

ST. MARK'S PARISH

24th December 2023 – 4th Sunday of Advent Year B

Parish Clergy: Rev Seán Bradley & Rev Nicholas Hodgson

Parish Office, 29 Oxgangs Avenue., Edinburgh, EH13 9HX Tel: **0131 441 3915**

Email: stmarksoxgangs@gmail.com

Website: www.stmarkschurch-edinburgh.org.uk

PARISH NEWS

WELCOME If you are just visiting our parish today or if this is the first time you have been to Mass for a while, welcome back! We hope our time together unites us in God's love.

PLEASE REMEMBER in your prayers those who are on holiday and travelling at this time, especially our children and teachers at St. Mark's Primary School on their Christmas holidays. May the Good Lord continue to watch over them and bless them with his care.

RIP Your prayers are asked for the repose of the soul **Ian James McNaught** whose Requiem Funeral Mass will be held on Friday 29th Dec at 2pm and thereafter to Mortonhall (Pentland) for 3.30pm. May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Christmas Day and Vigil Mass times for St. Mark's and all churches in the Archdiocese can be viewed at www.archedinburgh.org/christmas-day-mass-times/ Please note, Attendance at the Christmas Eve Vigil Mass will NOT fulfil the obligation to attend Sunday Mass. The Christmas Eve Vigil and the Christmas Day masses fulfil our Christmas obligation only. There will be no mass on Tuesday 26th or Wednesday 27th of December. Outside of these two changes the usual mass timetable will apply during the week, please consult your newsletter.

CAROL SERVICE will be held before the Christmas Eve Vigil Mass beginning at 4.30pm. Come and join us in this enjoyable festive preparation for Christmas Mass.

BACK CAR PARK GATE will be open for our 5pm Christmas Eve Vigil Mass and our 10am Christmas Day Mass for anyone wishing to use the back Car Park.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION 2023/2024 for children who are not attending a catholic school and would like to enrol for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Holy Communion or Confirmation in 2024, please contact the Parish Office via email or phone and request an application form.

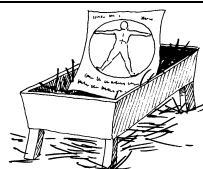
<i>St. Mark's</i>	<i>ATTENDANCE</i>	<i>OFFERTORY</i>	<i>Thank you, without your contributions the work of God's church would not be possible</i>
VIGIL	77	£328	
SUNDAY	168	£419	

St. Mark's, Oxgangs is a parish of The Archdiocese of St Andrew's & Edinburgh, a charity registered in Scotland - Number SC008540

MASS DATES TIMES INTENTIONS

Saturday 23rd December Vigil	5:00pm	People of the Parish
Sunday 24th December	10:00am	Gordon McGhee (Ann)
Sunday 24th Christmas Eve Vigil	5:00pm	Deceased Parishioners of St. Mark's
Monday 25th Christmas Day	10:00am	People of the Parish
Tuesday 26th December		NO MASS
Wednesday 27th December		NO MASS
Thursday 28th December	10:00am	Ellen Frost (Ann)
Friday 29th December	10:00am	Bill Lightheart (Ann)
Friday 29th December	2:00pm	Funeral: Ian McNaught
<i>Saturday 30th December Vigil</i>	<i>5:00pm</i>	<i>Sheila Duffy (Ann)</i>
<i>Sunday 31st December</i>	<i>10:00am</i>	<i>People of the Parish</i>
CONFESSIONS available before Sat Vigil 4.15-4.45pm and before Sun Mass 9.15-9.45am or upon request after any of the weekday Masses.		
EUCARISTIC ADORATION: Every Tuesday & Friday Morning 09.15am – 09.45am 1 st Thursday of Every Month 7pm-8pm		

