

# OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH In NEW MILTON

Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth

15 Mount Ave, New Milton. BH25 6NT.

Parish priest: *Father George Ngwa*

Church opening hours –



**THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR "B" 20<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2020**

## **We See In Mary What God Wants From All of Us.**



**(Left) Mary's grotto in the crypt of Nazareth's basilica of the Annunciation. It is here that tradition places the appearance of the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary, and thus the place where the first part of the Rosary has its origin. (Right) The Annunciation as depicted in 1672 by Italian painter Luca Giordano.**

Our Gospel reading this fourth Sunday of Advent the Angel Gabriel announces to Mary the long-awaited good news of the birth of the Messiah. Mary's response is her total and complete FIAT (yes) to the will of God. We see in Mary what God wants from all of us. Often, when we think of the Christmas story, we gloss over Mary. The focus is on the baby Jesus, the angels, the shepherds, and the wise men. We envision mangers and camel rides. But the Christmas story is so much richer than that. We have a villain – Herod. But more importantly, we have a heroine – Mary.

### **What we learn from our Gospel story today.**

In the first place, God became man because he loves us and wanted to join his divine nature to our human nature so that we could share in his divine nature by grace. This truth is a central theme of the teaching of the Catholic Church. It is also the basis of the sacramental life of the Church.

The kind of new life that Jesus came to give us is a sharing in divine life which we had lost through the first or original sin of Adam and Eve. Now by Jesus' death, it would be restored and the sacraments would be the means of receiving it and growing in it.

Secondly, the Annunciation teaches us that God requires our cooperation to bring about the salvific mission he intends to accomplish. Without Mary's fiat, the Son of God would not have become man and we would not have been redeemed. This truth is also part of the profound message of Fatima when our Blessed Mother asks all her children to pray and fast so that souls may be spared from the fires of hell. The understanding is that many will not receive graces for salvation unless others cooperate with God's grace to obtain them.

Thirdly, the feast of the Annunciation teaches us that human life begins at conception. The Church has always believed that Jesus became man at the moment of his conception, not at the moment of his birth. The Latin text of the Creed states this very fact when it says, "et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine, et homo factus est", which means "and he became flesh by the power of the Holy Spirit through the Virgin Mary and became man".

This is also the third declaration of the Angelus when one says, "And the Word became flesh", with the response, "And dwelt among us". At this moment many genuflect to show adoration of the Incarnate Word of God. This truth also reminds us why the Catholic Church so strongly condemns abortion from the moment of conception.

## **Mary's role in salvation**

Finally, the Annunciation reminds us of the remarkable role of Mary in the work of salvation. Mary was the one called by God to uniquely participate in the work of salvation so that the Son of God could become man and, by his death, redeem our world. Mary is the New Eve because as the sinless Mother of God, made so by Christ her Son, she becomes the Mother of all the truly living, those who accept and live in the very life of God. So as we read this Gospel of the Annunciation, let us rejoice in all the truths that are found in this great mystery. Let us begin to pray the Angelus daily in our families to commemorate our God becoming man by means of Mary. Let us rejoice that the Son of God truly came to dwell with his people by becoming man and opening the doors of heaven for us to enter.

## **Lessons We Can Learn From Mary**

What is impressive about Mary isn't simply that she gave birth to Jesus. God could have chosen any young woman to do that. What is impressive is how she carried herself with grace and maturity when faced with an incredibly difficult situation. Her story is rich with lessons for how we can better live our lives, even when faced with adversity. Consider the following lessons from Mary's story, and think about how you might apply them in your own life.

**Put your faith in God and Trust him in all things.** In great contrast to Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist who doubts Gabriel's announcement that he'll have a son, Mary is described by her cousin Elizabeth as "she who has believed" (Luke 1:45).

When the archangel Gabriel comes to Mary, just a young teenage girl, and tells her that she is going to become pregnant out of wedlock, Mary naturally should be alarmed. Given the patriarchal society in which she lives, she should be upset and frightened as to what is going to happen to her. But Mary trusts God. How often in fearful situations do we fail to do the same? But that isn't the right response when facing a difficult situation. The right response is Mary's: Trust God. Trust that regardless of what happens, God will be with you. Trust that He will provide you with the courage to face any adversity. Mary trusted God, and He led her through her difficulties. He changed Joseph's mind about divorcing her. He led her to a place of safety where she could give birth. When we trust God, as Mary did, He will guide us through any challenge.

