



## Parish of the Sacred Heart & St Thérèse of the Child Jesus

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(Part of the Plymouth Diocesan Trust – Reg. Charity No: 213227)

Parish Priest: Fr Ralph Candy

<b>Fourth Week of Advent – Year B, Psalter 4</b>	
Saturday 19 December Vigil Mass of the Fourth Sunday in Advent	Eileen Dillon
Sunday 20 December - Mass of the Fourth Sunday in Advent 8.30am Mass 10.00am Mass	Hipwell family and friends The Parish
<i>Monday – Mass to be said in private for the intentions of Deacon Joe and John</i>	
Tuesday 22 December – 9.30am Mass	Mr and Mrs McCormack
Wednesday 23 December – 9.30am Mass	Jessie Meredith RIP
<b>Thursday 24 December – Vigil of the Nativity <i>Solemnity</i></b> 6.00pm – Vigil Mass 8.00pm – Mass in the night	Parishioners in care homes Eileen Dillon
<b>Friday 25 December – The Nativity of the Lord <i>Solemnity</i></b> 8.30am – Dawn Mass 10.00am - Day Mass	Connors and McDermott families Michael Doherty RIP
<b>* Saturday 26 December – 6pm Mass – St Stephen * <i>Feast</i></b>	Raymond Pursey RIP
Sunday 27 December – Mass of the Holy Family 8.30am Mass 10.00am Mass	David Snowden RIP Eileen Dillon

**Sacrament of reconciliation:** Saturday before Mass 5.15 – 5.45pm.

**Pastoral visits** for the anointing of the sick are permitted at home, in our care homes (some) and in hospital, so do please contact the parish office as necessary to arrange a visit by the parish priest.

### **This week's Gospel... The Annunciation (Luke 1: 26-38)**

As we prepare for the birth of Jesus, the final Sunday of Advent always focuses on Mary. What was the young girl Mary doing when the message came? Kneeling in prayer? Feeding the sheep? Fetching water? Sweeping the mud floor? What was she thinking? Engaged to be married, surely about her approaching wedding to Joseph and about the children she would mother. Then came the message which she could accept or refuse, the message on which hung the future of the world: her child would be different from all others. How 'different'? Her thoughts were turned back to the promise to David. It had been read to her so often in the Bible, and now the words echoed in her mind as she listened to the angel say, 'His reign will have no end'. This would all be the work of the Spirit which she had so often heard about in Isaiah: 'the Holy Spirit will come upon you', the Spirit which was to come upon the Servant of the Lord, the Spirit of Emmanuel, 'God with us'. Her young body was to grow, nourish and develop this child. Then she would have the child in her arms to cherish and shape as both Son of God and her own son. What sort of person was Mary? Would you have liked to get to know her? What is God's plan for you?

*Now slowly and prayerfully read the Gospel once again but this time in silence. Consider how this Gospel could apply to your life in general. Then thank God for any insight you may have received. Conclude by asking God to bless you with one of the following spiritual gifts to help you act on any resolution you have made: love, understanding, wisdom, faithfulness, peace, self-control, patience, or joy. Please remember to pray for the Church and particularly our school families. Then conclude by requesting the prayers of Our Lady & St Joseph.*

## **Fr Ralph writes...**

The season of Christmastide is upon us this week, and although for most of us the celebrations will take on a different, more cautious timbre, we would do well to reflect on the divine fragility of the Christ-child in our Christmas cribs, both in church and at home. There is a direct connection between the vulnerable Christ-child and the presence of God among the suffering, the hungry (including those who are spiritually impoverished) and the marginalised. During this season of peace, we welcome God into our hearts, not as a distant king or a moral watchdog, but as an intimate companion from heaven, ready to join us on our journey. As an old prayer puts it: 'Fill our hearts with the quiet silence of that night on which your almighty Word leapt down out of your royal throne, and came to visit us in great humility.' Christmas spans twelve days, a time when we acclaim the mystery of the incarnation: God-with-us. Christmas brings peace when we inspire others through our vulnerability.

Please pray for the repose of the souls of all who have died recently, especially **John Gordon RIP**, and remember in prayer their loved ones at this very difficult time. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen.

**Breaking News** - Our parish now has a **Facebook page**. You can click on this link: <https://www.facebook.com/SacredHeartChurchPaignton> or search for @SacredHeartChurchPaignton on Facebook. We hope that being on Facebook will make it easier for people to find out about our parish and for parishioners unable to come to Mass to keep in touch. If you use Facebook, we'd really appreciate it if you can like our page and share it with your friends. This will help the page be seen by more people. At the moment, we are posting the parish newsletters and news about parish events on the Facebook page, but hope it will be a place where parishioners can stay in touch and share useful resources.

**Advent on Zoom!** - WAITING IN JOYFUL HOPE – **Tuesday 22 December at 7pm**. Do join with me and other parishioners in following a four-session course, 'The Joy of Hope' filmed on location on the beautiful Greek Holy Island of Patmos, where Scripture tells us the Book of Revelation was written. Email: [zoomsacredheart@gmail.com](mailto:zoomsacredheart@gmail.com) to receive the Zoom link. (If you are unsure about using Zoom, Keith Taylor will be happy to talk you through the process - just indicate this in your email.)

**CAFOD World Gifts:** If you have left it a bit late to buy some Christmas gifts or you are looking for a meaningful gift that will help others during these very challenging times, have a look at CAFOD's range of ethical World Gifts. Order by 21 December to ensure the card arrives before Christmas or you can choose to send it via email immediately. There are World Gifts catalogues available in the porch or you can order online here: [worldgifts.cafod.org.uk](http://worldgifts.cafod.org.uk)

**A Precious Place of God's Grace** is the title of a document prepared by our Bishop concerning the pastoral provision for the parishes of our diocese. Most people will be aware that there will have to be some reorganization because of the shortage of priests and over the years we have recognized that there will eventually have to be changes in our area as with the rest of the diocese. The Bishop, however, wishes to ensure that the future plans will be directed first and foremost to the effective proclamation of the Faith in whatever new structures are envisaged. You can read the Bishop's document on the Plymouth Diocesan website – follow the link on the homepage.

**Parish Collections:** week of 9-16 December: £643.49 – thank you for your generosity, and especially to those who saved up their weekly offering during the lockdown and presented them to the parish on their return to Mass.