STABLE BLUEPRINT We are so familiar with the Christmas story: the journey to Jerusalem, stopping off at Bethlehem, the stable, the angelic choir, the shepherds, the star and the wise men. And there's something comforting about the scene of Mary, Joseph and the child in the manger. Glory to God in the highest and peace to God's people on earth. Parents often look at the smallest features of their new-born child, like fingernails, and marvel at how everything needed for growing into adulthood is already there at such an early stage. When we look at Jesus in the crib we could do the same but this would be to miss the point. What we see when we look at the infant Jesus is God's blueprint for being human. Jesus is God's way to be man, God's way to be woman, God's way to be human. We are not talking about physical features but about the values that direct human life and action. The life of Jesus is a pattern for us to follow. It's about serving others and thereby serving God. The baby in the straw will go on to show that we reach maturity in God's eyes by the way we treat others. We grow into full humanity by giving without reserve so that our fellow human beings may see something of the face of God in the way we treat them. And so each Christmas summons us to go beyond the nostalgia for past events and to celebrate our commitment to being born again ourselves like the Christ-child. Christmas renews our pledge to making Christ born in our own lives so that we may give glory to God and peace to those who share our lives. Christmas, therefore, is not only Christ's birthday. It's ours too. For on this day we are caught up into the mystery of God's love for the world, a mystery that is born not only each time a baby comes into the world but every time we allow ourselves to bear God to the world. For from this day forward God has entered our lives in the most intimate way. Jesus is God's way to be man, God's way to be woman, God's way to be human. And so are we.



On behalf of Fr. Nick and myself, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your families a very Peaceful, Blessed and Joyous Christmas.

May God bless you all.

Fr. Seán.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading: A reading from the second book of Samuel [7:1-5.8-

12.14.16] *The kingdom of David will always stand secure before the Lord.*

Once David had settled into his house and the Lord had given him rest from all the enemies surrounding him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, Look, I am living in a house of cedar while the ark of God dwells in a tent. Nathan said to the king, Go and do all that is in your mind, for the Lord is with you. But that very night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: Go and tell my servant David, Thus the Lord speaks: Are you the man to build me a house to dwell in? I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be leader of my people Israel; I have been with you on all your expeditions; I have cut off all your enemies before you. I will give you fame as great as the fame of the greatest on earth. I will provide a place for my people Israel; I will plant them there and they shall dwell in that place and never be disturbed again; nor shall the wicked continue to oppress them as they did, in the days when I appointed judges over my people Israel; I will give them rest from all their enemies. The Lord will make you great; the Lord will make you a House. And when your days are ended and you are laid to rest with your ancestors, I will preserve the offspring of your body after you and make his sovereignty secure. I will be a father to him and he a son to me. Your House and your sovereignty will always stand secure before me and your throne be established for ever.

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Responsorial Psalm [Ps 88:2-5. 27. 29]

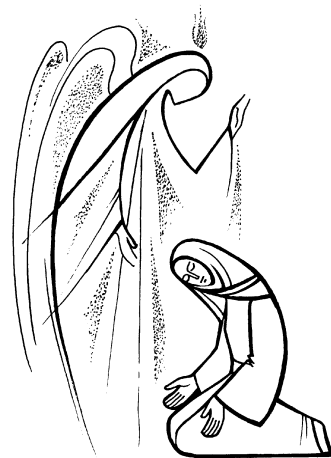
Response: I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord.

I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord;
through all ages my mouth will proclaim your truth.

Of this I am sure, that your love lasts for ever,
that your truth is firmly established as the heavens.

‘I have made a covenant with my chosen one;
I have sworn to David my servant
I will establish your dynasty for ever
and set up your throne through all ages.’

He will say to me: ‘You are my father,
my God, the rock who saves me.’
I will keep my love for him always;
for him my covenant shall endure.



Second Reading: A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

[16:25-27] *The mystery, which was kept secret for endless ages, is now made clear.*

Glory to him who is able to give you the strength to live according to the Good News I preach, and in which I proclaim Jesus Christ, the revelation of a mystery kept secret for endless ages, but now so clear that it must be broadcast to pagans everywhere to bring them to the obedience of faith. This is only what scripture has predicted, and it is all part of the way the eternal God wants things to be. He alone is wisdom; give glory therefore to him through Jesus Christ for ever and ever. Amen.

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Alleluia, alleluia!

I am the handmaid of the Lord:

let what you have said be done to me.

Alleluia!

Gospel: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke [1:26-38]

Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son.

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?' 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you' the angel answered 'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.' 'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary 'let what you have said be done to me.' And the angel left her.

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