

THE PARISH OF OUR LADY OF GRACE KIDSGROVE, BIDDULPH & GOLDENHILL

SUNDAY BULLETIN

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

SUNDAY 1ST DECEMBER 2024

A WORD FROM THE PARISH PRIEST



FIRST SUNDAY
OF
Advent

I am writing this, having just heard the result of the assisted suicide Bill in the House of Commons. It is a great shame that it seems that there is a desire to bring euthanasia to our country. However much the proponents say that there won't be a slippery slope, it is inevitable, as this is something which always happens with these 'progressive' moral issues. Once the general principle is accepted, then all hell breaks loose. We only have to look at the situation in

Canada, Belgium, Holland...

We can take a certain amount of consolation from the fact that both of our MPs—David Williams for Stoke North and Karen Bradley for Staffs Moorlands—both voted against at this stage. And we also have to remember that this is only the first stage of the parliamentary process. There is a committee stage and third reading in the Commons, and then the House of Lords still to begin their work. So let us keep praying for the defence of the sanctity of life.

When we begin the season of Advent, we don't hear about the coming of Christmas in the liturgy at all. In fact, it is mostly about preparing for the final judgement. We are urged to live lives which distinguish us in holiness and justice, in truth and

love, from the rest of the human race. So let us take the cue from the liturgy, and commit ourselves to living lives exemplary in the way in which they honour the sacred nature of human life. It may be that the Catholic Church becomes one of the few places where that sanctity of life will still be defended and proclaimed. And it begins with the way in which each of us deals with the lives of others—the poor, the sick, the elderly, the terminally ill, mothers in crisis pregnancies—and with how we honour the sanctity of our own lives.

So let us be joyful in the Lord and be of good cheer. The Lord is with us always. But one question I put before you: Can we leave the Christmas celebrations until Christmas actually arrives, and keep a good and holy Advent?

SAINT OF THE WEEK



St Alexander Briant 1556–1581

St Alexander was born in Somerset and educated at Oxford University, where he converted to Catholicism. This meant he had to leave the University, and from there he went to Reims to join the English seminary there. He was ordained priest in 1578 and returned to England, going

back to Somerset to work on the Catholic mission. He was able to minister for three years before he was arrested and sent to the Tower of London. He was subjected to torture to reveal the names of other Catholic priests. In November 1581 he was condemned to death. He was again tortured, which hastened his death.

CHURCHES

Biddulph English Martyrs' Church, Church Road, Biddulph, ST8 6NE

Goldenhill St Joseph's Church, High Street, Stoke-on-Trent, ST6 5RD

Packmoor St Patrick's Church, Mellor Street, Packmoor, Stoke-on-Trent, ST7 4SN

PARISH PRIEST

Rev Fr Julian C Green
St Joseph's Presbytery
715 High Street
Stoke-on-Trent ST6 5RD
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Parish Secretary

Teresa Harding
Tel: (01782) 782121
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Office Hours: Mon, Tues, Fri
9am to 3.30pm. Weds, Thurs
9am to 1pm.

Safeguarding

The Parish of Our Lady of Grace operates in accordance with Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and the National and Archdiocesan policies & procedures at all times. Our Parish Safeguarding Representatives are:

Biddulph: Julie Shufflebotham
(sg.englishmartyrs.biddulph@rcaob.org.uk)

Goldenhill: Jo Kirkham
(sg.stjoseph.goldenhill@rcaob.org.uk)

Packmoor: Lorraine Connell
(sg.stpatricks.packmoor@rcaob.org.uk)

Alternatively the Diocesan Safeguarding team can be contacted on 0121 230 6240

or safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk if you have any concerns.

Parish Website

www.ourladyofgraceparish.org

The Parish is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham: Registered Charity no.

