accomplish it.

### Gospel - John 1:6-8, 19-28

A man named John was sent from God. He came for testimony, to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to testify to the light. And this is the testimony of John. When the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to him to ask him, "Who are you?" He admitted and did not deny it, but admitted, "I am not the Christ." So they asked him, "What are you then? Are you Elijah?" And he said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." So they said to him, "Who are you, so we can give an answer to those who sent us? What do you have to say for yourself?" He said: "I am the voice of one crying out in the desert, 'make straight the way of the Lord,'" as Isaiah the prophet said." Some Pharisees were also sent. They asked him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ or Elijah or the Prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water; but there is one among you whom you do not recognize, the one who is coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie." This happened in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

**An Act of Spiritual Communion** can help us and the priests we see online celebrating Mass in empty Churches frequently encourage us to ask for Our Lord's guidance by offering prayers like this one written by St. Alphonsus Liguori in the 18th century.

**My Jesus,**  
**I believe that you are present in this Holy Sacrament**  
**of the altar. I love you above all things and I passionately desire**  
**to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,**  
**come spiritually into my soul so that I may unite myself wholly**  
**to you now and forever. Amen**

**Bible Verse of the Day - Third Sunday of Advent.** Again, this Sunday, we are given the glorious witness of St. John the Baptist. This passage above is from Year C of the liturgical cycle, but Year A & B also present us with John the Baptist. In this sermon of John, he says that Jesus will come and baptize "with the Holy Spirit and fire." The image of being baptized "with fire" is a good one to reflect upon. It especially reveals to us the deep purification Jesus desires for our souls.

**This week we continue to pray for all the people of Leicester, and for all the places that are in lockdown,** for all the sick and housebound people of the parish. Let also pray for each other.

**The Family of the late James Sweeney** would like to thank you for your kind expression of sympathy in their recent sad loss. The Holy Sacrifice of Mass has been offered for your intentions.

**Billy Shearer RIP,** Funeral Mass will be celebrated at MOG by Fr. Martin Hardy at 11.30am on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> December, followed by committal at Gilroes Cemetery. Our deepest and sincere condolences to his family and friends.

**Mother of God First Holy Communion Programme.** Due the difficult restrictive Covid measures that would have to be in place in order to safely operate our First Holy Communion Programme this year, it has been decided that we will unfortunately not be able to offer a course this year. However, with the very good news of the vaccine "on the way" we will resume our programme later next year. So, in order to accommodate the possible higher number of children being involved with the programme, next year we will introduce **two classes** per session running the same parallel programme. These classes will be held on Saturday and Sunday mornings. Look forward to meeting you all then.

**Applications for Autumn 2021 to Christ the King Catholic Voluntary Academy.** If you would like your child to start in Reception at Christ the King in August 2021, the closing date for first-time admissions is 15th January 2021. You will need to complete our Supplementary Form, which can be downloaded from our school website:

[http://www.ckleicester.co.uk/docs/admissions/Supplementary\\_Information\\_Form.pdf](http://www.ckleicester.co.uk/docs/admissions/Supplementary_Information_Form.pdf). You can also collect a form from the school office. You will also need to apply to the Local Authority; please see the following link for further information and to apply online: <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/school-and-colleges/school-admissions/starting-school/>

**300 Club: 6<sup>th</sup> December:** £50 B Hickey (276). £25 M Goodrich (203), J O'Grady (180).

**CAFOD Advent Prayer - A Journey To The Manger.** Sunday 13 December, 6pm-6:30pm. Join us for some simple and peaceful prayer and reflection as we share our journey of Advent together. We will gather around a candle and be gently led in a time of prayer. [Register](#) to the series.

**CAFOD's Christmas Fun Run' - A virtual event on December 27<sup>th</sup>.** 'Take to the streets in your local area on December 27<sup>th</sup> to run, walk or toddle 5km for CAFOD this Christmas.' There are loads of places where you can join this event. Please go to the [Eventbrite page](#) to sign up, or the [Facebook Event](#) to share. To fundraise, please go to [JustGiving](#). All are welcome, and if you fundraise over £100 we will send you a running vest! We look forward to sharing our stories and experiences with you online soon,

**Mondays from 30 November, 7.45pm-9.00pm.** [Introducing Laudato Si'](#) You are invited to an Advent series of online talks on *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis' encyclical on care the Earth our common home. The series opens with Paul Bodenham on *Reading Laudato Si' with heart, head and hands*, and closes with Sr Margaret Atkins OSA from Boarbank Hall in Lancaster Diocese.

