

Aspects of Advent: Expectation

The word 'Expectation' can be used in several ways. Sometimes we use it to demand something: "I expect you to respond!" At other times, it means anticipation, looking forward with real confidence that something good will happen. It's this sense we use when we speak of expectation in Advent. In today's Gospel we hear of Mary saying 'yes' to God's plan of salvation. She conceives a child, the one who will be the world's Saviour. Now, she is 'expecting'. She is expecting a child, looking forward with joy to His birth. And she is also expecting salvation, deliverance from sin and death for God's people. In her *Magnificat*, the great hymn of praise spoken by Mary at the Visitation, she speaks of the salvation God brings through her Son, even though He is not yet born! Mary knows how to live in expectation – looking forward with absolute confidence to the gifts of God.



Today's Readings

The Jewish people always expected that the Messiah would be born of the 'House of David', in other words, He would be a descendent of the great king David. Today's first reading shows us why: God promised David that the He Himself would make a 'House' for the king; this Davidic dynasty would last for ever. In the Gospel, we hear the Angel Gabriel refer to this promise, and tell Mary that it will be fulfilled in her Son, if only she will agree to God's plan. Mary's 'yes' opens the way to the Saviour to enter our world, and fulfil all the prophecies of old, bringing salvation to all who accept Him. In the second reading, St Paul speaks of God's plan, which had been mysterious and hidden from the world for so long, being made clear even to the pagans. The whole world awaits the dawn of salvation.

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MASSES THIS WEEK

Office: Psalter Week 4; Sundays: Year B; Weekdays: Year 1, days from 17th Dec.

Morning Mass is livestreamed each day and will be available for viewing later in the day on our YouTube channel. All information and links at www.saintclares.co.uk

Date	Time	Occasion	Intention/Details
Saturday	6pm (vigil)*	FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT	Ints John Cadden
Sunday 20 th	9:30am*		Gertrude Delargy and Rosaline Wright
	11:30am*		People of the Parish
	6pm*		Eileen Woodhead RIP
Monday	9:30am	21 st December	Rose Metcalf RIP
Tuesday	9:30am	22 nd December	Beryl Jacob RIP
Wednesday	9:30am	23 rd December	Sr Patricia RIP
Thursday	9:30am	24 th December	Dorothy Lawrenson RIP
	5:30pm*	THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD (CHRISTMAS DAY)	Thomas Wilson RIP
	7:30pm*		George Oldcorn RIP
Friday	Midnight*		People of the Parish
	9:30am*		Fred Newsham RIP
	11:30am*	Harry & Freda Burgess RIP	
Saturday	9:30am	St Stephen	Theresa and John Topping RIP
	6pm (vigil)*	HOLY FAMILY	Iqbal Cecilia Gill RIP
Sunday 27 th	9:30am*		People of the Parish
	11:30am*		Martin Malone RIP
	6pm*		Oastler Family

* These Masses can only be attended by those who have booked in advance.

LATELY DEAD: Please pray for **Mary Foy, Sister Patricia, Frank Higgins** and all who have died recently.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: Saturday 11am-12noon; also Monday and Tuesday 5pm-6pm this week.

ROSARY: Prayed after 9:30am Mass, Monday-Friday.

ANNIVERSARIES: Samuel Teehan, Rose Metcalf, Jim Donnelly, Catherine Walker, Philip Salthouse, Yolande Schofield, Richard Buckhardt.

POPE'S PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR DECEMBER: That our personal relationship with Jesus Christ may be nourished by the Word of God and a life of prayer.

CHRISTMAS MASSES: Attendance at Christmas Masses is strictly by reservation. No one will be admitted unless they have a space reserved at these Masses – this is to ensure everyone’s safety. There is some space left at the two morning Masses – please contact us if you wish to attend. Masses on Christmas Eve are already full. We will livestream Christmas Masses at 5:30pm on Christmas Eve, at Midnight and at 9:30am on Christmas morning. If you are booked in for a Christmas Mass and your plans have changed for any reason, please contact us as soon as possible.

CRIB BLESSINGS 2020: There will be a livestreamed service for the blessing of your home cribs on Tuesday this week 7:30pm. You are invited to watch and pray around your crib at home as this service takes place. If you wish to send in a picture of your home crib for us to show during the livestream, please email it to us no later than Tuesday lunchtime.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: Confessions are available each Saturday, 11am-12noon in the side chapel; also Monday and Tuesday 5pm-6pm this week only. Face coverings must be worn. Extra safety measures will be in place.

CHURCH OPENING: The church will be open for private prayer at the usual times until Wednesday (inclusive). After that, there will be no opening for private prayer until Saturday 2nd January.

VISITING THE CRIB: This year the main crib will be in the narthex and visible from outside the church, so it will be possible to visit the crib without entering the church. Come and pray before this beautiful image of our Lord’s love for us.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS: Please put any donation in a marked envelope, with the name of those you are remembering. A list of prayer intentions will be displayed.

2021 DIOCESAN DIRECTORIES now available in the narthex, priced £4. Please put money in wall box marked ‘CTS, books etc’.

RWANDA GOATS: Rwanda is suffering greatly at present. One way to help is to buy a goat! They cost £30 and are considered extremely useful in Rwanda. They eat anything and provide milk, milk products and meat and their skins have many other uses. If you can help, contact Michael Donlan of the Rwanda Group Trust on 07864 990941 or e mail rwandagrouptrust.org@gmail.com

CAFOD WORLD GIFTS: World Gifts make a real difference to families living in poverty across the world. The Keep Clean Kit gift for £6 and the Vegetable Garden gift for £10 are just two gifts that will help vulnerable families affected by the pandemic to protect and feed themselves. Let’s spread joy and hope around the world this Christmas. Visit cafod.org.uk/worldgifts or see leaflets in the narthex.

SPECIAL COLLECTION this weekend for the Apostleship of the Sea, which supports seafarers and their families throughout the world. This is postponed from July.

Events this week (occasional/one-off events in bold type)

Day	Time	What?	Where?
Every day	Anytime	Food Bank Collection	House Porch
Sunday 20 th	3pm-4pm	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	Church
Mon-Wed	5-6pm	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	Church
Mon-Tue	5-6pm	Confessions available	Side chapel
Tuesday	7:30pm	Blessing of your home cribs	YouTube

All events marked 'YouTube' are streamed live on our channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/StClaresChurch>

A prayer of spiritual communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

Christmas Masses at St Clare's 2020

Booking is absolutely essential for all the Christmas Masses. The Christmas Eve Masses are full, but there is still some space at 9:30am and 11:30am on Christmas Day. To book, contact us (enquiries@saintclares.co.uk) and let us know:

1. **Your name and contact details (email, or phone number)**
2. **How many adults in your bubble**
3. **How many children in your bubble**
4. **Which Mass you would like to attend**

If you are unable to attend in person on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day this year, don't forget that there are Christmas Masses in the church every day between Christmas Day and New Year's Day, 9:30am each day – you do not need to book for these Masses, except on Sunday. You can also visit the crib at any time, as this will be visible from outside the church.



We will also livestream Christmas Mass on YouTube at 5:30pm on Christmas Eve, at Midnight and at 9:30am on Christmas morning.