

Newsletter

Parish of St John Vianney

Halewood & Hunts Cross

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**For more News and Information see our website:
parishofstjohnvianney.co.uk**

24 December 2023
Fourth Sunday of Advent, p90



Luke 1:26-38

Pointers for Prayer:

1. “Greetings, favoured one. The Lord is with you”. We are all favoured ones and God is with us. Sometimes we are more aware of this than others. How have you experienced being a favoured person, one blessed by God? How have you experienced God’s presence? Who has been Gabriel to you ... a messenger of good news?
2. “Do not be afraid.” Mary was perplexed by the words of the angel. Perhaps you too have sometimes been perplexed by life’s path and wondered what it all meant. Perhaps at times you have doubted if God was really with you. In your troubled moments who has been an “angel” helping to lower your anxiety?
3. The angel told Mary that it was through her fruitfulness that she would realise the truth of the greeting. New life would come into being through her and it would be through the Spirit of God working in her. How and where have you experienced yourself as a source of life for others? Have you at times had the sense that the Spirit of God was at work in you?
4. Mary was taken by surprise by the invitation, but she did not tell the angel she was not ready, nor ask him to return later. She was prepared to go with the

invitation even though it was not the “right moment.” “Here I am Lord.” What invitations have come to you at the “wrong time” and how have you responded.

5. Mary’s response serves as a model for us - as one saying “yes” to what life offers. What is it like for you to say “yes” to life? Perhaps at this moment in your life you are being invited to say “Here I am, Lord”?

Prayer

Here in our midst, O God of mystery, you disclose the secret hidden for countless ages. For you we wait; for you we listen. Upon hearing your voice may we, like Mary, embrace your will and become a dwelling fit for your Word. Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen



25 December 2023
Solemnity of the
Nativity of the Lord, p102

John 1:1-18

Pointers for Prayer:

1. “In the beginning” takes me back to my own new creation in Christ, back to significant moments, perhaps even to a single moment which stands out as the beginning of my own belonging in Christ. A prayer of praise.

2. Life, what makes me alive, taking

hold of my imagination and energy? How is my life in Christ? Prayer of gratitude.

3. Light, a fabulous imagery. It may be that some particular land or seascape stands out in my memory as having an especially beautiful light. Prayer of enlightenment.

4. The dark side of refusal and rejection, in my life I probably have said both yes and no to grace. Where am I now in my life? Prayer of pilgrimage.

5. Wisdom was God’s presence, a feminine presence, because (to use Biblical language) just as a man is “incomplete” without the love and companionship of a woman, the human person needs to be complemented by God’s wisdom.

6. The power of language in my experience as an entry point to appreciating the Word made flesh. What word am I hearing especially today?

Prayer

We praise you, gracious God, for the glad tidings of peace, the good news of salvation: your Word became flesh and we have seen his glory. Let the radiance of that glory enlighten the lives of those who celebrate his birth. Reveal to all the world the light no darkness can extinguish, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy

Spirit, in the splendour of eternal light, God for ever and ever. Amen.



Christmas Message from Archbishop Malcolm McMahon

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we gather once again to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, I extend my warmest wishes to you and your loved ones. The festive season is upon us, and though the challenges of our times may persist, the timeless message of Christmas continues to shine brightly, offering us hope, love, and peace.

It is a busy time for everyone, with last-minute preparations, food and gifts on the agenda, and from an archdiocese point of view, there has been plenty to celebrate this year.

In July, we celebrated 100 years since our first pilgrimage to Lourdes. We travelled out there in great numbers, and it was truly an occasion to remember. With that, we also celebrated 100 years since the miracle of Jack Traynor and remembered his story. In September, it was a historic moment, not just for the archdiocese, but for the Catholic Church in this country, as St Mary of the Isle in the Isle of Man became our co-cathedral – the first of its kind in the UK. It was a momentous occasion, with the ceremony being watched not just by those in attendance, but by many more

across the world online. Despite this, I am also aware that it has not been an easy year for everyone. The cloud of the cost-of-living crisis still lingers, and we have seen the devastating impacts of climate change, and conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza.

In a world that often grapples with uncertainty, economic challenges, and social issues, it is easy to lose sight of the true meaning of Christmas. Just as Mary and Joseph faced an uncertain journey to Bethlehem, finding themselves in humble surroundings, so too do we encounter the unexpected in our lives.

