



**The Parishes of  
Our Lady of the Assumption, Maryvale  
and  
Christ the King, Kingstanding**



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Websites: [www.christ-theking.org.uk](http://www.christ-theking.org.uk) & <http://www.maryvale.org.uk>

**Hymns:** (OLAM: Ent: 348; Off: 217; Com: 475; Rec: 222)

**Responsorial Psalm:** Ps 23(24):1-6 **R: *Let the Lord enter! He is the king of glory.***

**MASSES THIS WEEK**

**SUNDAY OBLIGATION HAS BEEN REINSTATED BY THE BISHOPS**

<b>Sat</b> 17/12/22	10:00 Mon	Advent Feria	Mrs Alice O'Toole
	12:30 CTK	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent</b>	Henry Byrne & Tommy Judge (Ann)
	18:00 OLAM		Bob Thompson (Anni.)
<b>Sun</b> 18/12/22	10:00 CTK†		Mary Cassidy (RIP)
	11:30 OLAM	John Roche (RIP)	
<b>Mon</b> 19/12/22	08:00 Con.	Advent Feria	Liam Friel (Get well)
	09:30 Mon.		Mr & Mrs Bajor (RIP)(pronounced Bayor)
	<b>13:00 OLAM</b>		<b>Henrietta Sarah Nesbitt - Requiem</b>
<b>Tue</b> 20/11/22	09:30 Mon.	Advent Feria	Denis Herdman (RIP)
	12:00 CTK		Michael Cronin (Get Well)
<b>Wed</b> 21/12/22	08:00 Con.	Advent Feria	John Reilly
	09:30 Mon.		Mary & Tom Donohue (RIP)
<b>Thu</b> 22/12/22	09:30 Mon.	Advent Feria	Michael Quinn (RIP)
	12.00 CTK		Paul Lewsley (RIP)
	<b>19:00 CTK</b>		<b>Penance Service</b>
<b>Fri</b> 23/12/22	09.30 Mon.	Advent Feria	Jane Walsh (Anni.)
<b>Sat</b> 24/12/22	10:00 Mon	Advent Feria	Intentions of Alice O'Toole
	16:00 CTK	<b>Nativity of the Lord</b>	Delia Byrne (RIP)
	20:00 OLAM		Bob & Paul Thompson (RIP)
	20:00 CTK		Mary & Joseph Regan (RIP)
<b>Sun</b> 25/12/22	10:00 CTK		PEOPLE OF THE PARISHES
	11:30 OLAM	Maura Ranahan (RIP)	

**Bible Study** with Deacon Dominic Fahey in the church of Our Lady of the Assumption **every Tuesday** at 7:00pm.

**Rosary Group:** meeting **every Wednesday** in Christ the King Church at 1:30pm, following Church cleaning at 12.30.

**PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK:** Ron & Monique Hunt, Jean McCabe, Luke Byrne, Muriel Cowan, Paul Cowan, John & Sandra Mageean, Gerald, Sarah McCallion, Audrey Vickers, John, Sadie Pulido, Mary McGee, Claire & Mark, Jo Teece, Mary Ann Gniadkowski, Niamh O' Reilly, Carole Smith, Alan Rowan, Kyle Billing, Nicola Jones, Daniel Kelly, Patricia Nash, Alberto Bolongaro, Arjun Paul, Teresa Webb, Mary Hickey, Sr Marie, Carol Timmis, Carlos Beckford, and Ian Kennedy. **Please pray for them and their families.**

**Funerals:** Henrietta Nesbitt: Mon 19/12/22, OLAM, 13:00. Margaret Gasson. May they rest in peace.

**Celebration Of The Ministry Of Our Altar Servers:** On 26<sup>th</sup> December, the Church celebrates the Feast of St Stephen, who was one of the first seven deacons to be ordained and who is the patron saint of the Altar Servers' Guild. In light of St. Stephen's patronage, a special Mass will be held in Christ the King on Mon 26<sup>th</sup> December, for all altar servers - whether they serve at OLAM or CTK - followed by nibbles and hot and cold soft drinks. We would like to make the Mass a full solemn "High Mass" for the Feast, and all Servers present on the day will be invited to sit in the Sanctuary, with as many specific roles as possible being allocated to them. Any altar servers planning to attend are asked to give their names to Deacon Gary and (if they are under the age of 18) Gary will need their parents' telephone number as well. All parishioners are, of course, also heartily encouraged to attend.

**Are You Planning To Have Your Child Baptised?** If so, please come to the next monthly meeting, to be held at Christ the King Church on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> January at 3:00pm.

**Christmas Card** with Programme of Christmas and New Year celebration is available to every household after mass this weekend. Please help delivering it to the CEOs in the parishes.

Last Week's Collection CTK	
Loose:	£ 311.19
Envelopes:	£ 90.50
Standing Orders:	£ 206.69
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£ 608.38</b>

Last Week's Collection OLAM	
Loose:	£ 175.54
Envelopes:	£ 136.20
Standing Orders:	£ 51.92
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£ 363.66</b>

**Thank you for your generous support**

**Christmas Carol Service at the Franciscan Convent** (192, Hawthorn Road, B44 8PU) on Sat 17<sup>th</sup> Dec at 3:00pm. The service includes Carol singing and a short talk to reflect on the mystery of God's Love made flesh, an opportunity to prepare ourselves for the celebration of Christmas. Tea and coffee afterwards. All welcome.

