

**The Catholic Parish  
of  
Our Lady, Star of the Sea**



**4th Week of Advent, Year B**  
*Sunday Cycle B, Weekday Cycle II, Psalter Week IV*

“ ‘I am the handmaid of the Lord,’  
said Mary  
‘let what you have said be done to me.’ ”

Luke 1:38

Parish Priest: **Fr Pádraig Hawkins**  
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Parish Web Site: [www.ourladystarofthesealowestoft.wordpress.com](http://www.ourladystarofthesealowestoft.wordpress.com)

R.C. Diocese of East Anglia:  
A Registered Charity (Charity Commission No. 278742)

**Parish Church:** Catholic Church of Our Lady, Star of the Sea, Gordon Road, Lowestoft, NR32 1NL.

**Chapel of Ease:** St Nicholas' Catholic Church, Morton Road, Lowestoft, NR33 0JQ.

**Other Clergy:** Rev. Fr. Stephen Bould; Rev. Fr. Neville McClement, Rev. Mr. Stephen Pomeroy.

**Parish Newsletter:** Items for consideration need to be sent to Fr Pádraig - [frpmfoh@gmail.com](mailto:frpmfoh@gmail.com) – by Wednesday Evening please. The Completed Newsletter will be posted on the Website each Saturday.

**Catholic Primary School:** St Mary's, Kirkley Cliff Road, NR33 0DG. Tel: 01502 565384. For more information please visit the school website: <https://www.stmarysreps.com>

### **Gospel Reflection**

“This Sunday we read the story of the angel Gabriel’s announcement to Mary about the birth of Jesus. This story is found only in Luke’s Gospel. On this fourth Sunday of Advent, the liturgy shifts our attention from John the Baptist to Mary, the mother of Jesus. Both John and Mary serve as important figures for our reflection during the season of Advent; they both played instrumental roles in preparing the way for Jesus. Last week we reflected on John the Baptist’s announcement that the Savior was among us, although not yet recognized. This week we reflect upon Mary’s example of faith and obedience to God, traits which permitted her to receive the angel’s message that God’s Son would be born as a human person, as one of us. We are familiar with the story of the Annunciation, and it is fitting that we recall how God announced the birth of Jesus as we make our final preparations for our celebration of the Incarnation. The angel Gabriel visited Mary, a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph. Mary greeted the angel’s news with awe and wonder and asked how it could be possible that she could give birth to a child. In his reply, the angel Gabriel announced the seemingly impossible reality: the child to be born would be conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and would be God’s own Son. The angel reported to Mary another miracle; her relative Elizabeth was also pregnant despite having been thought to be unable to have a child. Mary’s response to the angel, which is called her fiat, is an example of complete faith and obedience to God. The story of the Annunciation calls to our attention God’s wondrous action in human history. God chose a human person to give birth to his Son so that all humanity would know God’s salvation. Mary, already full of God’s grace, was able to cooperate in this great plan for our salvation. Thus Jesus was born as one of us, fully human and also fully divine. This is the mystery we prepare to celebrate at Christmas, the mystery of the Incarnation. In the model of Mary, we pray that we will be people of faith who recognize God’s saving plan for us and are able respond with obedience.”

**Please do visit the “Wednesday Word” Website each week for short Reflections on the Sunday Readings:** <http://www.wednesdayword.org/sunday-gospel.htm>

### **Memory Tree – Praying for Loved ones at Christmas**

Throughout the Season of Christmas the Memory Christmas Tree will remain at the back of the church (OLSS). There will be tags available to write the names of loved ones on who are no longer with us that can then be attached to the tree in their memory. There will also be a basket for donations located by the tree, donations going to the ‘School of Joy’ in Bethlehem [www.schoolofjoy.org](http://www.schoolofjoy.org) via the ‘Friends of the Holy Land’ [www.friendsoftheholylan.org.uk](http://www.friendsoftheholylan.org.uk)

## **The Feast of Christmas**

Christmas is one of the most important days of the Church year, second only to Easter itself. Celebrating the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is the culmination of the mystery of the incarnation, the feast of God becoming flesh (the Latin "in carne" means "enfleshment"). It is a uniquely Christian teaching, the Divine choosing to become one of us. Because of this belief, God is not only Transcendent, but also wholly Immanent, Emmanuel (God-with-us). While remaining Transcendent (meaning we must rise above our present condition to reach Him), He is at the same time Immanent (meaning He is with us as we rise toward Him). Every Eucharist is like Christmas where the bread and wine are transformed into His flesh, His Body and Blood, and, in a sense, He is born anew on the Altar. The liturgical season of Christmas begins with the vigil Masses on Christmas Eve and concludes on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. During this season, we celebrate the birth of Christ into our world and into our hearts and reflect on the gift of salvation that is born with him, including the fact that he was born to die for us. The Christmas tree and the Nativity scene are popular symbols of the season and a tradition in many Christian homes. It is also traditional to exchange Christmas gifts with family and friends to honour God the Father's gift of his only son to the world. Having received the gift of Christ, we naturally want to pass that gift along to our loved ones.