**Compass in Advent ...preparing for Christmas.** Our lives are being turned upside down at the moment due to Covid-19. Join us to reflect on some of the characters in the Christmas story whose lives were also radically changed. How is God speaking to us through these stories today? Each Friday we will focus on one set of characters. The meeting will also include a sharing of a contemporary story of vocation/call. There will be time for sharing, questions and discussion. For young adults 18-35. Fridays - 27th Nov, 4th, 11th, 18th Dec. At 7pm for one hour. Zoom link: email us on [CompassInAdvent@gmail.com](mailto:CompassInAdvent@gmail.com). For the link and for any other information. Facebook event: <https://bit.ly/CompassInAdvent>

**A selection of Advent and Christmas** music recorded and produced by the team at NDCYS. You're invited to join us at 8pm on Wednesdays through Advent as we explore the themes of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love [Subscribe for free at YouTube and turn on notifications](#). Perfect for your Parish, School or home, available to download from [ndcys.com/resources](http://ndcys.com/resources).

**During Advent the Mill Hill Missionaries** will help us to pause and reflect in preparation for Christmas. Each Friday you are invited to join us online to reflect on the Gospel for the upcoming Sunday. Our time of prayer will be at 10.30am each Friday and will last for about 20 minutes. Join us on:

18 December - Fr Vincent Oates MHM

Christmas Day - Fr Anthony Chantry MHM (this will be pre-recorded and available to view from Christmas Eve). Please join by going to the [Missio YouTube channel: youtube.com/MissioUK](#). We also hope to make the videos available online to watch again or share with fellow parishioners.

### **Prayer to Mary during Coronavirus Pandemic**

O Mary, you always shine on our path as a sign of salvation and of hope.

We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick,  
who at the cross took part in Jesus' pain, keeping your faith firm.

You, Salvation of Your People, know what we need,  
and we are sure you will provide so that, as in Cana of Galilee,  
we may return to joy and to feasting after this time of trial.

Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform to the will of the Father  
and to do as we are told by Jesus, who has taken upon himself  
our sufferings and carried our sorrows to lead us,  
through the cross, to the joy of the resurrection.

Under your protection, we seek refuge, Holy Mother of God.

Do not disdain the entreaties of we who are in trial,  
but deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin. **Amen**

**Heaven's Road Catholic Online Radio** [www.heavensroadfm.com](http://www.heavensroadfm.com). An excellent Catholic radio broadcasting 24/7 from St John's Seminary, Guildford. Has traditional prayers, including Rosary, Angelus and prayers for the sick, plus lots of feature programmes and music. Also has many links on the website to podcasts etc, and about 40 live audio-visual Masses a day from webcams in UK and Ireland. If anyone has a spare shilling to give away, the Radio is reliant upon donations - a very worthwhile cause. [Donate here](#)

**Mary's Meal.** As we enter Advent and approach the end of a challenging year for us all, we want to thank you for your faithful support of Mary's Meals at this time. Our founder Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow has recorded [a special message](#) for parishioners. We hope you will continue to spread the word about our beautiful mission by sharing this short film during your services, on your website or on social media. Please [get in touch](#) if you need this film in another format or if you'd like to arrange a virtual talk from one of our volunteers to update the parish about our work. And as many of us prepare for a very different Christmas celebration, we invite your congregation to set a place for a loved one at our [virtual Christmas table](#). Thanks to our new match funding campaign [Double The Love](#), donations will go even further. Give until 31 January 2021 and public donations will be doubled by the UK government, up to £2 million - meaning we can reach even more hungry children in Liberia with life-changing school meals. We wish you and your congregation peace and blessings this Advent and Christmas.