**Christmas Penitential Service:** A number a local priests have kindly agreed to assist me in hearing confessions at CTK Church next Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> December at 7.00 pm.

**Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School** is currently under consultation to change their school admissions criteria for the intake year 2024/2025. All details of the proposed changes can be found on the school website [www.cardinalwiseman.net](http://www.cardinalwiseman.net) under 'School Admissions' – 'Proposed Admissions Arrangements 2024-2025'. If you wish to comment on these changes, please contact the school admissions team directly at [enquiry@cardinalwiseman.net](mailto:enquiry@cardinalwiseman.net).

**Bishop Challoner Training School Alliance** works with Catholic schools in the Birmingham area to help new trainee Teachers into this rewarding profession. Primary and Secondary School Direct places are available. A further online Information Event is to be held on **Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> January 10am**, with an additional School Experience Day being held on **Wed 4<sup>th</sup> Jan 23**, to offer an insight into life in a school. If interested please visit [www.bctsa.org](http://www.bctsa.org) for details, or email [trainingschool@bishopchalloner.bham.sch.uk](mailto:trainingschool@bishopchalloner.bham.sch.uk).

**Escorted Pilgrimage to Knock Shrine, Ireland, 27<sup>th</sup> March 2023.** £699.00 per person sharing (with supplement of £150.00 for single occupancy). Price includes flight, all transfers, a 4 night stay at the Knock House Hotel on a full-board basis. All entertainment and day trip excursions to Westport, Ballintubber Abbey, Croagh Patrick, Fr. Peyton Centre and National Museum. Contact Patricia on 01268 762 278 or 07740 175 557 or email [knockpilgrimages@gmail.com](mailto:knockpilgrimages@gmail.com).

**Deacon Gary's study leave in the New Year:** Gary will be away from 10<sup>th</sup> January to 4<sup>th</sup> February inclusive and then again from 11<sup>th</sup> February to 27<sup>th</sup> February inclusive.

#### Time to say goodbye

Andrew Leadbetter is leaving the parish to take up a post as Exams Officer and Data Manager at a School in the Falkland Islands. His last Sunday with us will be 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2023. Over the last 20 years, Andrew has served the parish in numerous ways, notably as Altar Server and MC, manager of the live-stream and through our pilgrimages to Lourdes. We are going to have a Farewell Mass for Andrew followed by a presentation in St John's Centre in which we can express our thanks more fully. We have not completely tied down the date yet. It could be as early as 2<sup>nd</sup> January (Bank Holiday Monday) or 22<sup>nd</sup> January itself. Please keep an eye out for more information in the Christmas Day and New Year's Day newsletters.

#### Gospel Commentary – Fr Donagh O'Shea, OP

Like a planet in conjunction, Isaiah looms very large in the Advent Liturgy. Many of his expressions could almost be from the New Testament. John the Baptist comes even closer. But, in Mary, the contact is made; the Presence has become a reality.

"She will bear a son" (Matthew 1:21), or "You will bear a son" (Luke 1:31). Matthew's Gospel tells the story from Joseph's point of view, Luke's tells it from Mary's. But the story is the same: the Child will soon be born of her.

Christmas is now upon us. But December 25<sup>th</sup> was almost certainly not the day of Jesus' birth! That date was not chosen till the year 440 A.D. I remember being severely hassled on this very point by a Jehovah's Witness. To him, it summed up the tissue of lies that he took the Catholic Church to be. Would it affect your faith if you heard that Jesus was born in the middle of August, for instance, or at the end of February...? Would it at least ruin your Christmas? Would it shock you even more to know that scholars are not even sure of the *year* of his birth? But one thing is sure: he was not born in the year 0, because there was no such year! (1 B.C. was followed immediately by 1 A.D.) His birth is usually put at 3 or 4 B.C.

If any of that information disappoints you, let me assure you that our faith doesn't rest on dates or customs or folklore, but on the simple accounts of the life and death of Jesus that the Gospels give us. It is true that St Luke takes great care to show that the events he is recounting are precisely located in history: "In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar - when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod - tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip - tetrarch of Iturea and Tracoonitis, and Lysanias - tetrarch of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas..." (3:1). But it is enough to know that the Word became flesh in human history; we don't need to put exact numbers on it.

Celebrating the birth of Jesus at the winter solstice has, however, immense *symbolic* meaning, and that is why the date was chosen in the first place. When the days are shortest and it looks as if the sun is abandoning the world to darkness ... suddenly the sun begins to return, and the days lengthen! The Sun is returning to us! It is the surprise of Newgrange, experienced since 3,200 B.C. But, for Christians, symbolically it is the surprise of the Incarnation: the Light has come into a dark world.... "The Word was made flesh, he lived among us, and we saw his glory, the glory that is his, as the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth". (John 1:14).