

# The Little Flower Messenger

Year C – FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT 19<sup>th</sup> December 2021

Welcome to our Parish Community of St. Theresa of Lisieux

The Presbytery, High Lane, Stansted Mountfitchet, CM24 8LQ

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## Gospel: Luke 1:39-45

*‘Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord?’*

### Mass book (P. 90)

#### 1st Reading:

*Micah 5:1-4*

#### Psalm 79:2-3:

*God of hosts, bring us back; let your face shine on us and we shall be saved.*

#### 2nd Reading:

*Hebrews 10:5-10*

#### Gospel Acclamation:

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

#### Communion Antiphon: (P. 92)

*Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and his name will be called Emmanuel.*

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## This Week’s Good News

Dear Friends,

“Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb”: To many Catholics, these lines are most familiar because they form part of the core of the Hail Mary. In the Gospel today, Mary goes to see her cousin Elizabeth, filled with joy and the Holy Spirit. The two cousins greeted one another, one running to assist the other, both pregnant with life and Faith. Elizabeth on seeing Mary, feels the child in her womb “jump” for joy as it feels the nearness of salvation, and greets her with the words we are so familiar with. Elizabeth does not simply speak these words; on the contrary, the text says that she “shouts them out with a loud voice.” Elizabeth then prophetically interprets this event, pointing away from her own motherhood to reveal the hidden identity of her visitor and the baby she carries. We too can “leap for joy,” because Jesus has come to us to forgive our sins. Elizabeth’s concluding words (“Blessed is she who believed...”) express a deeply Biblical and profoundly Jewish conviction: to trust in the Lord and in the Lord’s promises (no matter how seemingly impossible).

That is the epitome of that authentic Faith, which, for Luke, both Mary and Elizabeth supremely exemplify. Elizabeth, in turn, gives Mary assurance and confirmation to strengthen the young woman’s Faith in the early stages of her pilgrimage. She pronounces a blessing over Mary. Having been both blessed and favoured, Mary was now in a blessed and happy condition. Mary was blessed both because of her Faith and because of her bearing of the Christ-child. Thus, Mary becomes the true believer, model of Faith and first among her Son’s disciple-followers. Mary helps Elizabeth in her time of need and serves her till John is born — her perfect, loving, and sacrificial gift to Elizabeth.



Please familiarise yourselves with the location of the fire exits, extinguishers, and assembly points at this church.

This story teaches us the importance of mutual ministry. Each of us has a unique call, leaving us no reason for envy. Mary brought the Saviour; John recognized and identified Him; and Elizabeth gave prophecy, mediating God's word by interpreting this event. These two women rejoice, and we are called to rejoice with them, for one reason and one reason only: because God loves us enough to act. God wants each of us, like Mary, to bear within us, and to carry to those around us, no one other than the Lord of life.

Deacon Des

### **Making an Act of Spiritual Communion**

**My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot now 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.**

### **Parish News**

**COVID19 - Bishops' Conference Guidance:** Following the statement by the Prime Minister on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December, further restrictions have been imposed to mitigate against viral transmission, especially in the light of the new Omicron variant. The following guidance has been issued by the Bishops of England and Wales:

- **Face Coverings** - The wearing of face covering is now mandatory in Places of Worship. However, there will be exemptions for those leading worship, public proclamation of scriptural readings or prayers, and those who are unable to wear face coverings and are exempt for medical reasons.
- **Singing** - The current Church guidance states that congregational singing should take place with face coverings in place and choirs and soloists may sing without such coverings. As the Church moves towards Christmas celebrations which often involves carol services and other singing events, it is strongly recommended that congregational singing within church buildings continues with the applied face coverings.
- **Practical Guidance for Churches** - With respect to the current situation with the Omicron variant it is important to ensure the following points are followed in our churches:
  - ◆ That people displaying any symptoms of Covid-19 should stay at home and not travel to church or participate in person.
  - ◆ That hand sanitiser is available to those attending the Church.
  - ◆ Face coverings must be worn by those attending public acts of worship unless there is a genuine exemption or the person is leading worship or participating in a role that requires the mask to be removed for a period of time.
  - ◆ That there is good ventilation and air throughput in the building; in this case, because of climatic conditions, it would be important to remind people to wrap up well in church.
  - ◆ There is now very strong evidence to support that the main mode of this variant's viral transmission is through aerosols, and that the risk from surface and touch transmission is very small indeed. As such, the strict regimes of church cleaning that were recommended at the beginning of the opening of churches for public worship are no longer necessary. General church cleaning is sufficient.
  - ◆ That people who are engaged in a form of pastoral ministry which involves ministry to the housebound, sick and vulnerable, should take regular lateral flow tests to ensure they are safe to do so. These are free from the NHS.

Further to the above guidance please note that you **will not** be required to book for any of the Christmas Masses. Thank you.