Yet, amidst the difficulties, we find the enduring message of God's love. It's a reminder that even though we remember them with much fondness – they also had to go through their tough times. From having to travel a fair distance on a donkey, to there being no room at the Inn. But at the end of it, they got to celebrate the birth of Jesus. In the midst of the world's darkness, we find hope in the light that the birth of Jesus brings. Like the shepherds on that holy night, let us not be afraid, for the message of Christmas is a message of hope—a hope that transcends time and circumstances.

I pray that this Christmas fills your hearts with the warmth of love, the joy of hope, and the peace that surpasses all understanding. May the light of Christ shine brightly in your lives, bringing comfort and assurance in the

days ahead. Wishing you and your families a blessed and Merry Christmas.

In Christ's love, Most Rev Malcolm McMahon OP Archbishop of Liverpool.

Keep In Your Prayers

Hilda Cloherty RIP, Amber and Zoe Lynch, Karen Smith, John & Enid Allerston, Clare Williams, Eileen Prescott, Kay Thomas, Katie Whitehead, Kathy Murphy-Malpas, Mila Facenfield, Mary Lonsdale, Mary Ireland, Catherine Atkin, Margaret Facenfield, Kitty Heisley, Sally Moore, Valerie Higgins, Ron & Veronica Humphreys, Nora Bartley, John and Vera Leonard, Silva, Marian Hawkins, Laura Wakefield, Lisa Crompton, Vera Farrell, Maureen Jackson, Lorraine Keogh, May McGrath, Josie Henesy, our sick and housebound and all those whose anniversaries occur at this time.

Baptismal Information

Next meeting to register and find out more is Monday, 8 January 2024 at 6pm, St Mark's annexe. All enquiries please ring Chris Myles on 07443 018 816.

Youth Raffle

There is still time to purchase your raffle tickets which are on sale after all Masses with proceeds going towards the parish Lourdes fund. Please support this if you are able, there are hampers to be won and the draw will

take place after all Masses on 24 December.

Thank You

Many thanks to those parishioners who have given donations towards church flowers.

The Choir of Angels Parish Nativity Concert

Thanks to all the children and parishioners who worked so hard over the last few months to put this concert together. The children sang beautifully in both English and Italian to a packed church and everyone left filled with Christmas joy.

LiveSimply News

In January we will launch the LiveSimply Action Plan at our weekend Masses (27/28 January). Further details to follow. Next meeting dates for those involved are 4 and 18 January, 7.15pm, St Mark's annexe.

Recycling Plastic Chocolate Boxes

We have heard of a wonderful opportunity to recycle the plastic chocolate tubs that many will enjoy over the Festive Season. They can be taken to Greene King pubs e.g. Bear and Staff, Gateacre for recycling. It also raises funds for MacMillan. They are accepted from 1 January to 11 February.

Love To Move-Age and Dementia Friendly Seated Movement Programme:

The next session is Tuesday, 9 January from 1.30pm–3.30pm, St Mary's church hall, Woolton.

Mass with the Archbishop and Seminarians

Mass with the Archbishop and seminarians of our Archdiocese will take place on Wednesday, 3 January at 12 noon at St Charles church, 224 Aigburth Rd, Liverpool, L17 9PG. All welcome.

Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB)

Throughout 2023, the Pastoral Development Department will be arranging a series of workshops offering helpful information and advice to support people with various disabilities and needs within our parishes and ministries. They are beginning with a workshop from the RNIB at the end of January. Watch this space for more information in the new year.

Request for Resources

Fr James Fasakin, the new Chaplain at Risely Prison, has asked if anyone could please provide some spare resources, specifically: "a Hymnal Plus HT 400 or The Hymnal Plus, Liturgical Music Player or any Preloaded musical player, Worship CDs for liturgical celebrations. He would also appreciate it if you know any organisation that can offer the

inmates Rosary beads, Catholic Bibles and Holy Pictures. Thank you for your kind support. If you have some spare resources, you can contact Fr James via email at j.fasakin@rcaol.org.uk by phone at 01925 733 333 (office) or 07733 680 555 (mobile).