### **Believe in Miracles**

Today we live in an age of increasing cynicism. People like to question everything from the Christmas Story to whether Jesus actually lived. Mary believed in miracles. When the archangel Gabriel told her that she would get pregnant, even though she was a virgin, she believed him. She believed in the impossible because if God had ordained it, it must be so. Miracles happen all around us. From the changing of the seasons to the safe birth of a child, we are constantly surrounded by miracles. Each day, miracles occur. We are just too cynical to see them. Let go of the world's cynicism. Be like Mary. Believe in the miracles that are put before you.

**Serve God, Not the World and be prepared to be used by God.** As an unmarried young woman from Nazareth, Mary has a very low social status, but God doesn't care about that. Mary continues a long list of people in the Bible who felt inadequate (Moses, Rahab, David, Jonah, Naomi to name just a few) that God uses to fulfil His promises.

When the archangel Gabriel tells Mary that she is going to have a baby even though she is still a virgin, her response in Luke 1:38 is "I am the Lord's servant." In that moment Mary makes a choice. She chooses to serve God, not the world.

We make this choice with how we spend our time. Do we spend some time each day in prayer or in reading spiritually uplifting books? Or is our free time consumed with the Internet and television? How and where do we spend our Sundays?

We would do well to consider Mary's example and choose to serve God. If we do so, when we look back on our lives, we will find that they were more fulfilling and more meaningful simply by making that one small choice.

**Be Flexible and live your life as a servant of the Lord.** Mary ultimately responds to Gabriel with the powerful words, “I am the Lord’s servant. May your word to me be fulfilled” (Luke 1:38). Through Mary’s willingness to be used by God, we have an incredible example of the Apostle Paul’s later request for followers of Christ to be a “living sacrifice” (Romans 12:1).

Mary is the epitome of flexibility. When told that she will have a baby even though she is a virgin, she rolls with it. When she is told that there is no room at the inn, she has her baby in a manger, without much fuss. Mary’s approach is the right one. Being flexible in life is the key to happiness. Life will throw you curve balls. It simply doesn’t go according to plan. And if you can’t be flexible and roll with it, you will spend a large part of your life being frustrated and miserable. Better to take life as it comes, and try to be happy even when the unexpected occurs.

Mary is a wonderful role model for all of us. She is an example of grace under pressure and faith in difficult circumstances. She is truly the heroine of the Christmas story **Fr. George Ngwa**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **HOLY MASS BOOKING ON LINE DURING CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC**

Hampshire is still governed by Tier 2 Covid Restrictions, therefore, It will still be necessary to restrict the number of parishioners in Church for each Mass to 30, therefore, you will need to book your place in advance. We now have an “on-line” booking system in place, which you can find by going onto our website at <https://www.nfwp.org.uk> - (scroll down left hand column to CORONAVIRUS: Welcome to Our Lady of Lourdes, New Milton and click on CORONAVIRUS: How to book a seat for Christmas Mass) you will be directed to the following Link: <https://forms.gle/fjNLVDX1xR3ev6Vw7> If anybody does not have the facility to book on line, would they please contact Lizzie in the Parish Office on either a Wednesday between 12:00 noon and 3:00 p.m. or on a Friday between 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

### **MASS TIMES OVER CHRISTMAS & OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS**

DAY	MASS	
Christmas Vigil Thursday 24 <sup>th</sup> December	4:00 p.m. Mass for Children	<b>No Rosary, Benediction</b>
	6:00 p.m.	
	8:00 p.m.	
Christmas Day Friday 25 <sup>th</sup> December	8:00 a.m.	
	10:00 a.m.	<b>No Rosary, Benediction</b>
<b>OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS</b>		
Saturday 26 <sup>th</sup> December	10:00 a.m.	
Vigil Mass Holy Family	6:00 p.m.	
Sunday - Holy Family 27 <sup>th</sup> December	8:00 a.m.	
	10:00 a.m.	
Monday – Holy Innocents 28 <sup>th</sup> December	10:00 a.m.	<b>No Rosary, Benediction</b>
Tuesday – 29 <sup>th</sup> December	10:00 a.m.	<b>Rosary and Benediction</b>
Wednesday 30 <sup>th</sup> December	10:00 a.m.	<b>Rosary, Benediction</b>
Thursday 31 <sup>st</sup> December	10:00 a.m.	
	4:00 p.m. – thanksgiving Mass for the end of the year	<b>No Rosary, Benediction</b>
<b>Friday – Holy Mother of God 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021</b>	8:00 a.m.	
	10:00 a.m.	<b>Rosary and Benediction</b>

