

**ST DOMINIC'S, DURSLEY  
&  
ST JOSEPH'S, NYMPFIELD**

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**CHRISTMAS 2023**



**Father Philip and Deacon Domenic  
wish you every blessing at Christmas,  
and a Happy New Year**

**THE POPE'S INTENTION FOR DECEMBER: FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.** We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the centre of attention of society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programmes which value their active participation.

**THE POPE'S INTENTION FOR JANUARY: FOR THE GIFT OF DIVERSITY IN THE CHURCH.** We pray that the Holy Spirit may help us to recognise the gift of different charisms within the Christian community and to discover the richness of different traditions and rituals within the Catholic church.

**Our Parish:** PLEASE PRAY for those who have recently died: Goff Smith, Jamie Anthony  
**Diocesan Prayer Links:** St Bernadette, Whitchurch, St Dunstan, Keynsham, St Thomas More, Marlborough

**Churches Together:** All our church congregations as they celebrate Christmas

**Parish Prayer Rota:** Members of the UCM, The young people of our parishes

## **SUNDAY 24 DECEMBER ADVENT IV**

The story of the Annunciation calls to our attention God's wondrous action in human history. For His Son to be born among us, He has chosen Our Lady to the blessed mother, highly favoured. In the visit of Gabriel to Nazareth, we witness God assembling the pieces of His jigsaw puzzle, so that He can uncover to us the picture of salvation in the Crib. She is to give birth to His Son so that all humanity can be born again as the Children of God. Mary, already full of God's grace, was able to co-operate in this great plan for our salvation. Thus, Jesus was born as one of us, fully human and fully divine.

This is the mystery we prepare to celebrate at Christmas, the mystery of the Incarnation. In the model of Mary, we pray that we will be people of faith who recognise God's saving plan for us and are able respond with obedience.

### **Entrance Antiphon**

Drop down dew from above, you heavens, and let the clouds rain down the Just One,  
let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour

### **Responsorial Psalm**

I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord

### **Gospel Acclamation**

I am the handmaid of the Lord: let what you have said be done to me

### **Communion Antiphon**

Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and His name will be called Emmanuel



## **SUNDAY 31 DECEMBER CHRISTMAS I - THE HOLY FAMILY**



In the gospel we read about Mary and Joseph who, like good and devout Jews, present their first-born son to God in the temple. In Jesus, God himself enters his temple and is welcomed by Simeon and Anna.

As much as we would prefer life in to be happy and simple, we know from our own experience that it is fraught with trouble at each step of the way. The Holy Family too had to face their difficulties; a sword would pierce Mary's soul too!

Perhaps through these troubles, we can rest assured that like Jesus God's favour will always be with us too!

### **Entrance Antiphon**

The shepherds went in haste, and found Mary and Joseph and the infant lying in a manger

### **Responsorial Psalm**

He, the Lord, is our God. He remembers his covenant for ever

### **Gospel Acclamation**

At various times in the past and in various different ways, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets; but in our own time, the last days, he has spoken to us through his Son