234216

LITURGY & DEVOTIONS THIS WEEK

	Biddulph	Goldenhill	Packmoor	Sacrament of Forgiveness (Confessions) St Joseph's Sun before Mass; Friday evening at 5pm English Martyrs' Sun before Mass St Patrick's Sat before Mass <i>At other times on request</i>	
Saturday 30th			5.30pm	Holy Mass of Sunday	Int Brenda Crotty
Sunday 1st First Sunday of Advent	9.00am	11.00am		Holy Mass Holy Mass	Bill Adams Bailey & Plant families
Monday 2nd Feria of Advent		5.45pm 6.00pm		<i>Vespers</i> Holy Mass	Stan Grandfield
Tuesday 3rd St Francis Xavier	8.55am 9.15am		2.15pm	<i>Lauds</i> Holy Mass Holy Rosary	Nino Valgimigli
Wednesday 4th Feria of Advent		9.30am		Holy Mass	Bernard Cunningham
Thursday 5th St Birinus	12noon	9.30am		Holy Mass (St John's school) Holy Mass	People of the Parish Michael Cullen
Friday 6th St Nicholas <i>First Friday</i>		12.30pm 3.00pm 4.30pm 5.30pm 6.00pm		Holy Mass (St Margaret Ward) <i>Eucharistic Adoration</i> <i>Confessions</i> <i>Vespers, Devotions & Benediction</i> Holy Mass	People of the Parish Paddy Maughan
Saturday 7th St Ambrose			5.30pm	Holy Mass of Sunday	Kenneth Harding
Sunday 8th Second Sunday of Advent	9.00am	11.00am		Holy Mass Holy Mass	Andrew Sturgess Bernadette McGough
Monday 9th THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION		5.45pm 6.00pm		<i>Vespers</i> Holy Mass	Michael & Maureen Meaney & family
Tuesday 10th Feria of Advent	8.55am 9.15am		2.15pm	<i>Lauds</i> Holy Mass Holy Rosary	Dan & May Biggane & family
Wednesday 11th Feria of Advent		10.00am 5.45pm 6.00pm		Requiem Mass <i>Vespers</i> Holy Mass	Kathleen Boardman RIP John Jones
Thursday 12th Our Lady of Guadalupe					
Friday 13th St Lucy		8.15am		Holy Mass (St Margaret Ward)	Private Intention
Saturday 14th St John of the Cross			5.30pm	Holy Mass of Sunday	Dec of Moran & Norton families
Sunday 15th Third Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday)	9.00am	11.00am		Holy Mass Holy Mass	Barbara & George Connell & Karol Grolik Robert Johnson

First Friday This Friday is a First Friday in preparation for the Jubilee Year. This is the third month of our community First Friday Devotion. You can start now, even if you missed the first month. The programme is:

3.00pm Eucharistic Adoration in silence (note change of time)
 4.30pm Confessions
 5.25pm First Friday Devotions, Vespers and Benediction
 6.00pm Holy Mass

Training for Readers Thanks to all parish readers who came to one of the training sessions this week, to introduce the new lectionary and refine our practice. For those who were unable to come, there will be an additional training session. It will be on Wednesday 11th December at 6.30pm. If you haven't already attended, please try to attend this session. Any new readers are very welcome too.

Our Lady of Grace Ladies Our Parish Ladies Group are meeting at St Joseph's on Monday, 2nd December (note change of Monday to first of the month) at St Joseph's Church at 7pm. All ladies welcome!

Men's Prayer Circle The Circle is for men who have done the Prayer & Life Workshop. The next meeting is on Saturday 7th December (note change of date), 9am to 10.30am. There will be no meeting in December.

Cribs We'll be setting up the cribs after Masses on the Third Sunday of Advent (14/15th December). We need volunteers to help to fetch, carry and set them up, please. Just plan to stay behind after Mass on that weekend. Thanks.

Parish Forum The best laid plans... Our first meeting of the new Parish Forum had to be cancelled because of the terrible weather conditions a week last Monday. And so, we'll try again! The Parish Forum meeting will now take place on Monday 20th January at 7pm at St Joseph's.

All Parish Volunteers The parish safeguarding reps are in the process

of updating parish volunteer records to comply with new diocesan guidelines. To support this, please could we need all volunteers who have not already been asked to do so, to complete and return the volunteer registration forms which are available on the way into church. This form is for all volunteers: stewards, cleaners, flower arrangers, gardeners, etc. The diocese offers basic safeguarding training for all volunteers, which is available at this link: <https://training.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/> If you have any concerns, please contact the safeguarding representative for your church on the emails stated on the newsletter or in person at Mass.

Advent Penitential Service The Penitential Service for our Parish together with Tunstall, Burslem and Norton will take place at St Joseph's Goldenhill on Friday 20th December. There will be a selection of priests available to hear confessions that night.

Rorate Mass It is traditional in some countries of Europe to have a Rorate Mass on Saturdays in Advent. It is a Mass of Our Lady, celebrated by candlelight before sunrise, to end as the sun rises. It shows how Our Lady is the herald of the new dawn of our salvation. We will celebrate a Rorate Mass on Saturday 21st December at 7.15am at St Joseph's followed by breakfast. A great way to honour Our Lady of Grace!

Carol Service Please invite all family and friends to our Parish carol service which will take place at English Martyrs' on Sunday 21st December at 4pm. We will have refreshments with mince pies after the service.

Servers' Mass Please would all servers' make every effort to attend the Servers' Mass on St Stephen's Day, 26th December, at 11.30am at St Joseph's. If you usually serve at English Martyrs' or St Patrick's, please bring your cassock and cotta. New servers will be admitted to the Guild of St Stephen, and we will award silver medals to those who qualify.

