

GOSPEL REFLECTION FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

'Count Me In.'



Our Nativity scenes show Mary smiling fondly at the new-born baby Jesus and Joseph looking protective and relaxed as though bringing up the Son of God might be the most normal thing in the world. The couple look like they have slipped into the history books with the greatest of ease, but nothing could be further from the truth. Without the benefit of hindsight, things must have felt very different. Mary was taking terrible risks by saying 'yes' to God's plan, yet without her agreement the history of salvation would have looked very different. Joseph's agreement to God's plan was of equal importance. Without

Joseph, Mary would have had no one to support her. Without Joseph, Mary would not even have been accepted. Without Joseph, Jesus would have had no family in which to grow up. It is a tribute Mary and Joseph's faith that they were prepared to accept what was being asked of them without the faintest idea of where God's plan might take them.

The interesting lesson to learn is that what might originally seemed to have been difficult demands on the couple turned out to be gifts of hope and joy and love, not in a 'happy ever after' kind of way, but in a 'lasting fulfilment' kind of way.

We too are part of God's plan. We too have a part to play in leaving the world a better place than we found it. The challenge is to discover what God is asking us to do, and to say 'Count me in' to his plan wherever that plan might take us.

Bitesize - Say "Yes" to the seedlings and a giant forest cleaves the sky



PARISH PRAYER – Father, pour out your Spirit upon our parish. Grant us a new vision of your glory, a new faithfulness to your Word and a new consecration to your service, that your love might grow among us and your kingdom come, through Christ our Lord, Amen.

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Sunday 18th December 2022 – 4th Sunday of Advent – Year A

[4th Week of Advent, Weekdays Year I, Psalter Week 4]

MASSES in the PARISH

Saturday 17th December

18.00 *First MASS of Sunday*

For the People of the Parish

Sunday 18th December

4th Sunday of Advent

09.00 MASS

John Perkins+ (CP)

11.00 MASS *Live streamed*

Anne Hannon+ (DH)

Monday 19th December

Advent FERIA

10.00 MASS

Juliana Morrisroe+

Tuesday 20th December

Advent FERIA

10.00 MASS

For UCM intentions

Wednesday 21st December

Advent FERIA

10.00 MASS

Brenda May+ (K&RM)

Thursday 22nd December

Advent FERIA

10.00 MASS & ADORATION

Helen Macdonald+ (KB)

Live streamed

Friday 23rd December

Advent FERIA

- No Mass today

Saturday 24th December

Christmas Eve

18.30 Carols

Brenda May+ (GC)

19.00 MASS

The Nativity of the Lord. Solemnity

22.30 Midnight MASS

Christmas Day

Sunday 25th December

For the People of the Parish

10.00 MASS *Live streamed*

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: Thursday after 10.00 Mass and Saturday at 17.30

EXPOSITION & BENEDICTION: Thursday after Mass

For *Live Streamed Masses* Search for **Dereham Catholic Church** on **YouTube**, or use the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCR-qWs-B4OVTvbezZ83MxQ/videos?view=2&flow=grid>

The parish newsletter is available on the parish website from Friday each week.

Anniversaries this week: Patrick Keatley, Agnes Harmer, Mary Lingwood, Priscilla Louise Reavey, Patricia Huizar, Florence Sayer, John Thomas Macdonald, Kit Blackburn, Terence Blakiston, Tanina Gauci, Genevieve Smith, Dorothy Jones, Frederick Power, Emelienne McClure. *May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace.*

Hospital Visits: If you or any member of your family is admitted to the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital and would like to have a visit from a Catholic Priest, please inform a nurse on the ward and contact will be made through the Chaplaincy. If you are admitted to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in King's Lynn, please contact Fr. Peter Rollings at the Presbytery on 01553 772220. If you would like to receive the Sacrament of the Sick before going into hospital, please contact Fr. Jay either by phone or by email.

Sick & Housebound [with GDPR Permissions] – Please pray for: Shirley Liebenhals, Frances Saville King, Derek Williams, Patsy Gray, Collette Barro-Nessian, Betty Reavey, Marion Ring-Davies, Fr. Brendan, William Dunn, Pauline Buckland, Gretta Cummings, Marco Johnson.

Money Matters: Offering for last Sunday: Plate £201.60. Offertory by Standing Order for November 2022 came to £1,396.00. Last weekend's collection for the Dependent Priests' Fund: £191.70. Thank you.

For those who would like to make their regular offerings by Standing Order, the information you need is: Account name: **Catholic Church of Dereham.** The Sort Code is: **40-20-08** and the Account number is: **11311115.** If you are a tax payer, please also consider **Gift Aid.** **Gift Aid forms** are available at the back of church. This will help to maximize our donations in the Parish.

Parish Christmas Decoration – This will take place on 23rd December from 1000 onwards. We may need your artistic ability on this matter. Also someone who could trim a Christmas tree. **Crib Donation** – As we gradually fill the Nativity scene, donations for the crib this year will go to the Aid to the Church in Need.

Union of Catholic Mothers – There will be a meeting to officially close the Dereham Foundation of the UCM on **Tues, 20th Dec at 11am.** This will be followed by an informal buffet lunch, so please bring something to add to the shared table.

Parish Events this week		
Tues. 20 Dec.	1100	UCM meeting – Emmaus Room (<i>see item above</i>)
Wednesday	First Communion Class is now on Christmas holidays. Classes resume on 4 th January 2023.	
Friday	Confirmation Group is now on Christmas holidays. Meetings resume on 6 th January 2023.	

Parish Events this week	
Friday	Altar Servers' Group is now on Christmas holidays. Meetings resume on 13 th January 2023.
<i>Please note that the Saturday Youth Tennis and Tuesday Chess sessions are taking a winter break and will resume again in March 2023.</i>	

Christmas Masses – Please note the times for Christmas Masses:

- 24th December (Christmas Eve) – Carols at 1830; Mass at 1900 and Midnight Mass at 2230
- 25th December (Christmas Day) – Mass at 1000
- 26th December (Boxing Day) – Altar Servers' Mass at 1000 (Pizza afterwards)

UCM Christmas Raffle - The UCM is delighted to announce that their Christmas Raffle raised an amazing £300. Such a success. They have decided to donate it equally between the Parish, the SVP and to the Filipino Community Charity.

Church Cleaning Rota – A new rota for church cleaning for 2023 is available and team members are asked to collect their copy from the letter rack in the church porch.

Parish Pastoral Council – The Parish will discuss organising the Parish Pastoral Council in March 2023. Though consultative in nature, this will help to facilitate decisions regarding the day-to-day operation of the Parish.

PARISH STEWARDSHIP PROGRAMME – Keep an eye on this space.

Parish Garden Club – The Garden Club will meet every Thursday at 1145 starting in Spring 2023. Looking forward for willing hands to take up your gardening gloves and help to keep our Parish grounds and garden looking even more wonderful.

Forthcoming Appeals –

- **SPUC White Flower Appeal:** 14-15 January 2023
- **Columba Mission Appeal:** 25-26 February 2023

More details will be given nearer the time.

For Expectant Mothers - The Gospel on the 4th Sunday of Advent focusses on the role of Mary in our salvation. Over the three year-cycle the gospel tells of the betrothal of Mary to Joseph, the Annunciation and the Visitation. The stories prepare us for the Birth of our Lord at Christmas. Traditionally in this week we are asked to pray for all who are waiting for a birth, that they may be given patience and strength. We also pray for all who work in maternity units and with mothers, that they may always recognise and cherish the gift of life. We also pray for those who are trying for a baby, that they may not give up hope.