### **Communion Antiphon**

Our God appeared on the earth, and lived among us

## CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Saturday 23 December	3.30pm – 4.30pm	Confessions	Dursley
<b>ADVENT IV - B</b>			
Saturday 23 December	5.30pm	Sunday Mass	Nympsfield
Sunday 24 December	10.30am	Sunday Mass	Dursley
<b>NATIVITY OF THE LORD – START OF THE CHRISTMAS SEASON</b>			
<b>Sunday 24 December</b>	<b>5.30pm</b>	<b>Christmas Vigil Mass</b>	<b>Nympsfield</b>
	<b>9.00pm</b>	<b>Christmas Night Mass</b>	<b>Dursley</b>
<b>Monday 25 December</b>	<b>9.00am</b>	<b>Christmas Dawn Mass</b>	<b>Nympsfield</b>
	<b>11.00am</b>	<b>Christmas Day Mass</b>	<b>Dursley</b>
Tuesday 26 December ST STEPHEN	12 noon	Mass	Dursley
Wednesday 27 December ST JOHN THE APOSTLE	12 noon	Mass	Dursley
Thursday 28 December HOLY INNOCENTS - Childermas	12 noon	Mass	Nympsfield
Friday 29 December ST THOMAS BECKET	12 noon 3.30pm	Mass <b>Funeral for Jamie Anthony RIP</b>	Dursley <b>Gloucester Crem</b>
Saturday 30 December IN THE OCTAVE	12 noon	Mass	Dursley
<b><i>NO CONFESSIONS DURING THE CHRISTMAS OCTAVE</i></b>			
<b>FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY – B – CHRISTMAS I</b>			
Saturday 30 December	5.30pm	Sunday Mass	Nympsfield
Sunday 31st December	10.30am	Sunday Mass	Dursley
Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> January MARY MOTHER OF GOD	12 noon	Mass & Carols	Dursley
Tuesday 2 January Saints Basil & Gregory	Father is tired and taking day off		
Wednesday 3 January Holy Name of Jesus	9.00am	Mass	Dursley
Thursday 4 January Christmas Feria	10.00am	Mass	Nympsfield
Friday 5 January Christmas Feria	6.30pm – 6.55pm 7.00pm	Exposition and Confessions Mass	Dursley Dursley
Saturday 6 January Weekday of Christmas Time	3.30pm – 4.00pm	Confessions Sunday Mass	Dursley
<b>EPIPHANY OF THE LORD – B – MANIFESTATION OF CHRIST TO THE GENTILES – CHRISTMAS II</b>			
Saturday 6 January	5.30pm	Epiphany Mass	Nympsfield
Sunday 7 January	10.30am	Epiphany Mass	Dursley

## **FATHER PHILIP WRITES**

We are inclined to think that the days and seasons of the year simply celebrate people and events. Having finally reached the Solemnity of the Lord's Nativity, we tend to think that that's it! 'We've done it', as if Christmas Day were the end and culmination of Advent. Since the world around us started keeping Christmas as soon as their festival of Halloween was over, it is no wonder such a view is common. They want to be done with the Crib as soon as His Majesty the King as made his speech on the TV.

The truth is that we do not just celebrate events and people – we celebrate meaning and importance. We move from THIS HAPPENED to SO WHAT? It is a question we must answer repeatedly. The season of Christmastide helps us to do this for the entry of God into our world in a poor baby born in Bethlehem, the House of Bread. There is meaning in so many details of these events. No wonder we call the

Solemnity of the Incarnation Christ's Mass, for it is in the Holy Eucharist that we still know that He is Emmanuel GOD WITH US.

- One very easy way to ponder over the meaning of Christmas is to reflect with Our Lady in our hearts, by praying the words of the familiar carols and not just enjoying their tunes. So many truths can be found woven into their simple words.
- Another way to ponder over the meaning of Christmas is to take the saints' days of the Octave, Stephen, John and the others. It is not an accident that the Church keeps these days during the Octave, whilst nothing and no one can enter into the Octave of Easter.
- Another thing to notice is the fact that a whole season of Christmastide shows us something of the enormity of what we celebrate. We need time to appreciate and take it in. We need time and stillness, amid the festive film, holy and mince pies! A quick carol and a visit to the Crib is not enough!!!
- Christ came into the world, to save the world and everyone in it. This means that we are not confined to church. A walk after Christmas Lunch is a popular tradition in many households. Perhaps those who can might like to take a walk in the fresh air out in the world as part of our Christmas meditation, as well as walking off some of the excess food and drink.



**IN ALL THE LANGUAGES AND THROUGH ALL THE  
CULTURES REPRESENTED AMONG US,  
DEACON DOMINIC AND FATHER PHILIP WISH YOU ALL THE  
BLESSINGS OF THE SEASON.  
MAY THE INCARNATE SAVIOUR BRING YOU PEACE,  
AND A HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS CIVIL NEW YEAR**