The Diocese of Nottingham is inviting you to join others from across the diocese in preparing for and celebrating Christmas.

**Living Advent Podcast.** Living Advent is a weekly podcast series throughout Advent exploring the virtues of Hope, Love, Joy & Peace with people from across the diocese and how we can live them out. We speak to a young husband and father, a musician, a retired social worker and a police officer. You can find it on your usual podcast service by searching 'Living Advent Podcast' or visit [www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/podcasts](http://www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/podcasts) for links on how to stream or download it.

**Diocesan Carol Service.** Carol services are a wonderful family tradition of our Advent and Christmas celebrations, and often are a great opportunity to invite those who are not regular Churchgoers to connect with our parish or chaplaincy community. This can be quite challenging to do this year so we are offering a virtual diocesan carol service. We will celebrate a short online carol service on **Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December at 6pm** on Bishop Patrick's YouTube Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/BishopPatrickMckinney>) with readings, music, prayers and reflections. Please join us as a family and invite others to join us too. After the service grab a mince pie, something warm to drink and join us on zoom for our family Christmas Quiz (6:45pm-7:15pm). The link and access code will be given out during the service.

**'Being a disciple web series'.** January is a time when we try and work at being a better person, why not explore how we can be a grow as a disciple of Jesus? On the 4 Thursdays of January we will explore a different aspect of what it means to be a Catholic disciple with Brendan Thompson the CEO of Catholic Voices in a web series on Zoom. Catholic Voices are an international organisation that shares the Good News in the global media. This will be a great foundation for parishes, chaplaincies and individuals to explore how we can support each other in growing as Catholic disciples. Register for the series here:

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMrCuygqjwpGdNBRC5NIQ46Eu1bleEg246A> For information on how to access things on zoom visit: [https://www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/information/diocesan-commissions/01\\_commission-adult-formation/using-zoom](https://www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/information/diocesan-commissions/01_commission-adult-formation/using-zoom)

### Parish Finances

A letter from the Diocesan Finance Secretary has been received by all parishes in the Diocese. The letter has been sensitively written, aware and empathising with many Parishioners, whose jobs may not be there for them, and the resulting consequences for many in the future. He also writes about Parish income at this time, with our Church doors closed and no public services, no Masses on Sundays, no Parish income. He is fully aware that Churches and Church property has to be maintained, that bills will have to be paid etc. etc., and all this despite no regular parish income at this time. He realises that many parishes may struggle.

He has suggested that perhaps Parishioners, who are regular givers to the Church plate, either by weekly envelope or by cash directly into the Collection basket, might consider, if they are in a position to do so, of paying by direct debit from their bank account. This would ensure a continuous income for the parish on a weekly basis, and would help to alleviate the current financial income for the Parish.

For those who might like to do so, or to consider that possibility.

**Our Account Name: MOTHER OF GOD LEICESTER RCP -**

**Account number: 01538822 - Sort code: 30-94-97.**

Please include your name as a reference so that we know where the funds have come from and what they are for. Thank you for your attention and consideration to this possibility.

### Useful website addresses

Father George is offering Holy Mass from Mother of God Church. Available at <http://Facebook.com/gchelackal> <http://motherofgodleicester.co.uk>

**St Barnabas Cathedral is live streaming Mass at 1 pm Monday-Friday and Sunday at 10 am.** These services are also recorded.

A retreat service is attached for individual prayer for parishioners, which can be forwarded by email to those already on your list - downloadable at:

<http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/Flu/index.shtml> along with other prayer services.

**St JOSEPH'S MASS:** on YOUTUBE St Joseph Leicester live Weekdays @10am Sunday Mass @10.30 by Father John Daly.

**Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham** <http://www.walsingham.org.uk/live-stream>.

The TV channel EWTN also has a daily Mass as well as a large number of resources to keep us spiritually nourished over the coming weeks [www.ewtn.com](http://www.ewtn.com)

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en.html> listen to podcast Sunday gospel truth.

[www.cbcew.org.uk/home/news-and-media/news/](http://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/news-and-media/news/) [www.heavensroadfm.com/listen-now/](http://www.heavensroadfm.com/listen-now/)