**FROM BISHOP PHILIP - CLERGY CHRISTMAS DONATION** This Christmas we celebrate and give thanks for all the dedication, guidance and care our priests give us throughout our Diocese and in each Parish. If you would like to give a gift to support our Parish Priest – Father George - in his vocation and mission, please visit our Parish Website or click on the link <https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/fundraising/new-milton-clergy-christmas-collection> As the chief shepherd, Bishop Philip and the Diocesan Curia have designed a web page which will henceforth be used for the Christmas & Easter donations to the Priests of the Diocese of Portsmouth. This website is easy to use and the sum total collected transparent to all.

**THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR“B” 20<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2020**

Sunday Vigil	19	Dec.	Vigil Mass of the 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent Year B	18:00 Holy Mass – <i>William &amp; Mary Hodgkinson (for the souls)</i>	
Sunday	20	Dec.	FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT Year B	08:00 Holy Mass – <i>Anna Mathew (RIP)</i> 10:00 Holy Mass – <i>All the Deceased members of the Sheehan Family (RIP)</i>	
Monday	21	Dec.	Liturgy of the Day	10:00 Holy Mass	
Tuesday	22	Dec.	Liturgy of the Day Year B	18:00 Exposition 18:30 Rosary 18:50 Benediction 19:00 Holy Mass – <i>Magdalena Maynard (Birthday Blessings)</i>	6:00-7:00 p.m. Rosary, Benediction
Wednesday	23	Dec.	Liturgy of the Day Year B	10:00 a.m. Holy Mass – <i>Emanuel Salibu (RIP)</i>	6:00 – 7:00 p.m. Rosary and Benediction
Thursday	24	Dec.	Liturgy of the Day Year B	10:00 a.m. Holy Mass <i>Mary Tanner (Private Intention)</i>	
Thursday	24	Dec.	Liturgy of the Day THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD Solemnity with Octave	16:00 Mass for Children 18:00 Holy Mass 20:00 Holy Mass	
Friday	25	Dec.	THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD	08:00 Holy Mass- 10:00 Holy Mass – <i>For all members of the Maynard &amp; Oleksik Families</i>	No Rosary and Benediction
Saturday	26	Dec.	ST. STEPHEN	10:00 Holy Mass – <i>The Hollyoak Family (RIP)</i>	
Saturday Vigil			Vigil Mass of the 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent Year “B”	18:00 Holy Mass – Vigil Mass of THE HOLY FAMILY – <i>Fr. Marcin (Intention)</i>	
Sunday	27	Dec.	THE HOLY FAMILY of JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH YEAR B	8:00 - Holy Mass – <i>Brother James Ryan (RIP)</i> 10:00 – Holy Mass <i>Jeanette &amp; John Patching (RIP)</i>	14:00 Baptism

Your continued financial support during these very challenging times would be very much appreciated

**Parish priest: Father George Ngwa**

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Parish office: 01425 614968 [lolnewmilton@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:lolnewmilton@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

Hall Bookings suspended during the Pandemic.

Secretary: **Lizzie Davies**– Office Hours 12.00h to 15.00h Wednesday & 10.00h to 13.00h Friday

Our Parish Live Streaming: <http://churchservices.tv/newmilton> Website: [www.nfwp.org.uk](http://www.nfwp.org.uk)

Safeguarding Minister: **Tony Harwood** Tel: 01425 511 952 or email [hughharwood314@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:hughharwood314@hotmail.co.uk)

**PRAYER FOR THE RENEWAL OF OUR DIOCESE – ( to be said at home even with Church closure).**

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, we beg you to change us, to convert us and to make us holy. Fill us with a deeper faith, hope and love for you. Send into our hearts the cleansing fire of the Holy Spirit and powerfully renew all the clergy, religious and laity of our Diocese. Unite us in love and respect for one another and unify us as your one, holy people. Grant us a new passion and zeal for the Catholic Faith, for Mission, Outreach and Service. Help us to proclaim your Gospel generously to the poor and needy that many more souls may be saved by finding their way to you in your Church. May Mary Immaculate help us. May St. Edmund of Abingdon and Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati pray for us. Amen

Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel - St Michael, the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who wander through the world seeking the ruin of souls - AMEN