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**4th Sunday of Advent (B)** December 24th 2023

**SUNDAY MASS TIMES**

 Saturday 6.00pm St. Patrick’s church

 Sunday 9.30am Christ the King church

 Sunday 11.00am St. Patrick’s church

MASS TIMES FOR CHRISTMAS

 Christmas Eve, Sunday, December 24th 5.00pm at St. Patrick’s Church {Carols from 4.45pm}

 Christmas Eve, Sunday, December 24th 7.00pm at Christ the King Church {Carols from 6.30pm}

 Christmas Day, Monday, December 25th 10.30am at St. Patrick’s Church

**WEEKDAY LITURGY TIMES**

 Tuesday **11.00am** Christ the King (St. Stephen)

 Wednesday 10.00am St. Patrick’s (St. John the Evangelist)

 Thursday 10.00am Christ the King (Holy Innocents)

 Friday 10.00am St. Patrick’s (St. Thomas of Canterbury)

**MASS INTENTIONS RECEIVED**: Special Intention, Mary Veronica Spayne (4th Anni.), Margaret Tatters (4th Anni.),

Martin Donegan, Roy Rogers (Anni.), Cassie Chesser, Special Intention, James Devlin, Stan Elsey,

**ANNIVERSARIES: December 24th – 30th.**

Molly Maley, Bernard McLeary, Kathleen Kane, Yvonne Clasper, James Devlin, Ivor Blott, Winifred Margaret Heron, Peter Rafferty, Kevin Desmond Green, Mary Ann Hunt, Martin Bainbridge, Bishop Thomas Kevin O'Brien, Doreen Ward, Veronica Burns, John Hellerman, Pauline Craven, John Ritchie, Joan Whaley, Mary Allison, Hughie O;Rourke, Carol Lockwood, Freda Livermore.

**PLEASE REMEMBER** in your prayers all our sick and housebound brothers and sisters.

**The word this week**

2 Samuel 7:1–5, 8b–12,14a, 16 The Lord promises to establish a house for Israel.

Psalm 88 ***‘I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord.’***

Romans 16:25–27 The truth of salvation is manifested to all.

Luke 1:26–38 The angel Gabriel visits Mary of Nazareth.

H

ere we enter a new stage of Advent: having spent so much time on the Second Coming, now we look back, to remember the details of the Lord’s First Coming. Today we focus on the character of Mary, and hear of the angel Gabriel being sent to her, to invite her to take her part in the mystery of the Incarnation, “the revelation of the mystery kept secret for endless ages”. This mystery springs from the House of David, and so we lead into the Gospel by hearing of the establishing of that house. An interesting idea is that the first reading talks of David wishing to build a house for the Lord; through the prophet he is told not of the house that he would build, but the House which is his line: eventually, in Mary (betrothed to Joseph) the House of David does itself become the house of the Lord, the womb wherein he has a dwelling place.

**AT MASS TODAY WE PRAY** Eucharistic Prayer 2 and Preface 2 for Advent

Around this holy table we dare to imagine a future filled with justice and peace. Here we have a foretaste of the age to come. Let us offer this prayer of thanksgiving with grateful and expectant hearts.

**ST PATRICK’S PARISH AND PRIMARY SCHOOL:** Christmas Concert in St. Patrick’s church last Wednesday evening was wonderful. Big ‘Thank you’ to Dan Woodgate, the Teachers involved, Parishioners involved, the children who sang so beautifully and all who came along to take part and enjoy.

**MESSAGE FROM BEREAVEMENT GROUP:** ‘The Bereavement Group send love and prayers to all who are missing a loved one this Christmas. May the Holy Family of Bethlehem bring you peace and consolation. God Bless.’



**Fourth Sunday of Advent (B)**

**December 24th, 2023**

 **First reading** 2 Samuel 7:1-5,8-12,14,16

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; if he does evil, I will punish him with the rod such as men use, with strokes such as mankind gives. Your House and your sovereignty will always stand secure before me and your throne be established for ever.”’

 **Second reading**  Romans 16:25-27

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.

 **Gospel Acclamation**

Alleluia, alleluia!

I am the handmaid of the Lord:

let what you have said be done to me.

Alleluia!

**Gospel Reading** Luke 1:26-38

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.