First Holy Communion Preparation Programme

Any child in Year 4 or above is very welcome to take part in the programme. There is no time limit to completing the programme so families can start when they are ready and work through it at their own pace.

Registration forms are available from a catechist at the end of every Mass of the last week of the month. Please note you must produce your child's baptism certificate.

Prayer Requests

Do you have someone or something you would like to pray for?

Please feel free to fill in one of the prayer request forms at the back of church. Place it into the box provided, which will be brought to the altar by our children during the Prayer of the Faithful at Mass.

Our Housebound Parishioners

If you are no longer able to get to Mass, **don't just disappear!** Get in touch with Fr Matthew or the Parish Office and we can see how best we might be able to support you. But we

can't do that if you don't let us know!
You are still a vital and essential part
of the parish community, even if you
can't get to Mass.

Sacrament of the Sick

In times of illness or suffering we are
offered anointing with holy oil to
strengthen us. The sacrament can also
help us to experience healing of mind,
body and spirit and we receive the
forgiveness of our sins. Anyone
feeling the need of the sacrament is
very welcome to approach Fr Matthew
before or after Mass or via Parish
Office.

Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession)

Fr Matthew is usually available in the
20 minutes before each Mass to hear
confession. He will be sat towards the
front of the church, please approach
him directly and make your request
known.

Parish Finance

Our parish exists and functions only
with the financial support of the
members of our community. Please
consider making your contributions
by Standing Order (ring the office) or
Gift Aid it.

Collection Sunday, 10 December:

Gift Aid Envelopes	£290.00
GASDS Loose	£392.80
Non Gift Aid	£ 36.00
Standing Orders	£367.23
Total Offertory	£1086.03
Bonus Ball	£ 56.00

Collection Sunday, 17 December:

Gift Aid Envelopes	£253.00
GASDS Loose	£418.00
Non Gift Aid	£ 53.00
Standing Orders	£367.23
Total Offertory	£1091.23
Bonus Ball	£ 58.00

What's On At St Mark's Parish Centre



Christmas Opening

24 December, 2pm-11pm
25 December, 12 noon-2pm

Boxing Day

DJ/Karaoke from 7pm-Midnight
Free Entry

New Year's Eve

DJ/Karaoke from 7pm
Tickets £5
Available from the Parish Centre





*Wishing all parishioners and visitors to the parish
over these days a peaceful and blessed Christmas
and a very happy 2024.*

Fr Matthew

Fourth Sunday of Advent

23 December – 31 December 2023

We Pray Especially For

Saturday, 23 December

5.15pm – First Mass of Sunday, Holy Family

Addy, Rose & Jawssis Families

Sunday, 24 December, Fourth Sunday of Advent

9.15am – Mass, St Mark's

11am – Mass, Holy Family

People of the Parish
Sheila Parkinson, Mrs R Duncan,
Gerry Marsh

Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord

Sunday, 24 December

6pm – Mass of Christmas, St Mark's

8.30pm – Carol Service, Holy Family

9pm – Mass of Christmas, Holy Family

People of the Parish

People of the Parish

Monday, 25 December,

Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord

9.15am - Mass, St Mark's

11am – Mass, Holy Family

People of the Parish

People of the Parish

Tuesday, 26 December, Feast of St Stephen

9am – Mass, Holy Family

Joan Pryce, Michael Morrissey,
Ann Booth

Wednesday, 27 December, Feast of St John

10am-11am - Exposition, St Mark's

11am-12noon - Lectio Devina, St Mark's

Thursday, 28 December, Feast of the Holy Innocents

9am – Morning Prayer Online via Zoom (see website)

6.30pm – Mass, St Mark's

Kathleen Curtain, Colin Birkett,
Dodd & Ireland Families

Friday, 29 December, Feast of St Thomas of Canterbury

9am – Mass, St Mark's

Mary, Joseph & Peter Murphy,
May Sarsfield, Hilda Thomas

Saturday, 30 December

5.15pm – First Mass of Sunday, Holy Family

People of the Parish

Sunday, 31 December, Feast of the Holy Family

9.15am – Mass, St Mark's

11am – Mass, Holy Family

Ken Needham, Ronnie Murphy,
May McGrath

Sadie & Jimmy Devine,
John & Jean Holden,
Catherine's Family & Friends

