

GRIDIRON

THE WEEKLY NEWSLETTER FOR
THE PARISH OF ST LAURENCE,
LONG EATON

in the See of Oswestry and the Diocese of Derby
www.st-laurence.net

Sunday 1st January 2023
MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD
Octave Day of Christmas
9.30am THE PARISH MASS
Presider and preacher: Father David

Welcome to our worship today. Baptised and communicant members of any Christian denomination are welcome to receive Holy Communion; if you'd prefer to receive a blessing, please carry a Mass booklet or hymn book with you when you come to the communion point. Gluten-free communion hosts are available – please let a sidesperson know if you require one. Large-print copies of the Order of Mass and children's Mass Booklets are also available. Refreshments are served after the Parish Mass in the hall – do join us.

Thought for the week

Say to Mary: Mother of mine – yours, because you are hers on many counts – may your love bind me to your Son's cross; may I not lack the faith, nor the courage, nor the daring, to carry out the will of our Jesus.

St Josemaría Escrivá

Music at St Laurence's this morning

*Today's hymns are from **The New English Hymnal***

Introit	26	Hark! the herald angels sing
Gloria	4	
Offertory	161 (t.385)	For Mary, Mother of the Lord
Sanctus	Sanctus 3	
Agnus Dei	Angus Dei 2	
Post Communion	187 (t.387)	Virgin-born, we bow before thee
Recessional	33	Of the Father's heart begotten*

**The Angelus is recited after the first verse, the hymn resuming after*

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

A priest is usually available to hear confessions forty-five minutes before Mass on weekdays, from 8.30am on Sundays, or by appointment.

THIS WEEK at ST LAURENCE

Wednesday Christmas Weekday 10.00am Mass

Friday THE EPIPHANY 12noon Mass

Mass is also celebrated at Holy Trinity, Ilkeston, on Tuesday at 9.30am and on Thursday at 7.00pm.

**Vigil of the Epiphany – Thursday 5th January
7.00pm Solemn Mass at Holy Trinity, Ilkeston**

This Mass counts as Epiphany obligation

*We are also invited to join Father Giles and the congregation at St Anne's, Derby, for their celebration of **The Epiphany** at 7.00pm on Friday.*

Next Sunday 8th January 2023

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

Last Day of Christmastide

9.30am THE PARISH MASS

Presider and preacher: Father David

5.00pm Music and Readings for Christmastide

with the music group Aitone – all welcome

COVID 19 – IT HASN'T GONE AWAY!

OUR RESPONSIBILITY OF CARE FOR EACH OTHER

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

Following the further lifting of restrictions, but in light of the continuing risk of infection, here at St Laurence you are requested to be measured in your contact with others, who may still be anxious and very concerned. **The Sharing of the Peace** will continue in a 'socially-observant' manner – please don't move around the church. The priest will continue to sanitise his hands before distributing the host, and may choose to wear a face visor/covering during the administration.

Items for inclusion in The Gridiron ...

*should be sent to Father David by **Wednesday evening**, please.*

Father David's rest day this week is Saturday.

PRAYERS, PLEASE ...

The Sick: Derek Booth priest, Judy Crisp, Elvena Dew, Steven Elliot, Renée Else, Grace Fouracres, Keith Hann, Kati Hart, Jane Hessey, Julie Hunt, Pauline Lawley, Charlie Needham, Dave Perry, Angela Pown, Rick Savage, Karl Schnöll, Ann Skeldon, Barbara Smith, Bill Turner, Steven Watson, Jemima, John and Natalie.

The Recently Departed: Raymond Glenn, Andrew Goyns priest, Julie Hunt, Dorothy Titheridge, Connie Turner.

Anniversaries of death this week: Clive Davies, Irene Cheetham (Mon), William Foulkes, Margaret Cromack (Wed), Thirzah Complin, Marjoprie Farrow, Dorothy Roberts, Jack Grocock (Thu), Dorthy Eaver, Irene Clarke (Fri), Daisy Collier (Sat).

This week's spiritual link from New Pilgrim Path:



Ignatian New Year Resolutions

On New Year's Day, New Pilgrim Path brings you a short commentary on three Ignatian New Year's resolutions: 'Give others the benefit of the doubt', 'Resist desolation' and 'Follow God's will without condition, that is, freely'. Access these at: www.newpilgrimpath.ie.

New Pilgrim Path is a labour of love. Our small team of two people run it on a shoestring. We neither look for nor accept any form of financial support such as advertising and donations. Our only way of promoting the site is through word of mouth. If you find our website useful, please share the link: www.newpilgrimpath.ie. New Pilgrim Path introduces fellow Christians of all denominations to the great wealth of online spiritual resources that our small team has discovered and continues to discover. We provide links to, and a brief description of, a variety of resources we have explored and found valuable. In addition to our permanent pages, each week we feature a **Website of the Week**, **Poem of the Week** and **Music of the Week**. We hope these links will help visitors to encounter the person of Christ.

**THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST LAURENCE
DEACON AND MARTYR
LONG EATON**

Parish Priest

Father David Lawrence-March
The Vicarage
Regent Street
Long Eaton
NG10 1JX
Office Telephone 01159464060
Electronic mail fatherdlm@icloud.com

Churchwarden

Mrs Eleanor Naylor
Telephone 07484893424
Mrs Naylor may also be contacted with regard to Hall bookings

PCC Secretary

Mrs Lizbeth Fedyszyn
Telephone 07846671104

PCC Treasurer

Mr Andrew Sheasby
Telephone 01332 515335
Electronic mail stlaurence.treasurer@yahoo.com
to whom financial questions may be addressed

A FORWARD IN FAITH PARISH IN THE SEE OF OSWESTRY AND



The Society
under the patronage of Saint Wilfrid and Saint Hilda

About today's Mass readings:

MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD, YEAR A

First Reading: Numbers 6:22-27

In its original setting in the Jewish scriptures this passage comes at the end of a series of laws. It invokes the blessing of God on his people. The triple repetition makes it a strong and insistent blessing, calling the presence and protection of God on his people. At a certain stage, in the 1960s, there was a great tendency to translate the Beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5) as 'happy are the poor in spirit' etc. But God's blessing does not mean 'happiness' in the sense that the poor in spirit are singing, dancing and generally having fun. Rather, it means that God's protective hand is over them: nothing can go wrong, and God's guidance is looking after them, despite any appearances to the contrary. So, when the passage is read on this day, it does not mean that that Mary and her Son were always merry and having a jolly time. Mary had the same troubles as any mother with a new baby, perhaps even post-natal depression. It does not mean that the baby Jesus never cried (unlike the heretical line in the second verse of the original version of *Away in a manger ...*). Rather, God's protective hand was upon them in all their doings, their relationships and their troubles. For us, today, it means that this presence of the Lord was and is the beginning and guarantee of salvation.

Second Reading: Galatians 4:4-7

In his letter to the Galatians Paul is not setting out to assert anything about the maternity of Mary. He is simply setting out to assert that we are no longer subject to the Law. Why not? Because Jesus, though a real man like ourselves, could call God his Father. As son and heir of God, Jesus is free of all restrictions and enslavements, and we too, plunged into Christ in baptism, as similarly heirs and free. All this depends on Jesus fully sharing our human nature. Paul just slips this in unquestioningly, 'born of a woman'. Where did he get his human existence from, if not from Mary? At the Council of Ephesus Nestorius wanted Mary to be called 'Christotokos' or 'Christ-bearer', but the Council rightly insisted that the man Jesus, who was fully God, derived his whole being from Mary: she was 'Theotokos', 'God-bearer'. The whole person who was God was born of Mary, not just a human Christ. From Mary he derived his genes, his DNA, his flesh-and-blood, his temperament (which was divine too), his habits of mind, his warmth of personality. He was utterly, frankly and joyfully human, and yet those who opened their eyes and ears to him could not forebear reverencing him as only God may be revered.

Gospel Reading: Luke 2:16-21

The cosy picture of the bright-eyed child in the clean wooden manger (with the ox and the ass peeping in from a respectful distance) is misleading. The picture is one of destitution. There was no room for the new-born in the normal living-quarters for guests, and so, as was usual at the time in the Holy Land when your guestrooms were full, the worried mother had to lodge him in the only space available, a feeding-trough for cattle, perched on top of their fodder. That was where the ragged sheep-minders found him. They too were the poorest of the poor, no sheep of their own, just hired for the night. Perhaps they got a drink of goats'-milk or a crust of bread for their shivering pains. (Shepherds, although essential to the economy of First Century Palestine, were still some of the most despised members of society). Matthew does at least also have the baby worshipped by those rather splendid Wise Men from the East, with their noble and symbolic gifts. No gifts forthcoming from today's rough crew. As we worry about our post-Christmas waistlines, and set out on our prosperous New Year, it makes us reflect on where true blessedness lies, and who are the chosen ones of the Lord. Surely God could have rustled up more suitable worshippers for his Incarnate Son than these scruffy down-and-outs? He did not. And there's a lesson for all of us which we ignore at our peril.

Two saints for this week:

St Basil the Great and St Gregory Nazianzen

2nd January

St Basil was born in 330 at Caesarea in Cappadocia, of a Christian family. A brilliant scholar and a virtuous man, he started by becoming a hermit but was made bishop of Caesarea in 370. He fought against the Arian heresy and wrote many notable works, in particular the monastic rule that bears his name and which many monks in the East follow to this day. He was also generous to the poor. He died on 1st January 379. His lifelong friend, St Gregory Nazianzen was born in 330, near Nazianzus. He travelled widely in search of knowledge. He followed Basil into the wilderness, but he too was ordained a priest and later a bishop. He was elected Bishop of Constantinople in 381 but because of the factional fighting within the Church he retired back home to Nazianzus, where he died on 25th January 389 or 390. He is also known as 'Gregory the Theologian' in honour of his learning and eloquence, and appropriately shares a feast day with St Basil, not least as they are two of the greatest Doctors of the Universal Church before the split between East and West in 1052.