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**Mass 20<sup>th</sup> December 2021:** Please note there will be no Mass this Monday (20<sup>th</sup> December). Thank you.

**Christmas Eve Mass 24<sup>th</sup> December 2021 at 4:00 p.m.:** A reminder for those attending the 4:00p.m. Mass that we will be holding a pop-up nativity so, if you wish, do please come dressed as your favourite Nativity character. We look forward to seeing you all. Thank you.

**Brentwood Diocesan Directory 2022:** Copies of this this year's directories are now available to purchase. Should you wish to purchase one please contact Clair. Ringbound copies are £4.00 and Paperback copies are £2.80. Thank you

**Private Prayer:** The church will be open for private prayer on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. All are welcome.

**Rosary, Exposition of the Sacrament & Benediction:** The Friday evening sessions are now postponed over the winter months. A new date will be published as soon as it is known. Thank you.

**Baptism Course:** The next course will take place on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022, all at 7:00 p.m. To enrol on the course, please email the Parish Office [stansted@dioceseofbrentwood.org](mailto:stansted@dioceseofbrentwood.org) Thank you.

**Sacrament of Marriage:** People who wish to be married in the Catholic Church must approach Fr. Lee / Deacon Des, at least 6 months prior to the intended date of their wedding, and before setting a wedding date.

**Visions Group:** The Group will be taking a Christmas break and will return on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2022.

**The Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage:** Led by Bishop Alan, the pilgrimage will take place from Sunday 24 – Friday 29 July 2022 in Lourdes. It will be the first time in three years that the diocese has returned to Lourdes. Brochures for the pilgrimage, which will include costs, will be available soon. If you would like further information now, please contact Cathy O'Connor, the Administrative Director via email [cathy@dioceseofbrentwood.org](mailto:cathy@dioceseofbrentwood.org) or by calling 07813 710070.

**Gift Aid Envelopes 2021/2022:** We still have a number of uncollected Gift Aid envelopes for the current financial year; should you wish to have them, please contact Clair in the office and she will arrange for them to be collected or delivered to you. If you are still using envelopes from a previous financial year, please collect this year's envelopes; using current envelopes avoids unnecessary processing delays. Your continued support for our Parish is appreciated; we cannot thank you enough. If you are a tax payer and are donating to the Parish without a Gift Aid declaration in place, we are unable to claim the extra 25% from the government. Should you have any questions about Gift Aid, or wish to become a contributor, please contact us via email: [Stansted-giftaid@dioceseofbrentwood.org](mailto:Stansted-giftaid@dioceseofbrentwood.org) or speak to Clair in the office.



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## Mass Times and Intentions

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT – Year C		
Saturday 18 <sup>th</sup> December <i>O Adonai</i>	Confessions: 5:15 p.m. – 5:45 p.m. Mass: 6:00 p.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	For the Intentions of Rosemary O'Rourke (J.O'Rourke)
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> December <i>Expectant Mothers</i> <i>O Radix Jesse</i>	Mass: 8:30 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i> Confessions: 9:15 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. Mass: 10:00 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	People of the Parish  Expectant Mothers
Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> December <i>O Clavis David</i>	No Mass	
Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> December <i>St Thomas.</i> <i>O Oriens</i>	Confessions: 7:15 p.m. Latin Mass (EF): 8:00 p.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	Ave. T. R.I.P. (O.Salici)
Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> December <i>O Rex Gentium</i>	Confessions: 12:00 p.m. Mass: 12:30 p.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	Holy Souls
Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> December <i>O Emmanuel</i>	Confessions: 9:00 a.m. Mass: 9:30 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	Holy Souls
Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> December <i>Christmas Eve</i>	Confessions: 9:00 a.m. Mass: 9:30 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	Intentions of Deacon Des (Fr Lee)
NATIVITY OF THE LORD		
<i>Vigil Mass of Christmas</i>	Mass: 4:00 p.m. – with Pop Up Nativity <i>Livestreamed</i>	For the Special Intentions of S.Wood
<i>Christmas Mass During the Night</i>	Mass: 7:00 p.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	Holy Souls
Saturday 25 <sup>th</sup> December <i>Mass of the Dawn</i>	Mass: 8:30 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	Margaret Barrett R.I.P. Stuart Gibby R.I.P. (M. Jacobs)
<i>Mass of the Day</i>	Mass: 10:00 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	People of the Parish
THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH - Year C		
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> December	Mass: 8:30 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i> Confessions: 9:15 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. Mass: 10:00 a.m. <i>Livestreamed</i>	People of the Parish  Miss Margaret Aldridge R.I.P. (T. Aldridge)



**PLEASE TAKE THIS NEWSLETTER HOME WITH YOU AND DISPOSE OF IT RESPONSIBLY. THANK YOU.**



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