HOSPITALITY



St Joseph's Welcoming Place meets on Tuesdays from 10am to 12noon in the after school club at St Joseph's Catholic Academy on Mobberley Road. It is an opportunity for anyone from our community to come together for a refreshments and a chat.

The Welcome Space initiative is now up and running over the autumn and winter at English Martyrs' too. It is on Wednesdays, from 11am to 2pm, there will be tea and coffee, soup, sandwiches and dessert. Everyone welcome!

The Young at Heart Club, for senior citizens, is at Kildgrove Town Hall on the last Tuesday of the month. The club does not meet in December so the next meeting is on Tuesday 28th January from 1.30 to 3.30pm. Everyone welcome! £3 to attend.

CHRISTMAS WITH OUR LADY OF GRACE

Friday 20th December

6.00pm Penitential Mass & Service at St Joseph's

Saturday 21st December

7.15am Rorate Mass at St Joseph's

Sunday 22nd December

4pm Carol Service at English Martyrs'

Christmas Eve

4.30pm Vigil Mass at St Joseph's

6.30pm Night Mass at English Martyrs'

Christmas Day

12midnight Midnight Mass at St Joseph's

9.00am Dawn Mass at St Patrick's

11.00am Day Mass at St Joseph's

St Stephen's Day

11.30am Servers' Mass at St Joseph's

The Parish of Our Lady of Grace,
Kidsgrove, Biddulph and Goldenhill

Christmas Fayre Saturday 7th December 12noon - 3pm

At St. Joseph's,
Catholic Academy School,
Mobberley Rd, Goldenhill, ST6 5RN

Free Admission,
Many Quality Stalls,
Santa, Choir, Raffle and
Refreshments

The Parish is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham, Registered Charity No. 234216



The North Staffs Walsingham Association

Walsingham Pilgrimage 2025

Sat 23rd – Mon 25th August
Bank Holiday weekend

This is a great opportunity for you, your family and friends to make a special Jubilee Year pilgrimage to Walsingham in the footsteps of kings, saints, and holy people of times gone by to deepen your faith and reliance on our Lord Jesus Christ.

The pilgrimage includes coach travel, 2 nights' dinner, bed & breakfast in Elmham House and one packed lunch.

A programme of liturgical, devotional and social activities will make a special weekend in Walsingham.

The cost for adults will not exceed £227 (standard room) or £265 (ensuite room).

Special offer for pilgrims under 16: travel, food and accommodation will all be half price!

For more information/ booking details, contact Mary Shirley asap:

07910 605984 or maryroseshirley@gmail.com

PARISH GIVING

If you do not have a standing order in place, it is by far the best way of being able to give to the parish, as it attracts the lowest bank charges. You can set it up by contacting your bank or in online banking. The details of the parish bank account are as follows:

Account Name: Our Lady of Grace Parish

Account Sort Code: 010138

Account Number: 75282135

If you pay personal Income Tax, you can also Gift Aid your donations. Please contact Teresa in the Parish Office. You can also make a donation on your smartphone using this QR code. This can also be done on the parish website.



Mass for the Filipino community There will be a Filipino community Mass for North Staffs at St Teresa's Church Trent Vale on Tuesday 17th December at 7pm.

Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage 2025 The Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes will be from Saturday 24th May to Friday 30th May. If you would like to get more information or to register your interest in taking part, please go to this page on the Diocesan website: <https://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/lourdes-pilgrimage>

Hospital If you or someone you know needs a priest in hospital, you need to contact the chaplaincy yourself. For Royal Stoke call 01782 676400. It is important to specify you want the Catholic chaplain. If you need a Chaplain at the Haywood, please contact Fr George at Tunstall. For other hospitals, care homes or hospices, please ask the staff. If you have any difficulties, contact the Parish Office.

PARISH REGISTERS

Death

Of your charity, please pray for the soul of Kathleen Boardman. Requiem Mass at St Joseph's on Wednesday 11th December at 10am. Committal at Tunstall Cemetery.

Requiescat in Pace

Parish Office & Parish Priest's Open House

The Parish Office is **closed this week**, but open at the times advertised on the front of the bulletin.

Open House is when Fr Julian is available to be seen for consultations about baptisms, weddings, or for any other reason. It now takes place on Saturday mornings from 11am to 12noon. There will be no Open House on Saturday 14th December.

Sanctuary Lamp Dedications

Week beginning 1st December

St Joseph's: John Martin

English Martyrs': Mary Jervis

Week beginning 8th December

St Joseph's: Finn Family

If you would like to dedicate a lamp in one of our churches for any intention, please place donation (min £5) in an envelope with the intention and church