

St Anthony of Padua

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Priest: Fr. Peter Draper. (Tel: 725193)
Deacon (retired): Rev. Tom Butler

Sunday Masses: 6.00pm (Saturday Vigil), 9.30am.
Weekday Mass: Mon-Wed, Fri: 9.15am. (Thurs 9.15am at Holy Family)
Confessions: 5.30—5.50pm

Annexe: 725544 Social Centre: 735963 Primary school: 726621
Playgroup/Preschool 07963 700591

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Joseph

'Every third year, our liturgy gives us the perspective of Joseph a quiet, unassuming descendant of the House of David. It is his willingness to lean into the impossible, to embrace the scandalous, to abandon his notions of holiness in favour of God's confusing plan of salvation that allows the miracle of Christmas to unfold. But we make a grave mistake when we sanitise Joseph's consent. We distort his humanity when we assume that his acceptance of God's plan came easily, when we hold ourselves at arm's length from his humiliation and doubt. In fact, what Joseph's pain shows is that God's favour is not the shiny, comforting thing we'd like to believe it is. God's call required Joseph to embrace a situation fraught with tension, complications, suspicions and the inexplicable. Then again, Joseph's story gives me hope. I can't relate to a person who leaps headlong into obedience. I can relate, however, to a person who struggles, to a person whose yes" is cautious, ambivalent, and scared.

In the verses that immediately precede our Gospel reading, Matthew gives us a genealogy of Jesus' ancestors. How interesting that God chose a long line of brokenness, imperfection, dishonour, and scandal. The perfect backdrop, I suppose, for his beautiful work of restoration, healing, hope, and second chances.

The angel's first words to Joseph were, "Do not be afraid." If we want to enter into God's 'chaotic' story, then perhaps these are the first words we need to hear, too. Do not be afraid. Do not be afraid when God's work in your life looks alarmingly different from what you hoped it would be. Do not be afraid when God challenges your pre-conceived ideas about where God is to be found. Do not be afraid of confusion. God is in the confusion.' [1]

'I wonder how often we miss our own life because we limit it to what we know, what's familiar, what makes sense and we close ourselves to the not-knowing, to something new, different or unexpected. I wonder if we dismiss God-with- us by our searching for explanations and understanding rather than surrendering and entering into the mystery. Instead of looking for answers let's ponder what might be born in us, what needs to be born in us, what is waiting to be born in us.' [2]

When Joseph experienced the assuring presence and words of the angel, he then 'knew what he had always known.

We may not see how quietly he came and spoke no word.
Mary saw him come. She saw him kneel, lift up his hands,
Two hands that held, invisibly, his life.

[3]

"[1] Debie Thomas [2] Michael Marsh [3] John W. Lynch: A Woman Wrapped in Silence

Fourth Sunday of Advent
18th December 2022

Year A
missal p40

DIARY AND MASS INTENTIONS

for the week beginning Saturday 17th December 2022

Sat 6.00pm	<i>St. Ant</i>	Mollie & Ernie Hindle	
Sun 9.30am 11.00am	<i>St. Ant</i> <i>H.Family</i>	Kathleen Jones Craig Spencer	Fourth Sunday of Advent <i>Gaudete Sunday</i>
Mon 9.15am	<i>St. Ant</i>	Edward Allan Jackson	
Tue 9.15am	<i>St. Ant</i>	Frances Thompson	
Wed 9.15am	<i>St. Ant</i>	Leonard Stevens	
Thur 9.15am	<i>H.Family</i>	Special Intention	
Fri 9.15am	<i>St. Ant</i>	Jack Doyle	
Sat 6.00pm 8.00pm	<i>St. Ant</i> <i>H.Family</i>	Dave Smith For our parish	<i>Christmas Eve Vigil</i>
Sun 9.30am 11.00am	<i>St. Ant</i> <i>H.Family</i>	Fitzgerald/Williams families Draper family	CHRISTMAS DAY

Last Weekend: Attendance: 187 (72 + 115). Offertory: £610.27
Thank you for your generosity.

Masses received this week: Leonard Stevens, Gerry Allen.

Tea, Coffee, cake etc. served in the Padua Room after weekend Mass.

PRAYER INTENTIONS

We pray for those who are sick, especially Mary Lawler, Jo Counsell, Alice Myerscough, Chris Goldsmith, Theresa Wilkinson, Bill Embery, Les Farrer, Maureen Cafferkey, Carole & Gary Adnitt, Rev. Tom Butler, baby Mairead, Vera Bolton, Fr. Harry Holden.

We pray for those who have died recently: Geoff Plumb, Beryl Gee, John Walker; and those whose anniversaries fall about this time: Richard Jackson, Mary Parker, Monica Crombleholme, Bernard Dewhurst, James Joseph Smith, Hilda Martin, Eileen Bartle, Harry Wane, Melvin Brown, Anne Mulqueaney, Florence Woodruff, William Hartley, Jack Shaw, Arthur Lovatt, Eileen Dwyer, Laura Englishby, Francis Dewhurst, Frank Baron.
May they rest in peace.

Christmas Mass Times

- At St. Anthony's: vigil at 6.00pm, Christmas morning at 9.30am.
At Holy Family: vigil at 8.00pm, Christmas morning at 11.00am.

Christmas Cribs Thanks once again to Harry and his elves for erecting and installing the two wonderful cribs inside church and outside the Presbytery. And to Ian for completing them.
And thanks to the D'Souzas for decorating the church again with such style! A Christmas delight!

St. Anthony's Advent Carol Service

A very successful Carol Service and Sing along was held last Sunday in the Church and parish centre. Thank you to all the singers, social committee and club. A big thank you also and for the very generous donations from the choirs and Knit & Natter for the Hampers. A total of £406 was raised from the raffle and first ever St Anthony's Auction. There's a list of Christmas Hampers Raffle winners are at the back of church.

Sacrament of Confirmation

We are hoping to welcome Bishop Paul to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation in the new year for those in Years 8 & 9 (and above). There is an application form at the back of church.

CAFOD Christmas gift catalogues

- are available from the back of church. Inside you will find imaginative gifts which can be bought perhaps for family members who would appreciate a gift helping those in the developing world who are in dire need.

Lancaster Diocesan Directories 2023

Price is £5.00 or £6.00 for ring-bound. Please put payment in the slot in the green safe.

'The Shepherd'

You are invited to watch a 20 minute film seeing the birth of Jesus through the eyes of some Bethlehem shepherds. We will show the film in the Padua Room after the coffee evening/morning on the last Sunday before Christmas. At 7.15 pm on Saturday 17th December and 10.45 am on Sunday 18th December.

Cups & Saucers

Our Social Group are trying to build up a stock of cups & saucers suitable for the Afternoon Teas etc. If you have any redundant crockery they'll be glad to receive them.

Keep fit - and help a good cause

Weekly sessions, in the Padua Room on Wednesday mornings at 10a.m.

Catholic Voice

The December edition of our Diocesan newspaper is now available from the back of church. You may wish to take extra copies to pass on to others.