### **A Christmas Prayer: Gracious Lord, Child of Bethlehem**

Gracious Lord, Child of Bethlehem, as you were born into a family who fled to Egypt as refugees, help us grow in solidarity with refugees everywhere, to know we are all refugees, until our hearts find refuge in you. As you were born under an oppressive regime, let us grow in solidarity with those whose governments deny them their rights and try to undermine their dignity. Help us work for just governance everywhere. As it was workers, the shepherds, who first came to know you, the carpenter's son, let us remember the dignity of human labour—that you share a special love for those who work hard for their sustenance, and toil beside them. Let us honour you, in work and in prayer, that livelihoods may be secure, and that workers not be exploited. As you were adored by the Magi who came from far-off nations to honour you, let us bring to all nations the great good news that is your love. As your coming was joyfully sung by angels, let us with joy celebrate the gift of life every time a child of God is conceived, and honour that gift with our care. As you were denied any birthplace but a stable, help us to open our homes, our lives, our hearts to the coming of God and his presence in your people. Be born this time into our hearts, dear Lord. Gracious Lord, Child of Bethlehem, through the cradle of our hearts, be born into our world.

### **Weekly Collection**

Thank you for last week's collection which amounted to £338.31 (Plus the regular standing orders of c.£477). Your continued financial support for your parish, the diocese and the wider Universal Church is much needed and very much appreciated.

### **We Pray for...**

We pray for all in our Parish who are currently unwell and who are suffering from illness of one kind or another, praying especially for the housebound who are not able to join us for regular worship. We pray also for those who have recently passed away and for those whose anniversaries occur around this time; may they rest in peace. Names of the Sick and the Deceased may be written in the Parish Prayer Books and will be prayed for.

**Mass & Service Times for the Coming Week: December 24<sup>th</sup> – December 30<sup>th</sup>**

- Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> - 17:00 - Our Lady's** *(4th Sunday of Advent, Year B)*  
Offered for: Marie & Kathleen Walshe (RIP)
- Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> - 09:00 - St Nicholas'** *(4th Sunday of Advent, Year B)*  
Offered for: James & Edna McNamee (RIP)
- Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> - 11:00 - Our Lady's** *(4th Sunday of Advent, Year B)*  
Offered for: People of the Parish
- Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> - 17:00 - Our Lady's** *(Vigil Mass of the Nativity)*  
Offered for: People of the Parish
- Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> - 21:00 - Our Lady's** *(Mass During the Night)*  
Offered for: Private Intention
- Monday 25<sup>th</sup> - 08:00 - Our Lady's** *(Mass of the Dawn)*  
Offered for: Private Intention
- Monday 25<sup>th</sup> - 10:00 - Our Lady's** *(Mass of the Day)*  
Offered for: People of the Parish
- Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> - 10:00 - Our Lady's** *(Feast, St Stephen)*  
Offered for: Betty & Peter Leavey (RIP)
- Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> - 10:00 - Our Lady's** *(Feast, St John the Evangelist)*  
Offered for: James Leavey (RIP)
- Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> - 10:00 - Our Lady's** *(Feast, The Holy Innocents)*  
Offered for: Mabel & Michael Leavey (RIP)
- Friday 29<sup>th</sup> - 10:00 - Our Lady's** *(Feast, St Thomas Becket)*  
Offered for: Mr & Mry Leavey (RIP)
- Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> - 10:00 - Our Lady's** *(6<sup>th</sup> day of Christmas)*  
Offered for: Mr & Mrs Frost (RIP)
- Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> - 17:00 - Our Lady's** *(The Holy Family, Year B)*  
Offered for: Mick Frost (RIP)
- Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> - 09:00 - St Nicholas'** *(The Holy Family, Year B)*  
Offered for: People of the Parish
- Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> - 11:00 - Our Lady's** *(The Holy Family, Year B)*  
Offered for:
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